

2d Cavalry Regiment

THE DRAGOON

NEWSLETTER



Volume 2, Issue 3

March 2013



Col. D.A. Sims, 77th Colonel of the Regiment

Regimental Command Sgt. Maj. Malcolm D. Parrish



U.S. Army Spc. Erik Edwards with Comanche Troop, 1st Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment recites the Oath of Enlistment during a Mission Readiness Exercise March 11, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. Edwards reenlisted during the Regiment's training rotation designed to prepare them for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

Highlights in 2d Cavalry History

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March 9, 1847: The Battle of Vera Cruz of the Mexican-American War began with the 2nd Dragoons aboard ships waiting to land near Collado Beach, approximately three miles south of the port city of Vera Cruz. Under the command of seasoned Colonel William S. Harney, 2nd Colonel of the Regiment, the Troopers had great confidence in their leadership that they would soon make it to Mexico City. The entire expedition was commanded by Maj. Gen. Winfried Scott, who determined that Vera Cruz would not fall to artillery fire alone and was simply the first battle of his campaign.

The Regiment's forces included members of A, B, C, F, I and K Troops, it was the first large scale amphibious assault in U.S. military history. The Mexican Forces had intelligence that the landing would take place near Vera Cruz, but political instability in the country saw them fail to capitalize on this knowledge. By 11 p.m. on March 9, the entire U.S. force had rowed their boats, and landed on the beaches without a single casualty.

Maneuvering around Vera Cruz and then completely enveloping the city, the siege lasted until March 29. Facing heavy bombardment, and frequent requests to surrender by the insistent Americans, their surrender was finally negotiated at a cost of about 350 Mexican lives. Out of all American forces, 13 were killed, and Maj. Gen. Scott had kept his promise to keep U.S. casualties light.

History Highlights cont...

March 13, 1844: The Regiment is re-designated “Regiment of Riflemen Dismounted”. The War Department believed that as a cost saving measure the Regiment should function without horses. It was quickly found that many of the enemy of the day were still mounted, and that combat effectiveness had been severely compromised. The change was quickly made however and the U.S. Government reversed it’s decision. Later in 1844, the Regiment was again known as the 2nd Regiment of Dragoons as they would be until the Civil War.

March 18-25, 1879: The Regiment was engaged in the Indian Wars in the newly established forts in the Department of Dakota. Fort Custer and Fort McKeogh provided shelter for the Regiment during the cold winter, and spring. 1878 had been a trying year, seeing the Regiment’s enemy, the Cheyenne, and their infamous Chiefs Dull Knife and Little Wolf lead their bands into the Canadian wilderness as a refuge. Also, the United States Congress had not managed to appropriate pay for the Army, so the majority of the men had gone without compensation for some time.

As the Cheyenne made their way back into the United States, the Regiment laid in wait and managed to capture Dull Knife near Fort Robinson, Nebraska. With Little Wolf still on the loose, Lt. William P. Clark along with Companies E and I located their camp near Elder Creek, Montana. On the 25th of March, Clark managed to convince these Indians to return with them to Fort McKeogh under escort where they actually served alongside the Cavalry as scouts and thus were permitted to remain in the North.

April Regimental Events

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		4/2 CR Max Leave Period				
	TRNG HOLIDAY	2 CR PDSS				
		Property Accountability				
		GUNNERY/MRE RECOVERY				
		FRG Steering Comm				
		FRG Night				
WK27 Easter Sunday	Easter Monday (GM) Apr 1	2	3	4	5	6
		4/2 CR Max Leave Period				
		2 CR PDSS				
		Property Accountability				
		Theater Specific Training				
		DoDDs Spring Break				
WK28	7	8	9	10	11	12
		EOSB (T)				Operation Saber Guardian 13
		Property Accountability				
		Theater Specific Training				
		Small Arms Density				
		2d CR RFI Fielding				
Operation Saber Guardian 13						
WK29	14	15	16	17	18	19
		EOSB (T)			New Leaders Inbrief (E8T)	REGT Spur Call
		Property Accountability				
		Theater Specific Training				
		2d CR RFI Fielding				
		Small Arms Density				
Operation Saber Guardian 13						
WK30	21	22	23	24	25	26
		4/2 CR Squadron Pre-Deployment SRP				
		EOSB (T)				
		Theater Specific Training				
		2d CR RFI Fielding				
		EOSB (T)				
		Small Arms Density				
WK31	28	29	30			

