



2D BATTALION (AIRBORNE) 503D INFANTRY



THE

ROCK REPORT

30 MAR 2009

Volume 2, Issue 1

Commander
LTC Butler

Command Sergeant Major
CSM Womack

Executive Officer
MAJ Curl

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST :

- > Change of Responsibility
- > Able Change of Command
- > Battle's Combat Light Jump
- > Wanat Awardees
- > CAS Training in Florida
- > FRG Group Lunch

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Who might those two strapping young men be?



Indeed, it is the Third Place Team at the Destined Company Stress Shoot



ROCK REPORT

Dear families, friends and Paratroopers of The ROCK – During the last 90 days The ROCK continues to perform magnificently and we want to take this time to highlight just some of the accomplishments of our paratroopers.

During the month of January we focused almost exclusively on training and testing all of our Infantry paratroopers on the Expert Infantry Badge (EIB). The test takes place over three days and tests an individual on 33 basic individual skills that all Infantrymen, regardless of rank or position should be proficient in. The test is extremely detail oriented and only our best Infantrymen successfully test for and receive the EIB.

All of the companies conducted pre-training for their men to ensure that certain pre-requisites were met prior to testing; these included the Army Physical Fitness Test, successful completion of a land navigation course, a 12 mile footmarch with rucksack in under three hours, and an expert qualification on their weapon. On test day 124 ROCK paratroopers started and on day three 42 met the tough standards earning the right to wear their EIB. Of the 42 who met the standards 15 tested without receiving a single No-Go; they were perfect. Average Army units achieve a 20% Go Rate, but the men of The ROCK exceeded the Army standard and received a 34% success rate.

We conducted another airborne week, further honing our ability to plan and execute airborne operations. We sent our best officers and NCOs to the Jumpmaster Course, which allows us to train key leaders to safely lead and execute airborne operations. The Jumpmaster Course is also very challenging and only 50% of those who attend the course successfully complete it. We sent 24 men to the course and 14 of them met the standards and graduated, a 58% success rate. This is key to our future training in April and June when we will execute mass tactical airborne operations with combat equipment at night.

We sent other leaders to Pathfinder School, the Emergency Medical Technician Course, the Infantry Mortar Leader Course, Driver's Training, Combatives Level II and Level III courses, and we continue to send interested paratroopers to Ranger School. The battalion is in great shape with all of our newly trained Pathfinders (5), EMTs (15), and Rangers (4). We also sent six first sergeants or future first sergeants to the US Army First Sergeant's Course; distance learning training from Ft Bliss, Texas.

By far, the best thing that we did this quarter was to deploy the entire battalion to Monte Romano, Italy in order to conduct a Mortar Evaluation, marksmanship training, a Machine Gun Leaders Course, Squad Live Fires, Mounted Section Live Fires, and battlestaff training. Monte Romano is an Italian training area just north of Rome and unlike the training areas in Germany or the US does not have any existing qualification or live fire ranges. The companies and battalion built everything from scratch in order to meet our training objectives, which was an enormous undertaking.

At the end of our two week training density The ROCK shot over 250,000 rounds of ammunition; drove over 6,000 kms between Monte Romano, Camp Darby, Aviano, and Vicenza; trained our new battlestaff on command and control and tactical operations center tasks; and achieved every single company and battalion training objective. We accomplished all of this without any training accidents or incidents. This was a great training event that allowed us to take the entire battalion out and focus on the collective skills expected of us when we deploy at the end of the year.

There were also some changes of command in the battalion. CPT Chris Rowe relinquished command of Destined Company to CPT Ryan Turner; CPT Devin George relinquished command of Chosen Company to CPT Rowe; CPT Matt Sweeney and 1SG Christopher Turk assumed command and responsibility for Fusion Company; and CPT Dave Nelson relinquished command of Able Company to CPT Joe Snowden. We wish the best of luck to CPT George and CPT Nelson (and his family) as they PCS to Fort Benning and Dahlonaga, Georgia respectively. They both did a phenomenal job leading, training, and caring for our paratroopers. The new commanders and the first sergeant are more than capable of leading our men and women and undoubtedly will do an incredible job.

