

**BLACK OCTOBER** - In honor of Operation Urgent Fury and Operation Restore Hope

# TACTICAL MILSIM MAGAZINE

NOVEMBER 2009

## The 26-Minute RESCUE

Over 100 students need  
to be rescued!

Pro Communitas  
Strikers take this to heart

## OPERATION PINE PLAINS

22 hours of mil-sim action

Welcome to the MOG  
Follow the Rangers  
into Mogadishu during  
Operation Gothic Serpent

**SPECIAL EDITION**

# BLACK OCTOBER

Operation Urgent Fury  
Operation Restore Hope

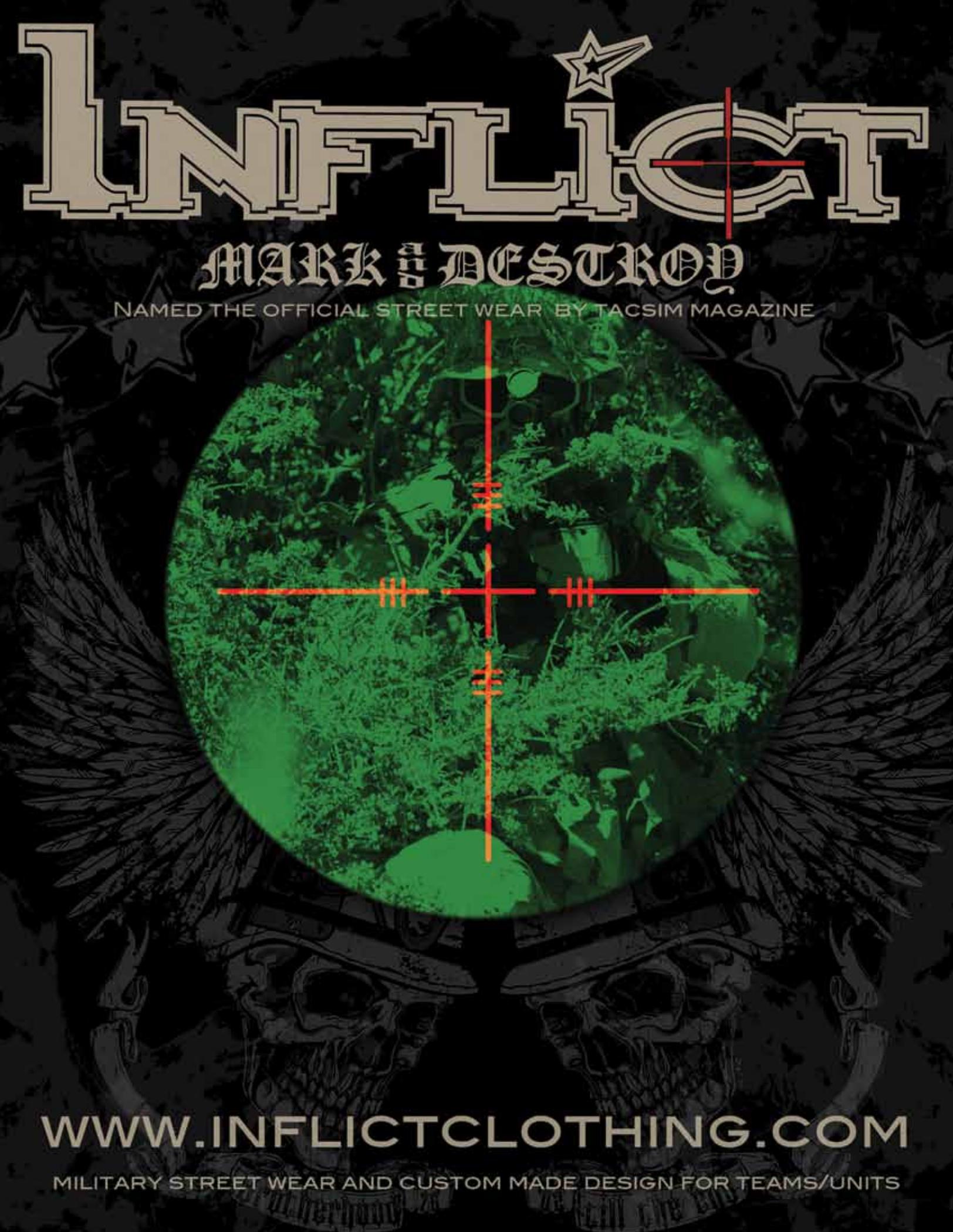


**WEAPON REVIEW**  
CLASSIC ARMY X-Series

\$7.50 US \$10.00 CAN  
Tactical MilSim Magazine  
Fall 2009



# INFLECT



MARK & DESTROY

NAMED THE OFFICIAL STREET WEAR BY TACSIM MAGAZINE



[WWW.INFLICTCLOTHING.COM](http://WWW.INFLICTCLOTHING.COM)

MILITARY STREET WEAR AND CUSTOM MADE DESIGN FOR TEAMS/UNITS



## FEATURES

**The 26-Minute Rescue** by Joe Muccia  
Over 100 students need to be rescued!

**Pro Communitas** by Jeem Newland  
Strikers take this to heart and it encompasses their commitment.

**Operation Pine Plains** by John Bucciarelli  
22 hours of mil-sim action at Ft. Drum, NY.

**Welcome to the Mog** by Denny Fry  
Follow the Rangers into Mogadishu during Operation Gothic Serpent.

## REVIEWS

**ESS Airsoft Profile with Cortex Clip** by Mark Anderson  
New airsoft goggle based on the Profile NVG.

**Classic Army X-Series AR-15** by Mark Anderson  
Taking realism to the next level.

## INTERVIEWS

**Steven Trujillo** by Joe Muccia  
Interview with Silver Star-winner Steven Trujillo.

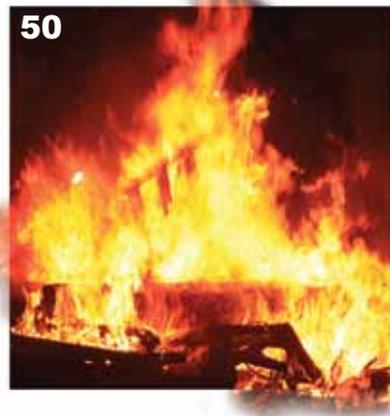
**The Battle of Mogadishu** by Don Roff  
Firsthand accounts from the men of Task Force Ranger.

## COLUMNS

**Sound of the Fury** by Dalton Fury  
Delta Force, Pad Speed, and the American Special Operator.

**Rush Hour** by Matthew "Sully" Sullivan  
Adrenaline-fueled urban combat.

**The Chronicles of Mad Max** by MSG (Ret.) Mad Max Mullen  
Black October.



16

44

50

56

13

30

39

62

6

36

69

**Playing against the professionals!**

**A**cross the country, there are a number of rapidly growing professional mil-sim teams with current and former military and law enforcement personnel among their ranks. Some of these teams have been assisting actual military and law enforcement units in real world training.



Real world units are always looking for new ways to improve their training. As a unit training officer or NCO, using professional mil-sim teams in your training can prove to be a very valuable resource. Unfortunately, their supervising departments are also looking for ways to cut costs. However, every once in a while, quality and cost-effective training can be found. It just requires a little foresight and creativity.

