

THE

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Troopers do heavy lifting at Patrol Base Assassin

SPC. BEN HUTTO

3RD HBCT, 3RD INF. DIV.

FOB HAMMER

— Using heavy chains, humvees and a makeshift weight set purchased with their own

money, four NCOs assigned to Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, are proving that "Army Strong" is not just a catchy motto to attract new recruits.

Day in and day out, members of the Combat Outpost Assassin power-lifting team make the time to go to the gym they constructed from the ground up.

"We've had to come in here

at three or four in the morning to work out because of our mission schedules," said Sgt. Brandon Sayles, from Hilo, Hawaii, a squad leader in Troop A. "We wake each other up to make sure we get our work out in. It has become an important part of what we do out here and nobody has a problem with it."

Lack of sleep is just one of the obstacles that the group overcame to become, in their minds, the strongest Soldiers in the 3rd Heavy Brigade Combat Team.

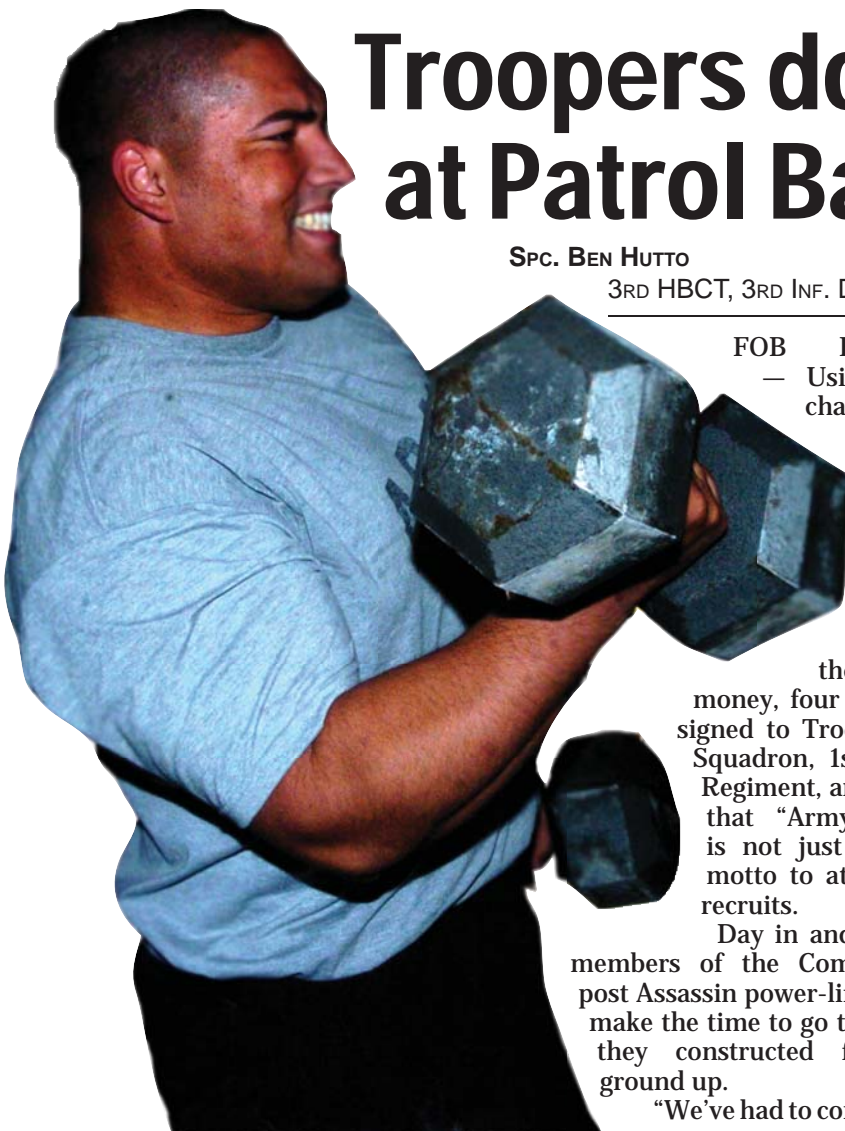
During the summer, 1st platoon, Troop A constructed a weight room to accommodate Soldiers, including the team.

"They needed a place to work out because it was getting hot during the summer so we built this place," said Sgt. 1st Class Lockett, from Huntsville, Ala., the platoon sergeant for 1st platoon, Troop A. "Soldiers bought a lot of the weights back at (Fort) Benning and had them shipped out here. They built their own squat rack."

Despite the cost, members of team still feel they need more. Sayles pointed

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Above: Sgt. Brandon Sayles, from Hilo, Hawaii, a squad leader in Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, works out at PB Assassin Jan.19. At left, Staff Sgt. Jimmy Cameron, from Rayford, N.C., a section sergeant for 2nd platoon, Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 1st Cavalry Regiment, pushes an up-armored Humvee to work out his legs at PB Assassin Jan.19.



