

British Combat Engineers ‘Cross The Pond’

Staff Sgt. David K. Strayer
109th MPAD

RAPID CITY, S.D. — The serenity in the Black Hills of South Dakota broke as the sound of military convoys pressing on with caution, verbal commands being shouted with authority, and the snap-echo report of training rounds and improvised explosive device simulators rang throughout its ranks during a counter improvised explosive device training lane near Camp Rapid, June 12.

The counter improvised explosive device training lane represented one of a myriad of training and real-world scenarios that made up the multi-national, joint-service Golden Coyote training exercise hosted each year by the South Dakota National Guard.

The combat engineers of Great Britain’s 72 Engineer Regiment out of New Castle, England, were no strangers to training overseas, and training with multi-national forces.

“We travelled from New Castle, England, to embed with the 153rd Engineer Battalion and participate in the Golden Coyote exercise,” said Maj. Dan Hall, commander of the 72 En.



U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Staff wSgt. David K. Strayer, 108th Mobile Public Affairs Detachment



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A group of British Combat Engineers from the British Army’s 72 Engineer Regiment keep an watch as their convoy pushes through a complex-ambush point during a counter-improvised explosive device-training lane near Camp Rapid, South Dakota, Tuesday, June 11, 2013.

Bn. “The exercise has much to offer, and I believe everyone benefits from the ability to trade troop training procedures and tactics.”

The British engineers were one of several nations represented at Golden Coyote, to include Denmark and Kosovo, who were joined by American military counterparts from the Navy, Air Force and units from the Iowa, Pennsylvania and South Dakota Army National Guard, to name a few.

“The mission here at the counter improvised explosive device lane goes well beyond just improvised explosive devices,” said Chief Warrant Officer 4 Todd Dressler, officer in charge of the lane and native of Rapid City. “Units that go through this lane will encounter everything from improvised explosive devices, simple and complex ambushes, sniper attacks, and indirect fire attacks, and will have to react quickly and with the necessary communication; they can be out here for as

An engineer with Great Britain’s 72 Engineer Regiment, of New Castle, England, returns fire on an enemy sniper position during a counter-improvised explosive device-training lane near Camp Rapid on Tuesday, June 11, 2013.

many as four hours training on this one lane.”

They want to see the soldiers react to the scenarios they encounter using doctrine, but also employing and perfecting their own methods and standard operating procedures.

The British combat engineers of the 72- En. Bn. had soldiers deployed to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom and take training and unit readiness seriously.

“We do currently have some of our guys in Afghanistan,” said Hall. “Those of us that are not deployed are working very hard in training and readiness to support the Royal Army’s effort to initiate betterment amongst all the units.”

Hall said that all of the British Engineers are looking forward to participating in some of the real-world engineer and humanitarian missions that are part of Golden Coyote, those types of missions cannot be replicated anywhere else as training often can be.

“This overall exercise, especially a lane like this, gives soldiers that may not have combat experience or deployment time an idea of what to expect and how to react should

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Checking On Chow



U.S. Army National Guard photo by Staff Sgt. Coltin Heller, 109th Mobile Public Affairs Attachment

Maj. Gen. Randall R. Marchi, deputy adjutant general Army, Pennsylvania Army National Guard, speaks to Soldiers assigned to 153rd Engineer Battalion, South Dakota National Guard during a visit to Forward Operating Base Custer, located in Custer State Park, S.D., June 11, 2013. Marchi spent several minutes talking with the Soldiers and praising them for the quality of their food. When Marchi asked the Soldiers about the training at Golden Coyote, an annual exercise providing logistical and tactical training to U.S. service members and foreign soldiers, they said it was better than expected and would prepare them for operations in a deployed environment.

State Partnership Program brings friendly forces together

Sgt. 1st Class Jeremy Harpold
135th MPAD

RAPID CITY, S.D. – Members of the Kosovo Security Force arrived with the Iowa Army National Guard to Rapid City, S.D., on June 9 for Golden Coyote.

The KSF were participating in a cooperative training environment as a part of Iowa's "State Partnership Program," which is an exchange program that sends Iowa Soldiers to Kosovo and brings KSF members to the U.S. for joint training.