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2 CR Troops use Raven to patrol skies



Story and photos by
Spc. Joshua Edwards
2 CR Public Affairs



U.S. Army Troops with Iron Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment prepare an Unmanned Aerial System for operations during a Mission Readiness Exercise March 16, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. The Regiment is conducting an MRE designed to prepare troops for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

When U.S. Forces move into an area for operations, one of the biggest aspects of modern warfare that helps with success is surveillance. It provides the necessary knowledge of what happens on the battlefield when it happens. One way to complete this task is to, not only see what happens on the ground, but also survey the area above it.

The 2nd Cavalry Regiment conducted Unmanned Aerial System operations to patrol the sky March 16, at Hohenfels, Germany during a Mission Readiness Exercise designed to prepare Troops for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

2CR is giving a new definition to the saying “a bird’s eye view”. With a UAS called an RQ-11 Raven, the Regiment’s Troops will be able to advise and assist Afghan National Security Forces from a completely safe perspective that involves the use of a drone aircraft. It has the capability to provide essential knowledge in deciding who, or what, to send into

combat for successful and safe results.

The Raven is 2-man operated, used for quick reconnaissance and designed to sustain crash landings. It provides troops with the skills to survey an area ahead of them that is suspected of being occupied by enemy combatants that provides a safe decision on how, or which way to proceed.

U.S. Army Spc. Joshua Phan, an armor crewman and Raven operator with Iron Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment and native of Portland, OR., talks about the advantages of using the UAS during deployment to assist and advise ANSF.

“As we have our SFAATs [Security Force Assistance and Advisory Teams] with Afghans leading the way, we can scout a little bit ahead of them so they are not in danger,” said Phan. “We can use it in conjunction and to benefit them. If you throw up a Raven and you see enemy activity in an area where you weren’t expecting it, you can save your whole team or platoon.”

The UAS asset allows troops to view the battlefield without endangering human life. Instead of soldiers heading into an unknown territory possibly occupied by hostile forces, a Raven can be sent up to view the distance ahead and provide the entire unit with timely up-to-date knowledge of what’s out there.

“Its really great if you don’t want to send your route clearance patrol out first to go and see what’s out there,” said Sgt. Skyler Rose, a forward observer, Raven operator and native of Spokane, Wash., also with Iron Troop. “As far as the Regiment goes, by taking the still imagery, I would be providing them with the most up-to-date and accurate imagery they can get at that time. Satellite imagery, they get it month-to-month or week-to-week, but I can give it to them right then.”

During the MRE Rose and Phan were able to survey a town and various terrain features surrounding a safe location without putting themselves or any other troops in harms way. Rose talks about how this capability is used and how it could benefit ANSF downrange.

Continued on the next page

Raven continued...



U.S. Army Spc. Joshua Phan, an armor crewman with Iron Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, assembles an Unmanned Aerial System during a Mission Readiness Exercise March 16, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. 2CR is conducting an MRE to prepare troops for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“We were conducting operations over a town looking for avenues of approach, MSR’s [main supply route], possible enemy mortar locations and we were capturing imagery in and around the town,” said Rose. “By showing them their own surroundings from a birds-eye perspective you kind of give them a view of their own battlefield. We are teaching them to fight the Taliban and if they can grasp a visual of the terrain from the sky, then they can maneuver better throughout the terrain.”

The Raven requires 2 people to operate, a vehicle operator [VO] and a mission operator [MO]. The two focus on mission completion that is essential to any combat related scenario.

“There’s two positions, the VO and MO, said Phan. “When you’re operating, either team member should be able to do one another’s job. I think as a team, when we operate we get the mission done and that’s the important part.”

Rose talked about operating the Raven and the opportunities the experience has brought to him over the years.

“I have been a raven operator for two years and every time I get to fly during training its usually a good time I enjoy,” said Rose. “I get to feel like a kid again and I’m doing something cool. I’m seeing where I live from a birds eye view and its just fun to fly the aircraft.”



