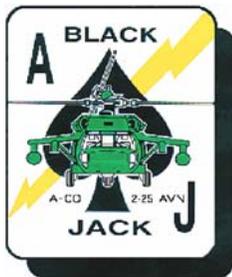


Blackjack Bulletin

Issue 8

August 16, 2004



Special points of interest

- Tragedy in Task Force Diamondhead
- Blackjacks lead the way once again
- Keep your love and support flowing

Inside this issue

- From Freedom's Frontier
- Soldier of the Week
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From Freedom's Frontier

Task Force Diamondhead has suffered some tremendous losses in the past week, as you've all heard. In the midst of this tragedy, the Blackjacks hold steadfast in our commitment to each other and the war effort. Now, more than ever, we are required to step up for the Task Force and shoulder a heavy burden in these tumultuous times. The Blackjacks will continue to spearhead the mission in FOB Salerno, as the remainder of Alpha Company muscles forward with re-supply, reconnaissance, and VIP missions from Kandahar. We also are striving to send our soldiers on much deserved passes to a lazy retreat in Qatar, and all of this while we carry out the logistical and tactical transition of our incoming commander, CPT Onderko, and bid farewell to CPT Turner. Yes, the Blackjacks are being called upon for great things, as we approach our 5th month in country, and with your continued love and support, great things we *will* accomplish!

Soldiers of the Week

This week's soldiers of the week are SPC Smithson and SPC Fyffe. Both of these fine young soldiers demonstrated exceptional devotion to duty in their portion of the recent crash recovery. Their crew was the first on the scene of the crash and they played a pivotal role in ensuring the crew and passengers were removed from the wreckage in a safe and timely manner. They didn't think twice about putting themselves on the ground in order to help fellow soldiers in their time of need.



CPT Turner gets congratulated on earning her Senior Aviator Wings by LTC Brown



Blackjacks standing tall in formation



CW3 Eric Strecker takes a well-deserved nap before the next mission while SSG Ray Luna "keeps watch"

Commander's Notes

Aloha,

Our hearts are heavy after losing a member of our task force in an aircraft accident. It hits closest to home for the Blackjacks in Salerno, as they were part of the flight and also the first to respond on the scene. Many accolades to the urgent response and care that our Blackjacks provided to the injured passengers and crew.

Alpha Company took the lead on the Battalion's first NVG air assault in country. It was a successful mission, providing time on target into dusty LZs. Our crews executed the plan flawlessly, not requiring a go-around for any of the insertions.

The accomplishments of our Blackjacks are celebrated in some of the finest crew chiefs in Army Aviation. They continue to bring home the recognition by winning the Soldier of the Month (SPC Wilsford) and NCO of the Month (SGT Ayala) awards. It has been a clean sweep for everyone we have sent to the board to come out the winner. In this upcoming board for NCO of the Quarter, SGT Williams (July) and SGT Ayala (Aug) must compete against each other.

The Blackjacks have conducted several flights helping our ground forces capture and kill a rogue enemy who continues to disrupt the security of Afghanistan. These missions are executed across the central and southern regions of the country without incident. We are making a difference!

Blackjack Pride!

CPT Dee Turner

Life in Kandahar



Two Turners!



Even 1SG Ed Purcell is getting into the flying action, as he assists here in a "hot refuel"



A celebratory "baptism" as only the Blackjacks can do it!

A Company, 2-25 Aviation Regiment

Address:
Name (no rank)
A Co, TF Diamondhead
APO AE 09355

2-25 AVN Regt Rear Detachment:
CPT Ryan Purdy
Work: (808) 656-0130
Email: purdyrs@schofield.army.mil

August Birthdays

CW2 Humbertson
1LT Roe
SPC Tonne

Upcoming FRG Events:

BN FRG Meeting Wed. Sept. 1
18:30 at the Nehelani

Alpha Company Spouse Coffee
September 18th