One of the problems I continually see in real-world training is that the “bad guys” are usually either members of the unit in training, staff instructors, or the office personnel from next door. It is obvious that using your own unit members to play the opposing force (OPFOR) is counter-productive because they not only have the same level of training and will most likely already know what the unit will do, but they are also not with their team, which is where they need to be. The next evolution I see is having the instructors function as the OPFOR. Using instructors is good when focusing on a specific skill, but it also requires that more instructors be on-site—because instructors functioning as the OPFOR cannot move around to evaluate, thus limiting their effectiveness. So then we go next door and get volunteers from the units accounting department. We would like to shoot them anyway for limiting our budget, and they’ll think it’s fun. Office personnel can add a fresh element to the training, but this will be limited because they generally do not have the motivation or understanding to adjust their behavior and skill level appropriately.

However, my point is that there is a fourth option. Finding local professional mil-sim teams, members of which may already be in your unit, can be a valuable resource. Just as the National Guard has unique qualities over the active duty military due to the diversification of its civilian job skills, professional mil-sim teams can provide an OPFOR with a diversification, which under proper guidance, will offer the unit many different levels of tactical interaction ranging from an unskilled to highly skilled OPFOR. Professional mil-sim teams can also offer ideas to increase the realism and stress of various tactical situations due to the various national events the mil-sim teams are exposed to. Mil-sim teams that have their own equipment will be able to offer advice on maintaining mil-sim technology and to suggest new products to enhance the training environment.

Real-world training units would also find an extreme benefit to sending their unit or some of its members to various local and national mil-sim events. These events would allow the unit to practice their training and skills outside of their familiar environment and the low, relative cost of the events will also allow for more time spent practicing skills. These events provide an excellent opportunity to increase your unit’s motivation, test new tactical concepts, identify professional mil-sim teams that may be able to assist in your local training, and also compare and learn about new mil-sim products.

In short, under the right guidance, real-world training units can expose themselves to more quality training and practice in a highly motivated, cost-effective environment amidst many other professionals dedicated to tactical simulation technology. If you would like more information, feel free to contact us. However, be careful, you may end up addicted to the training and end up running your own event someday. I’ll look forward to attending.

-Stone Wolf out!

**Owner**

MSG (Ret.) “Mad Max” Mullen  
MadMax@TacticalMilSim.com

**Executive Director**

Mark “Stone Wolf” Anderson  
StoneWolf@TacticalMilSim.com

**Advertising**

John Mirarchi  
John@TacticalMilSim.com

**Media Production**

Donnie T. “Cowboy”  
Cowboy@TacticalMilSim.com

**Marketing**

Toni “Angel” Anderson  
Toni@TacticalMilSim.com

**Sales**

Liz Buenrostro  
Liz@TacticalMilSim.com

**Senior Editor**

Don Roff  
Don@TacticalMilSim.com

**AEditor**

Rebekah J. Trout

**Senior Photographer**

Jeem “Krazie” Newland  
Krazie@TacticalMilSim.com

**Photographer**

Robert Ochoa  
Robert@TacticalMilSim.com

[www.TacticalMilSim.com](http://www.TacticalMilSim.com)

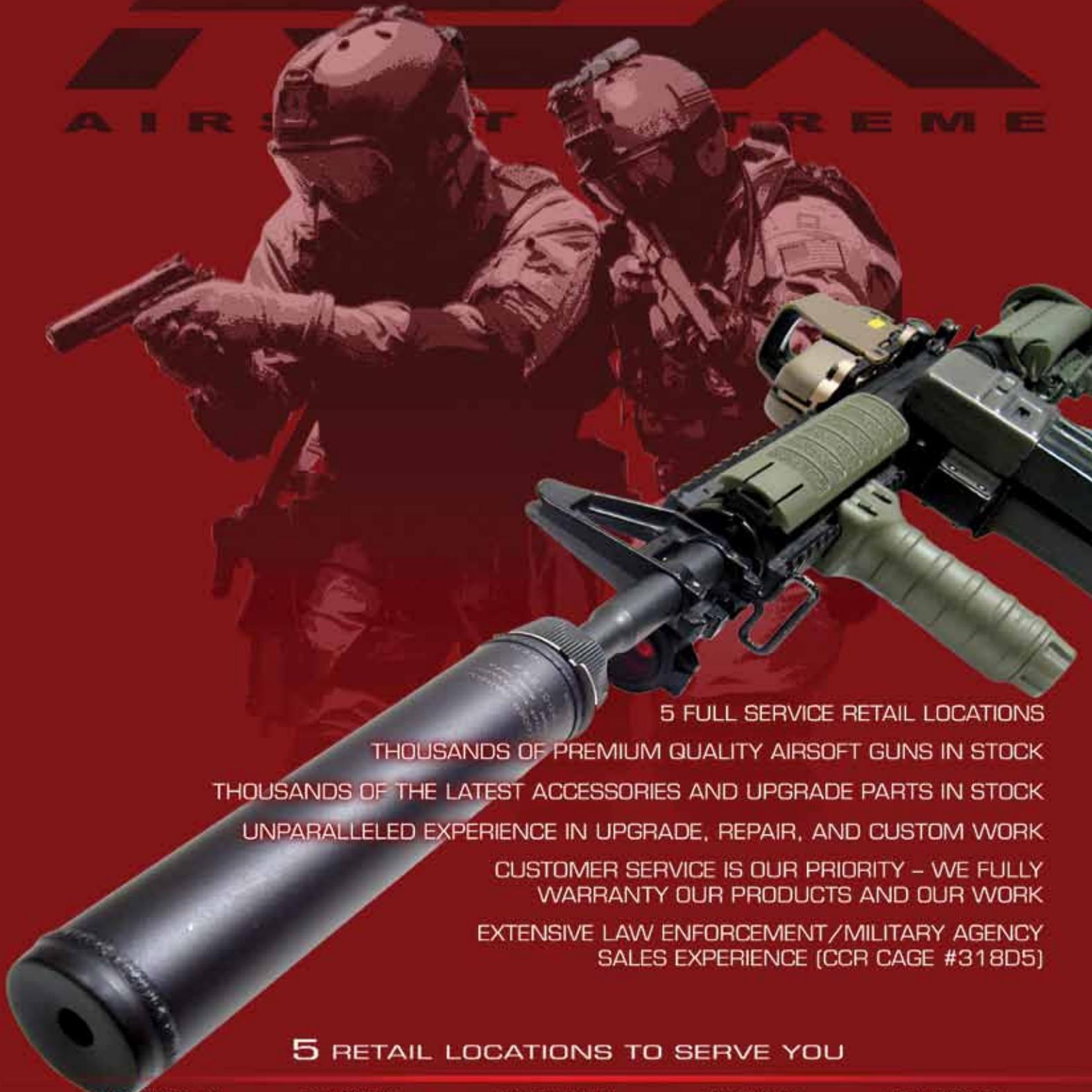
**Cover Photo by Robert Haasch**

**To Our Readers:** Some of the products that appear in Tactical MilSim Magazine may be illegal to purchase, sell, or transport. Prospective buyers should consult local authorities. The information contained in Tactical MilSim Magazine is based upon personal experiences and research and may vary with your own personal opinions and experiences. Tactical MilSim Magazine is not intended to serve as a manual or procedure in any way. Tactical MilSim Magazine, its officers, employees, and consultants accept no responsibility, liability, injuries, or damages from any attempt to rely on any information contained in this publication. Reproduction of this magazine in whole or part is strictly forbidden.

# AIRSOFT EXTREME

YOUR ONLY CHOICE FOR QUALITY AIRSOFT PRODUCTS AND SERVICE.