U.S. Army Spc. Joshua Phan, an armor crewman with Iron Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, throws an Unmanned Aerial System into operations during training March 16, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. The Regiment is conducting a Mission Readiness Exercise to prepare troops for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom where they will assist and advise Afghan National Security Forces.

War Eagle Update



U.S. Army Spc. Jacob Pharr with Bull Troop, 1st Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, demonstrates mortar emplacement during a training exercise March 18, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. The Regiment is conducting a Mission Readiness Exercise in order to prepare troops for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) conducted during March provided the Soldiers of 1st Squadron an excellent opportunity to train for the future deployment. The Hohenfels Training Area (HTA) was set up to replicate the area where 1st Squadron will deploy, with the names of villages and bases in the training area mirroring those in Afghanistan. This exercise also gave every Soldier the chance to hone their skills and practice the missions they will actually be conducting on the upcoming deployment.

The first week of the training was administrative and allowed War Eagle Soldiers to adapt to the scenario and get an understanding of what their role would be while deployed. These integrative processes and classes prepared War Eagles for the following weeks which would test their Soldier skills, teamwork and resolve.

The second week, focused on Situation Training Exercise (STX) lanes. These are specific scenarios and drills, such as a 'Downed Pilot,' 'Key Leader Engagement,' or a 'Quick Reaction Force' in which specific platoons or other units conduct the given task in a controlled environment. When one platoon got word that they had to rescue a downed pilot they would hurriedly get into their Strykers and move out to the location of the pilot, while ensuring they kept security and watched out for any insurgent forces. Controlled lanes provide the opportunity to platoons, squads and teams to bond and work together conducting scenarios they very likely may see while in Afghanistan. The third week was set aside for 'Force on Force' operations. This is where 1st Squadron used the entire HTA as an actual battle space. Everything was in play and the US Soldiers playing the opposing forces (OPFOR) would do whatever they

could to disrupt our efforts and infiltrate our bases. During this week our squadron conducted actual missions trying to assist the role-players portraying the Afghan National Forces; the focus of the future deployment. The final week was the most exciting, and also the most tiring, since operations were always being conducted; it led to some sleepless nights and interesting situations. Such as the assault on the forward operating base (FOB) that lasted nearly 10 hours or the multiple medical evacuations by helicopter (yes some Soldiers were considered 'casualties' and actually got to fly away from the battlefield by helicopter).

After three exhausting, but successful and educational weeks, 1st Squadron returned to Rose Barracks more cohesive and better trained unit, prepared for the future mission in Afghanistan and ready for a few well deserved four-day weekends to refresh and be with family.

Cougar Update



Pfc. Megan Baltistis (left) and Sgt. Benjamin Eaton (right) maneuver toward a firefight with Eagle Troop, 2nd Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment during the Mission Readiness Exercise.



Over the last several months, the Cougars have been moving at a sprint as we passed through the Stryker qualification density into a three-week rotation at the Joint Multinational Readiness Center (JMRC). In the month of April, the Cougars have a chance to catch our collective breath as we prepare to add another chapter to the Cougar history books.

In the first week of March, the Cougars deployed for a Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) to the Grafenwoehr Training Area (GTA), with Ghost Troop detaching to Fires Squadron in the Hohenfels Training Area (HTA). Spread over three different ranges, the Cougars occupied three bases and each had a nearby mock-village filled with role-players to act the parts of Afghan security forces, government officials, or the local population. Designed to simulate the challenges Cougars will encounter when deployed in support of Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF), the MRE utilized the services of a dozen allied partner nations to represent the complexity of the Afghanistan operating environment.

In the Cougar area of operations, Slovenian Soldiers replicated the Afghan National Army (ANA), while Macedonian Soldiers played Afghan Uniformed and Border Police, and German nationals played the local Afghan population. While working to advise and assist the ANSF was the focus of the training, this effort was made much more complex by the presence and activities of 1st Battalion, 4th Infantry Regiment, based out of Hohenfels, Germany. This opposition force element played the role of the Taliban and made every effort to disrupt the Cougars from successfully working for the self-sufficiency of the ANSF. By holding a strong and steady defensive posture against the Taliban threat to U.S. forces and interacting daily with the Afghan national security forces, the Cougars successfully accomplished their mission.

