



# Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



*Task Force Bobcat,*



Aloha from Uruzgan Province, Afghanistan! The above picture was taken on 25 Feb 05 during an Emergency Humanitarian Assistance Mission to the Bahguchar Valley close to Khas Uruzgan. The village, exceptionally hard hit by the snow this winter, was inaccessible by road. Several villagers lost their lives due to cold weather and untreated illness. According to the village elders, the foot paths in and out of the valley have been snowed in since late October. In previous years, the village stocked up for winter and was able to make occasional trips to the bazaar. However, due to deep snow this year, they have been unable to make the trip and were out of cooking oil, heating fuel, food, and water. Initially reported through the Provincial Ministry of Health, the mission to Bahguchar ultimately included the Uruzgan Provincial Governor, Jan Mohammed Khan, Bobcat 6, LTC Sellers, CPT Owen and Battle Company Soldiers as well as Afghan National Army Soldiers. The mission was a huge success. We delivered emergency rations and medical supplies. MAJ (Dr.) Gibbs with several medics treated numerous villagers including women and children. While this area is part of the A Company AOR, Team Alpha was in the process of Air Assaulting back from another mission to Sha Wali Kot District, part of Northern Kandahar Province. The next Humanitarian Assistance Mission will be another joint effort of A Company, B Company and the Afghan National Army. It is scheduled for 4 March. Additional supplies are staged awaiting transport on sturdy CH-47s. In the next series of pictures it is evident that the deep snow provided unique challenges on the mission. More than one sunk up to their chest and every Soldier returned with that fresh off the slopes red glow on their face...now turned into peeling skin for most. A very necessary mission and one that the Soldiers will remember for years to come for not only the volume of snow, beauty of the mountains but most important because their mission truly made a positive impact on the village and the people.



Initial CH-47 Off-load in Bahguchar



6ft 2in Soldier checking the snow depth



# *Task Force 2-5*

## *Bobcats' Newsletter*



Despite climactic challenges with weather and terrain, the Bobcats are thriving and accomplishing assigned tasks to a very high standard. Leaders at every level are staying focused on the immediate mission while conducting future planning.

CPT Dave Gohlich and Deb distributed initial information regarding redeployment and block leave. As it stands right now, we are hopeful to have the task force closed on Schofield Barracks by 1 May 05. You know that we will experience some mandatory requirements post deployment and approximately one week of administrative preparation prior to our block leave. Dates for Block Leave are available through CPT Gohlich at the Rear Detachment Headquarters. The information he has received should allow Soldiers and families to make plans with a fair amount of certainty. I will remind you that we must still observe Operational Security and should not be discussing exact unit movements and times over unsecured means. Continue to use the Rear Detachment and FRG Leaders as your source for accurate and up to date information. We need your assistance to ensure rosters and information dissemination channels remain open and accurate. In this manner we will be able to rapidly share new developments and assist those that need it. Most of all, Maintain your focus! There is a lot of work yet to accomplish as we continue operations here. Please continue your work to support the Bobcat Ohana on Oahu, the Main Land, and here in Afghanistan. Your thoughtfulness and sacrifice has made the time pass more quickly and made our separation much more bearable. Our thoughts and prayers remain with each of you during this time. Much Mahalo!

In a separate communication I will provide details on how we will memorialize the sacrifice of our Brother Bobcats. Keep them and their families in your thoughts and prayers; SSG Brian Hobbs, CPL Kyle Fernandez, CPL Dale Fracker, and CPL Jacob Fleischer. Likewise, please do not forget all of our wounded comrades; CPL Jorge DeLeon, 1LT Drew Sloan, SPC Jeffery Guerin, SPC Joey Banegas, SFC "IZ" Izqueirdo, and SGT Zach Parinello. No day passes without remembering the price these Soldiers and their families have paid to make Afghanistan a more secure and stable country. Ultimately, a more secure Afghanistan means a more secure United States. We will ensure that we complete the mission they started.