AIRSOFT EXTREME



5 FULL SERVICE RETAIL LOCATIONS

THOUSANDS OF PREMIUM QUALITY AIRSOFT GUNS IN STOCK

THOUSANDS OF THE LATEST ACCESSORIES AND UPGRADE PARTS IN STOCK

UNPARALLELED EXPERIENCE IN UPGRADE, REPAIR, AND CUSTOM WORK

CUSTOMER SERVICE IS OUR PRIORITY - WE FULLY  
WARRANTY OUR PRODUCTS AND OUR WORK

EXTENSIVE LAW ENFORCEMENT/MILITARY AGENCY  
SALES EXPERIENCE (CCR CAGE #318D5)

## 5 RETAIL LOCATIONS TO SERVE YOU

SACRAMENTO, CA  
6432 TUPELO DR. STE C-4  
CITRUS HEIGHTS, CA 95621  
916.729.1200

OAKLAND, CA  
95 LINDEN STREET STE 11  
OAKLAND, CA 94607  
510.302.6678

SANTA CLARA, CA  
891 LAURELWOOD RD. STE 108  
SANTA CLARA, CA 95054  
408.492.9282

SAN DIEGO, CA  
4821 CONVOY STREET  
SAN DIEGO, CA 92111  
858.569.4077

LOS ANGELES, CA  
2202 W. ARTESIA BLVD STE G  
TERRANCE, CA 90504  
310.323.4840

WWW.AIRSOFTEXTREME.COM  
INTERNET/PHONE SALES: 310-323-5057  
SALES@AIRSOFTEXTREME.COM

# Delta Force, Pad Speed, and the American Special Operator

By Dalton Fury

America's premier counter-terrorist unit, the super secretive Delta Force, has been extremely busy in the on-going war on terror. However, the operational tempo is really nothing new to this organization. Since Delta's activation in 1977, the organization has been on a thirty-one-year-long-and-running war footing, including headliner performances in both Grenada in 1983 and Somalia ten years later.

Still, its operations and operators remain cloaked in secrecy. And although its methods, tactics, techniques, procedures, and personalities have evolved with the times, it remains the nation's premiere counterterrorist force. Often referred to as the "National Force" within the confines of the Pentagon, Delta is the ground component of our most unique, nonconformist, and mysterious Special Mission Units (SMU). Delta provides our nation an exclusive set of skills forged over decades with unorthodox training that isn't found in any doctrinal manual.

Although there are no US Army Field Manuals dedicated to commando operations, inside the unit the anecdotal and tacit knowledge obtained from missions around the world is preserved like the hitting statistics of a major league ball team. In the wake of the failed mission to rescue American citizens held hostage in Iran, Delta learned a

early, painful lesson that the tactical and operational experiences required preservation. These lessons provide the foundation for written standard operating procedures and are passed from one generation of Delta operators to the next.

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq have validated the unique and highly secretive selection process—a process as well protected as the ingredients to Coca-Cola. Many have been wounded in action at least once, many twice, and it is not uncommon for them to return to the fight missing fingers, toes, feet, or even with prosthetic legs. Some still carry bullets and shrapnel deep inside their bodies—and will for life. Sadly, a classified number have made the ultimate sacrifice for our great nation.

Even with years of combat service in both theatres of war, the operational tempo doesn't slow down when stateside. In Delta, when the plane lands back at home station, the post band is not there to welcome the returning troops. There are no crowds of family, friends, and local townspeople waving American flags and homemade signs. There is no mustering into formation while the commander shares some emotionally charged comments over a microphone on a podium.

Yes, the deployment is over, but the moment the plane rolls to a stop and the ramp is low-



Dalton Fury during the hunt for Zargawi in Iraq

ered, the job begins anew. The boys load onto buses and head for the compound, where they repack their bags for a no-notice hostage rescue anywhere in the world. A Delta operator may retrieve his wedding ring from his wall locker and slide it onto his finger, but then it is immediately back to business.

They place fresh batteries in their NVGs, weapon sights, and ear protection. They clean their weapons with solvent and high-pressure air before applying a light coat of gun oil. They charge their interteam radio batteries and load pistol and rifle magazines before replacing them



in their kit bag. After taking a shower and winding down with a cold beer or two in the squadron lounge, a few minutes are spent remembering their fallen comrades, whose eyes watch over them from a wall of honor. Before jumping in their pickup truck or on their Harley-Davidson to head home to their families, they reach down to make a final check that their beepers are attached to their belts. The beepers are as meticulously maintained as a delicate heart monitor, for an operator knows if his beeper fails while inside the local movie theater or a neighborhood bar, then he risks missing a real world call-out or deployment to a crisis site. The worst thing you can do to a Delta operator is leave him behind, even for just a training mission. Counterterrorists don't punch time clocks.

**“Selection is an ongoing process.”**

Delta operators have been described as franchise athletes with pad speed—the analogy being that a blue-chip football player's true value to a team is how he performs with full pads and helmet on game day. This pad speed is determined after a candidate has been specially screened, and mentally, physically, and psychologically assessed. What's the ultimate goal? The answer is to find the “right guy” for the organization. But once you are accepted into the ranks, the expectation is that an operator will consistently perform well above the established standards. There is an old saying within the unit ranks: selection is an ongoing process. And, since 9/11, an operator's pad speed has been measured on the battlefield.

Bench-pressing your body weight a hundred times, running triathlons on the weekends, or scoring off the chart on your Army Physical Fitness Test are nice qualifications for a Delta

candidate to have—in fact, I had none of these—but they are only part of the equation. Intangibles like personal drive, thinking on your feet, processing multiple mental feeds simultaneously, and controlling your emotions are key ingredients in the “right guy” recipe.

The vast majority of Delta operators are products of the Army Green Berets or Rangers. Candidates from these “farm teams” obviously come with the small unit leader skills, tactical knowledge, experience within the special operations community, and in the past several years, significant combat experience on their resume. However, not having a combat arms MOS is not a disqualifier by any means. The Army at large provides unique training in numerous soft skill MOSs that make these candidates for Delta equally desirable. At the battle of Tora Bora in December 2001, reconnaissance team leader and Silver Star winner, “Hopper,” was a Rus-

sian Linguist before joining the ranks of Delta. After successfully moving through the gates linking selection and assessment to full “operator” status, he learned the unique tactical skills required of a counterterrorist.

## **“Discipline is loving to do what they hate, but knowing they have to do it to be the very best.”**

Successfully completing Delta’s Selection and Assessment course requires individuals that can function alone under extreme physical stress—as well as extraordinary self-induced psychological stress. Delta cadre do not raise their voices, harass, or coddle the candidates. The unique and age-old process identifies the individual that successfully preserves his sense of humor, follows the rules when nobody is watching, and requires zero external motivation outside of his own personal drive and desire to join Delta’s ranks. This process ensures the future Delta operator is capable of answering our nation’s call when the international and political stakes are the highest. This high stakes game is played out in the shadows and without fanfare as they are the nation’s offensive arm, entrusted with our most complicated problems—capturing Saddam Hussein, killing his two murderous sons, and outsmarting and ultimately ensuring Abu Musab al-Zarqawi’s demise after an intensive two and one-half year manhunt.

In the end, the remarkable

attention and effort placed on the Delta selection process provides the American people a lethal force of manhunters as comfortable in a village slaughterhouse as they are in a Balkan slum. These are fanatical yet composed men with a unique interpretation of discipline. To them, discipline is loving to do what they hate, but knowing they have to do it to be the very best.

