

# **MULTI-NATIONAL DIVISION – BAGHDAD**

## **Media Release**

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**APO AE 09344**

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## **Swing away with new “Dagger” driving range’**

By Spc. Dustin Roberts

2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B

BAGHDAD – Multi-National Division–Baghdad Soldiers serving with the 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, can now work on their golf swing and tee-off the strains and stresses of deployment.

In a small ceremony at the “Dagger” Brigade’s headquarters Feb. 8, 2nd HBCT leaders hit a few golf balls into the back of a sand-colored net to officially open the brigade’s driving range.

Named the “Ridgefield Country Club Driving Range in Iraq,” the range pays tribute to a group of golfing veterans in Ridgefield, Conn., who donated the equipment for the range.

“The men are friends of mine through my parents and in-laws and they are great supporters of the military,” said Lt. Col. Christopher Beckert, deputy commander, 2nd HBCT. “When they heard that our brigade was deploying, they felt that one thing they could do to contribute to the morale of the Soldiers is send used golf clubs and used golf

balls, along with some mats, so that we could set up a little area where Soldiers can relax and pass the time when they have free-time.”

Beckert, from Madison, Conn., knew the group of golfers in his home state sympathized with his Soldiers situation.

“They are all veterans themselves so they know what Soldiers go through and they also understand that it is hard sometimes to be away for a long time without things to do,” he said. “They knew that Soldiers need to pass the time in a combat zone; they thought one of the more constructive ways was to practice golf swings.”

After the equipment arrived it took about eight Soldiers to construct the range in a two-week period.

“The materials came from all around the compound inside the tactical operations center and we got the net from the communications section of the brigade,” said Staff Sgt. Justin Takach, who works in the operations section, Headquarters and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd HBCT. “I scrounged up foam and other things to use; like packing material for a base to stand on when hitting a few balls.”

Takach, a native of Woodbine, N.J., always looks for improvement in his projects. The next step, he said, would like to paint a back-drop and place it at the back of the netting for target practice.

“It’s a relief; a chance to escape for a bit from the ongoing of day-to-day life out here,” he said. “It gives the Soldiers a chance to come out during the day, whenever they get a minute, to get a little taste of home.”



**Col. Martin.**

BAGHDAD – Col. Joseph Martin, commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division – Baghdad, hits the first ball at the grand-opening of the “Dagger” driving range on Camp Liberty Feb. 8. The Dearborn, Mich., native christened the range as a way for Soldiers to unwind in their free-time.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)



**Lt. Col. Beckert.**

BAGHDAD – Lt. Col. Christopher Beckert, from Madison, Conn., deputy commander, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division—Baghdad, practices his drive at the newly installed “Dagger” driving range at Camp Liberty Feb. 8. A veterans group in Beckert’s home state donated the necessary equipment to make use of the range. (U.S. Army photo

by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-



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**Sgt. Greve 1.**

BAGHDAD – Sgt. Ryan Greve, of Charlotte, N.C., Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division—Baghdad, shows off his golf swing at the new “Dagger” driving range on Camp Liberty Feb. 8. The new range is a way for golf-loving Soldiers to hone their driving skills after work.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)



**Inspect.**

BAGHDAD – Maj. Matthew Dabbs, a native of Jacksonville, Ala., operations officer, 2nd Heavy Brigade Combat Team, 1st Infantry Division, Multi-National Division—Baghdad, inspects golf clubs at the new “Dagger” driving range on Camp Liberty Feb. 8. Brigade leaders celebrated the grand-opening of the range by smacking a few balls into the range net themselves.

(U.S. Army photo by Spc. Dustin Roberts, 2nd HBCT PAO, 1st Inf. Div., MND-B)