



North Wind 2004

Ceremony Commences Bilateral Training

By Spc. Kristin Crowder

CAMP TAKIKAWA, Japan – Maryland Army National Guardsmen from the 1st Battalion, 115th Infantry, 29th Infantry Division (Light) and soldiers from the 11th Division, Northern Army, Japan Ground Defense Force, gathered in formation under ice blue skies and bright sunshine for the kickoff of Operation North Wind 2004 Monday.

“Today marks the beginning of what is expected to be a challenging exercise between combat arms units of two of the world’s greatest nations,” said Lt. Col. Jeffrey A. Connelly, battalion commander. Connelly stressed the importance of the two units not only training together in a bilateral environment, but also developing an understanding of each other’s culture and doctrine.

“The soldiers of 1st Battalion, 115th Infantry come here with the greatest of enthusiasm and determination to not only train diligently with you, but also to embrace you in a professional friendship,” Connelly said to the Japanese soldiers.

The sentiment was echoed by Col. Masaya Kitamura, regimental commander.

“It is a great pleasure and a great honor to conduct bilateral training with the 115th Infantry,” Kitamura said.

While Operation North Wind is an opportunity for two allied nations to come together and train, there are implications for the future, Connelly said.

Because the U.S. is deploying many National Guard units to Iraq, and Japan has pledged to aid in its rebuilding, it is not unrea-



Photo by Sgt. Kate Neuman

Lt. Col. Jeffrey Connelly and Col. Masaya Kitamura render honors during the playing of the U.S. and Japanese national anthems at Operation North Wind 2004 opening ceremonies.

sonable that the units might meet again and share in the same mission, Connelly added.

The pure white uniforms worn by 10th Division soldiers during

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Medics Evaluate Joint Casualty Procedures



Sergeant Alberto Mella removes a litter holding Spc. Ethan Reid with help from three members of the 10th Infantry Regiment medical platoon.

Story and photos by Sgt. Nick Minecci

CAMP TAKIKAWA, Japan – Making sure the light fighters of Task Force Warrior receive the fastest medical response possible was the order of the day Monday for Sgt. Alberto Mella and Spc. Ethan Reid.

The medics, assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 115th Infantry (Light) of the 29th Infantry Division (Light) joined their Japanese counterparts from the 10th Infantry Regiment, 11th Division, Northern Army, Japanese Ground Self-Defense Force medical platoon, in a casualty exercise to test communication and procedures for treating a wounded troop.

“What we are doing is simulating a lower leg wound, and making sure the communications between the U.S. and Japanese to evacuate a casualty are clear,” Mella explained.

He added they were not testing the ability of the medics to treat the injury. “We will do that later,” said the acting medical platoon sergeant.

This type of exercise allows the U.S. and Japanese medics to build teamwork and see how each operates in a medical emergency, Mella said.

As Reid rode on a litter in the rear of a JGSDF ambulance, he said he was impressed with how similar the Japanese and U.S. standard operating procedures are.

“I am very excited about this exercise, and just to be in Japan is amazing,” the Baltimore resident said. “This whole experience is an amazing chance to get to see and do things I never thought I would,” he said.

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the opening ceremony stood out in contrast to the U.S. soldiers' dark camouflage. It was an indication of the training U.S. soldiers would endure during the 12-day exercise at Takikawa and Shimamatsu Training Areas on Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan.

The main focus of North Wind is on infantry tactics in a cold weather environment, Connelly said. Soldiers will first receive instruction on how to properly layer clothing and the effects of cold weather on weapons and other equipment, he added. Ski training, urban warfare, air assaults, field medical training and specialty platoon training round out the units' rigorous training schedule.

According to Connelly, Operation North Wind is applicable to real-world situations since the cold, mountainous climate of Hokkaido is similar to environments where many soldiers deploy today, such as Afghanistan.

Another significant aspect of the operation is working with



Photo by Sgt. Nick Minecci

A Japanese 10th Division guidon stands out among the company guidons for 1st Battalion, 115th Infantry (Light). The bilateral forces stood together during exercise opening ceremonies.

and respecting soldiers of other cultures, since many soldiers today must work with coalition forces and in multinational environments, Connelly said.

In addition to training with the Ground Self Defense Force, several U.S. soldiers will experience Japanese culture first-hand through morale trips to the local area of Sapporo and evening visits to Japanese families' homes for dinner.

"During this exercise, I expect the soldiers to mature in respect and understanding of other cultures," Connelly said. "Participating in Operation North Wind is a great travel opportunity for the soldiers, and they are very excited to be here."



Photo by Sgt. Kate Neuman

Captain Keith Brownell, HHC commander, stands in front of his soldiers during opening ceremonies at Camp Takikawa.

