

Divers Make Big Splash for Cav.

By Spc. Al Barrus
122nd MPAD

BAGHDAD, Iraq - Soldiers of the 86th Dive Team demolished a boat that was partially sunken in the Tigris River at the Abu Nuwas Park in central Baghdad Sept. 26.

The 35-foot tugboat's superstructure and cabin were an eyesore for the park, which is undergoing renovations by the 1st Cavalry Division, said 1st Lt. Jenny Jo Hartney, an operations officer in the 1st Cav. Div. Engineer Brigade.

"While we were at the park I saw this eyesore and, being a diver myself, I really wanted to tackle this," said Hartney, who coordinated the demolition project.

After the mission was approved by higher command, the 86th Dive Team, based out of Fort Eustis, Va., was called in for the job. It gave the divers the chance to practice their demolition skills using plastic explosives.

"We were going to try and lift up the entire boat, but that would be too difficult because of the size, so we decided to just flatten it," said 1st Lt. Eric Marshall, the 86th Dive Team officer in charge. "No one knows where the boat came from or how it got there. No one cares either, so we get to blow it up."

The seven-man team conducted reconnaissance of the site as well as a test shot on the submerged boat, using two pounds of plastic explo-



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With all spectators and buildings at least 300 meters away, the charges detonate and send the boat's wheelhouse approximately 150 feet in the air before it crashes safely into the Tigris River, and out of view for Abu Nuwas Park-goers.

sives, to get a feel for what kind of structure they were dealing with two days before the operation.

The day of the event called for more preparations. Soldiers of the 2nd Battalion, 162nd Infantry Regiment, 39th Brigade Combat Team, provided security at the site and helped spread the word to the local security forces so they would expect the explosion.

"Today we are using 14 pounds of the explosives to cut away the wheel house that's jutting out, and a one-pound charge to knock it over, all in one shot," Marshall said.

With everything "a go", six divers loaded up their raft with explosives, sandbags and the wire needed to rig

their target. When the rigging was complete, the divers moved back 300 meters from the blast site to detonate. A group of spectators, both Soldiers and Iraqi children watched with ears plugged.

First came a great splash, followed by a thunderous boom and subtle shockwave. The blast exceeded everyone's expectations, pushing the bulk of the boat's cabin nearly 150 feet into the air. Boisterous cheers and applause followed, as the debris rained from the sky.

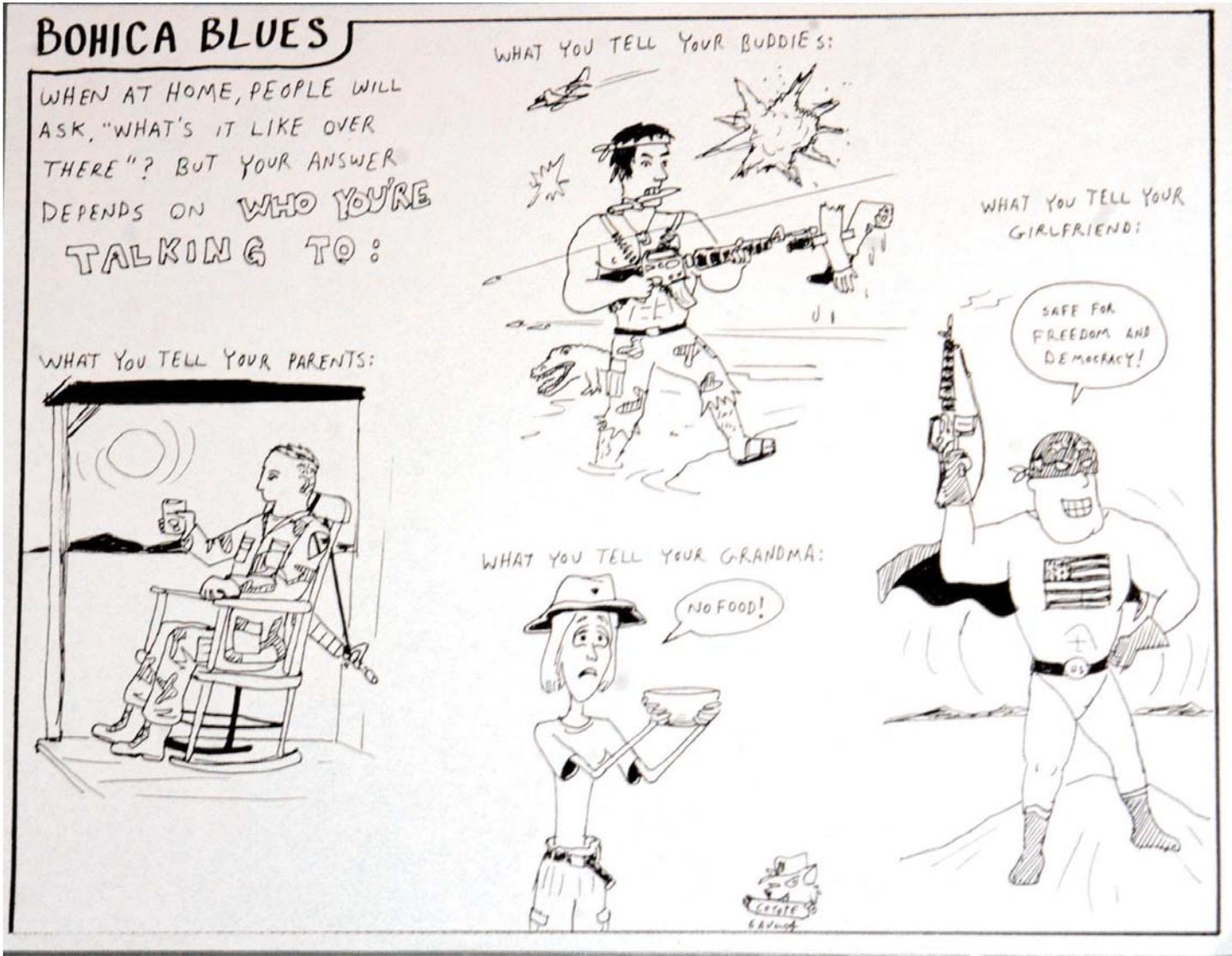
"The plume went higher than we expected," Marshall said. "We assumed it would be a nice cutting charge that would just slice through the metal but it had a lot more