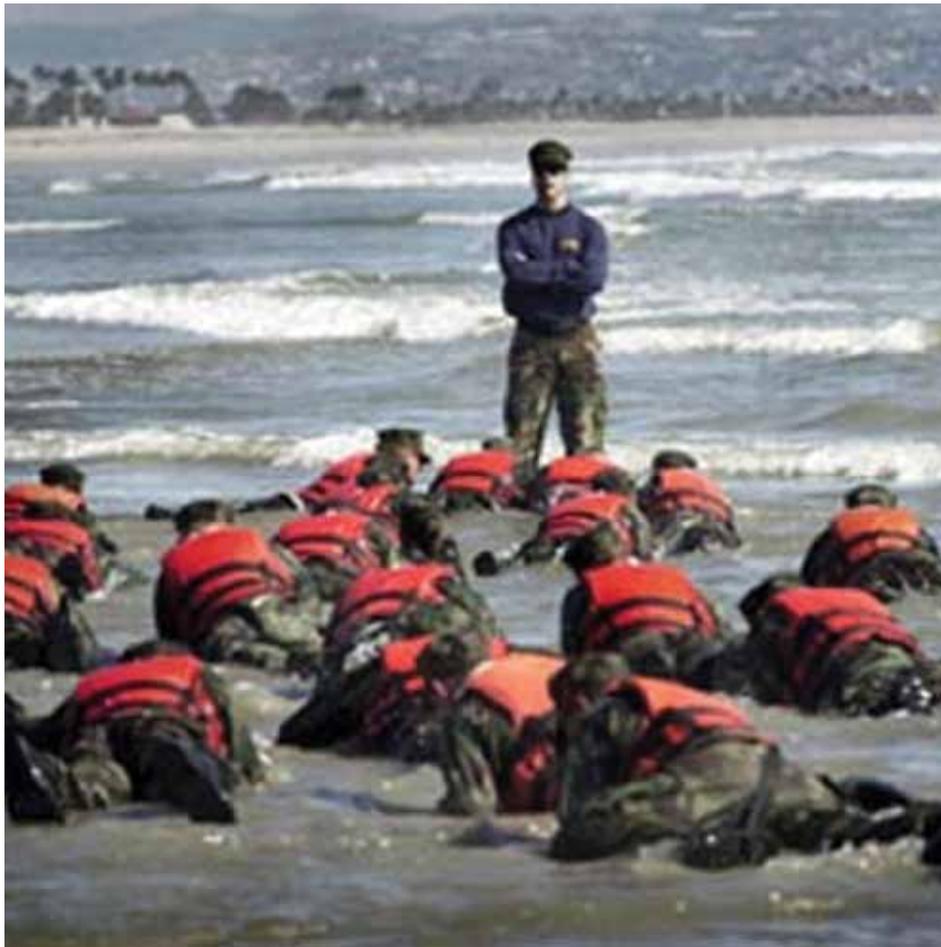
Sure, they score higher on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery and physical fitness tests than the average trooper. But who cares? The Mumbai terrorists that pulled off the most deadly terror attack in India’s history in November 2008 had elementary school educations. None of their mentors or leaders had Doctorate degrees, graduated from the Army War College, or any Non-commissioned officer mandatory schooling.

And yes, as Robert Martignage recently wrote in his 2008 monograph—*Strategy for the*

*Long Haul: Future Challenges and Opportunities*, “Most have significant prior military experience...and typically spend several years with their units before achieving full proficiency.” Our special operations forces (SOF) are busier and more in demand than ever before. “The operations tempo currently being sustained by SOF is the highest in its history,” remarked US Special Operations Commander Admiral Eric T. Olson in a March 2008 speech to national security leaders at the Center for a New American Security. But can we afford this multi-year-long process before “full proficiency” is achieved, particularly as more and more warriors hardened by years of war opt to attend a SOF selection?

How long did the ten Mumbai terrorists train before they were ordered to execute their mission? Weren’t they carefully selected, highly trained personnel capable of conducting challenging missions? Don’t the 19 hi-





ops helicopter pilot, a Green Beret, or even an operator in a ground or water SMU?

Our SOF has always been representative of our nation's best and brightest men and women. Most recently, the world witnessed the precision and composure of our Navy SEALs as they killed three Somali pirates before rescuing an American cargo ship's Captain. Sure, at 90-foot distance anyone with a basic understanding of firearms would consider this a chip shot. Factor in the SEAL's ocean bobbing shooting platform, dark of night, and the bobbing head-sized targets, and the difficulty increases a good bit. But the important point here is that these SEALs were not on a static rifle range taking target practice. They weren't in the streets of Baghdad in a gun fight where the only people watching were teammates and the Predator above. In the Indian Ocean, off the coast of Somalia, the entire world was watching.

**“These SEALs epitomized and validated once again the special in SOF.”**

Three anonymous SEALs simultaneously broke their shots and ended the terrifying and internationally embarrassing event. Talk about pressure! And it is this pressure; the international and political high stakes mentioned earlier, that these men are trained—in fact expected—to perform under. Essentially, these SEALs epitomized and validated once again the special in SOF. For their troubles they carry the hard-earned and coveted title of special operator.

jackers on 9/11 fit this description as well? Moreover, both groups very shrewdly employed the vital commando tools—disguise, deception, and diversion—quite well. These are tools we spend years honing.

Obviously, our SOF and the terrorists enjoy fairly comparative capacity. Clearly the difference is the respect for mankind on one hand and the desire for mayhem and death on the other. The political will of the terrorist leaders, funneled down to the foot soldiers like the Mumbai Ten, is what makes them different from us. And, in this respect, it makes them much more dangerous, much more relevant, and much more deadly than our nation's leaders could ever allow even our best special operations personnel to be.

The challenging SOF ramp-up demanded by the 2006 *Quadrennial Defense Review* (QDR) is well under way. On the books are a one-third expansion of active Special Forces battalions, significant increases in Ranger and SEAL units, expansion of Special Mission Units, and more special operations rotary-wing and fixed wing pilots and crews. An aggressive move indeed, but where in the world are we going to get these folks? Does our nation have enough human capital of the ilk required to serve the special operator ranks? Is the demand in proportion with the supply? How is it that now, when the need is greater due to the on-going war with Islamic extremists, that we magically have some bottomless pit of individuals with the native resources and propensity to become a special

This to them, I'm sure, is reward enough.

But the challenging 2006 QDR risks mirroring our society in a more malignant way. Our society has become super-sensitive to ensuring every child is treated the same in youth sports. Many communities and recreation leagues have discontinued selecting All-Stars because it somehow might have potentially disastrous emotional effects on some kid's mental state or self esteem. It seems all too common these days that parents blame their child's performance on everything but the lack of hard work, desire, and motiva-

tion to compete with neighborhood peers. Are we doing the same thing fundamentally with SOF? At several SOF schools service-wide, instructor numbers have increased, the number of classes per year has increased, class length has decreased, and selection criteria has been modified as well as some course standards—all to produce more special operators. Not everyone can take that shot in the Indian Ocean.

Caution must be exercised by our leaders to ensure we are not allowing what we think the future holds to obscure the four SOF Truths we held so sacro-

sanct before 9/11. Moreover, it's imperative that our special operators remain relevant, capable, and of high quality—not cattle herded through the SOF gates and measured by the pound to meet the demands of the QDR abacas. We can be confident that SOF senior leaders like Admiral Olson, a highly decorated and long time Navy SEAL, and LTG Frank Kearney, a long time Army Ranger and JSOC leader, and currently the Deputy Commander of US Special Operations Command, monitor SOF's expansion with a keen eye. Both leaders' pad speed has been measured in combat numerous





The Mumbai Ten pulled off one of the largest loss of life attacks in recent history using a few thousand dollars worth of equipment. What did they have? AK-47 rifles, hand grenades, backpacks, Blackberries, and a small amount of explosives—items that can be had from a few select bazaars in the wild North-West Frontier Province. Had American special operators executed a similar mission, these professionals would have carried in a hundred thousand dollars worth of equipment on top of the tens of thousands of training dollars it took for them to reach the level required before some authority knighted them as fully capable.