ROCK 07 and I set a high standard while at Monte Romano when we participated in the Destined Company Stress Shoot. It seems that Destined needed some motivation for their grueling buddy team stress shoot. We had the overall high score of the morning (the live fire measured marksmanship accuracy and overall time) and it gave the remaining teams some motivation to try and beat the two "old guys." Many tried (and failed) to exceed our score. We would like to point out that SGT Ochoa, SGT Sandberg, SSG Tobias, and SGT Talley did beat us; we came in third place.

We owe a huge debt of gratitude to the ladies of 2-503 for all that they do for our paratroopers, the ROCK, their families, and their husbands. Without them working, volunteering, single parenting, and pitching in at Caserma Ed-erle much of what we do would not be possible. A bunch of wives supported our paratroopers during EIB by providing food and drinks at the test site so they would not have to depart the test site to eat lunch.

We could not be more impressed with the men, women, and families in The ROCK. Our nation asks so much of them and the humbly meet and exceed every single, challenging expectation.

Sky Soldiers! The ROCK!

//ROCK 07//
LYLE WOMACK
CSM, USA
Command Sergeant Major

//ROCK 06//
WILLIAM J. BUTLER
Lieutenant Colonel, Infantry
Commanding

2D BATTALION (AIRBORNE) 503D INFANTRY

ROCK REPORT



CPT Robert Wilson
1SG Mitchell Rucker



Commanding
Officer
CPT Wilson

First Sergeant
1SG Rucker

Executive Officer
1LT McPhee

RECON
1LT
MacGregor
SFC Harding

MORTARS
1LT Thurman
SFC Alldredge

MEDICS
1LT White
SFC Jones

S3
MAJ Zieseniss
SFC (P) Holt

STAFF
1LT Cummings
SFC Lake

HQs
1LT McPhee
SSG Marra

BN FSE
SFC Perdue

FRG Leader
Julie Guerrero
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"SGT Stamper (Left), and SPC Brusaschetti (Right) give a class to Chosen Company's Designated Marksmen."

Nothing is more satisfying than hearing the faint metallic sound of a bullet hitting an iron target at ranges up to 800 Meters. This is precisely the sound of success we heard often at Monte Romano as the Recon Platoon ran a known distance range for the ROCK's sniper and designated marksmen. The primary instructors, SGT Anthony Stamper and SPC Anthony Brusaschetti, recent graduates of the US Army Sniper School, trained over 25 Rock paratroopers on topics relating to Sniper and Designated Marksman operations.



Also while at Monte Romano, the Recon Platoon conducted both a Team LFX and designated marksman exercise for the battalion. During the Team LFXs, the team leader maneuvered his team, passed required reports, and called and adjusted indirect fires.



What is Recon/Recce thing? Recently the Scout Platoon has rebranded itself as the Recon Platoon. Accompanying this change is a new logo for the platoon. The logo was updated by 1LT Ian MacGregor and is based upon an earlier design that fell out of use prior to the current chain of command's tenor. So Keep a lookout for the Recon platoon, if you can find them.

Message from the Commander:

Paratrooper's of the BLACKSHEEP recently completed a training rotation to Monte Romano, several miles north of Rome. Over the span of 10 days, the men of Blacksheep executed a variety of combat and support related tasks. This was our first major training rotation since returning from Afghanistan 6 ½ months ago. Our first opportunity to fully integrate our new paratroopers into the organization and start to build the team for the next mission.

A special emphasis was given to the dozens of non-combat arms Soldiers conducting simultaneous support and training activities. While not infantrymen, combat support and service support Soldiers are expected to perform basic Warrior tasks to the same degree of skill. Training deployments such as this are designed to give them the opportunity to maintain or gain that proficiency.

Our next major events as a company will be an airborne operation in March, and our upcoming training rotation in Germany scheduled for May.

Robert Wilson
Blacksheep 6

Hang It

The mortar men of The Rock continued their certification and also fired in support of the Squad live fires. During the training deployment, mortar men from each company, and the BN mortar platoon, trained and fired each weapon system. SFC Alldredge also trained and coached each section on the principles of handheld and direct lay firing with the 60mm mortar.



Triage

The Rock Medical Platoon continued to support the battalion with superb medical coverage. On any given day, they covered up to six different ranges. While supporting the battalion's training, the medics ensured they were training also. Medics took every opportunity to qualify on their assigned weapons, negotiate the stress shoot, and conduct MOS refresher classes. Including our young surgeon Rush Twilley outshooting our grizzled, experienced PA MAJ Rather

Can you hear me now?