"I think there are training benefits for both of us, not just the KSF," said Command Sgt. Major Rachel Fails with the 734th Regional Support Group, Iowa Army National Guard. "For us, it is an advantage to get some joint experience,

and for them, they get to come and see some processes and policies that are already in place that they can take back and adapt to the types of missions that they have."

Overall, ten KSF arrived in Iowa on June 5. Seven traveled to South Dakota to participate in Golden Coyote. They worked with their Iowa Guard counterparts in such specialties as personnel administration, logistics, information analysis and vehicle maintenance.

Three remained at Camp Dodge Joint Maneuver Training Center, Iowa, to train with military police and medical units.

"What we are trying to do for the partnership is take the



U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen, 135th MPAD

Six personnel from the Kosovo Security Force stand outside of their mayor cell's operating area at West Camp Rapid, S.D., on June 12, 2013. The group worked with the 734th Regional Support Group, Iowa Army National Guard, during Golden Coyote; observing and learning about how to manage the many aspects of tactical operations.

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Skilled mechanics keep Golden Coyote driving forward

Sgt. Darwin Seehusen
135th MPAD

RAPID CITY, S.D. – A Soldier can have the best piece of equipment in the world, but if it breaks down, it is of little value. To help maintain Army equipment for the Soldiers to accomplish their missions, units rely on highly skilled mechanics to keep everything in proper working order.

One of those Soldiers responsible for keeping the Army rolling is Spc. Scott H.J. Downer from Audubon, Iowa, assigned to the 1168th Transportation Company, 185th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 734th Regional Support Group, Iowa Army National Guard.

“Stuff breaks and we got to fix it,” said Downer.

Repairing vehicles often requires long hours of work to ensure the trucks are ready to roll out on a mission. “We start work at 7 a.m. and end around 9 or 10 p.m.,” said Downer.

Downer has been a mechanic with the 1168th for five years and has participated in Golden Coyote once before when the unit was staying at Custer State Park. “At least it’s not raining as much as it did in 2011,” he added, smiling.

Besides the weather, the 1168th has undergone changes since the last time the unit participated in Golden Coyote.

One of the changes has been a new maintenance officer, Chief Warrant Officer 2 Seth A. Liechti. He took over the duties as maintenance officer seven days before annual training and only had a day and a half to get to know his mechanics before leaving for South Dakota.

“It’s a building process and we are getting to know our strengths and weaknesses” said Liechti.

The mechanics are having plenty of time to get to know each other while repairing vehicles for missions. He said, several trucks broke down on the convoy to Rapid City and there have been issues on some of the older trucks breaking gear case covers.

Liechti said, the key to keeping the trucks running is the drivers performing a quality preventive maintenance checks and services before, during, and after operation of the vehicles.

Often potential problems can be identified and repaired before they breakdown or become a serious issue that



U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen, 135th MPAD

Sgt. Jesse A. Andersen (left) and Staff Sgt. Robert E. Anderson, mechanics from Detachment 2, 1168th Transportation Company, 185th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 734th Regional Support Group, Iowa Army National Guard, repair an injector fuel pump on a 5,000-gallon fuel trailer which the unit uses to fuel trucks before leaving on missions in support of Golden Coyote exercises.

could make them non-operational.

Second squad leader, 3rd platoon, Staff Sgt. Brian P. Hart from Van Meter, Iowa, stressed the importance of daily PMCS to his Soldiers. Besides being a truck driver for the Iowa Army National Guard, he was a truck mechanic in his civilian occupation.

Hart teaches his Soldiers the proper way

to perform a PMCS in accordance with the standards listed in the operator’s manual to identify deficiencies before they cause a major breakdown.

His squad has found several oil leaks and other deficiencies on their trucks during PMCS and attempted to fix the problems themselves, at the operator level. If they could not fix the problem, the truck was sent to the mechanics for repair.

“They are our lifeline. We can’t do our mission without an operational truck,” said Hart.

The 1168th Company Commander, Cpt. Rob Stangel agreed with the statement saying, “We’re paid to drive trucks and can’t deliver if a truck is dead-lined.”

Stangel said his maintenance section is strong and has good leadership. “They are a group of go-getters. They are not going to let missions stall,” he added.



U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen 135th MPAD

Audubon, Iowa resident Spc. Scott H.J. Downer, a mechanic with the 1168th Transportation Company, 185th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 734th Regional Support Group, Iowa Army National Guard, installs a dashboard on a M1120 Load Handling System truck after repairing a broken speedometer.