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Part of the experience was the chance to ride as a simulated casualty in the back of a JGSDF snow cat and ambulance. "The



Japanese and U.S. medical soldiers inspect the interior of a snow cat prior to a casualty exercise in the Takikawa Training Area, Hokkaido, Japan.

similarity between the layout of their vehicle and ours kind of surprised me," said Reid.

"There are a lot of things that are similar or the same for both armies; the procedures seem pretty standard so far," said Reid, a medic for seven years.

"Riding in the back of the snow cat was like the back of a Humvee. It was a fairly smooth ride, but I am loving the chance to do this," he said.

The excitement of working with another country's military was not confined to the U.S. light fighters.

Sergeant 1st Class Kenji Matsumura, 10th Inf. Regt. medical platoon sergeant, said he looked forward to the exchange of professional knowledge.

"I am excited. I enjoy working with the [U.S. Army] and trading information," Matsumura said.

"It is always a good time both professionally and personally. I am looking very forward to North Wind," he added.

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Soldiers Sharpen Skills on Skis

By Sgt. Kate Neuman

CAMP TAKIKAWA, Japan – Cross-country skiing was the first training mission Monday following opening ceremonies for the bilateral training exercise Operation North Wind 2004.

Skiing is an essential part of training for soldiers of the 10th Infantry Regiment, 11th Division, headquartered in Hokkaido, the northernmost island of Japan.

Expert skiers from 10th Regiment gave several soldiers from 1st Battalion, 115th

Infantry Division (Light) instruction in ski basics at Camp Takikawa's Ski Mountain.

The soldiers marched to the site, where they grounded their skis and divided into five teams to conduct necessary stretching before the soldiers donned their skis.

The Japanese instructors led U.S. soldiers in stretching and then taught them how to adjust their skis and execute basic ski movements such as standing and turning without falling.

"I plan on falling a lot," said Sgt. Joey

Bramande, Company A, 1st Battalion, 175th Infantry.

Though Bramande did fall, so did many other soldiers as they familiarized themselves with the contraptions on their feet and tried to balance with the ski poles.

Though several soldiers looked like this was their first time on skis, they were lighthearted about it, having a great time laughing while picking up invaluable skills and a better understanding of their Japanese counterparts. 

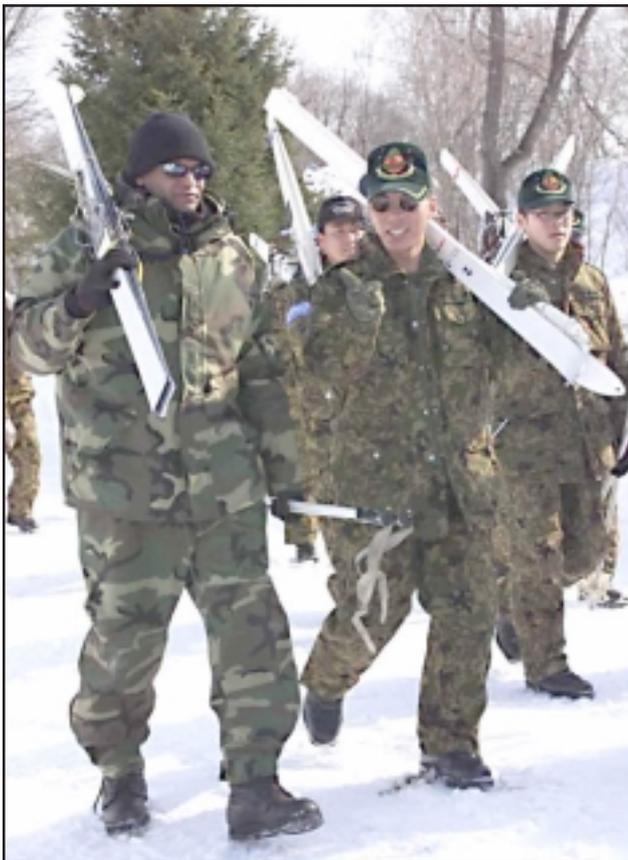


Photo by Sgt. Kate Neuman

Soldiers get to know each other during the march to Ski Mountain for initial ski training.



Photo by Spc. Kristin Crowder

U.S. soldiers perform stretching exercises before donning skis.



Photo by Sgt. Kate Neuman

Sgt. Joey Bramande falls while attempting a turn.



Photo by Sgt. Kate Neuman

A U.S. soldier greets his counterpart and instructor at the site of ski training.



Photo by Sgt. Kate Neuman

A Japanese instructor assists a U.S. soldier with adjusting his skis during cross-country ski training.