SSG (P) Carey from the S6 shop ensured his Soldiers remained active during the entire training deployment. Arriving early, his section established the TOC and ensured it had connectivity with the outside world and with each training element. As the deployment progressed, comms Soldiers fixed any problems, user or equipment error, which developed. When not providing comms expertise, the S6 section took advantage of the various ranges. Making their rounds, the Soldiers fired the Mk19, qualified on their M4s, and even hung several 60mm rounds with the Mortar Platoon.

ROCK REPORT



1: Who is this man? Is it Blacksheep 7 or ROCK 7? And have you seen him?

2: A Common view at Monte Romano

Special Announcements

Incoming BLACKSHEEP 7

On 9 April at 1400 1SG Rucker will relinquish responsibility for HHC/2-503rd (ABN) IN to 1SG Zaleski. The change of responsibility will be located at Building 173 the HHC Barrack's.



1SG Zaleski is no stranger to **THE ROCK** and Vicenza, having served in a number of position's within the Battalion over the years. Nor is he a stranger to the position he will be filling; Having followed behind 1SG Rucker to assume responsibility of Destined Company in April of 2008.

E7 Promotion List Published

On 24 March the promotion List for E-7 was published, on The list were a number of Paratrooper's from the Company, congratulations to



SSG(P) Foote, Recon

SSG(P) Taylor, Recon

SSG(P) Carey, S6

Former Blacksheep:

SSG(P) Upp SETAF

SSG(P) Snipes FT Benning

SSG(P) Ortiz FTSam Houston

Recent Award's Presented



1LT Aaron Thurman: BSM-V For valor in the battle of Wanat

SSG Rocky Rizzo: BSM For service during OEF VIII

CPT Troy Hokanson: ARCOM For service, PCS'ing to FT Rucker and Army Aviation

CPT Wayne Morgan: AAM For efforts to guarantee the recognition of the **ROCK**'s action's during OEF with a Presidential Unit Citation and Valorous Unit Citation.

SPC Jordan Williams: AAM For Service, ETS'ing to attend college



ROCK REPORT

CPT Joe Snowden
1SG Christopher Schofield



Commanding
Officer
CPT Snowden

First Sergeant
1SG Schofield

Executive Officer
1LT Kennedy

1 PLT
2LT Jensen
SFC Torres

2 PLT
1LT Keefe
SFC Lewis

3 PLT
2LT Miller
SFC Delagarza

FIST / HQ
1LT Sanfilippo
SSG Endl

FRG Leader
Stacy Swilley
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Able Company, 2nd BN (ABN), 503rd IN.
Commanded by CPT David J. Nelson looking sharp in their Class A Uniforms. This picture was taken in October of 2008, only a few months after returning from Afghanistan in support of OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM VIII.

Able Company Paratroopers Compete for their EIBs

The Expert Infantryman's Badge Test is a rite of passage among all Infantry soldiers. During the cold and rainy days of January 2009, dozens of Able Company Paratroopers competed for the right to proudly wear the EIB. After weeks of training on weapons' assembly and disassembly, functions checks, land navigation, marksmanship, and a variety of other basic Infantryman's tasks, Able Company Soldiers, along with Soldiers from the other companies in 2 Battalion, underwent a week of testing. Each Soldier competing for his EIB had 2 chances to correctly perform each station to standard. If they received a "NO GO" at 3 stations or a "DOUBLE NO GO" at any station they were automatically disqualified and would have to try again during the next EIB Test. However, for those select few that passed all their stations, they participated in a ceremony at the Post Theater where they were awarded their EIBs in front of their family and friends. Able Company had several Paratroopers earn their EIB this year, including 1LT Brandon Kennedy and 1LT Dan Keefe, who both earned theirs "True Blue," that is on their first try. Congratulations to all the Soldiers that earned their EIB and Good Luck to those who will compete next time.

Message from the Commander:

The last four months have been very busy but very rewarding for the WARLORDS. Our outstanding Paratroopers had an excellent Christmas block leave and then returned to move right into Expert Infantryman's Badge training and testing. During EIB the Able Company Warlords had 16 of the 23 candidates earn the coveted award—the most of any Company in the Battalion. The WARLORDS then completed a Jump week and moved right into marksmanship and Squad Live Fire training at Monte Romano training area. The Paratroopers have given 110% during all these training events and we fully appreciate all the support given to us by family and friends.