Photo by Staff Sgt. David Strayer, 109th MPAD

Members of Great Britain's 72nd Engineer Regiment dismount their vehicles and form a three hundred-sixty degree security perimeter during the counter-improvised explosive device training lane near Camp Rapid, South Dakota, Tuesday, June 11, 2013.

they need to," said Staff Sgt. Chad Hartley, noncommissioned officer in charge of the counter improvised explosive device training lane and native of Spearfish, S.D.. "Golden Coyote offers a great experience for Soldiers to come out to the Black Hills and get some of the best training the National Guard has to offer so that whether they are from South Dakota or Denmark they can take that training back to their units and become force multipliers."



Chaplain's Corner The Power of Joy

By (CH) Maj. Kenny Honken

Stay Motivated!

According to the great military theorist Carl von Clausewitz, "The moral elements are among the most important in war. ... the will is itself a moral quantity."

In fact, even the Old Testament reflects this truth. Isaiah 9 describes the peace and justice of God's kingdom that will begin in the region of Galilee. How will God accomplish all of this? In describing God as a military commander, the end of Isaiah 9:7 reads, "The zeal of the Lord of armies will accomplish this."

Since motivation—or the will (Clausewitz) or zeal (Isaiah)—is among the most important elements in war, it is also among the most important in training. After all, we train as we fight.

Stay in the "fight" today by staying motivated. If you are a person of faith, use your faith to propel you to accomplish your mission. The apostle Paul writes concerning himself, "I pummel my body and make it a slave" (1 Cor. 9:27). To his readers, he gives the exhortation, "work as unto the Lord, and not men" (Eph. 6:7).

We're half way through Golden Coyote 2013. There are only a handful of CUBs, training lanes, and kitchen patrol assignments left to go.

So stay motivated!

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like type units, and build that relationship between their unit and a unit in Iowa that is similar for a training relationship into the future," said Fails. "This year, we wanted to incorporate the service support, and the sustainment type specialties."

"Right now, we are just here to observe and learn," said 1st Lt. Arbresha Rrahmani, supply and maintenance officer with the KSF's Operational Support Brigade.

The interaction with the Iowa Guard counterparts has provided the KSF a lot of different techniques for accomplishing tasks, said 2nd Lt. Visar Nura, a platoon leader for the KSF's Rapid Reaction Battalion.

Training with the Iowa units helped to reinforce classroom training acquired at U.S. Army basic officer leadership schools, said 1st Lt. Vjosa Maloku, staff officer for personnel with the KSF's Rapid Reaction Battalion. Many of the visiting KSF officers received their

leadership training in the U.S.

When the group returns to Kosovo, they will use the training and experience they received to enhance the KSF's capabilities.

An experience that received much praise, from the KSF, was the vehicle convoy from Camp Dodge to Rapid City. The trip was well organized, with proper distances between each group of vehicles, well thought out fuel points and rest breaks, and impressively executed vehicle recoveries when breakdowns occurred, said Sgt. Fatmir Rama, a Battalion Administrative Noncommissioned Officer for the KSF Rapid Reaction Battalion and Sgt. Shera Kulla, Administrative Assistant to the Commanding General of KSF Land Forces Command.

In addition to receiving training, the KSF are educating U.S. Soldiers on Kosovo history by briefing different platoons every day, said 2nd Lt. Vedat Shaqiri, a platoon leader for the KSF's

Civil Protection Regiment.

In turn, the KSF will get a chance to visit some historical sites around South Dakota; like Mt. Rushmore and The Crazy Horse Memorial, said Rrahmani.

The KSF plan to complete training at Golden Coyote on June 20, return to Iowa and depart for Kosovo on June 22.



U.S. Army National Guard Photo by Sgt. Darwin Seehusen, 135th MPAD

1st Lt. Arbresha Rrahmani, supply and maintenance officer with the Kosovo Security Force's Operational Support Brigade, goes over plans with KSF personnel at West Camp Rapid, S.D., during Golden Coyote on June 12, 2013.

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**Leaders Call all unit leaders Wednesday, June 19, 1500 to 1700
Coyote Den, RSVP to 196 MEB, 605-593-2683**