explosive reaction than we thought, but no one got hurt. It shot that wheel house up a good 150 feet, but we liked it; that's why we are engineers."

It was the highlight of the day, but not the end. As expected, other portions of the sunken craft still remained above the water line, and another detonation was needed.

"After the first detonation there was the section in the front and the one in the back that were sticking out, as well as some railings," Hartney said.

The divers pressed on and put another 10 pounds of explosives in the areas needed. It was a smaller explosion on the river as the sun began to set.



By Staff Sgt. Christopher Grant, 411 Engineer Battalion

Bohica Blues cartoons are drawn by Staff Sgt. Christopher Grant, of the 411 Engineer Battalion from Boise Idaho. His battalion is attached to the 1st Cavalry Division in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom II. Grant says he draws cartoons as a way to present his, and his fellow Soldiers', opinions to the world. His work is also displayed at the the Antelope (Engineer) dining facility on Camp Al-Tahreer.

Useful Iraqi Words/Phrases

I'd like an interpreter.
ureed mutarjim

Saturday

High: 102
Low: 70



Sunday

High: 100
Low: 68



Monday

High: 98
Low: 68



Weather information provided by 1CD Staff Weather Office (SWO)

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News Notes

Whale Takes Surfer on a Wild Ride

SAN CLEMENTE, Calif. (AP) - A surfer says the swell he was riding on a recent trip turned out to be more than just a wave -- it was a whale. Spyros Vamvas, a 60-year-old San Clemente therapist, felt the ocean swirl under him and was lifted up by the giant mammal. "All of a sudden I just felt, wow, this huge noise and bump," said Vamvas, "and it lifted my board up. I'm looking down, and there's just swirling water and I see barnacles on the back of the whale. I'm used to dolphins. This was different. It was huge."

Soldiers Wanted for Speeches

WASHINGTON (Army News Service) - The Army's Operation Tribute to Freedom program is recruiting Soldiers willing to go out into their hometowns or local communities to share their experiences in fighting the Global War on Terrorism. "We're moving forward with efforts to strengthen the bond between American Soldiers and citizens of the nation they serve," said Capt. Robert Kuster, who heads the speakers service. "To do that, we want Soldiers who will volunteer to go out and share their stories and personal experiences with their fellow Americans." Sending Soldiers into communities is a practical way to connect the Army to the public it serves, Army leaders believe.



Dallas Morning News

Lexi and Melody Munoz watch as the State Fair of Texas parade moves down Main Street in downtown Dallas. The event signaled the start of the fair, which runs through Oct. 17.

Temple Schools Ranked by TEA

TEMPLE, Texas (Temple Daily Telegram) - Four Temple elementary schools earned high marks under the state's new accountability ratings system, the Texas Education Agency announced Thursday.

Temple school district's Cater Elementary School was one of 517 schools across the state to earn an exemplary

rating, the system's highest honor. Jefferson Elementary, Kennedy-Powell Elementary, and Thornton Elementary were all recognized by the state.