We do have one other thing in common with our adversaries, though. Terrorists face the same recruiting challenges as Delta or any other direct-action SOF outfit. Any candidate has to possess an internal desire to carry a rifle into harm's way and risk his own life for a cause. It is simple as that and it always has been. At the end of the day, the score will be settled by whoever shows the capacity to maintain the commando edge and keep the tools of disguise, diversion, and deception razor sharp and well protected. But, just like a chilly, autumn Sunday afternoon, the team with the most pad speed usually comes out on top.

*Dalton Fury, a pseudonym, retired from the US Army after twenty years of service. Fifteen of those years were spent with some of the finest Special Operations Forces in existence. He is the author of the New York Times best-seller KILL BIN LADEN: A Delta Force Commander's Account of the Hunt For the World's Most Wanted Man (St. Martin's Press, 2008)*

times, and found not wanting.

History has shown we can't predict the next battlefield. Presently, our nation continues a fight we failed to predict against an enemy with a clear disadvantage. Our SOF's mental capacity, operator training, and support structure is unmatched. We all know by now, after seven years of fighting the jihadists, or "Sunni Salafi-Takfiri and Shia Khomeinist brands of violent Islamist radicalism" that Martinage refers to, that the only advantage our Islamic extremist adversaries have on us is their very elementary and simple willingness to die for their cause—and kill as many innocent non-combatants as possible in the process. Let's not expand our SOF simply because we fight an enemy with a self-defeating jihadist mindset.

Our conventional ground forces in the Army and Marine Corps have proven their skill and courage time after time in both Afghanistan and Iraq. In this respect, they are just as special as Delta or any other SOF outfit.

**“The Mumbai Ten pulled off one of the largest loss of life attacks in recent history using a few thousand dollars ... “**

The SOF expansion plans that are available to the public are clear. However, what might we find in the Islamic extremist 2006 QDR? What capacity are they lobbying and budgeting for? More UAVs? More special ops helos? More special operators?

# Think Airsoft



## The Nation's Largest Airsoft Retailer

**FREE SHIPPING!\***    **SAME DAY SHIPPING!**  
**110% PRICE MATCH GUARANTEE**



**AGM 035/036 CQB  
M4 AEG Rifles**  
(ERM-AGM-M4-035 /  
ERM-AGM-M4-036)  
**\$139.95**



**AGM P90 AEG**  
(ERM-JG-P90-TR)  
**\$119.95**  
Stan Cap Mag \$12.95  
Hi Cap Mag \$15.95



**A&K LR300 Short/  
Long AEG Rifle**  
(ERM-AK-LR300-S/  
ERM-AK-LR300-L)  
**\$179.95**



**SRC G36L/G36K/  
G36C AEG Rifle**  
(ER-SRC-0631-G36/  
ER-SRC-0634G36K)  
**\$189.95**



**ICS SIG 551/552  
Airsoft AEG Rifle**  
(ER-ICS-SIG-51/  
ER-ICS-SIG-52)  
**\$319.95**



**JG G36K 0738/  
JG G36K 0838  
Scope AEG Rifle**  
(ERM-JG-G36K-738/  
ERM-JG-G36K-838)  
**\$119.95/\$134.95**



**JG G36 Long RIS  
Airsoft AEG Rifle**  
(ERM-JG-G36K-938)  
**\$124.95**



**Celcius Technology  
CTW Airsoft Training  
Weapon**  
(ER-CTW-M4A1)  
**\$619.95**



**M18A1 Airsoft Claymore**  
**CYMA M18 Claymore**  
(AC-CYMA-M18A1)  
**\$99.95**

**www.airsoft.com**





# ***ESS AIRSOFT PROFILE NVG***

**Review By Mark Anderson**

My life was nearly and painfully changed forever as an airsoft pellet impacted the front of my goggles where the removable lens met the frame passing between the two and impacting my left eye. The pain was immediate and extremely intense. However, I was lucky and after two years my eye no longer bothers me. Maybe I didn't have the lens in all the way or they were worn out, but it was no longer worth the risk. This story was just the beginning of a quest to find the right goggles to fit my playing style and protect my eyes.

Finding eye protection that meets the demands of the mil-sim environment is a difficult task to say the least. To be honest, I had been wearing the WileyX series goggles with the removable lens while many of my friends were wearing standard Oakley's which provide little to no pro-

tection from the sides. Since my goggles provided foam around the eyes, I felt I was protected.

ESS has released a new series of airsoft goggles based on an unfiltered version of the ESS Profile NVG series. ESS also added a Cortex Clip which attaches quickly to the exterior of the goggles to provide essential coverage for eye protection in the airsoft environment. The Cortex Clip will also fit the Profile NVG and Profile TurboFan goggles.

## **BALLISTIC PROTECTION**

Since there is still no specific rating for Airsoft, most fields require that goggle meet the ANSI Z87.1 standard. However, the military requirements for eye protection under the Mil Spec Test: MIL-DTL-43511D demands more than five times the level of impact required by the ANSI Z87.1 standard. This Mil Spec standard requires that the goggle lens must withstand impacts from a .22 caliber fragment at 550 to 560 feet/sec (~1665m/sec). ESS believes that this same standard should be required for Airsoft as well. Therefore all ESS airsoft goggles will meet this same standard.

## **COMFORT**

To the player, comfort is right up there with

looking cool. Goggles have to feel good and look good. Unfortunately, everyone has their own idea of comfort. I have seen on many occasions where a player will shoulder his weapon only to force the goggles out of position thus opening a large gap. The last thing we want is to break the seal when under fire. This was one of the first things I tested as soon as I received a pair from Scott Leightner of ESS. I donned the goggles and shouldered every weapon I had with every sight configuration I could find. The only issue I found was that the Cortex Clip would touch the weapon when using low profile sights. Yet it did not break the seal nor make it feel uncomfortable. Although I'm sure it is not recommended by ESS, I would consider trimming about 1/8" off of the bottom lip of the cortex clip. This would remove even the impression of interference at least for me.

## **USABILITY**

Fogging is the most discussed issue in regards to sealed goggles. In the military you wear them over short periods of time to keep dirt and debris out of your eyes and if they fog you just take them off. However, this is not an option for the mil-sim player. The mil-sim environment is ex-

tremely more demanding on these goggles. With this in mind, ESS removed the filter system to increase the airflow greatly reducing fogging issues.

## **COOL FACTOR**

This aspect, although a bit vain, is extremely important to safety. Mil-sim players should "want" to wear the goggles not "have" to wear them. I must admit though without a helmet, the goggle with the Cortex Clip does visually appear to be big and awkward looking but with a Kevlar or Protec helmet the goggle look great. I can certainly see player customizing their Cortex Clip by painting them different colors or camo patterns that is unless ESS beats them to it.

ESS has a strong reputation for high quality goggles within military and law enforcement communities and we welcome them into the mil-sim community as well. Visit [www.ESSAirsoft.com](http://www.ESSAirsoft.com) for more information.





[WWW.MAC-V.COM](http://WWW.MAC-V.COM)

**Military Actors Consultants & Vehicles**



**Military Special Operations Film Consulting**



# The **26-MINUTE** F

By Joe Muccia

“What do you mean there are more students?!?!” exclaimed LTC Ralph Hagler, commander of 2nd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger).



# RESCUE

SSG Steve Weiss replied, “Sir, there’s a call for you on the True Blue campus phone. It’s a student over at a place called ‘Grand Anse.’ He says that there are over 100 students there now and they need to be rescued.”

“Tell him to hang tight. We’re working on something.”

