



Rainbow Division Soldiers Work on the Railroad – to Deploy

Three Railhead Operations Send 42nd Infantry Division Equipment South to Philadelphia

Story and photos by SSG Raymond Drumsta, 42nd Infantry Division

FORT DRUM, NY – Rainbow Division Soldiers have turned their vehicles into rolling stock for their final destination—Iraq, and Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.

Division Soldiers conducted the first of three railhead operations here on Sunday, September 26, loading their first group of vehicles—160 in all, including trucks, trailers, and track vehicles—onto railroad flatcars for shipment to Kuwait. It was another milestone along the Rainbow Division’s road from mobilization to deployment for Operation Iraqi Freedom 3, according to MAJ Edward Walther, officer in charge of the railhead operation.

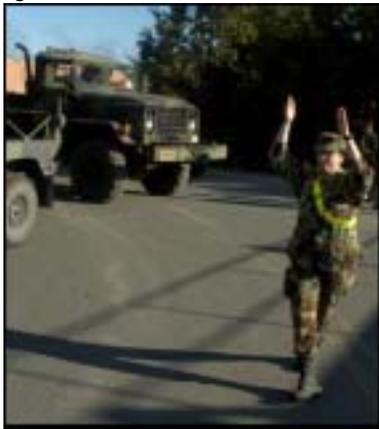
“This is the first railhead operation for the 42nd Infantry Division since World War II,” said Walther. “This is the first time since World War II that the division, in its entirety, is rolling.”

Roll they did. Rainbow Soldiers mustered before dawn Sunday to stage their vehicles near the rail yard. Wearing Kevlar helmets, reflective belts, and gloves the Soldiers worked until late afternoon, driving Hummvees, 5-ton trucks and armored personnel carriers onto narrow

flatbed railcars—a potentially dangerous task, according to Walther.

“You’re basically driving down a railcar,” Walther said. “Any one of the vehicles can slip off.”

Soldiers stationed on each railcar ground-guided vehicles down the railcars and kept drivers safe and on track. In the Indian



FOLLOW ME: PFC Karen McGaa, 42nd Infantry Division G1 Section, helps stage vehicles for loading onto railcars.

summer afternoon, the Soldiers transformed the railcars into a vast, mobile 42nd Infantry Division motor pool. Walther said the Soldiers made the mission a success, despite their inexperience with railhead operations.

“Very few people argued,” he said. “The cooperation was



BRING IT ON: A 42nd Infantry Division Soldier ground-guides a five-ton truck onto a narrow railcar during railhead operations here on September 26th.

exceptional. There were some lessons learned. Bottom line—the vehicles were loaded, and no one got hurt.”

Walther also praised the expertise of the civilian employees.

“Whatever they said to do, we did. The safety briefing was excellent.”

The vehicles will go by rail to Philadelphia, where civilian stevedores will drive them aboard ships and stow them with other unit equipment, including 42nd Infantry Division equipment containers and helicopters. The helicopters will be partially disassembled and shrink-wrapped for the nearly month-long voyage, according to MAJ Bernie Spoerri, a 42nd Infantry Division Transportation officer.

About a dozen Division Soldiers will travel with the equipment aboard each ship, added Spoerri. These Soldiers, called ‘supercargoes’, will routinely check the vehicles for leaks or other problems during the ocean crossing. The equipment will be off-loaded by Soldiers in Kuwait and placed in a marshalling area to await 42nd Infantry Division Soldiers.

The railhead operations will be completed next week.

“This is another step to deployment,” said Walther. “We trained with our equipment. Now our equipment is being shipped. We’ll marry up with our equipment in Kuwait and move forward into Iraq.”

Rainbow Division Departure Ceremonies Set For October 8th, 9th

FORT DRUM, NY, FORT DIX, NJ -- The 42nd Infantry Division will host two departure ceremonies for deploying Soldiers and their families — October 8th at 12:00 noon and October 9th at 10:00 a.m. The ceremonies will take place at Fort Drum’s Magrath Sports Complex and the Trenton Civic Center,

respectively.

Division Soldiers have completed their collective and individual training and will don their desert camouflage uniforms for the ceremonies to show they’re now part of Task Force Liberty Resolve and Operation Iraqi Freedom 3.

So, tell us how you really feel...

Rainbow Division Soldiers we spoke with all agreed when we asked them how they felt now that the Division is wrapping up training and preparing to depart Fort Drum for Kuwait:

SPC Lee Oswald Cine, 42nd Infantry Division Artillery: *"On one hand, I feel good the training is done—we're ready. On the other hand, it's hard to leave your loved ones behind."*



1LT Bryan Miller, 642nd Military Intelligence Battalion: *"We're ready. Let's go now."*

SPC LaRon Green, 250th Signal Battalion: *"I'm ready to go. At this point, I'm looking forward to it."*



SPC Carla Hernandez, 272nd Chemical Company: *"I feel like I just want to leave Fort Drum. I just want to get the mission done and over with."*

SGT Anthony Padin, 42nd Military Police Company: *"I'm looking forward to the experience of Iraq. I'm a little nervous, but other than that, I'm motivated."*



RAINBOW DIVISION VETERANS MEMORIAL FOUNDATION

Membership in the Rainbow Division Veterans Memorial Foundation, the Association of all those who served in the famed 42nd Rainbow Infantry Division in either World War I or World War II, that now includes the New York National Guard Chapter of the 42nd Infantry Division (Mech), is now open to anyone who has worn or now wears the Rainbow patch as a member of the National Guard.

In 1998, at the Annual meeting in Duluth, the foundation's constitution and bylaws were changed to allow the New York National Guard 42nd Division to form a chapter, but only one chapter was allowed. This past July, at the annual meeting in Memphis, a new change was added allowing chapters to be formed in any of the states where the 42nd has units. This means that now any six people who presently wear the Rainbow patch or have worn it in the past are eligible to form a new chapter. National dues are \$10 and there is a \$3.50 charge for the charter.

As the Rainbow veterans of World War I have passed away and as those veterans of Rainbow in World War II are passing on, we need your support to carry on the great traditions of Rainbow Division.

If possible, try to attend one of our upcoming events: Veterans Day celebration in both Birmingham, Alabama or Garden City, Long Island, New York; our Midyear meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, February 9-13, 2005; or our Annual meeting in Indianapolis, Indiana, July 12-16, 2005.

For further information contact the National Secretary Herbert Butt, 16916 George Franklyn Drive, Independence, MO 64055, telephone (816) 373-5041. His Email address is rainbowherbb@comcast.net.

Announcements & Messages:



VIDEO POSTCARDS: The 42nd Infantry Division Public Affairs Section will be producing video postcards for Soldiers who adopt or correspond with classrooms and schools while overseas. Those interested should contact SFC Dean Welch, 42nd ID Public Affairs Section, at fortysecond.id.pao@us.army.mil



TO THE SOLDIERS OF THE 42ND ID: It is with our deepest regard that we salute you for your heroism and bravery during these tension-filled times in America and throughout the world. Without a shadow of a doubt, we know that your efforts allow us to maintain a safe existence in America, the greatest country in the world. Thank you for your service, which

we reap the rewards of every day.

In our line of work, we are constantly impressed by the athletic accomplishments of ballplayers. And although that makes an indelible imprint in our minds, it is your willingness to put yourselves in harms way on a frequent basis that is truly awe-inspiring. In our culture, you define what is right.

Again, thank you for all that you do. Our thoughts and prayers are with you.

Sincerely yours,

Alfred Santasiere, Assistant Director, Publications & Multimedia, New York Yankees

Rob Bernstein, Coordinator, Fans Services New York Yankees

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