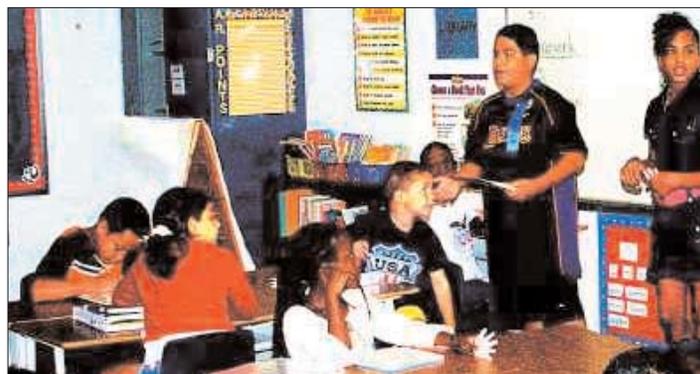
The nine other schools in the district that were rated by the agency were classified as academically acceptable, as was the district as a whole.

The new rating system

classifies schools as exemplary, recognized, academically acceptable or academically unacceptable using scores from the TAKS test and dropout and completion rates.

The old system, in place from 1994-2002, relied primarily on the less rigorous TAAS test for its ratings. To achieve the highest rating, a district or campus must have a 90 percent passing rate for all students - as well as for African-American, Hispanic, white and economically disadvantaged student sub-groups - in reading, writing, mathematics, social studies and science.

Special education students who took the State-Developed Alternative Assessment also needed to achieve a 90 percent or higher passing rate.



Temple Daily Telegram

Jerkhaal Alvarez (standing left) and Chaquita Brown talk to students at Garcia Elementary.

Yankees Top East in Win

NEW YORK (AP) - Bernie Williams sent a drive soaring to left-center field, raised his right arm in triumph and circled the bases.

Pretty soon, he was home - and so were the New York Yankees.

Williams hit a two-run homer in the ninth inning and the Yankees clinched their seventh straight AL East title, beating the play-off-bound Minnesota Twins 6-4 Thursday night for their 100th victory of the season.

"This time of year seems to bring out the best in him," Yankees manager Joe Torre said.

With the crowd already standing and hollering, Williams connected with one out to set off an enthusiastic celebration.

"I've been through it so



New York Yankees' Gary Sheffield celebrates the Yankees' 6-4 victory over the Minnesota Twins to clinch the AL East title Thursday.

many times. I was picturing it in the on-deck circle, taking it all in, thinking it would be nice for me to end it," Williams said.

Williams missed much of spring training following an appendectomy. He struggled at times during

the season, and even was benched late in the year for a big game against Boston.

But he was in the lineup for this one, right where his teammates wanted him.

The Yankees enjoyed the moment, gathering for a group hug near the plate.

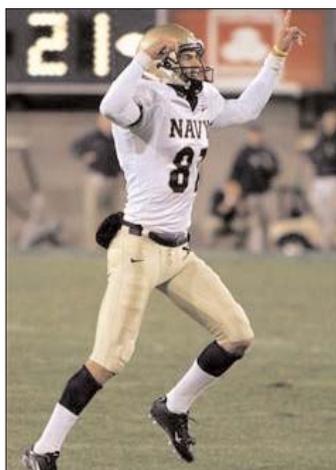
Navy Still Perfect in Win vs. AF

AIR FORCE ACADEMY, Colo. (AP) - Geoff Blumenfeld lined up for the game-winning kick, only to head back to the sideline because of a timeout. He trotted back out to the field again and - yep - another timeout.

Entering the game for the season, Blumenfeld should have been nervous from the stalling tactic. He wasn't.

Blumenfeld picked a good time to make his first field goal, nailing a 30-yarder with 4 seconds left to lift Navy to a 24-21 victory over Air Force on Thursday night.

"What an opportunity," Blumenfeld said. "All year long we've talked about getting opportunities and taking the opportunities afforded you. Tonight was



Navy kicker Geoff Blumenfeld celebrates after kicking the game-winning 30-yard field goal against Air Force.

an opportunity." Blumenfeld's kick has given Navy (5-0) a chance to do something it hasn't done since 1981: win the

Commander-in-Chief Trophy in consecutive years. The Midshipmen ended Air Force's six-year run last year with a 28-25 victory and can repeat as service academy champion by beating Army on Dec. 4.

Air Force (2-3), on the other hand, is looking for ways to turn around what has so far been a disappointing season. After losses to California and Utah, both ranked teams, the Falcons are off to their worst start since opening the 1994 season 0-3.