Squad Live Fire Field Training Exercises at Monte Romano

During 2 weeks in February, Able Company and the rest of 2/503 deployed to the Italian Training Range Monte Romano to conduct Squad Live Fire Exercises. Monte Romano is a small village 45 minutes North of Rome consisting of mainly farmland. During the first week, the Company conducted static ranges where they zeroed and qualified on their assigned weapon systems including the M4 rifle, M203 Grenade Launcher, and M249 Squad Automatic Weapon. Able Company Paratroopers also conducted familiarization fire with the MK-19 Automatic Grenade Launcher and practiced on their Close Quarters Combat skills. During the second week of training, each squad in the Company conducted a Live Fire Lane which included reacting to a simulated enemy contact. Every squad got a chance to negotiate the lane 4 times, twice during the day and twice at night. The training helped instill confidence among the squads and teams and build upon their already learned skills. The Forward Observers also got a chance to train as they went through with each of the squads and conducted a live Call For Fire with the 60mm, 81mm, and 120mm mortars. Overall the training was a great success and the Paratroopers of Able Company are ready to start Platoon Live Fire Training up at Grafenwoer this summer.

ROCK REPORT

ABLE



1: 01 MAR 2009
1LT Keefe and SFC Torres count hits on CQM Targets at Monte Romano

2: SGT Hurt gives a block of instruction on the MK-19 Weapon System at the CQM Range

3: SFC Lewis demonstrates how to properly search an EPW as members of 2nd PLT watch

4: SSG Estrada conducts the AAR for his Squad after finishing the day iteration of Squad Live Fire Lanes.

5: An Able CO soldier fires the MK-19 during the 1st Week of training at Monte Romano

6: An Able Co. Paratrooper conducts STX training at Monte Romano

7: CPT Nelson receives his Plaque from the Company

8: 2nd Platoon, Able Company at Monte Romano

CHANGE OF COMMAND

CPT DAVID J. NELSON

Unit: Able Company, 2/503 IN

MOS: 11A
(Infantry Officer)

Place of Birth:
Tampa, Florida



“My time with the WARLORDS has been the highlight of my career. I’ve learned an incredible amount and I’ll always treasure my time in Afghanistan and Italy with this incredible group of Paratroopers”

Date of Outgoing Ceremony: 25 March 2009

CPT JOSEPH B. SNOWDEN

Unit: Incoming to Able Company

MOS: 11A
(Infantry Officer)



Date of Incoming Ceremony: 25 March 2009



ROCK REPORT

CPT Joshua VanEtten
1SG James Hill



Commanding
Officer
CPT Van Etten

First Sergeant
1SG Hill

Executive Officer
1LT Moad

1 PLT
1LT Johnson
SFC Navas

2 PLT
1LT Kim
SFC Monroe

3 PLT
1LT Dabashinsky
SFC Pozin

FIST / HQ
1LT Lippman
SGT (P) Cruz

FRG Leader
Lori Van Etten
Phone: 349-491-7171
Email:
Lorivanet@yahoo.com



Soldiers from **Battle Company**, 2D BN (ABN), 503D IN prepare to assault an enemy position on a squad LFX at the Monte Romano training site on March 1st, 2008. The exercise was the culminating event of Monte Romano where squads conducted both day and night live fire iterations.

Monte Romano Training Rotation

Since the offset of the New Year, soldiers of Battle Company have been focusing on preparing for last month's Expert Infantryman's Badge testing where 11 (EIBs) were awarded to Battle Company paratroopers. Shortly after, the men began prepping for Monte Romano. In what was the first major battalion training event of the year, every Soldier was able to qualify with his weapon and team / squad leaders were able to hone their leadership skills in a squad live fire exercise. The training was a welcome change from garrison life, even if it was in the muddy Italian countryside just outside of Rome. Despite the numerous cease fires called due to livestock wandering into the impact areas, Battle Company was able to put thousands of live rounds down range from 5.56mm to 120mm mortars. Currently, the men of Battle Company are prepping for MOUT training at San Giorgio and subsequent airborne operations during the first week of April.