Remain strong in the Bobcat Ohana! Run through the finish line! I deeply appreciate your individual and collective sacrifice. God bless each and every Soldier, family member and loved one. Mahalo!

*Aloha, Meke Ahui Hou!*  
*Bobcat 6/Bobcat 7*



# Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



*Viper Base,*

Another fast month here in Afghanistan! The company continues to do good things supporting the task force. Although it is winter here and the roads are hard to travel, the task force continues to make its presence known and provide peace of mind to the people of Afghanistan.

The AT platoon, one Mortar Section, PA and Medics, and DFAC team are still working hard for Team Cobra. They are continuing to make a difference in their areas of operation. HHC Soldiers helped Team Cobra establish a new government system that offers its citizens a better life and a promising future.

The Scout platoon, one Mortar Section, Medical Team, and DFAC team are still working hard for Team Alpha. Team Alpha has made tremendous strides in government, civil projects, and humanitarian missions. They have also continued to provide security through patrols and check points. The Soldiers attached to Team Alpha have also experienced more snow than anyone else in the task force. They will be ready for the fun and sun when this deployment is over.

The HHC Soldiers at FOB Ripley continue to provide the services that keep the task force in motion. The DFAC runs a mess hall that serves over 600 Soldiers daily. The new DFAC is coming along nicely and will be a real morale booster when it is finished for both the Soldiers and the DFAC personnel. Also, congratulations to SGT Padgett and SGT Espinola on their re-enlistments. The support platoon runs the flight line and this is critical to operations. All of them are doing an outstanding job. MAJ Gibbs, 1LT Kuehn, and SFC



Morgan run the rest of the Medical Platoon out of the Task Force Aide Station. Our Medics have done an incredible job supporting the task force and offering medical care to local nationals. The Commo Platoon is still working diligently to make sure the task force can talk to the FOBs and KAF. It is an incredible task that keeps them busy. We are thinking about changing their name to "MA-BELL." The staff continues to operate as the glue that holds everything together. Day in and day out, they work hard to ensure the task force stays focused and has what it needs to accomplish any mission.

Although we remain focused on the mission, the S-1 section is busy planning and preparing the entire task force's personnel readiness for redeployment. With all of the R&R Leave and Pass complete, the S-1 section is back to 100% of their manning. Completing awards, evaluations, briefings, readiness packets, service memos, and accurate personnel rosters has quickly consumed every second of their time. Congratulations to SGT Asuncion, and SSG Pepin for re-enlisting, and congratulations to SSG Rigdon on his 1 Mar 05 promotion.



Lastly, the HHC Soldiers that work out of KAF are doing a fantastic job of resourcing and shipping the items needed by the task force. All of the company supply sergeants and the S-4 work to make sure any equipment or supplies are resourced. SPC Smith and SSG Addis work hard making sure the task force has the repair parts needed to fix vehicles and communications gear. The staff NCOs and officers make sure that everyone is up to date with battle tracking and personnel tracking. The personnel at KAF have accomplished many tasks and done a fine job supporting the task force.

The 1SG and I are very proud of the Soldiers in HHC. Everyday they surprise us with outstanding performance and dedication to duty. We are also very appreciative of the families back home for all their support. We look forward to completing this mission and returning home to our families and friends.

*Sincerely,*  
*Viper 6/Viper 7*



# Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



## *Quickstrike Base,*

Team Alpha is hanging in there but misses you all very much. We are focused on the mission at hand and are looking to finish strong. The past month's weather has impeded progress as the roads leading in and out of our FOB are impassible by vehicles and locals are focused strictly on survival. It has been the harshest winter in a long while and reports indicate that several of the more isolated villages have had several casualties due to cold weather, lack of supplies, and snow damage to homes. We are doing our best to help by distributing humanitarian aid to those in need, working with local elders to identify problem areas, and assisting in clearing roads.