Following the MRE, the Cougars will take advantage of well-deserved compensatory days to travel and spend quality time with family and friends. In the month of April, the Cougars have three four-day weekends and the opportunity to take a week of leave aligned with the Department of Defense School's spring break. April also offers a chance for the

Cougars to sharpen their skills at shooting, moving, and communicating in platoon formations at the squadron's platoon live fire exercise, which is the last large collective squadron training event before the unit deploys later this year. In the last week of April, the squadron leadership, along with some select Troopers from Eagle Troop, will travel to the Czech Republic to commemorate the liberation of that area by 2d Cavalry Group Troopers late in World War II.

May is a time for camaraderie and celebration as the Cougars host a Spur Ride and squadron ball. The Spur Ride gives each uninitiated Cougar Trooper a shot to earn his or her spurs, which shows that he or she has the strength, stamina, and drive to deserve special recognition as part of the Order of Silver Spur. The squadron ball will celebrate the Cougars' recent achievements as well as their rich history and traditions.

Following completion of our second demanding JMRC rotation in six months, 2d Squadron stands ready to deploy in support of one of the final OEF rotations.

Cougars...Second to None!

Wolfpack Update



U.S. Army Soldiers, assigned to I-Troop, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment provide first aid to a simulated civilian casualty at Hohenfels, Germany, Mar. 17, 2013. The Mission Readiness Exercise was designed to simulate what the Regiment may experience in Afghanistan, all the way down to what some injuries may look like.

Wolfpack Family and Friends, with the conclusion of the Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE), Troopers of the Wolfpack returned home after three challenging weeks in the field.

The MRE was designed to test the 2nd Cavalry Regiment's ability to conduct operations with multinational cooperation in Hohenfels, Germany. The Wolfpack worked closely with the Moldavian Army and other NATO allies, who role-played as the Afghan Uniformed Police and the Afghan National Army. Interpreters and translators also took part in the MRE and aided U.S. and Moldavian forces with communicating to actual Afghan citizens who "lived" in towns and villages within the Hohenfels training area.

The role-players, interpreters and translators, Afghan citizens, and villages made to look like Afghan towns created a fully immersive and dynamic experience

to all Wolfpack Troopers.

The Wolfpack started off the MRE with Situational Training Exercises, otherwise known as STX lanes, that evaluated how well we react to threats and other likely dangers in Afghanistan. How the Wolfpack treated each situation set the tone for the rest of the exercise and whether or not the Afghan civilians would help the U.S. and Moldavian forces. Troopers were able to build positive relations with the civilians in the nearby towns and received outstanding feedback from OC's (Observer/Controller).

The MRE also shed light on how the Wolfpack will operate with Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams, or SFAAT. The SFAAT are specially selected officers and noncommissioned who mentor and advise the Afghan Uniformed Police and the Afghan National Army towards lasting security and safety in Afghanistan. The SFAAT are an extremely important asset

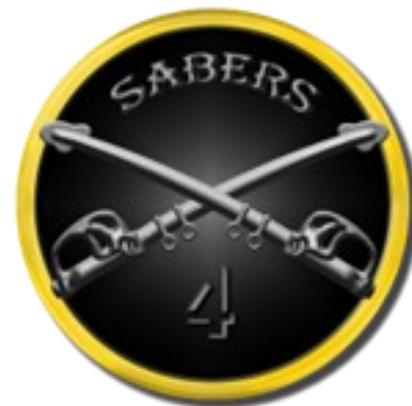
to U.S. forces and our Afghan partners, because their guidance and expertise will allow ANSF to "take the reins" when coalition forces leave in the near future. Throughout the MRE, Troopers and SFAATs worked together exceptionally well in conducting security operations, public welfare meetings with the Afghan role-players, and promoting a positive image of U.S. Forces.

After the MRE, Troopers of the Wolfpack will perform recovery operations, that includes cleaning gear, checking for broken equipment and getting some well earned rest after a month in the field. Troopers also get to look forward to some long weekends in April. Even though there is time off coming our way, Troopers of the Wolfpack have more tough and challenging training to look forward to including, firing ranges and platoon size STX lanes. As is our motto, Troopers of the Wolfpack remain "Always Ready!"