SGT(P) Hajar from 2nd PLT assaults a hilltop during the squad LFX at Monte Romano. Hajar was one of several Battle CO paratroopers who attended and successfully passed the field promotion board during the final days of the training cycle.

ROCK REPORT

BATTLE CO



Above: Battle CO, along with the rest of 2D BN traveled up to Aviano AFB last month to conduct a "combat light" jump. Battle CO spent the night outside the town of Maniago to practice patrol base activities.

Above and Right: 3rd PLT soldiers engage targets on the squad LFX at Monte Romano earlier this month. The range allowed team / squad leaders to practice the fundamentals of Battle Drill 1A with a 120mm live call for fire at the end of the lane.



Left: Sorry Texas fans but even in Italy, Oklahoma still rules.

ROCK REPORT



CPT Christopher Rowe 1SG Shane Sport



Commanding
Officer
CPT Rowe

First Sergeant
1SG Sport

Executive Officer
1LT Schick

1 PLT
1LT Tato
SFC King

2 PLT
1LT Keating
SFC Jensen

3 PLT
1LT Meehan
SFC Phillips

FIST / HQ
1LT Kuball
SSG Chase

FRG Leader
Rachel Perez
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320-713-0549
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Chosen Company, 2nd BN (ABN), 503rd IN.

MG William B Garrett III as he presents valor awards to six soldiers of Chosen Company. Pictured here from left to right are SFC Erich Phillips, SGT John Hayes, SPC Jeffery Scantlin, 1LT Aaron Thurman, SGT Hector Chavez, and SPC Tyler Hanson.

EIB Qualification- Back from Christmas leave, the Soldiers of Chosen Company conducted their Expert Infantry Badge (EIB) qualification. The EIB process began before block leave with the company conducting the pre-requisites to include the Army Physical Fitness Test, a road march, rifle marksmanship, and land navigation. The standards for a "Go" in each event varied, but required the individual soldier to perform at his best. For the Army Physical Fitness Test, each soldier was required to score a 70% or better in each event. The road march was based along a twelve mile course with a 35lbs combat load, weapon, and helmet and required a time of under three hours. The rifle marksmanship portion required each soldier to qualify expert with their assigned weapon, the M4, by shooting 38 out of 40 targets. Finally, Soldiers had to complete both a day and night land navigation course, scoring 2 out of 3 points.

After completing the pre-requisites, the soldier then moves to the training and testing portion of the EIB qualification. The two week training introduced soldiers to the different individual Soldier tasks they would soon be required to accomplish to standard and time. The EIB training and testing varied from weapons assembly, to personal combat techniques. Overall 24 soldiers from Chosen started the EIB training. From that group, eight Soldiers received the necessary goes and were awarded the prestigious EIB badge. Out of those eight, three distinguished themselves by earning the EIB with no deficiencies, or in other words, they earned their badge "true blue." Chosen Company congratulates it's newest EIB awardees and expects them to continue to bring pride and honor to the future of the Chosen Few.

Battle of Wanat Awards Ceremony-

The Paratroopers of 2-503D IN (ABN) honored the heroes of the Battle of Wanat on Friday March 20, 2009. Six Soldiers from Chosen Company 2-503D received awards for valor for their actions on 13 July 2008, when their Vehicle Patrol Base at Wanat, Afghanistan was attacked by over 200 Anti-Afghan Forces. SFC Erich Phillips, SGT John Hayes, and SPC Jeffrey Scantlin received the Silver Star and 1LT Aaron Thurman, SGT Hector Chavez and SPC Tyler Hanson received the Bronze Star with V Device. The awards were presented following a speech by MG William B. Garret, commending the awardees and the men of Chosen Company for their valor that day and throughout the deployment.

Monte Romano- On 23 March 2008, Chosen Company departed for their first collective training event of the New Year at Monte Romano. After weeks of preparation and training, the Paratroopers of Chosen Company were able to put their skills to use during their time in the field. Monte Romano offered our Chosen Paratroopers an opportunity to develop their Close Quarters Marksmanship, Heavy weapons, and combat patrolling skills. It also provided an opportunity for the company to work together as a team away from the garrison environment for the first time.

