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STRYKER REGIMENT CASES ITS COLORS AS IT READIES FOR SECOND DEPLOYMENT TO IRAQ

By Sgt. Aimee Millham

U.S. Army Europe Public Affairs Office

VILSECK, Germany -- Lt. Gen. James D. Thurman did not mince words when he addressed thousands of 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment Soldiers during their Aug. 3 farewell ceremony here.

“I’ll venture to say you’ll face a fight as soon as you hit the ground,” the V Corps commander said. Despite that blunt assessment, the general said he has no doubt of the regiment’s ability to succeed.

“While many challenges lie ahead, none are insurmountable, because of your outstanding training, excellent leadership, and dedication and devotion to duty,” he said.

During the ceremony the regiment cased its colors, symbolizing the unit’s pending deployment to Iraq. The unit has been in Germany for one year and received orders to deploy in the spring.

“It is our honor and privilege to carry these colors into battle,” said Col. John RisCassi, 2nd SCR commander. “We will not let down the members of the Regiment, past and present, nor our friends and family in Vilseck.”



SPC SHANE ESCHENBURG

From left: Col. John RisCassi, commander of V Corps' 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment; 2nd SCR Command Sgt. Maj. Victor Martinez; Chris Golden, a senior representative of the 2nd SCR Association, and V Corps Commander Lt. Gen. James D. Thurman prepare to case the regiment's colors during a farewell ceremony for the unit in Vilseck, Germany Aug. 3. The ceremony marked the regiment's upcoming deployment for its second tour in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

This deployment will mark the second Operation Iraqi Freedom mission for the 2nd SCR, one of four U.S. Army Europe brigade-sized units deploying this year.

“It’s tough leaving, but I’m excited to get over there and serve the people of Iraq,” said 2nd SCR Command Sgt. Maj. Victor Martinez.

The deployment will be Martinez’s second with the regiment, and he says he is certain the unit’s camaraderie and cohesion will carry them through.

“I get guys who tell me, ‘Here we go again, sergeant major; let’s do this,’ and it warms my heart,” he said.

Though communications NCO Sgt. David Acosta is new to the regiment, he said he is already part of that camaraderie. “I got a warm welcome, and they brought me in like a family,” he said.



SPC SHANE ESCHENBURG

Retired Master Sgt. Merrit Powell, bagpiper for V Corps’ 2nd Stryker Cavalry Regiment, watches the regiment’s Soldiers move into formation during the unit’s farewell ceremony in Vilseck, Germany Aug. 3.

The regiment’s 171-year history makes it the oldest cavalry regiment in the Army. Formerly the 1st Brigade, 25th Infantry Division, the unit re-flagged as the 2nd SCR in June 2006, prior to its move to Vilseck from Fort Lewis, Wash.