Photos by Spc. Ben Hutto

Bringing color to the bland

Aviation Soldier paints
Army pride on military
buildings, equipment

PFC. MONICA K. SMITH
3RD CAB, 3RD INF. DIV.

CAMP STRIKER — In a country where the primary color is sand, a bright hue is easily detected. Sgt. Daniel Graves, Company B, 2nd Battalion, 3rd Aviation Regiment, has made a name within his battalion as the man to go to for color.

Graves designs and paints t-shirts, door signs, battalion signs and can even claim 2-3rd Avn. Regt. Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Dunnigan's flight helmet as his handiwork.

"I've been painting as long as I can remember," said Graves, from Waynesville, Mo. "I started when I was 8-years-old or so. I picked it up from my mother."

Working mostly from his computer, Graves uses Adobe Creative Suite and a Wacom computer drawing tablet to create new images.

"I do it the same way you would do any sketch or photo, I just do it on computer; it makes it faster and easier," Graves said. "It's a relaxing thing to do to pass time. It makes me feel proud, knowing that I left my mark."

Graves' most prominent mark has been the 2-3rd Avn. Regt. sign which stands in the regiment's headquarters area. The five-piece sign stands 20-feet tall and took three weeks for Graves to complete.

"The hardest part is the lack of prop-



er materials," Graves said. "With the sign, the wood grain was really poor so I kept throwing paint on it to smooth it out. It took me approximately three weeks to finish because of I didn't have the right colors. I would mix paint, color, and let it dry before I do the rest. I had to be patient and take my time."

Company B, 2-3rd Avn. Regt., 1st Sgt. Freddie Holmes said he enjoys seeing the work Graves creates displayed throughout the brigade and believes it promotes unity among Soldiers.

"It cheers me up and I guess it promotes esprit de corps when you see things he's made for the unit," Holmes



Photos by Pfc. Monica K. Smith

Sgt. Daniel Graves painted the flight helmet of 2-3rd Avn. Regt. Command Sgt. Maj. Donald Dunnigan's flight helmet. On one side is the 3rd Infantry Division patch, on the other, the rank of sergeant major. At left, a 20-foot sign painted by Graves marks the entry way to 2-3rd Avn. Regt.'s tactical operations center at Camp Striker.

said. "It brings pride in the unit and I feel Soldiers feel the same way."

Dunnigan said Graves' work helps brighten up an occasionally gloomy environment.

"It rains here and sometimes it gets gloomy," Dunnigan said. "Even on a day without sunshine, his work adds light."

The TOC (tactical operations center) sign was painted solely by Graves who says he doesn't mind. He prefers working alone but takes pride in knowing his work is appreciated by others.

"You never want to miss an opportunity to improve yourself and the morale of others," said Graves.

THE Dog Face Daily

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LIFT: Hammer troopers stay strong

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out that in many cases they are limited in what they can do because they only have a certain number of plates.

"We don't have the nice weight room and all the equipment they have back at (FOB) Hammer," said Staff Sgt. Jay Doran, from Orlando, Fla., the mortar section sergeant for 2nd platoon. "So we have to use other things to get strong."

Some of the unorthodox training methods the team employs to train include lifting towing chains to work out their back and shoulders, pushing up-armored Humvees to strengthen their legs and picking up the ATVs used by the mechanics to strengthen their back and legs.

"It's friendly competition between all of us," Doran said. "We try and hang with one another and out do the guy that lifts before us. We know all the Soldiers back at Hammer have nice equipment and a better diet, so we have to work twice as hard to stay with them."

The team competed in FOB Hammer's strongman competition last November and finished first, besting the other teams competing against them in bench press, farmer's carry, dead-lift and Humvee-pushing events.

"We don't get to compete

in a lot of events like this due to missions," Doran said. "When we hear about a dead lift competition and we can't compete, it's frustrating. We found out what the winning weight was and the next day all of us dead-lifted it just to prove that we all could have won that."

The club has been responsible for helping motivate the Soldiers of Troop A, said Lockett.

"These guys have implemented a workout plan for 60 percent of the troop," he said. "I would say that 60 guys out of our 80-man troop work out because of the example these guys set. They are real motivators."

The Soldiers in the club have other reasons to continue working out.

"It's a stress reliever," said Staff Sgt. Jimmy Cameron, from Rayford, N.C., a section sergeant for 2nd platoon. "There are days that I come in here to work out after a 10-hour mission. It's just a way to get through the day. You get to a point where you need it to relax."

Sayles said that the make-shift gym has become a refuge for him.

"I really don't know what I would do if I didn't have it," he said. "The deployment would go by so slow if I couldn't work out."

