

OBSERVATION POST

MCAGCC TWENTYNINE PALMS

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Since 1957

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FORGING friendships

US Marines train with Royal British counterparts

CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

For more than 100 years, the U.S. and British militaries have shared a close bond that is reinforced every generation through joint training and shared hardships during deployments.

The British Royal Marines 40 Commando, a battalion-size military force, and U.S. Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment brushed up on the basics during cross-training classes at range 215 Sept. 30.

Sgt. Noel Rodriguez, a platoon guide with 1/7, said how the long history together and similarities in training and operations helped them work together and build a sense of camaraderie.

"I love to do a little cross training," said British Royal Marine Sgt. Cameron Smith, mountain leader with the reconnaissance troop with the 40 Commandos. "You get other

ideas off of people of how to do things. It's obvious everyone thinks they are doing things right. But you might see an American unit do something and think,

See BRITISH, A5



[Right] Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, and the 40 Commando, British Royal Marines combine their skills as they breach an empty building during a cross training exercise at Range 215, Sept. 30.



PFC. ALI AZIMI

Marines take on Black Alligator exercise

PFC. ALI AZIMI

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, cross-trained with the British Royal Marines 40 Commando, a battalion sized unit, during Black Alligator at the Combat Center's military terrain at Range 215 Sept. 30.

Black Alligator consisted of a series of exercises simulating possible situations the Marines, may encounter while deployed.

As both the British Royal Marines and U.S. Marines worked in mixed units at the stations, each teaching a different skill point, they showed

one another the training methods they were taught.

"U.S. Marines are in Afghanistan, as are the Royal Marines," said British Royal Marine Maj. Chris Hall, the commanding officer for Company C, 40 Commando British Royal Marines. "It's important you get to know individuals who are going to be there working with you."

The exercise tested and refreshed the multi-national Marines' abilities in subduing resistant combatants, clearing and breaching rooms, performing tactical movements into a building, hard take-downs of vehicles and combat hunters.

At the first station, Marines practiced the methods of combat hunters.

They practiced judging

the size and speed of an enemy force by their footprints, and their direction of travel by the trails they left

behind in the sand.

"It's a perishable skill," said U.S. Marine Lance Cpl. Austin L. Priest, a rifleman with 1/7. "They brought it back today."

The next station covered the hard takedown of a vehicle.

As a mixed group of U.S. and British Royal Marines approached the scrapped rusted truck used for these simulations, one or two other Marines sat inside, simulating combatants.

These "dummy" Marines responded to capture with different levels of resistance. While some were compliant, others tried to fight and run.

These carrying tactics forced the apprehending Marines to think on their feet as they attempted to immobilize the enemy roleplayers.

The Commandos emphasized the benefits of using leverage instead of strength when pulling out combatants to give Marines the advantage, no matter what the size or strength of the enemy.

In the next training exercise, teams of four-to-six Marines, traveled through the MOUT town, clearing buildings.

Within these buildings, Marines acting as combatants

See ALLIGATOR, A5



PFC. ALI AZIMI

A Royal British Marine with 40 Commando demonstrates a hog-tying tactic for detaining prisoners.

New barracks, better living ■ Marines at home with more upgrades

CPL. WILLIAM JACKSON

COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Rumors about improvements featured in the new barracks have made their way through the so-called lance corporal underground.

From an amphitheatre, volleyball court and a batting-cage to a theater room, gaming room and a full kitchen, the rumor mill has spit out some crazy topics.

All of which are true.

"I'm really enthused for the Marines that are going to live here," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Lawanda Hall, the G-1 staff non-

commissioned officer in charge, during a leadership walk-through Sept. 28.

The moment the Marines set their eyes on the dormitory-style common area filled with pool and air-hockey tables, high definition TVs and couches, they were amazed.

"I'm taken away by the amenities here," said Hall. "This place is going to be more like a home now instead of just a place to sleep and store their gear."

The \$128 million dollar three-building complex houses 576 rooms, 144 dry-

ers, 72 washers, security cameras, fire pits, natural gas grills and misting coolers for the Marines.

The barracks are also equipped with energy-saving features that aim to help preserve the environment and save the Corps money.

"The windows open, and when that happens the air conditioner automatically turns off," said Emmett Guette, the sector three barracks coordinator, during the leadership walk-through.

Corporals and below will now have two-person

rooms with a twin size beds, individual walk-in closet, desks and chairs. Each room is also stocked with a refrigerator, freezer and microwave.

Sergeants will have a one-person room with a full size bed and the same features as the corporals and below rooms.

"The times have changed," said Hall. "I had three roommates in a room roughly the same size. Plus, having a kitchen area is working for towards a healthier lifestyle. Everything they need will be at home."

Do's and don'ts for barracks life

DO use liquid detergent in washing machines. This helps expand the lifespan of the machines.

DO use microfiber cleaning cloths to keep from scratching new furniture.

DON'T rearrange the rooms. This reduces damages to walls, flooring or furniture.

DON'T use tacks, nails or push-pins to hang decor on the walls.

DON'T use harsh chemicals, including stripper, on flooring. Just sweep and mop.

Four excuses women use to avoid regular mammograms

SHARI LOPATIN
TriWest Healthcare Alliance

When Mara Street turned 40, she received a call from TRICARE to recommend she go for her first yearly mammogram.

Street, who resides in Great Falls, Mont., and is the wife of a retired Air Force captain, didn't listen at first.

"I deleted the message. I'm a healthy young woman. I do not have a history of breast cancer," she said.

But two weeks later, TRICARE called again. This time, Street listened. And after going for her first mammogram, she learned she had breast cancer.

"If it hadn't been for TriWest making two phone calls, we may have waited until she was 50 years of age and our opportunities and options would have been grossly limited," said her husband, Tim.

Many women put off their yearly mammograms for a variety of reasons. But as Street, a mother of six, can attest, nothing should get in the way. A mammogram saved her life.

Here are four common excuses women use to avoid getting their mammograms, and why they

should stop avoiding this lifesaving screening:

"I'm too busy."

Having a mammogram will only take a few moments, usually three to five minutes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Typically, it's less than an hour from checking in to walking out the door.

Also, a woman's risk for developing breast cancer grows as she gets older. The sooner you detect breast cancer, the better your chance of survival, as cited on the Susan G. Komen for the Cure website. Remember, what's the point of "being too busy," if you can't be there for your family someday?