JGSDF Soldiers Build Sculptures for Snow Festival

By Sgt. Kate Neuman

CAMP MAKOMANAI, Japan – More than two million visitors head to the Sapporo area annually to take in the sights of snow sculpting, at the Sapporo Snow Festival. The traditional festival began in 1950 and the 11th Division, Japan Ground Self Defense Force, has been cooperating for 43 years in making the festival possible.

Makomanai, the city outside Camp Makomanai, and nearby city Odori, hosted this year's festival. Operation White Dream was the theme for the 2004 festival, in recognition of military operations in and outside Japan.

Camp Makomanai is the temporary home to U.S. soldiers supporting Operation North Wind 2004, and 11th Division soldiers are the Japanese counterparts to the Maryland National Guard unit participating in the bilateral training exercise.

Members of the 11th Division and other volunteers assembled several of the snow sculptures showcased at the festival.

The first step in the sculpturing process begins with designing and modeling. Each unit drafts designs that can include up to 100 sheets of paper. Once the design is finished, an accurate model is created with wood, plaster and clay. Frameworks are then built on site with some being 66 feet tall, as high as a seven-story building.

The 11th Tank Battalion built one of the most popular sculptures, the Radial Snow Slide. The 11th Field Artillery Regiment created "Go Go Matsui in NY," a sculpture of Hideki Matsui, a Japanese baseball player for the New York Yankees, set against a backdrop of New York City. Matsui's number, 55, is also the number of times the Snow Festival has occurred. The 55th Annual Sapporo Snow Festival was displayed Feb. 4-11. 🌐

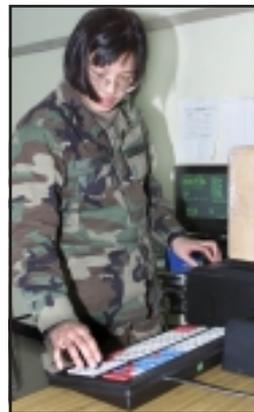
Cold Weather Tip

- C** -- Keep it Clean
- O** -- Avoid Overdressing
- L** -- Wear Clothing Loose and in Layers
- D** -- Keep Clothing Dry

Zama Soldier Handles Task Force Mail

Story and photo by Sgt. Nick Minecci

CAMP MAKOMANAI, Japan – Sitting alone in a room surrounded by mail may not seem like excitement to some, but for Sgt. Chanthaly Jackson it is the kind of job she enjoys.



A self-described people-person, Jackson is assigned to the 25th Adjutant General Postal Company at Camp Zama, and is the sole postal clerk for all Task Force Warrior soldiers during Operation North Wind 2004.

There are approximately 400 soldiers deployed here for North Wind from the Maryland National Guard's 1st Battalion, 115th Infantry Regiment (Light), 29th Infantry Division (Light) for the biannual cold weather field training.

The U.S. troops are working with about 600 troops from the 10th Infantry Regiment, 11th Division, Northern Army, Japanese Ground Self Defense Force for the exercise.

The 24-year-old, who is normally the acting noncommissioned officer in charge of the postal finance section at Zama, said she was "just lucky" in getting the assignment.

"This is the first time I have deployed by myself, but that is OK because I trust my soldiers back at Camp Zama," she said.

"My biggest concern is getting the

Mail Hours

Sunday-Saturday -- 8:30-11:30 a.m. and 1-7:30 p.m.

Closed from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Feb. 20, 23, 25 and 27

vehicle to the airport every day, but other than that I don't have any worries here," she said.

"I don't mind getting up early and working late, or working odd hours to get the job done ... that's why I'm here," she said.

Making sure she does whatever it takes to accomplish the mission does not mean Jackson does not have concerns however. She said soldiers also share the responsibility to assist her to get the mail out.

"When someone is mailing something, they need to make sure they fill out the address on packages or envelopes correctly, including the correct ZIP code," she stressed.

"The customs form also should be as complete as possible. There are usually one or two soldiers who try to get sneaky and mail something illegal or hazardous home. The bottom line is do not try to mail something here you would not at home," she said.

Jackson also said that custom forms are also needed for anything other than a post card or envelope.

The post office is open from 8:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. every day, but is closed for lunch from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. It will also be closed from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Feb. 20, 23, 25 and 27 while Jackson picks up mail from Chitose airport.

The last day of outgoing mail service is March 1, and express or registered mail service is not available 🌐

HOKKAIDO HUMOR BY MASTER Sgt. Steve Opet



Communication

by Dennis Lopic

A week after the opening ceremony for Orient Shield '04, U.S. and Japan Ground Self Defense Force soldiers have been putting in long hours every day performing a variety of tasks from combat training to meal preparation.

