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TALON



Infantry Joint Patrol

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Soldiers Find Weapons Near Srebrenica

Story and Photos By
Spc. Michael Bennett
TFE Public Affairs

On Sunday, April 18, Soldiers of Task Force Eagle descended upon a series of abandoned ruins outside Srebrenica.

The soldiers, led by Capt. Jimmy Coates, the Team Gator Commander, had received information that there was a possible illegal weapons cache in one of the buildings. Despite treacherous roads through the hills near Srebrenica, the Soldiers arrived safely at the location where the weapons

weapons and 39 pounds of explosives. “We are very pleased with the results of this search. Every illegal weapon found and destroyed



Top: A soldier carries out one of the weapons discovered in a ruined building. Above: A soldiers secures his gear before conducting the mission.

were believed to be held.

Upon arrival at the site, with the assistance of Staff Sgt. Michael Girard and Sgt. Meghan Lennon from the 741st Explosives and Ordnance Detachment, the Soldiers discovered a cache containing two surface-to-air missile launchers, two anti-tank

potentially saves lives”, said Multinational Brigade (North) Maj. Jon Thurlow.

“Stabilization Force Soldiers in this region promote a climate in which the peace process can continue to move forward toward a point where there is no longer a need for NATO forces in Bosnia. SFOR will continue to monitor and assess the situation in Bosnia in order to assist in sustaining peace and stability,” said Thurlow.

“The operation was a great success. Our soldiers should be commended,” said Coates.

He added, “We are committed to ensuring the safety and security of this country.”

Srebrenica is the site in which approximately 7,000 non-Serb inhabitants were brutalized and killed. This ethnic cleansing took place during Bosnia’s 1992-95 war that claimed some 200,000 lives.



On the Cover: Pfc. Jose Machado, of the Portugese army, explains the care and maintenance of his weapon to Spc. Donn Sherwood, of Company A, 2-152. The two soldiers were part of the joint patrols conducted during April. Photo By Nedima Hadziibrisevic

U.S. Joins Portugal in Forging the Peace

Story and Photos by
Nedima Hadziibrisevic
Media Specialist TFE PAO

Having the chance to learn about a different culture through first hand experience and meeting its people is a rare opportunity for most individuals. Soldiers of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 152nd Infantry, stationed at Camp Clark, had an opportunity to spend several days with Portuguese soldiers at Camp Doboj. The camp is Bosnia and Herzegovina's home for the Slovenian and Portuguese peacekeepers serving within the Multinational Battle Group of Multinational Brigade (North.)

According to 2nd Lt. Matthew Voss, a platoon leader at Camp Clark,



Spc. Michael Wilson explains to soldiers of the Portuguese army the disassembly and cleaning of the M-16.

the training had two purposes.

"First, we wanted to have the U.S. Soldiers meet their NATO and Stabilization Force counterparts (from other nations) while having a chance to learn some of their techniques," said Voss. "This also let the Portuguese see some of our training and skills in action."

"The second goal was to show Bosnian people how our two countries can get along and work together," he continued.

2nd Lt. Goncalo Ferreira, a platoon commander, Portuguese Task

Force, has been in Bosnia and Herzegovina for three months. This was his first time to patrol with another SFOR nation outside MNBG.

"I think this is very productive. I like to work with the Americans because we have many things to learn with them," Ferreira said.

"The idea is for the Americans and Portuguese to do a few patrols here to see if there are any suspicious movements of weapons; or to see if there are any people trying to hide those weapons."

U.S. and Portuguese Soldiers conducted joint day and night patrols in the various towns of the Portuguese Task Force's sector,

which includes several municipalities within MNBG, and familiarized themselves with each others weapons and vehicle systems. U.S. Soldiers also experienced Portuguese cuisine, shopped at the Portuguese Post Exchange, played sports together and spent time getting to know each other better.

"They really are a very relaxed (group of) people," said Spc. Leon Wilson,



2nd Lt. Ferreira conducts briefing for the American Soldiers at Camp Doboj prior to one of the joint day patrols soldiers carried out during their visit.

who also praised the high level of the hospitably displayed by his hosts. "They are very open-minded."

In making comparisons between the two militaries, Voss emphasized that both groups are well trained, disciplined and always very serious about their job.

He added that he thinks there are not many differences between the two groups; aside from the language and equipment.