Upon arrival, paratroopers led by SSG Otfinoski took the lead in setting up the training sites and the tents where the Paratroopers would spend the next two weeks. The rest of the Company arrived the following Monday and were able to fall in and begin training the next day. During the first week of training, the Chosen Paratroopers refreshed their shooting skills at the available static ranges. The ranges varied from CQM, to M4 qualification, to MK-19, and M-203 shooting skills. The Paratroopers made good use of their time while not shooting by brushing up on their patrolling SOP's and applying them to various patrolling scenarios.

Throughout the second week, members of the Chosen Few set up a Stress Shoot Range that proved to be both instructional and fun to all who participated, especially for those that had the fortune to do the range in the mud and the rain. As expected, the members of the "Chosen Few" drove on with training despite the poor weather conditions. SGT Chinchilla and SGT Rux, 1st Platoon Chosen Company, set the Company and Battalion standard by achieving the highest overall score and at the end of the training week were recognized by the Battalion Commander and Command Sergeant Major. For their efforts they were awarded a Battalion coin and a three-day weekend.

The successful training event allowed the Paratroopers of Chosen Company to demonstrate their ability to think on their feet, and improvise when needed, as they fell onto other company's training plans. As predicted, the Chosen Few's field time at Monte Romano allowed for some great training and even a few fun times as well.

ROCK REPORT

CHOSEN



1

1: CHOSEN soldiers engage targets from the corners of a small structure



2

2: Men of 3rd Sqd, 3rd Plt in the always required "we're badass" picture



3

3: One of the CHOSEN FEW as he fires during the stress shoot at the Monte Romano Field Exercise



4

4: Nothing better than a sweet power slide with a loaded assault weapon



5

5: A CHOSEN buddy team prepares to move to their next position while participating in the Combat Stress Shoot



6

6: 1LT Aaron Thurman is pinned with his Bronze Star Medal w/V Device for Valor by MG William Garrett



7

7: CHOSEN CO stands tall in respect for it's heroes during the Battle of Wanat Award Ceremony



THE CHOSEN FEW



ROCK REPORT

CPT Ryan Turner 1SG Stephen Zaleski



Commanding
Officer
CPT Turner

First Sergeant
1SG Zaleski

Executive
Officer
1LT Gillespie

1 PLT
1LT Nguyen
SFC Macaranas

2 PLT
1LT Nihill
SFC Garcia

3 PLT
1LT Murawski
SFC Anderson

4 PLT
SFC Lopez

FIST / HQ
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Photo by 1LT Curbelo

Destined Company, 2 BN (ABN), 503 IN.
Takes the lead in CQM with the Company shoot house. 2nd Platoon does a superior job in designing and constructing an indoor shoot house in the company bay. The company is preparing for SQD Live Fires in Monte Carpegna next week.

First Platoon

1st PLT Dragons bonded together during the Monte Romano FTX as a platoon. Our junior leadership trained over 20 Soldiers from Fusion company on close quarters marksmanship. We also took charge of Destined Company collective driver's training as well as vehicle recovery and reacting to an IED. 1st platoon set the standard for the stress shoot event in our company. As a result, SGT Ochoa and SGT Sandberg received recognition from the Battalion Commander and the CSM. 1st PLT also welcomes our new section leader SSG Frazier and his family to Italy. We look forward to our next challenge at Monte Carpegna.

Second Platoon

2nd PLT, Destined Company is proud to welcome two new soldiers to the Platoon. PVT Katanic and PV2 Randazzio are recent graduates of Airborne School and have already displayed great enthusiasm and willingness to learn. Last week, 2nd PLT said goodbye to SPC King, who was PCSing and changing his MOS to Imagery Analyst. The platoon wishes SPC King all the best. The platoon has been busy in recent weeks with intense training at Monte Romano. The Soldiers displayed an incredible work ethic in supporting the company during two days of M4 and Close Quarters Marksmanship training.

Message from the Commander:

There has been a lot going on in Destined Company since the last new letter: I took command from CPT Rowe in late January, we had 5 men earn their EIB with 3 being "True Blue" – great job, we completed our first Collective Training Block at Monte Romano and have farewelled many great men – while welcoming many new faces. Congratulations to LT Cummings, SGT Crivello, SGT Ochoa and SPC Gomez for earning their EIBs. I would not know where to begin with congratulating individuals for their performances at Monte Romano since everyone did such an outstanding job – but I will congratulate SSG Tobias for destroying the competition during the company's first stress shoot – great job for a FISTER! Finally, it is an absolute privilege to lead the fine men of this company! Destined continues to Lead The Way!