We recently returned from a mission in which we worked alongside B Company to clear and provide Humanitarian Assistance to several villages in the Sha Wali Kot District. The mission was a success as we were able to confiscate unauthorized weapons, provide over 300 people with medical care, and provide radios, blankets, and farm tools to the local populace. We have received additional equipment for the sports league and are awaiting warmer weather to begin practices and games with the local kids. We are developing a way to distribute all remaining school supplies to the local kids in the upcoming months and we are doing our best to close out other CERP projects in the area. All in all, things are coming together and we are beginning to realize the tangible difference we have made for the people of Khas Oruzgun and Chora. Today one of the elders asked me when we would be leaving so that he could be sure to throw a goodbye celebration for the Soldiers

It will be a bittersweet goodbye. Sweet because we are coming home to you all, and bitter because it wasn't sooner. No just kidding, it will be sweet all around. We look forward to hanging out in normal clothes, eating home-cooked food, being able to use an indoor bathroom, not having to worry about the shower pipes freezing, actually taking a shower, seeing a person from the opposite sex, conversing without an interpreter, and all the simple comforts of home. Of course most of all we look forward to seeing, holding, and kissing you all.

Your husbands have performed with honor and distinction while over here and we will continue to do so until we deplane in Hawaii. We love you all and you are in our thoughts and prayers. See ya soon.

*Sincerely,  
Quickstrike 6/Quickstrike 7*





# Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



## *Battle Base,*

Well, if all goes as planned, this should be the second to last FRG Newsletter I will send out from over here in Afghanistan. Our time here is slowly coming to an end, and soon we will be enjoying time with family and friends.

Even as the deployment reaches its end, our pace is not slowing down one bit. The focus of the Soldiers is still on the mission at hand here in country, and B Company continues to assist the country of Afghanistan in many, many ways. We conducted a variety of missions this past month, from an Air Assault to capture some bad guys in Mirabad, to an Air Assault into the Bagachar Valley to bring some humanitarian supplies to locals who had been stranded for the past month due to a heavy snowfall.

In early February, B Company took part in an Air Assault and Ground Assault Convoy into Mirabad to go after some bad guys in the area who had been working with the locals in the area to plant several IEDs along two of our main patrol routes here in Tarin Kowt. Luckily for us, the locals in the area reported all of the IEDs to local police forces who in return notified us so we were able to destroy and disarm all of them before anyone was injured. The mission went off well, and we recovered some IED making material and took some of the individuals with us for further questioning. The Soldiers of B Company continue to impress me with their ability to react to the many different types of missions that we face here in country. No matter what mission the Soldiers face, they are treating the local people with respect, and have learned a lot about the culture of the Afghan people.



On the opposite side of the spectrum, the mission into Bahguchar is one that those who were involved will probably never forget the rest of their lives. As the Soldiers of B Company, along with ANA Soldiers stepped off of the CH-47s, they sunk waist deep into the snow. If the Taliban had been waiting to attack us, they would have all died laughing at watching us get off the birds and attempting to move around in the snow. Once the birds took off, the local citizens came out with their snowshoes to see what we were up to. Needless to say, they were extremely pleased to see us and happy with all the supplies we brought for them. During the initial Air Assault, we brought in two pallets of MREs. Two days later we flew back and brought rice, flour, cooking oil, propane tanks, and propane stoves. It was a great mission for the Soldiers of B Company to participate in, and we won the loyalty of an entire valley by helping them out.



Now that we are in the tenth month of this deployment, we think we have seen all that there is to see of this country, and culture, but once again February brought new experiences to all of us in B Company. Whether it was the mission we took on, or the interaction with the locals, the Soldiers of B Company continue to stay focused on the mission at hand and excel at all that we take on. During the next 7 weeks, the missions will not slow down, and the Soldiers will continue to assist this country. However, all of us will let out a huge sign of relief when we board the plane to head back to Hawaii and into the arms of loved ones. The success of B Company could not have been done without all the support we received from back home in Hawaii and the Mainland. Thanks to all who read this, the members of the FRG, and anyone who has taken the time to show support for us over here. I know the Soldiers look forward to seeing everyone soon.