"It hurts."

As a general rule, having a mammogram may cause some minor discomfort. Yes, there is pressure on the breast tissue—but it is pressure, not pain.

"Nothing can be wrong if I don't check."

Breast cancer is the most common type of cancer in American women, other than skin cancer, according to the CDC. Therefore, the odds are against you if you don't check. Just getting older increases your risk.

"I don't know where to go for a mammogram."

Your doctor can give you some options of where you can conveniently get a mammogram. Your closest option might be at a base clinic or a local imaging center. Sometimes these are called radiology centers. Always call to make sure your mammography center is TRICARE-authorized.

TRICARE covers mammograms for women starting at age 40. For those considered at high-risk for breast cancer, TRICARE begins covering mammograms at 35 years old.

From the CDC, some of the warning signs of breast cancer include:

- A new lump in the breast or armpit
- Thickening or swelling of the breast
- Nipple discharge, other than breast milk, including blood
- Change in size or shape of the breast
- Pain in any area of the breast

To watch Mara Street's story firsthand, visit <http://www.TriWest.com/MissiontoServe>. For more information about breast cancer prevention, visit <http://www.TriWest.com/BreastHealth>.

Hot Topics

FRAUD, WASTE, MISMANAGEMENT HOTLINE

The Command Inspector General's Fraud, Waste, Mismanagement Hotline is available to all military personnel, civilian employees and family members at 830-7749 or DSN 230-7749. Facsimiles can be called in at 830-6155 or DSN 230-6155. You can also file a complaint at SMBPLMS CenterInspector@usmc.mil.

CAREERS IN WATER

The ABCs of Water is a presentation about the benefits of tapping into a career in water where there is security, competitive salaries and room for growth. Careers include:

- Customer service
- Cashiers and clerks
- Office support staff
- Engineers
- Scientists
- Environmentalists
- Plant operators
- Utility personnel
- Mechanics
- Meter readers
- Computer programmers and analysts
- Human resources
- Health/safety specialists
- Lawyers
- Environmental educators
- Public relations specialists

The presentation is from 5:30-7 p.m. Nov. 9 at the Joshua Tree Community Center, 6171 Sunburst Road in Joshua Tree. Come learn how you can make a living in the water industry.

HQMC/MMOA (OFFICER) TEAM VISIT

The Manpower Management Officer Assignment Team will be aboard MCAGCC Oct. 18-19. An informational PME will be held at 8 a.m. on Oct. 18 at the Protestant Chapel, Building 1541 for all company and field grade officers.

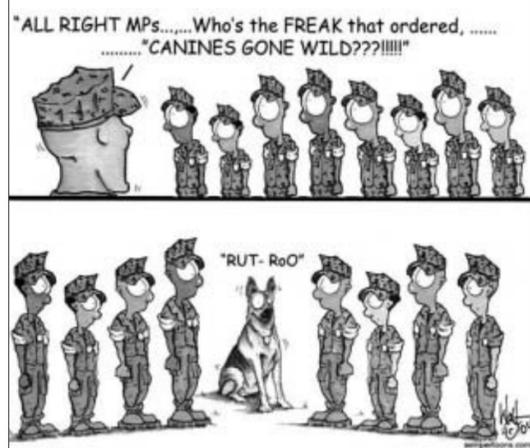


Eagle Eyes

Immediately report any suspicious activity which may be a sign of terrorism, including:

1. Surveillance
2. Suspicious questioning
3. Tests of security
4. Acquiring supplies
5. Suspicious persons
6. Trial runs
7. Deploying assets

830-3937



SEMPERTOONS: CREATED BY GUNNERY SGT. CHARLES WOLF, USMC/RET.

11SUDOKU #2311

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	3				6			2

CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU PUZZLES COURTESY OF © 2011 HOMETOWN CONTENT

This Week in Combat Center History

Reprinted from the Observation Post dated Oct. 7, 1958, Vol. 2, No. 41

It Blinks Red, Green and Yellow

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

It was October 2, 1958 and the time was 1600. The working day here had just been completed and just like any other work day at 1600, car after car headed for home via Del Valle Rd. Everything was normal until the drivers approached the three intersections at First St., Plant St., and Mineral St., on Del Valle Rd.

It was at these intersections that a red, green and yellow eyed, fully automatic or manually operated "gizmo" stood in the center of the street directing traffic.

Some drivers may have been startled, some maybe confused, but all took the situation in stride. Despite the newness of the situation the traffic "directors" continued to efficiently control traffic until the rush hour was over. The Provost Marshal reports that the traffic lights are here to stay.

These new devices are portable and can be rolled or transported anywhere. Their schedule of operation has been slated for the "after work rush hour" and whenever traffic control is necessary.

These new traffic police are designed to save this Base many valuable man hours.

(1). First Street in 1958 was the same intersection it is today.

(2). Plant Street is now the portion of Adobe Road between Del Valle and Sturgis Roads.

(3). Although still named Mineral Street, the intersection is most often referred to as Agate and Del Valle Streets. The street is named Mineral on one side of Del Valle and Agate on the other side.

(4). Eventually permanent traffic signals were installed along Del Valle Road at the intersections of Plant (Adobe) Road and Mineral (Agate) Streets

Seasonal flu shots available at clinics

Flu shots and the flu mist are available Monday through Friday, from 8 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., near the Pediatrics and Optometry Clinic at Entrance D. Screening by medical personnel will determine if a patient is administered the shot or mist. The Preventive Medicine Department will also be giving Influenza vaccinations in Clinic A (in the TRICARE waiting area) every Tuesday in October from 9 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. All beneficiaries eligible for care at the Naval Hospital are eligible.

