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RELEASE #2009-04-07-2      2009: THE YEAR OF THE NCO      April 7, 2009

### **‘Operation Saber Charge’ gives cavalry platoon leaders a chance to plan, execute operating procedures**

**By Mark Heeter**

U.S. Army Garrison Schweinfurt Public Affairs Office

**SCHWEINFURT, Germany** – Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry Regiment (Airborne) wrapped up a 10-day training exercise called “Operation Saber Charge” March 31.



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Soldiers of the 1st Squadron, 91st Cavalry run through a training mission at Camp Robertson, near Schweinfurt, Germany, during the 10-day exercise ‘Operation Saber Charge.’

The exercise offered platoon leaders and their Soldiers the opportunity to train on a wide variety of tasks.

“It’s an opportunity on the dry-fire ranges to get the new platoon leaders to move their platoons around with commander oversight” with outside observer-controller oversight, explained Capt. Perry Morton, a spokesman for the 1-91st.

The missions included live firing at Wildflecken

ranges, as well as cordon-and-search, mounted patrol and dismounted key leader engagements at Camp Robertson training area.

“Having a training area out here like this -- close to Ledward (Barracks), close to the Bundeswehr -- allows us to concentrate on the training, rather than the preparation,” Morton said.

Operation Saber Charge gave small, platoon-sized units a chance to find their rhythm and define their standard operating procedures, according to 1st Lt. Jay Feldt, platoon leader for 1st platoon, Blackhorse Troop.

“There are so many different scenarios. Right now we’re trying to get our baseline, trying to get the basics down. That way we can form our team, our platoon,” Feldt said.

“You can plan a perfect plan and have the most detailed thing, but as soon as you ‘cross that wire,’ you have no idea what’s going to happen. Anything can happen. You can’t plan for everything. So we’re trying to develop those thinking skills, so they don’t need their leaders to tell them exactly what they do,” he said.

Feldt, his platoon sergeant, Sgt. 1st Class Steve Carbajal, and senior scout Staff Sgt. Jeff Marschewski, are a brand-new leadership team, and were using the exercise to develop their platoon standard operating procedures.

“This is the first time the three of us are working together,” Carbajal said.

“It gives us an opportunity to see what we need to do to get the information to the lowest level,” and allows them to develop plans constantly,” he added.

The Soldiers used the exercise to draw on each others’ knowledge and experiences, especially because they represent such a combat-tested group of Soldiers, Marschewski said.

“We’ve got a lot of different guys from a lot of different units. And when we all come together and come with different plans, we’ve got good knowledge around the platoon,” he said.

During the cordon-and-search missions, while Soldiers were on the ground fighting house-to-house, Apache helicopter crews from the Ansbach, Germany-based 12th Combat Aviation Brigade provided air support.

The 12th CAB added air attack and air lift support to the training, said Lt. Col. Paul Fellingner, squadron commander.

Watching a cordon-and-search mission March 24, Fellingner called his unit “one of the most versatile units in the United States Army. We can do it from a parachute. We can do it from a vehicle. We can walk in.”

Feldt, likely sharing the sentiments of his fellow platoon leaders, was grateful for the chance to exercise their leadership within the confines of the larger, squadron-level mission.

“(Squadron leadership) also allowed us about three days or so to ourselves, so that we can specifically develop our own plans, down to the troop level, down to the section and team level. And that’s what we really need,” he said.

More photos from Operation Saber Charge are available at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/schweinfurtpao>



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