With that, Hagler flew out to the USS Guam to coordinate what would become a highly successful rescue mission, executed within the smallest of timeframes and without loss of life to the US forces or the rescued students.

After meeting with the Joint Task Force leadership aboard the Guam, Hagler was told that LTC Granville “Granny” Amos’s, Marine Corps helicopter squadron, HMM-261, the “Raging Bulls,” would be supporting his battalion on the rescue.

Hagler boarded Amos’s command-and-control Huey and flew back to Point Salines airfield, with the rescue force’s CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters in trail.

## The Plan is Hatched

Once on the ground, the two Vietnam-experienced officers and former Virginia Military Institute classmates hashed out a plan to rescue the students at Grand Anse. They would have ample supporting arms in the form of US Air Force AC-130 Spectre gunships, US Navy A-7s from the carrier Independence, two Marine AH-1 Sea Cobras, 2nd Ranger Battalion 60mm mortars, and 105mm artillery pieces from the 82nd Airborne Division.

Hagler’s Rangers would be divided into nine CH-46 Sea Knight helicopters, commonly referred to as Frogs, with each of his three companies being allotted three aircraft. Four CH-53 Sea Stallions would be available to pick up the students once the area had been secured by the Rangers.

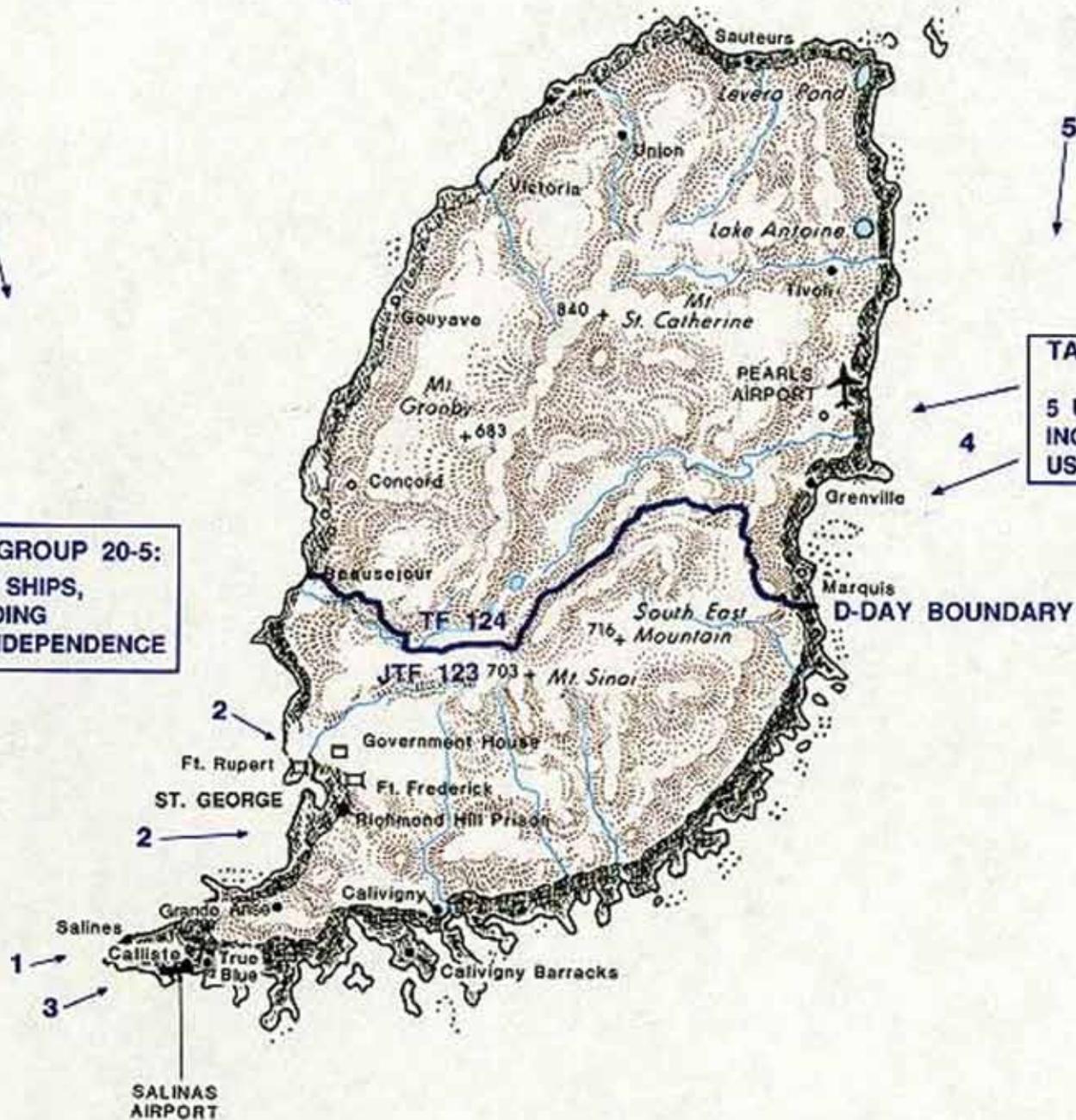
The plan was simple. The Frogs would pick up the Rangers at Salines and fly out to a rendezvous point off the coast of Grand Anse where they would link up with the CH-53s and two Cobra helicopters. LTC Amos, along with Hagler and



2nd Battalion Rangers loading up at Point Salines on USMC CH-46 Frogs for the Grand Anse mission.  
Photo credit: Joe Muccia via Defense Visual Information Center

**TASK GROUP 20-5:  
8 USN SHIPS,  
INCLUDING  
USS INDEPENDENCE**

**TASK FORCE  
124:  
5 USN SHIPS,  
INCLUDING  
USS GUAM**



**US PLAN FOR URGENT FURY:**

- 1- SOF UNITS INFILTRATE INTO SALINES AREA
- 2- SOF UNITS SEIZE KEY SITES IN AND AROUND ST. GEORGE
- 3- 1ST AND 2ND BNS (-), 75TH INF (RANGER) SEIZE SALINES AIRPORT, TRUE BLUE, AND CALIVIGNY
- 4- USMC (22 ND MAU) SEIZES PEARLS AIRPORT AND GRENVILLE
- 5- ELEMENTS OF 82ND ABN DIVISION ARRIVE ON D-DAY TO RELIEVE SOF AND USMC
- 6- CARIBBEAN NATIONS' FORCES ARRIVE LATER ON D-DAY TO SERVE AS PEACEKEEPERS

his Fire Support Officer, CPT Dave Aherns, would direct preparatory fire into the areas surrounding the campus. The Frogs would swoop in to drop off the Rangers and then quickly depart. Companies A and B would secure the perimeter and hold it, while C Company dashed in to collect the students and escort them to the LZ for pick up by the CH-53s. Once that was accomplished, the Rangers would fall back towards the LZ, climb aboard the returning CH-46s, and exfil from the area. All aircraft would then return to Point Salines.

After the two finalized the plan, they walked off to deliver the mission FRAGO to their men. Before doing so, Hagler returned to True Blue and contacted the student at Grand Anse again. He told him that they would be coming in at 1530h and that the students should put white bed sheets on the roofs of their dorms and that each student should tie a white strip of cloth around each arm for identification. Lastly they were told to stack mattresses in front of any windows to protect them from flying glass and debris.

### **“Hang Tight. We’re Coming for You.”**

Hagler gathered his company commanders. CPT Frank Kearney of A Company, CPT Thomas Sittnick of B Company, and CPT Mark Hanna of C Company listened intently as Hagler described each company’s part of the mission.