OBSERVATION POST

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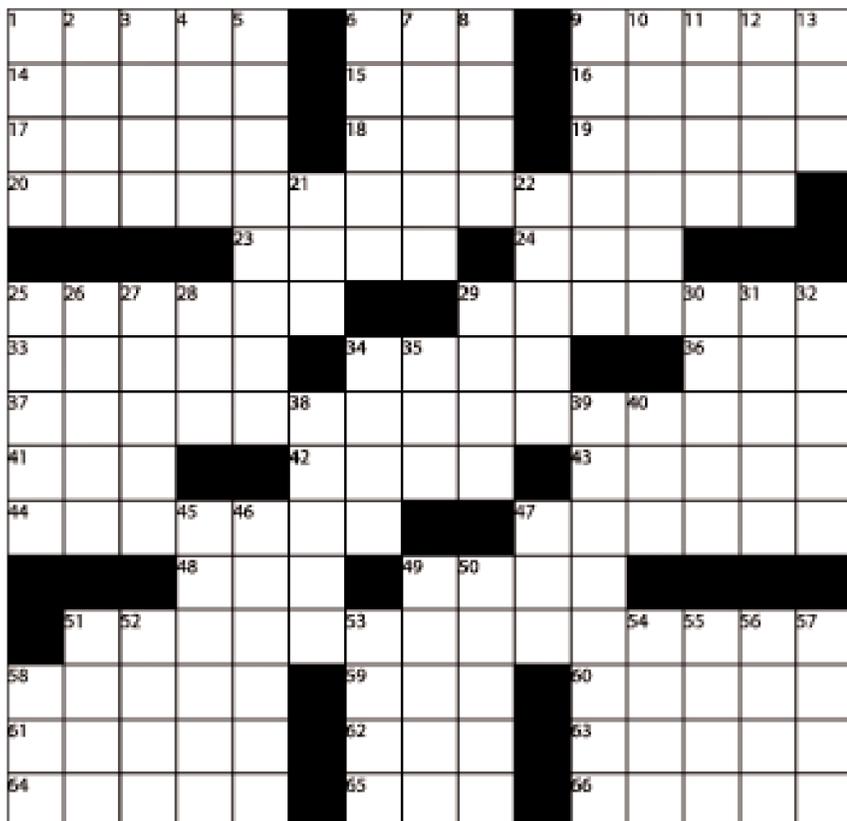
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WHAT'S MY NAME?

[Puzzle solutions on A4]



- ACROSS**
1. Partner of hope and charity
 6. Friend of Fidel
 9. Le ___, France
 14. Navel unlikely to collect lint
 15. MLK's title: Abbr.
 16. Kitchen spreads
 17. Nash rhymed it with "thox"
 18. Asayer's specimen
 19. Shearer of old films
 20. Elf's place
 23. Wanders aimlessly
 24. "I've got a brainstorm"
 25. One-by-one coaches
 29. Swindler's words perhaps
 33. ___ Gay
 34. Mixologist's measure
 36. Absorb, as a loss
 37. Elf's place
 41. Nicotine's partner
 42. Diplomacy breakdown
 43. Newsboy's cry
 44. Pinch hitter
 47. Points the finger at
 48. Extra-wide, on a box
 49. Mouse pussher
 51. Elf's place
 58. Mule team?
 59. Itinerary word
 60. Emitted a surgical beam
 61. Lake Titacaca
 62. Matador's trophy
 63. Chipped in
 64. "Johnny B. ___"
 65. Seashell seller
 66. Bushed
 7. Long lunches?
 8. Anon's partner
 9. Tokyo's island
 10. Hawaiian hellos or goodbyes
 11. ___ Beach, Florida
 12. Easy victory
 13. Conductor ___ Pekka Salonen
 21. Airline to Stockholm
 22. Miniature racing autos
 25. Dry runs
 26. Doff one's derby
 27. Irish lullaby refrain starter
 28. "___Buttermilk Sky"
 29. Suit material?
 30. Revival shelters
 31. Prefix with economics
 32. One of the film-making Coens
 34. It may be grafted
 35. Playboy Hugh, familiarly
 38. Shakespearean sprite
 39. Crescent-shaped bakery treat
 40. Addl. phone
 45. Couldn't do without.
 46. Lower in quality
 47. Stephen of "Citizen X"
 49. Scheming Heep
 50. Diagonal line, to a kegler
 51. Lotto cousin
 52. Opposite of ecto-
 53. Nights, in classifieds
 54. Classic Welles role
 55. The Charleses' canine.
 56. Will of "The Waltons"
 57. Spiraling current
 58. Veer suddenly
- DOWN**
1. Watch pockets
 2. Distinctive air
 3. "Put ___ my bill"
 4. Windshield option
 5. Star of david shape
 6. Leave insufficient room for

LESSONS OF LIFE FROM...

THE 1ST SGT.

1ST. SGT. NELSON HIDALGO

INFANTRYMAN, 35, QUEENS, NEW YORK

INTERVIEWED AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY

SGT. HEATHER GOLDEN

SEPT. 30, 2011

GROWING UP IN QUEENS

- > **I wanted to be G.I. Joe.** I grew up in New York. There is no military there. All I really saw was in the movies.
- > **Biggest and baddest.** I always wanted to be the biggest and baddest.
- > **I just liked to fight.** Fight, fight, fight.
- > **Wrestling was my life** when I was in high school.

- > **It's still like a team,** but at the same time, it's just you and the other guy.
- > **The minute it came out** that I wanted to join the Marine Corps, he gave me such crap about it. When I was about to graduate, he asked if I was still joining and said "Semper Fi, good luck." Then it clicked, and I was like, well I'll be damned.
- > **When I was a kid,** and you're gonna say this is cheesy, but my hero was Ronald Reagan. He was able to tell it like it is and still be a president.

FAMILY TIES

- > **In the back of my mind,** anytime I wanted to quit, I'd say I didn't want to quit for my son. It grew me up.
- > **My son's 17,** and into computers and stuff. The total opposite of me.
- > **Football** - that was by force, and eventually he liked it.
- > **My daughter?** She's 14. Sometimes you want to hug her, and sometimes you just want to choke her.
- > **She actually does have** sparkly pirate skulls.
- > **I like the responsibility** of knowing they depend on me.
- > **Best thing about my marriage,** I guess, is that we're fortunate we don't have a lot of the high school drama that other couples have.
- > **Been married 15 years.** You realize all the things you depend on your spouse for. When she's not there, you have to do it all yourself.

GROWING UP IN THE CORPS

- > **I don't know if** things would have turned out the same for me. I don't know if I would have been as good a Marine if my son hadn't been born.
- > **I like working out** to the point where I'm exhausted, done.
- > **My worst day in the Marine Corps** was the second night in Nasiriyah. I lost a lot of friends. I felt like my platoon commander got relieved because of me. Because I was a bad platoon sergeant.
- > **I've had so many best days,** I don't know how I can narrow it down.
- > **I think it's an attitude.** They'd normally get a haircut anyway, but because they want to be Johnny Rebel, they don't.
- > **As a young infantryman,** like a lot of infantrymen, I had a "if you ain't infantry, you ain't blank" mentality.
- > **Even though I came here kicking and screaming,** I'm so grateful I came to Headquarters Battalion. I got a sincere appreciation for the support elements. The hours they work. The care they have for their craft.
- > **Sergeants have just enough power** to make things happen, but not enough power to really get into trouble when things go bad.
- > **As an infantryman staff sergeant,** I think there's no greater thing than to take out your platoon to combat and bring them all back safely. That's a great thing.
- > **Gunnery sergeants** run the show. Nothing happens without the Gunny.