Saber Update



Engineer Troop conducts route clearance operations in Hohenfels Training



Over the past three months, the Sabers of 4th Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment have been extremely and increasingly busy with extensive and realistic training for the upcoming deployment to Afghanistan. However, the Saber Soldiers never forget to reach back to the community and take some time to relax and enjoy themselves.

During the middle of its Mission Readiness Exercise in February, the squadron was told to shift its focus from operations in the northern part of the country to a more advisory-centric role in the south.

The squadron received several Security Force Assistance Advisory Teams (SFAATs) and began training to conduct security operations. In March, the squadron participated in another MRE focused around a Command Post Exercise (CPX), in which the squadron's Tactical Operations Center practiced and refined tactics, techniques, and procedures for use in Afghanistan.

As the Regiment began their portion of the MRE, Engineer Troop and Military Police Platoon detached from the squadron and moved to Hohenfels Training Area to train for combat operations. The engineers trained on route

clearance operations to find hidden Improvised Explosive Devices (IEDs) and the MPs trained on security operations. While the Regiment has been at the MRE, the Sabers have conducted numerous weapons ranges and driver's training.

Nemesis Troop conducted advanced marksmanship training where Soldiers conducted a fast paced ruck march, pushups and a series of sprints in full kit before moving to a firing line to shoot their M4s. Outlaw Troop conducted multiple react-to-contact and other combat related training scenarios.

For each lane, the Observer/ Controllers (OCs) from Task Force Grizzly would provide a different scenario for the platoon leadership to react to.

Although the focus for Saber Soldiers is training to prepare for deployment, Sabers still took time give back to the community and lend a helping hand to brothers-in-arms.

On March 14, 2013, about 30 Soldiers from Nemesis Troop participated in the Adaptive Sports Expo held at the Grafenwoehr Gym. The event is held every month for wounded Soldiers of the Warrior Transition Unit. Saber Soldiers used their own time after being released for a four day weekend to play wheelchair basketball and seated volleyball with wounded Soldiers. Sgt. Dannie Leonnard,

a team leader with Nemesis Troop, stated he was very happy to participate in the Adaptive Sports Expo and would definitely do it again.

"It's important for us to participate in events like this because it shows the wounded Soldiers that they are still our battle buddies and they are not alone," said Leonnard.

Tammie Pech, the Assistant Station Manager for the Grafenwoehr Red Cross Office, said with the help of Nemesis Troop, the participation and turn out to the Adaptive Sports Expo was higher than it had ever been.

Fifteen Troopers from the squadron also participated by reading to children at the Vilseck Elementary School's "Bed Time Story" event, which was part of their Red Hot Reader program.

Over the next 30 days, the squadron will be taking a short, two week block leave period where Saber Soldiers will be able to enjoy some well deserved time off. Following block leave, the Squadron will continue to conduct realistic and necessary training to prepare for the deployment. Driver's training on Mine Resistant/ Ambushed Protected vehicles, first aid combat lifesaver, and more advanced marksmanship training are some of the topics.

Field Artillery Update



Soldiers from Bulldog Battery emplace a howitzer during the live-fire portion of the Mission Readiness Exercise.



The past month has meant one thing for Field Artillery Squadron, 2d Cavalry Regiment, field time. Splitting time between the Grafenwoehr and Hohenfels Training Areas, Artillery Hell flexed its muscles once again during its capstone pre-deployment event, the Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE).

While select elements fired live rounds on Grafenwoehr ranges, the bulk of FA Squadron went south to Hohenfels and conducted follow-and-support operations in conjunction with Afghan role players composed of four partner nations in an environment replicating as closely as possible the anticipated mission set.

The frantic operational cycle of the Decisive Action Training Environment was gone and the focus shifted to Advise and Assist operations. Partnered with both army and police units, the Squadron's Security Force Assistance Advisory Team (SFAAT) trained on enabling the staffs of its mentored units to plan, resource and

execute effective operations. As this small team taught, coached and mentored its way to mission accomplishment, the squadron threw the rest of its weight into various other missions including providing security for the advisory teams and conducting base defense operations at a replicated Kandahar Air Field. Coordinating the daily missions of almost one thousand Soldiers provided a tough, realistic training opportunity for the squadron to prepare for what it will face down range.

While this was occurring, those left behind were busy. The Squadron Family Readiness Group conducted multiple meetings designed to help spouses and Families prepare for, and cope with, deployment and providing new Families with basic introductory information for their overseas tours.