"All in all, a soldier is a soldier," Voss explained. "I think (the Portuguese soldiers) would do well in the U.S Army and vice versa."



2nd Lt. Voss (left) and Spc. Joe Godfrey (right) carefully study the map while 2nd Lt. Ferreira explains routes and other specifics of the patrolled area.

Holy Week Inspires Faith

Story by Chaplain (Maj.) Eric L. Ebb,
MNB(N) Deputy Task Force Chaplain

*“Boruch ato Adonoy, Elohaynu
melech ho-olom, ...”*

These were words spoken to mark the beginning of ‘Holy Week’ – *“Praise art Thou, O Lord our God, King of the universe.”* Passover, the Jewish Festival commemorating their escape from Egypt, marked the beginning of both Jewish and Christian services with the traditional ‘Seder.’

Chaplain Rabbi (Lt. Col.) Jeremy Steinberg flew in from Germany to conduct the special meals on Monday and Tuesday. Attended by both Gentiles and Jews, the Seder meal recounted the faith of the Jewish people through many years of trials and hardships only to strengthen their faith further in the hope of the coming of the promised Messiah.

As early as Sunday the Christian community began their ‘Holy Week’ observances with palm branches on what is traditionally called ‘Palm’ or ‘Passion’ Sunday.

Worshippers received palm fronds at Catholic and Protestant services to remember the day Jesus entered Jerusalem to shouts of Hosanna. Thursday evening ushered in the ‘road to Jerusalem’ as soldiers attended Holy or Maundy Thursday communion in

remembrance of the night Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper with his disciples.

Good Friday introduced many soldiers to an historic service called “Tenebrae” meaning ‘shadows’ or ‘darkness.’

This is the day when Christians remember the crucifixion by recounting the last hours of Jesus. The service involved more than a dozen soldiers who took part in reading accounts of the Passion of Christ and removing items from the chancel of the church. At the end of the service the altar was stripped bare and all of the lights had been turned off in the chapel. Worshippers were asked to leave the sanctuary in silence.

“Christ the Lord is Risen Today” ushered in Easter Sunday. Once again soldiers of Task Force Eagle turned out to sing loud hosannas in celebration of Christ’s victory over death. The Gospel Choir and the Praise Team lead worshippers in songs of praise as voices filled Eagle Base chapel.

All in all the Unit Ministry Team conducted or coordinated 12 services during Holy Week providing ministry to the men and women of Stabilization Force 15. In addition to providing support to the Jewish and Christian soldiers the Unit Ministry Team coordinates prayer times and worship

opportunities for soldiers of other faiths as well. Task Force Eagle is made up of soldiers who are Muslim, Hindu or other specific denominational groups. It is the purpose of the chaplaincy to ensure that all soldiers are provided with the opportunity to express their religious beliefs according to the constitution.

Sometimes this means that individual soldiers are appointed by their denominations to act as ‘Distinctive Faith Group Leaders.’

Others are trained as Lay Leaders who assist the chaplain in various support roles.

The Task Force Eagle Unit Ministry Team is made up of Chaplain (Lt. Col.) Bill Stang, who is a Roman Catholic priest, and Chaplain (Maj.) Eric Ebb, a Lutheran, who ministers to the Protestant soldiers. The backbones of the UMT, however, are the Noncommissioned Officers, Sgt. 1st Class James Lee and Staff Sgt. Jason Brown.

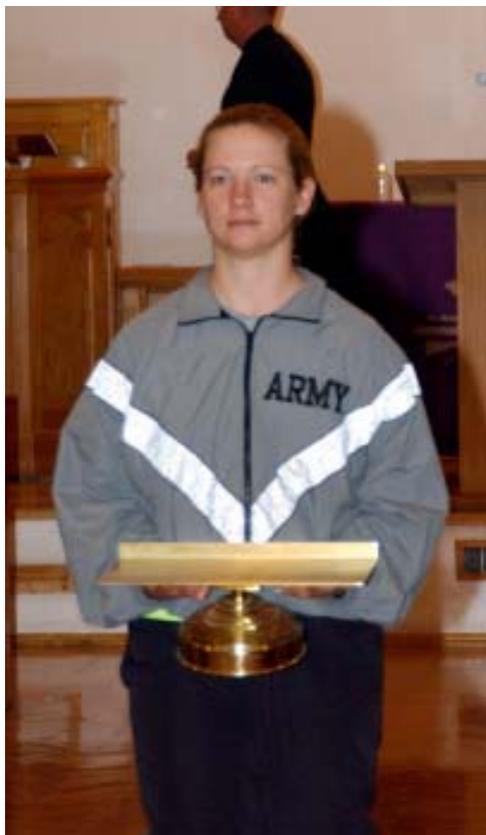
With their dedication and hard work the many religious support programs at Eagle Base, Forward Operating Base Morgan, and FOB Clark provide our soldiers enriching and meaningful ways to express their faith.