LESSONS LEARNED AND LEADING LEADERS

- > **My philosophy on leading** is this: We can analyze every order or policy. Every everything. We can always find a way something can't be done. But what's the morally and ethically right thing to do for the Marine? Instead, we should find a way we can do something.
- > **Make sure the Marine Corps** values and Marine things happen. You can lose sight of that in the daily grind.
- > **The ranks above you** are the junior officer ranks, and it's a welcome responsibility because you get a chance to shape the future leadership of the Corps.
- > **The Marine Corps gave me** this captain and said, "Here, make this guy successful."
- > **That's the lesson I learned.** Sometimes it's real easy to say, "Go ahead sir, fall on your sword." I learned never to do that, no matter how easy it may be. It's always the Marines who pay.
- > **I chose first sergeant** because I like being someone who's enforcing the whole Marine package.
- > **Its how the Green Monster works.**



Lt. Col. Phillip Zeman, the Headquarters Battalion commanding officer, pins 1st Sgt. Nelson Hidalgo, the former first sergeant for Company B, HQBN, with a Meritorious Service Medal Sept. 29. Hidalgo is headed to 7th Communication Bn., Okinawa, Japan.

MARINE

VS.

MARINE



Infantryman

Country: United States of America
Branch of service: Marine Corps
Unit: 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment
Role: Infantryman
Size of unit: Battalion
Garrison: Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif.
Time spent in basic training: 13 weeks
Motto: *Semper Fidelis* (Always Faithful)
Weapon of choice: M16A4 rifle



Commando

Country: United Kingdom
Branch of service: British Royal Marines
Unit: 40 Commando
Role: Infantryman
Size of unit: Battalion
Garrison: Norton Manor Camp, Tauton, Somerset, Great Britain
Time spent in basic training: 32 weeks
Motto: *Per Mare Per Terram* (By sea or by land)
Weapon of choice: SA80A2 rifle

CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS

FAITH	CHE	HAVRE
OUTIE	REV	OLEOS
BRONX	ORE	NORMA
SANTAS	WORKSHOP	
GADS	AHA	
TUTORS	TRUSTME	
ENOLA	SHOT	EAT
SHOEMAKERS	BENCH	
TAR	RIFT	EXTRA
STANDIN	RATSON	
EE	USER	
KEEBLER	PACKAGE	
ZENDA	VIA	LASED
ANDES	EAR	ANTED
GOODE	SHE	WEARY

SUDOKU SOLUTIONS

1	6	9	2	8	5	7	3	4
4	7	8	1	3	9	2	5	6
3	2	5	6	4	7	1	8	9
8	5	3	4	2	1	9	6	7
7	1	6	5	9	8	4	2	3
9	4	2	7	6	3	5	1	8
2	8	7	3	5	4	6	9	1
6	9	4	8	1	2	3	7	5
5	3	1	9	7	6	8	4	2



The Combat Center has its own YouTube channel
 Find it at
<http://www.youtube.com/user/CombatCenterPAO>.

ALLIGATOR, from A1

hid in corners and waited, ready to attack.

The Marines of 1/7 advocated a spread formation as each team traveled through the city, closing the gap between each person when approaching a building to be entered. A spread formation prevents an entire team from succumbing to a grenade or the activation of an improvised explosive device.

"It's always good to share ideas, tactics, and techniques," said Hall.

The last station was a combination of three skills necessary for deployment-mechanical breaching of a door, flash clearing a room and subduing a combatant.

The Halligan bar and a battering ram tool were introduced to breaching a locked door. The Halligan bar, which acts as a multi-tooled crow bar, uses leverage to break locks. It also features a spike extending from its side used to help break glass and clear windows.

A battering ram can be used in compliance or instead of the Halligan bar during a breach. It breaks open the door using a concentration of force and momentum over a small surface area.

This forces the door, and what or whoever may be behind it, out of the way.

During flash clearing of a room, the Commandos promoted using a low silhouette while throwing in flash grenades to make a smaller target. The 1/7 Marines preferred a standing silhouette to prevent butting of their helmets into other Marines' weapon muzzles.

Lastly, while subduing an enemy combatant, the Marines were called up to demonstrate Marine Corps Martial Arts Program techniques in taking down an opponent. The Commandos close quarter battle instructors then demonstrated their technique to hog-tie and search the combatant.

Black Alligator is a three-week exercise scheduled to end at the beginning of this month. Both U.S. and British Royal Marines walked away with a shared knowledge of both nations' tactics.

The two forces have had a long history of working together and it's important to continue that, said British Royal Marine Lance Cpl. Matt Drake, a close quarter battle instructor with Co. C, 40 Commando.

"We can offer each other a lot of valuable experience," he said.



[Above] A British Royal Marine from the 40 Commando, British Royal Marines, tosses a U.S. Marine with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, from a vehicle during a cross-training exercise at Range 215, Sept. 30.

PHOTOS BY PFC. ALI AZIMI



[Left] A Royal British Marine with 40 Commando apprehends a U.S. Marine from 1/7 who is role playing as a surrendering enemy combatant. The two nation's services joined forces for pre-deployment training.

[Far left] A British Royal Marine with 40 Commando is held on the ground and hog-tied during a training demonstration. The 40 Commando Marines and 1/7 Marines shared their different tactics for apprehending and detaining prisoners.

**BRITISH, from A1**

"Hang on. That is better than what we do, and integrate that or vice versa."

One of the best ways to get to know someone is by training with them, Smith added.

The Royal Marines spent their minutes between classes and during spare time simply striking up conversation with their new American friends.

"After every class, we are talking with them, swap-

ping stories and making friends," Rodriguez said.

"You always see the guys in the Warrior Club chatting away with each other," Smith said.

The battalions commander's own experiences training with other military services when he was still young within the Royal Marine ranks showed both the 40 Commando and 1/7 troops that some of the relationships they built together here will stand the test of time.

