



PRESS RELEASE

**2d Stryker Cavalry Regiment
Public Affairs Office
Vilseck, Germany**

PHONE: DSN: 476-5017 COMMERCIAL (49) 09662-83-5017

E-mail: 2scrwebmaster@eur.army.mil

Website: www.2SCR.army.mil

No.08011101

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dragoons say goodbye to former Commanders

Story and photos by: SGT Jerry Wilson (2SCR Public Affairs)

Vilseck, Germany – Dragoons of the 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment gathered Wednesday, July 27 at the Vilseck High School football field for the Regimental Change of Command ceremony. Soldiers gathered not only to say goodbye to the 75th Colonel of the Regiment, James Blackburn, but to welcome his replacement, Col. Keith Barclay. The Regiment also bid a fond farewell to four squadron commanders after the unit's successful deployment to Afghanistan.

Among the honored outgoing squadron commanders were: 1st Squadron Commander, Lt. Col D.A. Simms, Lt. Col. Omar Jones, 2nd Squadron Commander, Lt. Col. Bryan Denny, Commander of 3rd Squadron and FIRES Squadron Commander Steven Bergosh.

Lt. Col Simms relinquished his command to Lt. Col. Kendric Robbins. Lt. Col. Jones handed over the reigns of 2nd Squadron to Lt. Col. Michael Pratt. Lt. Col. Christopher Keller took command of 3rd Squadron from Lt. Col. Denny and Lt. Col. Bergosh relinquished his post as FIRES Squadron Commander to Lt. Col. Anthony Lugo.

In attendance were special guests Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, Commanding General U.S. Army Europe, and Maj. Gen. James Boozer, Deputy Commanding General U.S. Army Europe, who presided over the ceremony.

A major highlight of the event was the presentation of the Silver Star Medal to Sgt. Jose Arocha of 4th Squadron by Lt. Gen. Hertling. Arocha distinguished himself on March 19, 2011 when his fellow Soldiers came under fire. Arocha's gallantry and courage under fire contributed to the death of the insurgent attacker and thereby saving his fellow Soldiers.

During his remarks Lt. Gen. Boozer highlighted some of the outstanding accomplishments 2SCR had achieved under the leadership of Blackburn. Some of these accomplishments included the successful execution of the largest mission readiness exercise in over 25 years at JMTC, multinational training exercises with Romanian and Georgian forces which further strengthened partnership ties and the implementation of a military community engagement program he described as second to none. Most notable was the Dragoon's accomplishments during their 12-month deployment to the Zabul Province of Afghanistan.

“The Dragoon’s accomplishments were nothing short of phenomenal,” Boozer said.

“Their continued engagement with the Afghan people that assisted in providing security and stability which improved their quality of life.”

“Fifty Soldiers received awards for valor and more than 1,000 received combat badges,” he said. “The Dragoons enabled their Afghan National Army Partners to operate independently without the aid of Coalition forces and facilitated and executed a national election.”

“Simply put, Jim,” Boozer said. “You commanded and led this Regiment into another remarkable chapter of its history.”

In his farewell address to the Troops, Blackburn elaborated on his command philosophy and what he and Regimental Command Sgt. Maj Mark Morris have tried to achieve during their tenure.

“We established our climate here around serving Soldiers,” Blackburn said. “Recognizing that it is our obligation as leaders to put Soldiers in a position to be successful, and ruthlessly seek out and eliminate abusive leaders who think Soldiers are assigned to serve them.”

“Mark and I wake up every day to see if there is any way we can better position our subordinates to be successful in the Army and in life,” he continued. “As we have said all along we are interested in Dragoons for life, not simply a 3 year PCS tour.”

Col. Barclay expressed his excitement about his new command.

“It’s quite a humbling honor to be part of this historic Regiment,” Barclay said. “I am thrilled to have the opportunity to serve the Troopers and the families of this Regiment as their 76th Colonel.”



Col. James Blackburn says goodbye to his Troops during the 2nd Stryker cavalry Regiment's change of command ceremony.



Col. Keith Barclay accepts the Regimental guidon from Maj. Gen. James Boozer during the 2SCR Regimental Change of Command ceremony.



Sgt. Jose Arocha receives the Silver Star Medal from Lt. Gen. Mark Hertling, Commanding General of U.S. Army Europe, during the 2SCR Regimental change of command ceremony.