"I still think we have a competitive football team," Air Force coach Fisher DeBerry said. "It'll be interesting to see how our team rebounds now after such a disappointing loss."

In Brief

Tiger in Pain, Shines in First

THOMASTOWN, Ireland (AP) - Tiger Woods pursed his lips and cursed under his breath as he stood over his tee shot, feeling spasms in his back and knowing the sharp pain that was coming with each shot. What he didn't expect was the score - a 4-under 68 that left Woods two shots behind the British Open champion Todd Hamilton after one painful round in the American Express Championship Thursday.

Players Have Swung at Parcels

NEW YORK (AP) - Bill Parcells' players have tried to hit him - and that's just fine with the two-time Super Bowl champion coach.

"We've had a few" players take a swing at him, Parcells says in an interview with "60 Minutes" that will air Sunday night. "That's OK. I think confrontation is healthy, because it clears the air very quickly." The Dallas Cowboys' coach is rarely pleased, even when his team is doing well. "This game and this business is not without a myriad of incessant problems ... even when you are successful ... when you win the game," Parcells said.





By Spc. Andy Miller, 122nd MPAD

Sgt. 1st Class Suree Valenzuela, the supply sergeant for 1st Cavalry Division's headquarters company, throws a line at Camp Al-Tahreer in Baghdad. The man-made lake was once part of Saddam Hussein's private hunting reservation, and has since become one of the largest overseas American military bases built since the Vietnam War. Sporting goods company's from Alabama have donated over 500 pounds of fishing equipment to Soldiers stationed here, including rod and reel combos, lures, tackle boxes and custom T-shirts.

Donation Helps Troops Fish Iraq

By Spc. Andy Miller
122nd MPAD

CAMP AL-TAHREER, Baghdad - The large man-made lake between Camp Al-Tahreer and Camp Al-Nasr was once stocked with fish as part of Saddam Hussein's private hunting reservation, and has since become one of the largest overseas American military bases built since the Vietnam War. Though the lake is no longer stocked, the 1st Cavalry Division Soldiers stationed here have found that fishing season is still open.

The First Team fishing fanatics and amateurs who fish this lake received a boost recently when an Ala. sporting goods company collected hundreds of rod and reel combos and thousands of fishing accessories for donation to the Soldiers here.

The gear started arriving last June when the parents of 1st Lt. Kevin Black, the executive officer for 1st Cav. Div. Headquarters Company, contacted Simmons Sporting

Goods Company of their hometown Birmingham, Ala. When the sporting goods company heard Soldiers in Iraq had a place to fish, they immediately donated about 20 rod and reel combos along with around 200 lures from their shop, according to Black.

Simmons then went on to contact equipment distributors and other fishing supply company's, which, in turn, donated over 200 rod and reel combos, and over 1000 lures, along with hooks, line, tackle boxes and other fishing equipment. The store also designed a custom 'Fishing Iraq' T-shirt and donated 450 of them for the Soldiers here. All told, over 500 pounds of fishing equipment and paraphernalia valued at several thousand dollars was shipped to First Team Soldiers from Birmingham.

"It really shows that the folks back home really support what we're doing over here," Black said. "I went and picked up some of [the gear] myself when I was

home on R&R, and [the people at Simmons] couldn't thank people over here enough for what we're doing over here."

Sgt. 1st Class Stephen Sanders, a 1st Cav. Div. headquarters platoon sergeant, fished the lake everyday when he first arrived to Al-Tahreer. He said the fishing equipment donation is a tremendous morale booster for the troops stationed here.

"I was highly impressed that they sent so much. They didn't send just 10 fishing poles; they sent 200 fishing poles, thousands of hooks and lures. It was awesome," Sanders said. "You know their not sending all those supplies for publicity. You know their actually doing it for dedication and support of the troops."

Black and other Soldiers from Headquarters Company devised a system where Soldiers can borrow the fishing gear by signing it out from the company's supply room. The Soldiers plan to expand the equipment sign-

out system to the nearby Morale, Welfare and Recreation tent, and may sponsor a fishing tournament where participants can receive a 'Fishing Iraq' T-shirt.

"[The donation] gives all the Soldiers the opportunity to fish on their time off," Sanders said. "You can't go find hooks and lures at the [Post Exchange]. They don't have the supplies that you need to go fishing."

"Being right beside the nicest lake probably in Iraq, it's hard to know the fish are there and not be able to fish. It makes your mouth water," he added.

Black said he encourages Soldiers to try their hand at the Iraqi lake, even if they've never fished before.

"We had a sergeant in here today who had never gone," Black said. "He went out there and caught a crab. He just had a few minutes after he got off shift last night. There's not telling what you'll catch out of that lake."