"I am still in contact with friends I made in the U.S. Marines 17 years ago and am finding out how small the military really is," said British Royal Marine Maj. Chris Hall, the Company C, 40 Commando commanding officer.

Hall also said how the strong ties between the two services will only remain this strong as long as they continue to perform joint exercises and foster these kind of bonds wherever they go.



Visit the official Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

British Royal Marines with 40 Commando and U.S. Marines with 1st Battalion, 7th Marine Regiment, clear a stairwell with a dummy grenade during a joint training exercise at Range 215 Sept. 30.

With the fight in sight

'America's Battalion' completes training for deployment

Sheltered from rumbling explosions by a cascading wall of sand, a platoon of infantrymen impatiently waited to plunge through and respond by assault.

Story and photos by Cpl. Reece Lodder
3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment

The annoyance ceased and the command to attack spread rapidly down the line. Spurred forward by their leaders' screams, the Marines waded up the knee-deep obstacle. Focused by adrenaline, they peaked the barrier and charged toward their attackers.

The Marines of 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, transitioned from clearing a village's enemy threat to re-building rapport with its citizens during Exercise Clear, Hold, Build 4 on Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms, Calif., from Sept. 26 to 29.

The counterinsurgency training, part of the Enhanced Mojave Viper exercise, marked the completion of seven months of pre-deployment training for "America's Battalion." Next month, they will deploy to Afghanistan's Helmand province to support combat operations there.

Before the Marines could build rapport and help the villagers, they had to root out enemy fighters. Faced by simulated small-arms and rocket propelled grenade fire, they navigated through blocks of buildings to eradicate their threat.

Dripping with sweat but far from haggard, Lance Cpl. Dajuan Dilworth, a team leader with Weapons Company, 3/3, said the exhausting training tested his Marines to stay positive. With three combat deployments under his belt, he prodded them to maintain pace in light of their mission ahead.

"Every day, the enemy is finding new ways to try and kill us, but we're finding better ways to counter-attack," Dilworth said. "We're not training to quietly bypass them. We're training to find and destroy them."

Four blocks and several hours later, the Marines finished their clearing portion. Thrashed by the scorching mid-day sun, they escorted detainees back to their patrol base on the town's outskirts. They found shade next to a building, and used a precious moment to replenish the food and

water stolen by the desert.

Minutes later, they re-entered the village to continue their mission. As they moved back into their area, two companies of Marines pushed further into the town, weeding out the remaining enemy activity with the support of tanks.

Though the evolution began with force and firepower, the Marines quickly shifted the environment to focus on interaction with the village's populace — a reflection of what they'll experience with local nationals and coalition forces in Afghanistan.

With the help of interpreters, the battalion's leadership held meetings with role-playing Afghan elders, listening to their concerns and gauging how to best help the village. Squads of Marines patrolled through its streets, interacting with citizens to build rapport and gain intelligence on further threats.

"Working with the Afghan role-players gives us a chance to learn how to communicate without speaking words," Lance Cpl. Justin Turner, a team leader with Weapons Company, 3/3, said.

Turner also said this offered the Marines a valuable opportunity to step into the Afghan culture before deployment. Despite the language barrier, he said working with the role-players here would help ease the Marines into a new world while in country.

Though Turner carries scars from the blast of an improvised explosive device last September in Afghanistan, the 21-year-old is eager to re-join the fight with his fellow Marines.

"I'm happy to be going back," Turner said. "We'll be in a new area, meet new people and have a fresh start at making a difference. We'll experience some of the most miserable times there, but when we look back on it, these times will make for the best stories. I want to leave knowing we made Afghanistan a better place to live in, and that the Taliban are no more."



Mortarmen with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, patrol toward a mock village shortly after dawn during Exercise Clear, Hold, Build 4 at the Combat Center Sept. 26.



Lance Cpl. Nick Montez, an improvised explosive device dog handler with Weapons Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, calms his working dog, Molly, as Lance Cpl. Jared Hunter, a mortarman with Weapons Co., 3/3, administers the dog fluids before beginning Exercise Clear, Hold, Build 4 at the Combat Center Sept. 26. During the evolution, the Marines of 3/3 transitioned from clearing a village's enemy threat to re-building rapport with its citizens. The counterinsurgency training, part of the Enhanced Mojave Viper exercise, marked the completion of seven months of pre-deployment training for America's Battalion. Next month, they will deploy to Afghanistan to support combat operations in Helmand province. Montez, 20, is from Lewiston, Idaho. Hunter, 21, is from Dyersburg, Tenn.



Lance Cpl. Kevin Joseph, a mortarman with Weapons Co., 3/3, perches atop a mound of sand to view enemy activity in a mock village during Exercise Clear, Hold, Build 4 at the Combat Center Sept. 26. The unit is scheduled to deploy to Afghanistan's Helmand province next month.



Lance Cpl. Andrew Gray, a team leader with Guard Force Platoon, Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, searches two Afghan role-players after stopping their vehicle while patrolling during Exercise Clear, Hold, Build 4 at the Combat Center Sept. 28.



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WeekINPhotos

Marine Corps Air Station Miramar



SGT. JUSTIN M. MARTINEZ

[Above] A Ryan PT-22 pilot gives a thumbs-up, signalling he's ready for flight aboard Marine Corps Air Station Miramar Sept. 29. Dozens of aircraft pilots spent the days prior to the annual 2011 MCAS Miramar Air Show making final preparations and moving aircraft into place.

[Right, top] President Barack Obama shakes hands with Cpl. Steven H. Posy, a combat correspondent with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron aboard MCAS Miramar Sept. 26. Obama stopped to thank Marines for their service before leaving for a fundraiser in La Jolla, Calif.

[Right, bottom] Cpl. James Rader, an air control electronics operator with Marine Air Control Squadron 1, performs a shoulder throw on Lance Cpl. Michael Hoxie, an air control electronics operator, also with MACS-1, Sept. 27.



