



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
Public Affairs Office**

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Base defense Soldiers go on offensive, in softball

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CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE Q-WEST, Iraq — Washington Guardsmen from the 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, based out of Everett, Wash., started a softball team, “B-Pro,” the first sports team the unit has put together since it deployed here six months ago.

The team’s coach, 1st Lt. Kurt Strauss from Spokane, Wash., was a softball “skipper,” softball talk for coach, back in the “Evergreen state,” and was eager to start a team with Soldiers from throughout the battalion.

“This has bridged the force protection company and the base defense operations center relationship and gives us the opportunity to compete together,” said Strauss. “It’s a lot different now; we’re having a good time, and getting to know each other.”

The team has a lot of rookies, but Strauss has seen much improvement from his players since they first assembled.

“Our team has improved so much since the first time on the field,” said Strauss.

“Everyone’s having a good time and everyone is representing the 81st BSTB well.”

The 81st BSTB is responsible for force protection and base defense operations at Q-West. They have been in Iraq for six months, and expect to return home at the end of summer.

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Soldiers from the 81st Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, out of Everett, Wash., gather around softball coach 1st Lt. Kurt Strauss, a Spokane, Wash., native, to get the line-up for their softball game at the Sgt. Jose Velez Field at Contingency Operating Base Q-West, Iraq, April 11. (Photo by Capt. Jacqueline Baird)