While the squadron deployed for training, the Ready Reserve stood up and established its systems and structures while laying the groundwork for its mission of taking care of Families and providing manpower for various tasks in support of

the Regiment's mission.

Though a small sigh of collective relief might have been heard upon completion of the most recent exercise, having successfully accomplished this major event gives no opportunity for FA Squadron to rest on its laurels. April will start with an opportunity for some time to recover equipment and personnel. The upcoming month will be just as busy as the last.

Artillery Hell will spend a significant amount of time in April on the range, qualifying on both individual and crew-served weapons systems. The squadron's SFAAT will have multiple training opportunities, ranging from language classes to a Mobile Training Team meant to provide academic instruction on the finer points of combat advising.

Through it all, the FA Squadron will continue to prepare for the upcoming deployment, honing its edge in support of the Regimental mission as it remains true to the Regimental motto, *Toujours Pret, Always Ready. Artillery Hell!*

Muleskinner Update



U.S. Army Pvt. Marques Purvis with Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Regimental Support Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, prepares a plate of hot food for the Troops with the Regiment March 4, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. The Troops are training during the Regiment's Mission Readiness Exercise in preparation for an upcoming deployment.

March was a busy month for the Muleskinners as Regimental Support Squadron spent the majority of its time at Hohenfels Training Area as 2 CR prepares for its upcoming deployment.

The Muleskinner mission was to support the Regiment during the Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) for the upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The MRE took place from March 3-23 with RSS staged at Camp Albertshof, one of HTA's main training facilities, where they provided logistical support to line squadrons and Security Force Assistance Advisor Teams located at various Forward Operation Bases (FOBs) and Command Outposts (COPs) throughout Hohenfels.

RSS supported the maneuver squadrons by coordinating logistical convoys from Camp Albertshof to replicated FOBs located in the East (FOB Masum Ghar) and the west (FOB Zangabad). The majority of these logistical convoys were coordinated by the Support Operations

sections, under the supervision of the SPO OIC, Maj. Micah Hutchins and executed by RSS's Troop A (Supply and Transportation) under the command of Capt. James Turner. The transportation missions were the first opportunity for RSS's new Convoy Security Team (CST) to get some valuable field training before deployment.

The CST Platoon under A Troop is commanded by 2nd Lt. Richard Espailat and his Platoon Sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Jason Alaniz. Some of RSS's most experienced noncommissioned officers were tasked with the CST to ensure its Soldiers were properly trained and prepared for potential combat environments during deployment.

RSS's Troop B (maintenance) did not deploy in full strength to the MRE, leaving the maintenance of the Regiment's Strykers and vehicles under the care Chief Warrant Officer 3 Daniel Sweitzer.

Working in an ad hoc maintenance facility at Albertshof, RSS's small maintenance team was able to keep the Regiment's equipment combat ready throughout the exercise.

Charlie Troop's medics also played a key role during the exercise, providing simulated and actual medical care to the Regiment's Soldiers. Signal Troop was active during the exercise, providing successful tactical communications throughout HTA.

Successful communication was especially key for the constant communication abilities needed to effectively support the line units. Headquarters and Headquarters Troop's cooks provided hot meals three times a day throughout the exercise at Albertshof and the two FOBs.

Despite its overall success, the exercise was not without challenges. Initial set up of the box, coordination between RSS and various squadron S-4s and proper utilization of logistic assets provided to the FOBs were all obstacles that had to be overcome throughout the exercise.

RSS redeployed back to Rose Barracks on March 22 with many lessons learned and its Soldiers feeling ultimately more prepared for the upcoming deployment. The month ahead will focus on taking lessons learned from the MRE and

2CR Troops, SFAATs prepare for OEF rotation



U.S. Army Pvt. Mike Wood with Cobra Battery, Field Artillery Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, kneels while on a foot patrol near an entry control point March 10, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. The Regiment is conducting a Mission Readiness Exercise designed to prepare Troops for an upcoming deployment in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

**Story and photos by
Spc. Joshua Edwards
2 CR Public Affairs**

There are many ways for troops to prepare for deployments to combat zones and numerous training and safety standards have to be implemented to ensure overall success of the mission within the areas of operations.