“A Company will go in first, securing the south – southeastern section of the perimeter. B Company will go in second and secure the north – northeastern section of the perimeter. C Company will arrive last, move into the campus, round up the students, and escort them to the waiting CH-53s. We will then exfil in reverse order: C Company, B Company, and finally A Company,” Hagler explained. The limit of advance for A and B Company was to be a roadway that bordered the eastern side of the campus. The Rangers would need to be ready for pick up at Salines by 1500h with the birds hitting the Grand Anse LZ at 1530h.



2nd Battalion Rangers loading up at Point Salines on USMC CH-46 Frogs for the Grand Anse mission. Photo credit: Joe Muccia via Defense Visual Information Center

With that said, Hagler released his company commanders to go brief their men.

The Rangers were told to strip down their rucks; they would be going in heavy on ammunition and nothing else. While they were doing this, each of the company’s leaders devised a scheme of maneuver for the platoons. Once the Rangers completed their gear prep, the platoon leaders and platoon sergeants delivered the OpOrder.

SFC Gerry Klein, the platoon sergeant for 3rd Platoon, A Company, remembered the sequence well, “It was mid-afternoon when word came that we would be getting a FRAGO for a rescue mission and that it would be at a place called Grand



2nd Battalion Rangers loading up at Point Salines on USMC CH-46 Frogs for the Grand Anse mission. Photo credit: Joe Muccia via Defense Visual Information Center

Anse. Apparently they (the Battalion) had contact with someone on the campus. The campus was surrounded and according to the plan, we would come in over the beach (by helicopter) to get the students out. When CPT Kearney left to get the order, I began working out a quick scheme of maneuver with the other Company leaders. As the plan was worked out, 3rd Platoon was assigned security cordon duties on the right side of the perimeter. Rangers began emptying everything out of their rucksacks except for ammunition.”

B Company Ranger Steve Kendrick also remembered the briefing and his personal load. “We were briefed that the students would have white sheets on the roofs of the buildings. We didn’t take rucks, but I had my ammo, LCE, and a 90mm recoilless round. The round was still in its cardboard tube and I carried it in the same hand as my CAR-15.”

1LT Steven Brown and SFC Dave Cummings were the senior leaders for C Company’s 1st Platoon and were key players in the mission planning. Brown recalled, “My platoon had the mission

to go inside the building and rescue the students. My plan was for SSG Glen Webb’s 3rd squad to go inside to get the students with one squad for security on each side of the building.” Cummings added, “We were tasked with entering the campus gym where the students were to be assembled, secure them, and herd them out to the beach and into waiting CH-53s. After a five-minute rock drill, the CH-46s arrived and we loaded up.

As the Rangers were loading up, SSG Weiss, who had remained behind to monitor the radios with the Battalion Tactical Operations Center, received a call from Grand Anse. The student on the line asked them to hold off the rescue. There was another group of students coming in and they would need another 30 minutes. Weiss hopped in his jeep and tore down the runway looking for Hagler. After being informed, Hagler told Amos that they needed to hold and that the launch time needed to be pushed to 1600h. Amos passed the info to the flight crews. Rangers continued to board their assigned Frogs.

### **“We are Inbound to the LZ at This Time.”**

At 1600h, Amos lifted his UH-1N Huey off the Salines tarmac, with the rest of the force following suit. The two commanders quickly pulled the chain on the supporting fires. A symphony of destruction began erupting all around Grand Anse campus as a Spectre gunship opened up with its lethal 20mm, 40mm, and 105mm cannons. As Spectre broke off, A-7 Corsair II attack aircraft dove in, adding their blistering 20mm cannon fire to the explosions occurring around the campus. When the A-7s pulled out of their runs, Hagler radioed for 2nd Battalion’s mortar teams and the 82nd’s 105mm artillery pieces to start dropping rounds east of the campus road.

Twenty seconds after the last shell impacted, the first flight of three CH-46s came roaring in bearing the Rangers of A Company. Unfortunately, the LZ was much smaller than planned for, with palm trees and buildings pressing up against

the surf line. The three aircraft settled into the south side of the LZ, all the while taking incoming rounds. Marine crew chiefs answered back with jack-hammering bursts of fire from their starboard side .50 caliber door guns. The ramps dropped and the Rangers came charging out into the sand and surf. After quickly getting their bearings, A Company realized they had come in too far south. So they shed their rucks and raced 200 meters up the beach, cut right into the brush, and pushed out into their assigned blocking positions. Many crawled out and placed Claymores.

A Company SGT Scott Breassealle recalled, "When we arrived at our beachhead there was no place for the birds to land. So they spun around, lowered their tail gates, and we jumped into waist deep water and made our way to a beach wall. As soon as we hit the 3-foot beach wall we started receiving fire, so we dumped the equipment on our backs so that we could move easier. We maneuvered to the north until we found the correct hotel

and went to our security positions. I recall looking back at the beach on the way and saw one of the helicopters sitting in the water unable to take off. I did not know if it was mine or not at that point, but they all looked the same to me. Once at our positions we could see close air support strafing the ground to our front as it came in and did a fire mission run from west to east.

B Company's aircraft came screaming in as A Company's aircraft were clearing the LZ. They too landed outside the LZ, a bit further to the north than anticipated. CPT Sittnick's Rangers cleared the ramps quickly and moved south and into their designated blocking positions. By this time, Haggler and Amos started bringing in the Spectre and A-7s, along with Ranger mortars and 105mm artillery pieces, to suppress the small arms fire that was building up around the LZ.

B Company Ranger SGT Steve Griffin set up his 90mm M67 Recoilless Rifle and waited for the students to be extracted. "I set my 90mm up on



2nd Battalion Rangers loading up at Point Salines on USMC CH-46 Frogs for the Grand Anse mission.  
Photo credit: Joe Muccia via Defense Visual Information Center



2nd Battalion Rangers loading up at Point Salines on USMC CH-46 Frogs for the Grand Anse mission.  
Photo credit: Joe Muccia via Defense Visual Information Center

the left side of the hotel near some sort of an out-house building, a pool house maybe. The rest of B Company was to my left and right. The Company CP was behind a wall to my rear in a pool/patio area. I remember that there was a row of wooden shotgun type houses directly across the road from the hotel. They were approximately 50-75 yards from my position. The Navy fast movers were suppressing the far side of the road with 20mm fire.”

The last flight of three CH-46s came in bearing C Company. Unfortunately the flight lead chose to go in just outside of the designated LZ in an area festooned with palm trees. The tail rotor of the third bird in the flight impacted a palm tree that sat on the edge of the LZ. The aircraft settled into the zone and the ramp quickly dropped. Rangers scrambled to get out of the stricken aircraft while being peppered with razor-sharp shards of palm. The crew also escaped from what they thought was a disabled aircraft.

C Company Ranger SGT Kurt Sturr recalled the crash landing well, “Heading in, things start-

ed to go wrong. Strange sounds. The ‘46 started shuddering violently. Pilot put it down in the surf, so close to the palm trees that the blades were trashing the trees. The rear ramp opened a crack and then stopped, as water started filling the floor of the bird. The water was waist deep when I bailed out. I’m thinking, “this is not good,” and with my 100-pound ruck, tried to go out an escape window. The two LAWs under the top flap of my ruck held me up. SFC Magana (Sturr’s platoon sergeant) shouted “DROP RUCKS,” and then managed to get the ramp to drop. We struggled to get out into the water, about 4 feet deep. My ruck, one strap off, and one caught on my M-16 sling, tangled and I go right underwater as if I’ve got an anchor around my neck. [I] slipped out of the ruck, and made it to the shore. By this time there is close air or some other shooting. Hell, I was so disoriented at this point; it was hard to say where the fire was coming from, but seemed directed at the trees along the beach. [I] believe it was a Navy fast mover with nose cannon firing up the tree line. Things then

got quiet; we got up and ran up the beach a couple hundred meters to where the rest of 2nd Bat was landing.