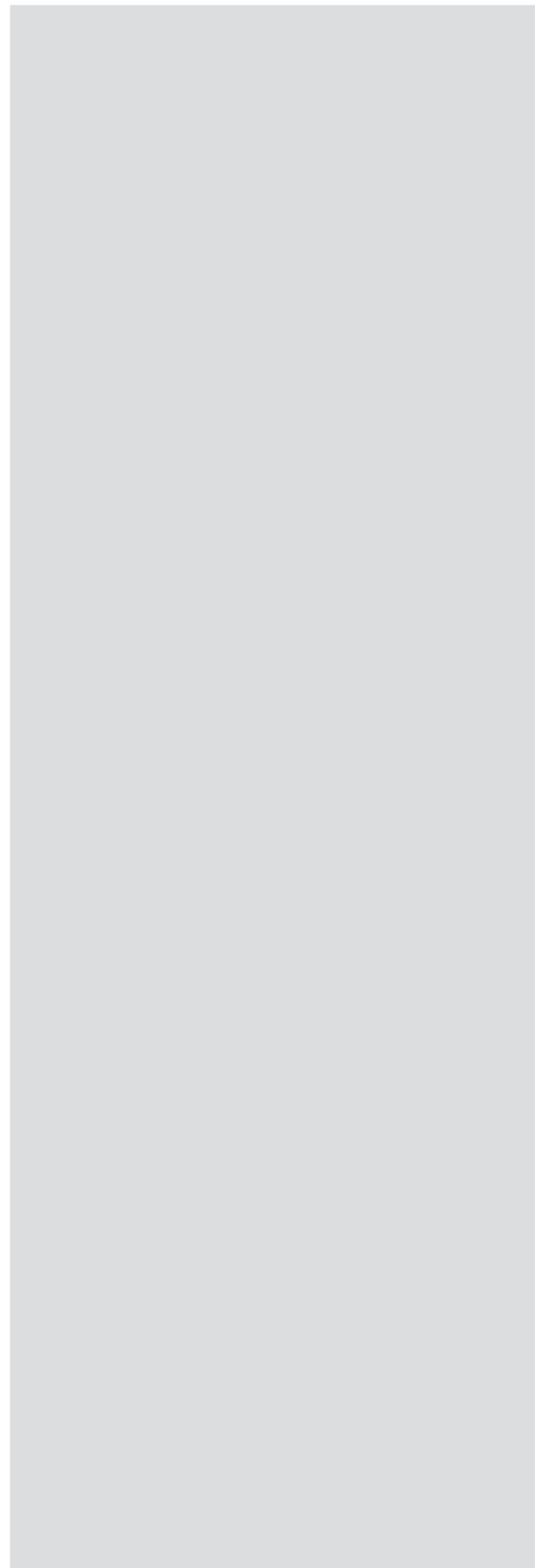
LANCE CPL. ERICA DISALVO



PFC. KEVIN CRIST



ADVERTISEMENT





Stunt driver turns getaway man at night, page B2

THE ALMOSTS

3/11 Thunder comes close to scoring



GUNNERY SGT. LEO A. SALINAS

2011 Intramural Football League		
Team	Wins	Losses
1. HQBN	3	0
2. MCCES	2	1
3. MWSS-374	1	2
4. 3/11	0	3



LANCE CPL. D. J. WU

HQBN Bulldawgs cheer from the sidelines.



GUNNERY SGT. LEO A. SALINAS

[Above] Bulldawg running back Kyle Bisbee evades the Thunder's defensive line as he runs the ball upfield. At 3-0, the Bulldawgs are undefeated so far.

[Left] Thunder running back Christopher Williams trips as a Bulldawg defender pulls him to the ground inches before the next yardline during an intramural football game Wednesday. Thunder has yet to win a game this season.

Story by Pfc. Ali Azimi
 Combat Correspondent

The 3/11 Thunder is a team of "almosts" this year. They almost defeated the MWSS-374 Rhinos in the season's first game. Almost, but didn't. During their latest game against the HQBN Bulldawgs, they almost walked home with at least one touchdown on the scoreboard.

Almost. A light stop-and-start drizzle didn't help. Rain with a chance of Thunder.

Almost. Strong, smart offensive plays and an impenetrable defense led the Bulldawgs to a 20-0 victory over the Thunder during the football game at Felix Field Wednesday night.

The Bulldawgs came out strong early in the game, and scored a touchdown in the first quarter, just as they did in their last game against the Rhinos Sept. 28.

They used a combination of short, accurate passes and a well-tuned running game to keep the ball moving up the field with every play. Before Thunder could devise a strategy to defend their goal line, the Bulldawgs had made their mark on the scoreboard. And they kept it coming.

If Thunder thought they could even the odds with their own offense, they were mistaken. The Bulldawgs fortified their defense and prevented the Thunder line from getting through.

Blocked rushes kept Thunder from making any real progress, instead inching the ball up the field a couple of yards at a time, hitting the Bulldawgs' defense at every turn. After many failed attempts, it became an easily-anticipated move.

Before the game hit half time, Thunder finally reached of the end zone. After two fumbles at the 13-yard line and a blocked pass on the fourth down, the ball turned over to the Bulldawgs.

Here, Thunder countered the Bulldawgs with their own defensive line. Throughout the game, Thunder

See FOOTBALL, B3

Off to the races

6-8-4 series kicks off with golf course route

CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN
 COMBAT CORRESPONDENT

Runners of all skill levels lined up at the Desert Winds Golf Course for the first leg of the three-part 7th annual Intramural Race Series Wednesday.

The six-mile course took the runners on a tour of all

18 holes, over hills and through grassy terrain.

While there was a smaller turn-out than expected at just over 30 participants, the more serious runners used it as a stress-free practice event. Final times went from 32:45 to just over an hour long.

"I got back from deployment a couple of

months ago because I was injured and only started running again a few weeks ago, so this is a good first training race," said Sage Koch, who is on the All-Marine running team.

The runners were grouped into teams of at least four members each. The four fastest times from each team were added together to get the team's final time.

The as the racers neared the finish line, they sprinted the final yards, trying to shave off a few extra seconds to help their team win.

For the men, the fastest individual time went to Koch, with a time of 32:45. The fastest woman was Fabiola Pamatz, with a time of 41:24. VMU-1's team won overall with an overall, combined time of 2:40:41.

Even with the first race in the series completed MCCS Sports is still accepting applications for the other races. Entry deadline is 30 minutes prior to each race.

"The next two races are still open, and if anyone wants

See RACES, B4



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Sarah Fortner [left], a court reporter chief, and Maria Jeys, a legal clerk, both with the Staff Judge Advocate Office, are pleased with their times as they pass the halfway mark during the first race of the 7th annual Intramural Race Series 6-8-4 at the Desert Winds Golf Course Wednesday.