2nd PLT is looking forward to setting the bar for the company at the Monte Carpegna field exercise in the execution of the squad live fire and by organizing the event.

Fourth Platoon

During the last quarter, 4th Platoon had the opportunity to participate in EIB training. Congratulations to SPC Gomez, 1LT Cummings, and SGT Crivello on their earning of the prestigious badge. The Platoon also deployed for two weeks to Monte Romano, Italy to participate on Close Quarters Marksmanship training, and Mounted Movement to Contact Training. The Platoon performed above standards having been the first time we work together as a team.

As we initiate preparations for upcoming deployments, we are delighted to receive new members to the family. The Platoon welcomes PV2 Coty Morris and PVT Cody Cockerham who just completed Basic Training and AIT at Ft. Benning, GA. We also welcome SGT Sean Sandlin who PCSd from Ft. Stewart, GA, and SGT Dusty Doyle and wife Nicole, whom PCSd from Ft. Bragg, NC. Additionally, coming from our Battalion Scout Platoon we welcome SPC Juan Gomez, his wife Davia, and their daughter Dana. We would like to wish a fond farewell to SGT Patterson, who left the Army, and 1LT Cummings, and SGT Beachnaw who moved to HHC 2-503.



ROCK REPORT

CPT Ryan Turner ISG Stephen Zaleski



SGT Parker training at Monte Romano



SSG Falcon guides SGT Ellender while he gives a class on CQM

Third Platoon

This past month was a significant time for Destined Company 3rd PLT, we completed our first collective training event, several Soldiers went and completed schools, and the platoon continued its proud heritage by jumping into Aviano Air Base.

The month started with the return of SGT Victor Parker from Warrior Leader's Course, commonly referred to as WLC. SGT Parker learned a lot more about being an NCO in today's Army and continuing the tradition of excellence that others have created before him. At WLC SGT Parker refined his basic Soldier skills such as land navigation, basic rifle marksmanship, combatives, and many more. As well as basic Soldier skills, SGT Parker continued to refine his leadership style and exceeded the course standard by showing the other NCOs what a good leader does. Around the time that SGT Parker was returning from WLC in Germany, SPC Christopher Sainsbury was completing the EMT course here on Caserma Ederle. The EMT course was taught by Major Rather the Battalion's Physician's Assistant. Throughout the course SPC Sainsbury built upon his prior existing medical skills. SPC Sainsbury will be a great asset when this unit deploys again with his additional medical training.

Destined Company moved out to Aviano Air Base for a week of Airborne Ops. Everyone who was able to jump during this time was able to jump twice. The jumps were a little more intense this time because once we landed on the ground we conducted link-up operations, started training on movements, and basic battle drills. Destined Company is going to miss the next jump week due to training at Monte Carpegna.

Destined Company's main focus this past month has been the collective training at Monte Romano, an Italian base just north of Rome. 3rd Platoon was the advance party for the company and was responsible for setting up the ranges to ensure everything was ready once the rest of the company arrived. The platoon worked really hard during this time and missed a weekend, but really came together and had some fun while we were there by ourselves. Once the rest of the company arrived, the training was kicked into high gear. The first week was dedicated to live-fire static ranges; the soldiers were able to shoot M-4s, M249s, M240Bs, MK-19s, and some were able to shoot the M203 and M9. The next week was dedicated to maneuver live-fire ranges. SPC Kellison and PV2 Kirts stood out as the gunners during the mounted react to contact live-fire exercise.

The training this month was exciting and advanced the Soldiers' skills to better prepare them for the coming deployment.



ROCK REPORT

CPT Ryan Turner ISG Stephen Zaleski



SPC Dawson Coordinating Fires with JTAC in JTAC FTX

Head Quarters Platoon

FIST- Fortunately the FIST has had some great opportunities to train outside and inside of Italy. At the beginning of the new year, the FIST was sent to Graffenwoer Germany to be a part of the Battalion FIST platoon as well as train and compete as separate teams. Destined Company FIST shot over 60 live rounds and completed both basic and complex CFF. Our FIST was chosen to certify in front of the BDE FECC and completed all CFF from Level 1 to Level 3. On another note, SPC Dawson and 1LT Curbelo were sent to Egland AFB, FL to control CAS and the AC-130. They both controlled and dropped live ordnance with the F-15E and F/A-18E. They also shot 105mm cannons off of the impressive AC-130. Finally, our newest FO's PFC McPherson and PFC Jones were welcomed to 2nd and 3rd platoon. They are adjusting well to the Infantry life and are expected to perform a normally E-5's job as PFC's.