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Far Left: Chaplain Lt. Col. Jeremy Steinberg leads MNB(N) soldiers in the Seder, the traditional Jewish celebration to mark the beginning of Passover. Left: Spc. Jennifer Soper performs an Easter monologue, reading as the mother of Judas Escariot, during the Easter Morning service. Above: Chaplain Ebb leads the "Tenebrae" service on Good Friday.



Top and Above: Spc. Meghan Schlotfeld, G-3, and Sgt. Kelly Walsh, TF Med, carry items away from the alter during the "Tenebrae" service.

SFOR Assists Local School

Story By Capt. Aaron Jenkins
TFE Public Affairs

In January, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in Bosnia and Herzegovina set out to help an elementary school in the small Bosnian community of Konjevic Polje that had no running water.

Though the community is made up primarily of Bosniak returnees, the school provides education for the surrounding villages multiethnic populace.

Due to bad pipelines and a bad capping reservoir, the school ran out of water.

Without water, the Republica Serbska Minister of Education could force the school to be closed. The U.S. Embassy made the decision to reconstruct the school, despite the many obstacles to overcome during

the complicated process of coordinating the work.

The UNHCR and Stabilization Force engineers agreed to get involved, pending one condition; the municipality would have to offer their assistance as well.

The Military and Civil Affairs Team negotiated with local authorities, who decided to take part in the project by providing the 500 feet of pipeline required. SFOR provided engineering support, and the UNHCR provided 8,000 KM for additional expenses. The residents provided the manpower to get the job done.

“This is an excellent example of Bosnians helping Bosnians,” stated Maj. Jeff Brandt, SFOR 15 Multinational Brigade (North) Task Force Engineer.

Principal, Petar Kocic, was very

pleased with the outcome and noted, “This is a very important project for those who live here.” He then presented certificates of appreciation to all parties involved.

Brandt summarized SFOR’s role best when he said, “This is why we’re here.”



Photo By Spc. Mike Bennett
TFE Public Affairs

Students of the school enjoy water from a fountain after the water is restored to the building.

Radio MIR: The Voice of SFOR

Story and Photo By
Capt. Aaron Jenkins
TFE Public Affairs

Winning the hearts and minds of the people is one of the main goals of today’s U.S. Army.

Radio MIR informs and influences the Bosnian populace. The station encourages the listening audiences by delivering themes and messages.

Radio MIR is the voice of the Stabilization Force. The broadcasting range covers approximately 85% of



Locals enjoy a Radio MIR sponsored karaoke event in Tuzla.

all of Bosnia on 3 frequencies, 102.3, 106.2, and 98.0. With troop numbers decreasing, MIR remains a viable option for communicating to the populace. MIR offers an assortment of programs supporting the SFOR missions. “Radio MIR enhances the SFOR image,” stated Spc. Anna Maestrado, the Radio MIR Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge. Maestrado added, “We interact with our listeners and assess problems in the local cities.” Maestrado is part of a Psychological Operations Team, from Parma, Ohio. In addition to broadcasting at local community events, MIR hits the road for a weekly karaoke party.

“We interact with the people and let them know what SFOR is all about,” said Maestrado.

Radio MIR hats, t-shirts, jackets, and coffee cups are distributed at these functions with themes and messages.

The shirts promote SFOR messages to the youth who participate

in the Radio MIR remotes. The fleece jackets, caps, and coffee cups promote the station.

“At one remote a young lady won a prize that a sponsor was giving away. She declined the prize of perfume and instead wanted a Radio MIR t-shirt,” said Maestrado.

Stevie Wonder sang, “Music is a world within itself it’s a language we all understand.”

Radio MIR blends US billboard top 100 and local Bosnian music throughout their broadcast day.

They cover every music genre to keep the interest of listeners. In addition to music the news is broadcasted several times daily. Radio MIR uses music as a platform for peace to touch all ethnic groups in Bosnia.