All-women's, Co-ed softball leagues play on



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

There is confusion at first base as Fawn Buck, a player for the Cherry Bombers (right), tripped over the base and tries to remain safe by holding on with her left hand. Angie Rodriguez, the S.W.A.T. first baseman, maintains her stance and gets the out.

See more photos on page B3

All-women Softball League: week 2			Co-ed Softball League: week 1		
Team	Wins	Losses	Team	Wins	Losses
1. S.W.A.T.	2	0	1. K's Buy	1	0
2. Cherry Bombers	1	1	2. Chicks & Sticks	1	0
3. Where's My Pitches	1	1	3. Pitch Slapped !!!	1	0
4. Playtime	0	2	4. Drama Killers	1	0
			5. Spartans	0	1
			6. MWSS 374	0	1
			7. Outkast	0	1
			8. Ballz & Dollz	0	1

Check out more photos at our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/thecombatcenter>



Liberty Call

Combat Center Clubs

Excursions Enlisted Club

Friday: Social Hour with food, 5 to 7 p.m. followed by DJ Gjettblaque, 8 to 11 p.m., Ladies Night
 Saturday: Variety Night, DJ Gjettblaque 8 to 11 p.m.
 Sunday: Football coverage, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m.
 Monday: Closed for Columbus Day
 Thursday: Social Hour, 7:30 to 9:30 p.m.

Bloodstripes NCO Club

Friday: Social Hour with food, 5 to 7 p.m.
 Monday: Closed for Columbus Day
 Wednesday: Free gourmet bar food, 5 to 7 p.m.
 Thursday: Social Hour, 7 to 9 p.m.

Hashmarks 29 SNCO Club

Club closed for upgrades until Oct. 11
 Tuesday: Social Hour, 5 to 7 p.m.
 Thursday: Social Hour, 5 to 7 p.m.

Combat Center Officers' Club

Monday: Closed for Columbus Day
 Tuesday-Friday: All-hands lunch, from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
 Thursday: Taco Night, 5 to 8 p.m.

For complete calendars visit <http://www.mccs29palms.com>.

Local Events

Pappy and Harriet's Weekend Line-Up:

Claremont Voodoo Society

Playing a mix of folk, blues and gospel music
 When: 8 p.m., Friday, Oct. 7

Folkyeah presents Gang Gang Dance and special guests

Playing American/experimental music
 When: 10 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 8
 Where: 53688 Pioneertown Road, Pioneertown
 For more information, call 365-5956 or visit <http://www.pappyandharriets.com>.

Joshua Tree Roots Music Festival

One of the basin's most popular music festivals featuring dozens of bands from all over the country
 When: 11 a.m., to midnight, Saturday, Oct. 8 and 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., on Sunday, Oct. 9
 Where: The Joshua Tree Lake, 2601 Sunfair Road, Joshua Tree
 For more information visit <http://www.joshuatreemusicfestival.com>.

The Third Man at the Bijou Cinema

The 1948 film noir classic about a writer trying to discover who killed his friend, Harry Lime. The Bijou Cinema is located in the garage of a private home and is the official headquarters of the Desert Classic Film Society
 When: 7 p.m., Friday, Oct. 7
 Where: The Bijou Cinema, 57482 Onaga Trail, Yucca Valley
<http://www.meetup.com/desert-classic-film-society>.

Lower Desert

Don Rickles

The famous comedian performs his stand up
 When: 8 p.m., Friday, Oct. 15
 Where: Agua Caliente
 32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
 For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Chicago

The rock legends perform their hits
 When: 8 p.m., Friday, Oct. 21
 Where: Fantasy Springs Resort Casino
 84-245 Indio Springs Parkway, Indio
 For more information call 800-827-2946 or visit <http://www.fantasyspringsresort.com>.

Brian McKnight

The R&B singer/song writer performs
 When: 8 p.m., Saturday, Oct. 22
 Where: Agua Caliente
 32-250 Bob Hope Drive, Rancho Mirage
 For more information call 888-999-1995 or visit <http://hotwatercasino.com>.

Joan Rivers

The edgy comedian performs her stand up
 When: 7 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 23
 Where: Morongo Casino Resort and Spa
 49500 Seminole Drive, Cabazon
 For more information call 800-252-4499 or visit <http://www.morongocasinoresort.com>.

Sunset Cinema

Friday, Oct. 7

6 p.m. – Colombian, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. – Conan the Barbarian, Rated R
 Midnight – Our Idiot Brother, Rated R

Saturday, Oct. 8

11 a.m. – **Free Matinee** Hoodwinked Too, Rated PG
 2 p.m. – Spy Kids 4, Rated PG
 6 p.m. – The Help, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. – Final Destination 5, Rated R
 Midnight – Less, Rated R

Sunday, Oct. 9

2 p.m. – Apollo 18, Rated PG-13
 6 p.m. – Shark Night, Rated PG-13
 9 p.m. – The Debt, Rated R

Monday, Oct. 10 Columbus Day

2 p.m. – The Help, Rated PG-13
 6 p.m. – Conan the Barbarian, Rated R
 9 p.m. – Our Idiot Brother, Rated R

Tuesday, Oct. 11

7 p.m. – Final Destination 5, Rated R

Wednesday, Oct. 12

7 p.m. – 30 Minutes or Less, Rated R

Thursday, Oct. 13

7 p.m. – Spy Kids 4, Rated PG

Ryan Gosling stars in dark, hypnotically stylish action packed thriller "Drive"

NEIL POND

AMERICAN PROFILE

"Drive"

Starring Ryan Gosling, Carey Mulligan and Albert Brooks
 Rated R, 100 min.

A Hollywood stunt driver intersects with dangerous gangsters in "Drive," a dark, hypnotically stylish thriller about one man's extreme reactions to extreme circumstances.

Will mainstream moviegoers want to go along for the ride? Possibly, with Ryan Gosling behind the wheel, hot off his previous role in "Crazy, Stupid, Love," one of the summer's brightest romantic comedies.

But there's nothing comedic or even particularly romantic about "Drive," which punctuates its long stretches of cool, carefully calculated menace with splatterly spasms of shocking violence.

Gosling's character, who is never named, is a garage mechanic sidelining as a stand-in for movie stars in car chase and crash scenes. At night, however, he's a getaway driver for hire, freelancing for thieves who need his skills to successfully speed off after heists.