*Sincerely,*  
*Battle 6/Battle 7*



# Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



*Cobra Base,*

Hello again, family and friends! February was a fast month, and as we enter into March, Team Cobra continues to stay as busy as ever. The weather has been quite brisk, to say the least, but our buildings and heaters are keeping everyone warm.

In February, we welcomed the members of 2<sup>nd</sup> platoon back to Cobra Base. They have spent the last three months at a nearby Special Forces Camp, assisting them with security and patrols. It's good to have them back. They were replaced by 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon, who took over for them in early February. Now, each platoon, with the exception of Headquarters, has had a rotation at the Special Forces Camp.

We were also joined at Cobra Base with our own team of Special Forces. They will remain here for the remainder of our time in Afghanistan. We are working side by side to improve our area of operations, and it is proving to be a great partnership.

We have been joined by another Afghan National Army (ANA) platoon. They are a great group of Soldiers and make a real impact with the local population on every patrol and mission.

Team Cobra continues to conduct operations throughout our two provincial districts and with each operation come signs that the Afghan people are more receptive to the central government's message.

God Bless you all and The United States of America!

*Sincerely,*  
*Cobra 6/Cobra 7*





# Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter



*WarDog Base,*

February was a busy but good month for Soldiers of the Wardog Battery. We have made a lot of moves this month. Fourth and Sixth Sections that were at Kandahar Airfield for the past several months were relocated to a village called Cham Kani in support of a Special Forces Team there. These two sections are definitely the most traveled sections in the task force and will remain at Cham Kani until redeployment. Third and Fifth Sections left Tarin Kowt to replace the sections that left Kandahar and each Soldier that departed received recognition from LTC Sellers, TF 2-5 Bobcat's Commander, for their service in support of the "Bobcat" Task Force. First and Second Sections remain at Tarin Kowt and continue to support the "Bobcats" with indirect fires and perimeter security both with the Forward Operating Base and on missions "outside the wire."

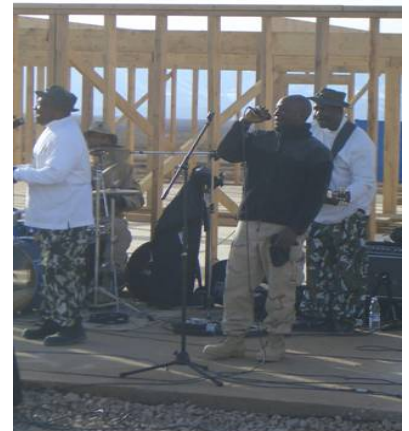
All howitzer sections completed their certification requirements to a high standard and the FDCs will certify in March. These certifications are important to complete as we prepare for redeployment and the subsequent transformation into a Unit of Action once we return. SPC Brown, SPC Daniel, and SGT Jones performed extremely well on their promotion boards in February and are now considered "promotable" until they obtain the required amount of points for promotion. SPC Richardson was promoted to Sergeant on the first of February and is performing well with his FDC section at Cham Kani.

Thanks to the help of SFC St. John, the Task force Communications Sergeant, we were able get our new satellite dish set up at Tarin Kowt so that we could watch the New England Patriots win this year's Super Bowl live. SGT Konken provided plenty of good food to include personal sized pizzas, chicken wings, and drinks so that we wouldn't have to miss any of the game in order to eat.

A MWR band from Ohio named "FrienZ" came to FOB Ripley to perform for us last month. SPC Williams joined in on the act when the band asked for volunteers to show their talent. SPC Williams made the Wardogs proud with ability to rhyme off the top of his head.