Medics- Provided medical coverage for Multiple RFR training events, Marksmanship Indoor Range, Basic Airborne Refresher course, and the Expert Infantryman Badge. Participated in a battalion level, multiple company, medical training event. This training tested the medics both physically and mentally to their fullest potential. The feed back from multiple senior medics was that this training provided the greatest training assets and it was one the medics enjoyed the most. As we welcome SPC Roberts and PFC Sisson to the company, we prepare to say good by to SGT Hjelmsted next month and SGT Burgin, Destined Company's Senior Line Medic, in May.



Top: 1LT Curbelo, SRA Fayette (JTACROMAD), and SPC Dawson
Below: PFC Jones, PFC McPherson in Germany



ROCK REPORT



CPT Matthew Sweeney ISG Christopher Turk



Commanding
Officer
CPT Matt
Sweeney

First Sergeant
1SG Turk

Executive Officer
1LT Arambula

Distro PLT
2LT Welch
SSG Scaliter

Maint PLT
1LT Murphy
SSG Miller

Shop Office
CW2 Rodriguez
SSG Wemhoff

HQ Platoon
SSG Saldarini

Operations
SGT Dingle
SPC Marquez
SPC Proud

FRG Leader
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Soldiers from **Fusion Company**, 2D BN (ABN), 503D IN receive valuable MK-19 training from SPC Peyton of the Distribution Platoon. The company was able to conduct familiarity fire of 75% of assigned personnel, as well as conduct live fire exercise.

Monte Romano Training Rotation

The training exercise lasted only two weeks, but during that short time Fusion was able to train considerably. The hardest part about being a logistician is being proficient at both logistics and tactical operations. Monte Romano allowed the Fusion Company a chance to hone both of these important skills.

Fusion provided field feeding support, ammunition management, petroleum products, transportation operations, and contact maintenance support to the battalion. Fusion Soldiers had to juggle their external support mission, while at the same time taking advantage of every training opportunity.

A special relationship was clearly developing between the supporters and the supported during Monte Romano. Fusion Soldiers were well taken care of by their Infantry brothers at every range. The training received was of high caliber and valuable to the Fusion. It was not uncommon that a cook would spend all night cooking, then use their personal recovery time to train on their assigned weapon etc. Bottom line is that these Fusion Soldiers take extreme pride in supporting "The ROCK" and it was their time to shine.

In addition to the logistical support Fusion was able to train 75% of the company on the MK-19 grenade launcher, conduct convoy live fire, first aid, M-4, CQM, stress shoot, nighttime convoy operations, and many other combat skills.



Logistical Warriors PFC Owens, SPC Sulick and PVT Walker replace transmission of Destined Vehicle within 24 hours!

Family Readiness Group Lunch

Fusion had a pot-luck lunch with the ladies of the FRG on March 12th. The lunch was an opportunity to thank all the spouses who sacrifice to support our outstanding Soldiers. Fusion conducted an awards ceremony during the lunch to recognize individuals who "committed themselves to excellence".

ROCK REPORT

FUSION CO



Above: Distribution platoon soldiers SPC Peyton and SPC Wheeler conduct ASP operations in support of weapons ranges. The Fusion Company maintained accountability for over 250K rounds!



Above: Fusion's own "Combat Yankee" supply sergeant SSG Adams lays down effective fire with the MK-19. When he is not destroying the enemy with lethal fires he is ordering needed company supplies.



Above: Fusion Soldiers with their ammunition eager to get some "Trigger Time" on the MK-19. Some of the Fusion Soldiers with combat experience from Afghanistan were very impressive with their mastery of the MK-19.



Above: Fusion Soldiers SPC Marquez, SPC Heckelsmiller and 1LT Arambula conduct international operations in order to obtain logistical support from our Italian allies. Would you believe that the Italians only demand for providing fuel was a box of MREs!