Director Nicolas Winding Refn spins an arty, moody, broody, almost dream-like web taut with intrigue. Gosling's driver is a man of few words, and it's hard to know what's



COURTESY PHOTO

Ryan Gosling [left] begins to fall for Irene, played by Carey Mulligan, the woman who lives down the hall from his apartment. Gosling plays a mysterious roll as a garage mechanic and stunt driver for hollywood movies, but his double life as a getaway driver for hire presents an interesting twist in the film.

going on behind his unflappable, unblinking gaze.

He's unreadable, unknowable – even to the sweet single-mom waitress down the hall (Carey Mulligan from "Wall Street: Money Never Sleeps") who captures his attention.

The driver's involvement with Irene begins with a simple act of kindness but leads to something more, even though it never quite blossoms into full-blown romance. It also leads to a perilous entanglement with her ex-con husband, a robbery that goes horribly awry and a couple of thugs who don't like having loose

ends hanging around.

Brian Cranston of the hit TV series "Breaking Bad" and Christina Hendricks put some real, red meat on their supporting roles, especially Hendricks, whose brief turn as a used and bruised accomplice bears little trace of her familiar role on AMC's "Mad Men."

But the movie's most galvanizing performances belong to Ron Perlman and Albert Brooks as the two businessman brutes of which the driver runs afoul. Brooks is best known for his many other achievements in a much more comedic mode. But here he

slices into a new vein of totally uncharacteristic evil, especially for a couple of genuinely gasp-worthy scenes involving a fork, a knife and an antique razor.

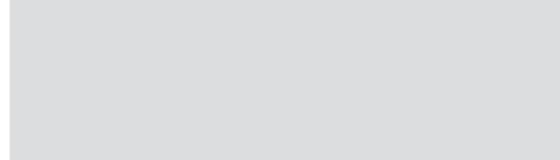
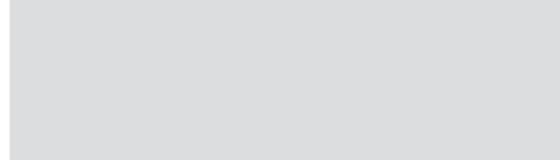
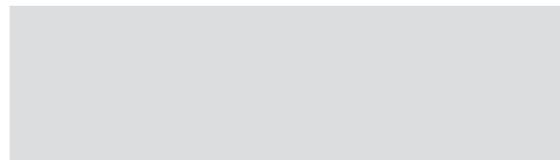
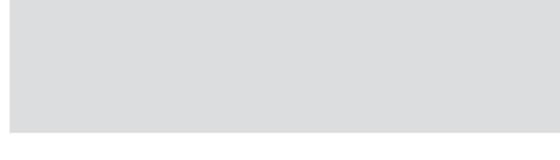
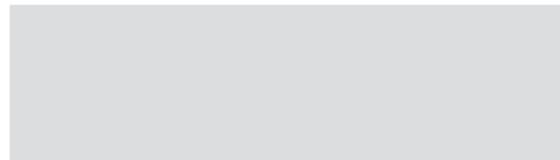
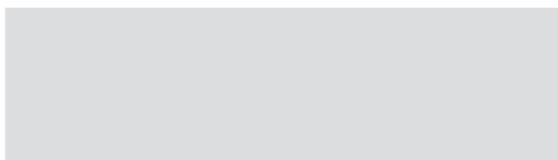
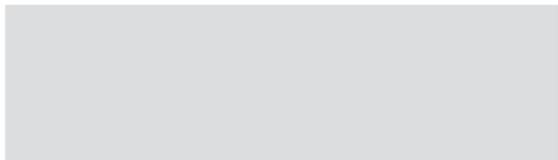
"Drive" sometimes feels like too much style over too little substance, and its ending will leave many viewers with an emotionally vacant, empty-tank kind of feeling.

But this gritty, unflinching depiction of a seedy L.A. underworld of speed, shadows and slime does make for an interesting, even intoxicating place to visit – especially knowing that you can get in your own car and "drive" away when it's over.



COURTESY PHOTO

Ryan Gosling's character, who is never named, is a garage mechanic sidelining as a stand-in for movie stars in car chase and crash scenes. At night, however, he's a getaway driver for hire, freelancing for thieves who need his skills to successfully speed off after heists.



Combat Center Sports

FOOTBALL, from B1

intercepted the ball twice, once by safety Andrew Mosley in the first quarter and the other by line backer Chase Lyles in the second.

The Bulldogs came back with an interception of their own by safety Anthony Farrell.

"The first thing that went through my head was to keep the ball in front of me," Farrell said after the game.

If Thunder felt the Bulldogs' noose tightening, they didn't show it.

By the second quarter, they were fighting tooth and nail to keep yards between the Bulldogs and their own end zone, causing a constant turnover of the ball. They held most of the Bulldogs' players back, but did not account for Guillermo Manzo.

Manzo, a Bulldawg running back, made two of the team's three touchdowns, one in the first quarter and another in the fourth quarter.

It wasn't that Thunder lack talent or skill or heart. It was simply that this year, the Bulldogs have a stronger team.



CPL. WILLIAM J. JACKSON



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

Bulldawg wide receiver Brett Schneider sprints downfield around 3/11 Thunder's defenders before being brought down. The Bulldogs are 3-0 for the season and Thunder has yet to win a game.



CPL. ANDREW D. THORBURN

[Above] HQBN Bulldogs running back Guillermo Manzo rushes past 3/11 Thunder defenders to the endzone, for the game's first touchdown during the third week of the intramural football season at Felix Field Wednesday. HQBN won the game 20-0.

[Left] HQBN Bulldogs offensive players and 3/11 Thunder defensive players huddle up during a timeout in the fourth quarter.

All-women's softball, from B1



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

Cherry Bomber outfielder Amanda Rossiter keeps her eyes on the batter, ready to sprint to third base, during an All-women's Softball League game against S.W.A.T. Monday. The Cherry Bombers held the lead until the final inning when S.W.A.T. came up from behind to score six runs and claim victory, 9-8.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

[Above] Cherry Bomber second baseman Autumn Johnson leaps to first base as S.W.A.T. first baseman Angie Rodriguez fails to catch the ball during a Women's Intramural Softball League game Monday.



LANCE CPL. SARAH DIETZ

[Left] S.W.A.T. batter Najma Rosado reacts to the force of her bat connecting with the ball.

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