So what do they think of their experience so far?

"I think it's great," said Sgt. Sam Williams, chemical non-commissioned officer, C-Co., 2nd Battalion, 27th Infantry Regiment, 25th Infantry Division.

Williams believes the U.S. Army can work with the JGSDF even if they can't communicate directly.

"They listen more than they talk," he said.

Some soldiers said they were unsure if one translator per group would be enough to communicate effectively, but the message seems to be getting through, soldiers said.

Sgt. Richard Villanueva, chemical non-commissioned officer, C-Co., 2-27, was concerned about getting information across during bilateral training.

"It's hard enough doing [common task training] in our own army let alone with a language difference," he said.

But some soldiers were pleasantly surprised by their experience.

"What I envisioned was more communication barriers, but it's not as tough as I thought it would be," said 1st Lt. John Carver, chemical officer, C-Co., 2-27.

It's not just U.S. soldiers who agree.

"The training is very good," said Gunso Hiroka Kawamura, 43rd Infantry Regiment, 8th Infantry Division, referring to the U.S. Army live fire demonstrations. He said he especially liked the night live fire using the U.S. Army night vision goggles.

"The U.S. scope is lighter and has a better vision than ours," he said. Kawamura said he also learned a lot about the different U.S. Army firing positions.

Besides communications, some U.S. soldiers observed differences in combat tactics or in the type of equipment used.

Spc. Seung Soo Kim, B-Co., 2-27, said he saw similarities and differences in military operations in urban terrain (MOUT) tactics.

"Some [techniques] seem alike and some different compared to our system. They need to incorporate some of our techniques into their MOUT," he said.

Not all Orient Shield '04 training is bilateral, either. Many leaders are taking advantage of training opportunities during Orient Shield '04.

Master Sgt. Don Sciria, motor sergeant, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 35th Supply and Service Battalion, 10th Area Support Group, USARJ, is one of the leaders taking advantage of the ongoing training opportunities. His unit sent soldiers out for weapons training on the M-249 squad automatic weapon.

"We've never been able to get training like that before," he said.

Because site support is taking care of the war fighters, "wolfhounds" are free to



Spc. Sueng Soo Kim
B - Co., 2nd Batt., 27th Inf. Reg.

train the service and support soldiers, according to Capt. Mark E. Young, HHC, 35th S&S Bn.

Soldiers said JGSDF support has been crucial and soldiers said they are impressed by how courteous and thoughtful the Japanese hosts have been.

"From what I've seen, they go out of their way to learn about our culture," Kim said.

Many task force soldiers said they saw the advantage of training with the JGSDF.

"I really enjoyed getting to know another culture. At first I was a little shy, but we can work as one," said 1st Lt. John Carver, C-Co., 2-27. ♦

Do's and Dont's around JGSDF

Cpl. E.M. Brown
141st Military Battalion

Don't Spit

Spitting is just as low a custom in Japan as it is in the United States. To expectorate (that means "to hock a loogie") in someone's presence is a sign of tremendous disrespect, even if you just hopped off of a "deuce" and you have half the road up your nose and down your throat. The custom of chewing tobacco is relatively unknown in Japan as well. In general, the Japanese are tolerant and will not say it to your face, but they find the habit pretty low brow. If you have to dip, do it away from them, and never-ever-spit into a cup or empty can you are carrying around.

Let Them Talk

To the Japanese it is uncouth to be direct and to the point. Over here, to be cultured and refined you need to dance around an issue before coming to the point. This is often maddening to Americans, especially we soldiers, who value directness in a person. The point is, if you are coordinating an activity with a JGSDF counterpart or simply throwing down a few beers and want to do some trading (patches, coins, etc.) let them talk it out and wait for them to come to the point in their own good time. To do otherwise will come across as pushy.

Don't Touch

If you are wondering what your Japanese Ground Self Defense Force counterpart's patches or ribbons on his uniform mean you can point to them but don't touch them. To poke someone with your finger is to tell them that you are their "senior" and above them in class and rank. So, even if you do outrank a JGSDF soldier, keep your hands off of him.

Thank Them For "The Last Time"

In Japan it is customary to thank a person when you see them again after not seeing them for a while. Seem weird? Well, it is a little, but it's a fine point of culture here. If you master it, it will make you seem like a high gentleman and person of high breeding. Here's how it works; if you were at the beer hall the last night and you traded drinks with a Japanese soldier and you see him the next day around camp you should say, "Thank you for last evening."

One Last Thought

This is just one of the many niceties the Japanese have that they use to make their country one of the politest on the face of the earth. ♦