The 2nd Cavalry Regiment conducted a Mission Readiness Exercise (MRE) March 3-22 at Hohenfels, Germany in preparation for its upcoming deployment where they will advise and assist Afghan National Security Forces as they prepare to assume responsibility of their own security at the end of 2014.

It has been more than five months since 2 CR's completion of the Decisive Action Training Environment rotation designed to promote interoperability between U.S. and multinational forces on today's modern battlefield. The training was well received by the troops and gave the Regiment a chance to train throughout the maneuver rights area, which includes the Hohenfels and Grafenwoehr Training Areas and the local communities.

Security Force Advisory Assistance Teams (SFAATs) have been added to the organization and have become a key element of the upcoming deployment. The teams will be responsible for advising and assisting ANSF during their operations and help them to become independent in their daily security operations. The overall goal is to allow ANSF to maintain security of their country without the help of U.S. Forces.

"What we are really trying to do is enable the ANSF to get to a level where they can take over responsibility for security of their local area, either at the independent level or, at the level where they are independent with advisors," said Lt. Col. Jesus D. Garcia, Field Artillery Squadron SFAAT team leader. "What they need from us is mentorship in terms of having better command and control, how to maximize the use of their enablers and how to promote the legitimacy of their organizations."

The Mission Readiness Exercise was one of final trainings in preparing the

Regiment's troops for its future mission in Afghanistan. More than three weeks of convoys, foot patrols, multinational partner trainings, close combat air and squad trainings, land reconnaissance, key leader engagements, SFAAT training, live fire exercises, observer-controller mentorship and crew drills provided important combat education that is sure to effectively help produce an overall effective mission completion during the Regiment's upcoming rotation.

There are Troops in the Regiment who have never deployed before and who used the exercise as an opportunity to learn as much as possible about what they will be doing in support of OEF.

"The troops have been very receptive," said Command Sgt. Maj. Malcolm D. Parrish, senior enlisted advisor for the Regiment. "We have a lot of new soldiers in the unit who have never deployed, so they are eager and they are absolutely listening to what's being told to them. They are paying attention and trying to learn the right things the first time."

Continued on the next page

OEF Rotation continued...



U.S. Army Capt. David Broyles (right), an S-3 staff advisor with the Security Force Assistance Advisory Team (SFAAT) with Field Artillery Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment, speaks with Romanian Army Capt. Gheorghe Dura (left), an Artillery commander with Black Scorpions, 20th Infantry Regiment, during the Regiment's Mission Readiness Exercise March 9, 2013 at Hohenfels, Germany. Soldiers with the Romanian Army are playing the role of Afghan National Security Forces during the exercise to assist with training the Troops to prepare them for an upcoming deployment to Afghanistan.

The training event was a chance for the new SFAAT members to get a feel for each other and become effective as a team. Continuing to improve the relationship with partner security forces is essential and the teams will be able to effectively execute that.

“The first thing they had to do was learn each other in order to form the team amongst themselves and that happened within the first week of us arriving down here in the Hohenfels Training Area,” said Parrish. “What they physically do with the ANSF is very important, its something they have had the opportunity to practice since we have been down here and that relationship is what they will build on and make them successful for the deployment.”

The Regiment was provided with an

understanding of what an SFAAT truly is because of the three-week exercise. Although the concept was unfamiliar at first, the training provided important knowledge necessary to execute the future mission.

“We really didn’t have a true understanding of how a security force assistance brigade would work before we got here,” said Col. D.A. Sims, commander of 2 CR. “The chance to execute operations as an SFAAT was monumental. So we leave here with a real understanding of how to do that. I think the SFAATs we trained here are very ready.”

Multinational troops from more than 15 nations trained with the Regiment during the exercise and played the role of ANSF. Training with troops from other countries

provides for a type of training that can facilitate in breaking down barriers of communication that exists between Troops and the population in an area, in which, they are unfamiliar. In another instance, foreign troops get to see how 2 CR trains for the upcoming mission.

“Anytime that you can involve a multinational partner in any type of training is an absolutely positive thing,” said Parrish. “They give us the opportunity, specifically the new soldiers, to tell someone how they are going to have to communicate with someone that doesn’t speak their language. They, being our multinational partners, get to see the training we are doing because they might have to do it in the future as well.”