For Doran, the club was a bonding experience for him.

Moving up in the world



Pfc. Amanda McBride

Capt. David Stewart, commander of Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Infantry Regiment, 4th Brigade Combat Team, and Abbas Obaid Omran Al Masaoudi, plant manager, cut the ribbon of a new office building in a ceremony Jan. 16, on FOB Iskandariyah. The building gives Iraqis working in the maintenance and inventory sections more space.

Having just transferred from 1st Battalion, 15th Infantry Regiment, the club was a way for him to meet Soldiers with similar interest.

"Working out with guys like these builds camaraderie," he said. "I've only known these guys about three months, but I'm as close with them as anyone. Working out with them goes way beyond work; it has become a friendship."



Safety Thought of the Day

MRAP Recovery – Lessons Learned

- MRAP can be recovered by a M984 wrecker
- Spade and snatch blocks are needed
- Additional MRAPs (two) needed to hold down the M984 wrecker
- Shovels should be BII for MRAP
- Do not drive into soft or wet areas
- Do not use tow straps or the winch
- Approximately 10 people are needed
- Use thickest chains possible
- Ensure personnel are clear of chains during recovery in case it breaks.

Headline Highlights

Personality/body mass link; fighting cock theft

Japan study says sociable people get fat, worriers thin

TOKYO (Reuters) — Outgoing people tend to be overweight, while anxious types are more likely to be thin, according to Japanese researchers who examined the links between personality and body mass.

More than 30,000 people in north-eastern Japan aged between 40 and 64 were quizzed about their height and weight, and given a personality test, according to a study published in the Journal of Psychosomatic Research this month.

The results showed that outgoing people were far more likely than other people to have a body mass index (BMI) of more than 25, a widely used definition of overweight, said Masako Kakizaki of Tohoku University, who led the analysis.

After controlling for other factors, such as smoking, men in the most extrovert category were 1.73 times more likely to be obese than their most introvert counterparts. Extrovert women were 1.53 times as likely to be obese.

People ranked as having the most anxious personalities were twice as likely as the least anxious to be underweight, or have a BMI of less than 18.5, the study found.

"These results may provide clues to devising more effective measures for preventing overweight, obesity or underweight," the researchers said in their paper.

"I was planning on taking these fighting cocks to perform at the temple fair, and then ... I planned on bringing them to the dinner table."

— Wang Guiqin,
owner of stolen cocks

Coop violence averted as fighting cocks vanish

BEIJING (Reuters) — More than 100 fighting cocks due to perform at a temple fair over the Chinese New Year holiday have been stolen from a suburban Beijing farm along with the dog guarding them, a newspaper reported on Monday.

Farmer Wang Guiqin and her husband, woken by barking, ran out to discover that the 127 birds and their German Shepherd guard dog had been taken, the Beijing News said.

Most of the cocks were imported from Vietnam and the eastern province of Shandong and were together worth about \$30,000, the newspaper said.

"I was planning on taking these fighting cocks to perform at the temple fair, and then after the Olympics I planned on bringing them to the dinner table,"

the paper quoted Wang as saying.

The newspaper did not say what kind of temple, but Wang was so distraught over the loss of her cocks, she had taken to her bed ever since, the newspaper said.

Cock fighting has a long history in China where along with football, mah-jong, horse-racing and cricket fights it is a popular activity with illegal gamblers.

Beijing hosts the Summer Olympics in August.

Woman filmed killing of lover

BEIJING (Reuters) — A 19-year-old Chinese student recorded the killing and dismembering of her married lover by her boyfriend, local media said on Friday.

The second-year student in the southwestern province of Yunnan, her boyfriend and another male accomplice had all been arrested after the killing last month, the Southern Metropolis Daily said.

The victim, 39, was a married manager at a local highway and bridge building company, the newspaper said.

The girl, who was from a struggling family in the capital Beijing and met the victim as a nightclub hostess, filmed as he was killed and his body was cut into "hundreds of pieces," the newspaper said.

"The dismembering was both out of hatred and aimed at making the body unrecognizable," the report said.

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		3		7	4			2
2		4	8					3
				1		6	4	
			4				2	

from Sudoku: The Original Brain Workout From Japan

Solution to
yesterday's
puzzle:

1	7	6	4	8	9	3	2	5
5	8	9	7	2	3	1	4	6
4	2	3	6	5	1	8	9	7
3	9	2	8	4	7	5	6	1
8	1	4	5	3	6	2	7	9
6	5	7	9	1	2	4	8	3
9	4	5	3	6	8	7	1	2
7	3	1	2	9	4	6	5	8
2	6	8	1	7	5	9	3	4

ARABIC PHRASE OF THE DAY

Describe the vehicle?

Aw-sof il say-yah-reh