The weather last month has been pretty harsh. We have received plenty of snow and rain that has turned the several inches of dust that we had over the summer into several inches of mud that gets everywhere. Living conditions continue to improve and will only get better as we prepare the next unit to arrive and relieve us. Hopefully we will have a real building to eat our meals in before we leave.

Redeployment is right around the corner beginning with our advanced party members leaving Afghanistan in late March. We will make every effort to keep everyone informed about the details of our return trip, as they are available. We all look forward to being with our families again. Anticipate that the battery will have a redeployment party/picnic sometime in June once the kids are out of school and families are settled down after the unit's return.



*Sincerely, Wardog 6/Wardog 7*

## *Task Force Fire Support Element,*

In February the FSE was able to accomplish many missions and training to ensure that we remained proficient in our primary task of Fire Support for Task Force Bobcats. TM Cobra, lead by LT Collins and SSG Cutler, conducted numerous types of mortar Call for Fire missions. The missions ranged from Time on Target to Immediate Suppression. Quickstrike, A Company, is slated to conduct their missions in the next few weeks to ensure that they are ready at a moments notice.

While out on combat missions we have been able to help the people of Afghanistan during the harsh winter month. Leaders and Soldiers have worked with local officials to provide much needed relief to hungry and cold families that live in the shadows of the towering peaks of the Uruzgan Province. At the end of February, LT Bowmen and the men of B Company air assaulted with the Task Force Commander, Provincial Governor Jan Mohammed, the Task Force Surgeon and others into a region of the province that became inaccessible to the outside world by either foot or vehicular traffic due to the weather. In short, the task force spun into action to provide the people with needed supplies so they could survive the remaining winter period. All involved were rewarded with the knowledge that their efforts saved lives.

*Sincerely,*  
*FSE*



# *Task Force 2-5 Bobcats' Newsletter*



## *Task Force Engineers "GET 'R DUNN",*

Belated Happy Valentines Day! Winter hit us in full force last month with frequent rainfall and snowfall that presented many new challenges for the "GET 'R DUNN" platoon. 1<sup>st</sup> Squad received the brunt of the snowfall and has had to deal with blown water pipes as well as the regular enemy cache destruction. However, SSG Cagle continues to ensure that our Sappers stay active and warm. 2<sup>nd</sup> Squad's struggle with the mud continues to rage and has become a regular part of mission planning. When not battling the mud, 2<sup>nd</sup> Squad has upgraded from building stairs and latrines to supervising the construction of a new brick and mortar laundry building. The completion of the laundry building will be very helpful in cleaning up our muddy Sappers. 3<sup>rd</sup> Squad has had to face freezing rains and snowfall but has had no problems due to the return of SSG Batchan from emergency leave. With Castle 27 and Castle 26 taking R&R leave back in January, the Headquarters Sappers have had to take over the responsibility of building the Task Force's FOB in Tarin Kowt and did a great job. SPC McFarland conducted multiple missions with the scouts and is now having to split his time working with the Forward Surgical Team (FST) and the scouts. Even though the weather remains cold and stormy, we are able to stay warm and happy knowing that we are completing the mission and will be home soon!

*Sincerely,  
Castle 26/ Castle 27*

## *Task Force ADA,*

Aloha to the friends and family of 1<sup>st</sup> Platoon. Well, the pace is picking up as we continue our day-to-day operations and begin preparing for our redeployment back home. We've been shipping our vehicles and equipment back to Kandahar, so most of the guys were busy washing the Avengers and their equipment. Other than that, our normal day of manning guard towers continues. The weather was unusually cold during the day for most of the month of February, especially at night, but has begun to warm up as March approaches and seems like spring is finally trying to break through. Even though we are close to coming home the guys remain focused on their duties and perform as well as they had at the beginning of our deployment.

We are sad to lose SGT Malone who went home to deal with a family emergency. Please keep him in your prayers as he's going through a tough time. Thanks for all the support everyone continues to give us, and know that the end is near.

*Sincerely,  
Old School 6/ Old School 7*