“My job is very rewarding. Radio MIR is well received by the local fans at every event. They relate to us, they know us, and they listen to what we have to say because they know we are here to help,” added Maestrado.

Battle on the Hardcourt

Story by Nenad Ristic
TFE Media Specialist

The soldiers of Multinational Brigade (North) hosted a friendly basketball game against a local franchise, in Peacekeepers Hall on April 8th.

The team was the Sloboda Dita, a local team with more than 40 years of history, and one of the best teams in the Bosnian league.

Sloboda came with a very young roster, with player's ages ranging from 15 to 18.

Despite their youth, the players showed talent and aggressiveness appropriate for much more experienced athletes.

The game was decided in the last



Photos by Aleksandar Ilic, TFE Media Specialist

Above: Mr. Gales, a civilian contractor and power forward, goes for the game winning basket. Top: Mirza Hrnčić skies over Sgt. Carter for a dunk.

3.4 seconds, while Sloboda had a one-point lead (46-47), and the SFOR Ambassadors team had possession of the ball. SFOR passed the ball down in the paint to the player of the game, Mr. Michael Gales, a civilian contractor, who showed a great deal of poise throughout the game and scored 23 points, shooting 11 for 12

from the field.

Gales got the ball underneath and, although double-teamed, went for a layup off the glass for the win.

"That was the play that we always work on, it was pretty close, but we got lucky at that time of the game", Gales said after the game.

Prior to the last play, the Gator Company Commander, Capt. Jimmy Coates had the game in his hands but he missed a 17-footer after playing for almost the entire game.

The Tuzla team tried to prevent the ball going out of bounds.

Sgt. Nicholas Carter of the Task Force Eagle communications section managed to reach over Sloboda players and get to the ball.

The ball bounced out-of-bounds, but only after it hit one of the opposing players according to a referee close to the scene.

"In the last 60 seconds we wanted to control the clock, hang on to the ball as best as we could and run some set-plays," said MNB (N) Provost Marshal and team coach Maj. Steven Hibler.

"We had one guy inside who takes up half of the lane, so we tried to get the ball in to him, and see if he could hang on it and go into the basket."

"They have some good players and we would like to play with them again," said Hibler.

From the very beginning it was a dynamic game.

Teamwork and the physical strength of the MNB (N) team forged a ten-point lead at half time.

In the second half, the Tuzla team regrouped and their aggressive defense and defensive rebounding sparked open court running and fast break points, often bringing the crowd of around 100 soldiers and civilians to their feet.

"Transition defense is something we definitely have to work on in the future," Hibler added.

The Tuzla coach was clearly upset, but blamed his own players for the loss. "I was angry because I told them



to fill the paint, and position themselves between the ball and receiving player on the inbound play. I am disappointed because we had the game in our hands, but my players haven't played hard enough to the very end", said Vujovic after the game.

The game itself was just one part of the Basketball Skill Challenge organized by MWR Balkans.

Spec. Anneka Ford, from 177th Finance, won both the women's free throw competition and three-point shoot out.

Ranko Krizanovic, Sloboda's small forward and Mirza Hrnčić the team's center made sure the guests did not go home empty-handed, between them they won the men's three-point contest and slam-dunk competition.

Hrnčić brought the crowd to their feet with a beautiful display of dunks, featuring a 360-degree turn and dunk while flying over a couple of his squatting teammates in the final round of the competition.

This was the sixth game between the two teams organized by MWR Balkans in the last few years.

Sloboda holds the edge, leading MBN(N) 4-2.

Eye of the Cyclone



Above: 1st Lt. Robin Nix shares his take from the Egg Hunt on Easter morning.



Left: A Turkish doctor examines a Bosnian child during free checkups in the Turkish Battalion's sector.

Photo Courtesy Capt. Ersin Arda

Below: The graduates of the first Basic Noncommissioned Officer's Course to be held on Bagle Base during SFOR 15.

Right: Pfc. Damon Ralston performs 3 Doors Down's song "Be Like That" during the Eagle Idol competition. Below: Brig. Gen. Timothy Wright gets into the spirit during a visit by the Philadelphia Eagles Cheerleaders. Photos by Spc. Mike Bennett



Members of the Joint Military Affairs team inspect a tank held at a weapons storage site.

Photo courtesy Capt. Clayton Adamkavicius