While SGT Sturr was struggling to exit the CH-46, 1st Platoon, C Company raced into the campus to extract the students. SFC Cummings remembered the actions inside the campus well, "From the chopper we sprinted directly to the gym. Explosions and sporadic fire could be heard in the distance, nothing close. I got to the double doors of the gym and checked it. I signaled 'unlocked.' I turned to SSG Webb, Scout Squad Leader, and pointed at him to take it in. I then positioned myself a little outside the door where I could react to events inside or outside. LT Brown positioned himself with his RTO where he could control the PZ and maintain comms with higher."

Thinking that the downed aircraft might be flyable, the crew chief, LCpl Marty Dellert sprinted back out to look over his bird. After extensive

checks, he signaled to his crew that he was confident that the bird would fly. They ran out, cranked up the bird, and although it vibrated fiercely, they were able to limp back to Point Salines.

Cummings continued, "Webb pulled the door open and sent his first man in. We had no idea what to expect. Ranger George Rollins burst into the room, yelling, 'US forces, everyone down on the ground!' The Scouts fanned out through the gym, weapons at ready, yelling for everyone to lie down on the floor. They had to first insure there was no hostile threat. I heard the 'ALL CLEAR' signal and breathed a sigh of relief. Our Scouts did a magnificent job of taking charge of the scared and confused students. They got them organized and heading out the door single file. At the all clear signal LT Brown had the first CH-53 inbound.

The first student emerged from the door, blinking at the bright sunlight, wide-eyed scared. I motioned her toward our reception line and they all



2nd Battalion Rangers loading up at Point Salines on USMC CH-46 Frogs for the Grand Anse mission.  
Photo credit: Joe Muccia via Defense Visual Information Center

began to file by. Some had little backpacks or gym bags. They all followed instructions and things went smoothly. They were scared, trying to comprehend what was happening to them, being herded like cattle to who knows what fate: jet attack aircraft screaming overhead; the thump of explosions in the distance; the big Jolly Greens roaring in to land, throwing a sandstorm into their faces; can't see, being grabbed by stern looking green men directing them onwards; wading into the surf to be crammed into a roaring, shaking metal monster. I grinned to myself, 'don't get no better than this folks'."

With the students emerging, 1LT Brown called in the CH-53s. The big birds came into the zone one at a time, quickly filling up with students. SFC Cummings continued counting students until the last one emerged from the gymnasium. All told, there were 236 students being extracted. By the time the last CH-53 came in, there were over sixty of them staged, waiting for the helicopter to land. The ramp dropped and they moved forward under

the guidance of Rangers and Marine crew chiefs that eyed the situation suspiciously, not knowing if they would be able to fit so many. As the students pressed in close, the crew chief raised that ramp and radioed to the pilot that they were all aboard. The big bird cleared the zone slowly, and because of the weight, had to slow down to climb, then dip its nose to build up airspeed. The pilot did this several times. It was a fantastic display of airmanship on the part of the pilots just to keep the bird aloft, let alone make it back to Salines safely.

With the students extracted, it was time for the CH-46s to come back in for the Rangers. The remaining eight Frogs thundered back into the LZ. Unfortunately another one hit a palm tree. As aircraft "00" or "Double Nuts," piloted by Major Dick Gallagher settled into the landing zone adjacent to the school, its rotor wash pitched a palm tree upward. When the aircraft made contact with the ground, the rotor wash changed direction, allowing the palm tree to settle back down. Without the wind to hold it aloft, it came crashing down into the aft rotor section, completely destroying it. The





## Operation Urgent Fury Basic Equipment List: Grenadier

### WORN:

M1 Helmet w/BDU Camouflage Cover with  
 Company Markings (Cat Eyes)  
 Helmet Band  
 OG 107 Jungle Fatigues  
 Jungle Boot (Panama Sole)  
 OG Wool Socks  
 M1950 OG Field Cap  
 Brown T-shirt  
 Dog Tags with 550 Cord Sheath  
 LCE Load Y Harness  
 2 - One Quart Canteens w/ Covers  
 Canteen Cup  
 Iodine Tablets  
 Pistol Belt  
 Lensatic Compass Pouch  
 2 - M16 (30rd) Ammo Pouches  
 M7 Bayonet (or Custom Knife)  
 M203A1  
 2 - 45.cal Machine Gun Pouches (Non-issue  
 Item to Carry Extra M203 Rounds)  
 M203 Grenade Vest

### RUCK:

Alice Pack Large w/Frame  
 Five Quart Canteen w/Cover  
 Cargo Strap (Canteen)  
 VS17 Panel  
 Casualty Collection Cards  
 Tourist Map (Grenada)  
 Rappelling Gloves (Usually dyed Black)  
 Poncho Liner  
 5 - MRE's  
 OG107 Top  
 1pr OD Green Wool Socks  
 1ea Brown T-shirt  
 Weapons Cleaning Kit  
 Wet Weather Top  
 Snap Link  
 5ft Swiss Rope (Tie-in)  
 Flash Light  
 PVS 5 Night Vision Goggles w/ Carrying Case  
 Entrenching Tool w/Cover

### AMMO:

200rd 7.62 Machine Gun Ammo  
 4 - 60mm HE Rounds  
 365 Rounds of 5.56 Ball Ammo  
 4 - M67 Fragmentation Grenades  
 1 - AN-M8 HC Smoke  
 40 - M203 HE Rounds  
 1 - Claymore Mine  
 1 - M72A2 Law

crew immediately abandoned the bird in the surf. Despite this, fortune smiled on them, as they were able to quickly board the last bird in the flight along with a load of Rangers.

Rangers started pulling back to the LZ by squads, many blowing their Claymores as they withdrew. They piled into the Frogs as they hit the zone, and just as quickly as the Rangers cleared the ramp, the helicopters were clattering out of the zone, headed back towards Point Salines. With the exception of a squad from C Company's 2nd Platoon, all the Rangers and the students arrived back safely that day.

The 2nd Platoon squad would later paddle out to sea and be picked up by the USS Caron, returning to the Battalion the next day.

It wasn't a perfect mission, but because of the valor, intrepidity, and devotion to their countrymen and women, Army Rangers and US Marines made the mission a success ... all in twenty-six minutes.



# WALL OF HONOR

Our eternal thanks to those who gave their lives during the Invasion of Grenada...

## U.S. ARMY

SGT RANDY E. CLINE • SSG GARY L. EPPS  
SP4 PHILIP S. GRENIER • SGT KEVIN J. LANNON  
CPT KEITH LUCAS • SGT SEAN P. LUKETINA  
PFC MARLIN R. MAYNARD • SGT MARK A. RADEMACHER  
CPT MICHAEL F. RITZ • PFC RUSSELL L. ROBINSON  
SGT STEPHEN E. SLATER • SP4 MARK O. YAMANE

## U.S. NAVY

MM1 KENNETH GARY BUTCHER • MM1 KEVIN P. LUNDBERG  
HP1 STEPHEN L. MORRIS • ENCS ROBERT R. SCHAMBERGER

## U.S. MARINE CORPS

MAJ JOHN P. GIGUERE • 1STLT JEFFREY R. SCHARVER  
CAPT JEB SEAGLE

“... WE SHALL FIGHT ON BEACHES, LANDING GROUNDS, IN FIELDS, IN  
STREETS AND ON THE HILLS. WE SHALL NEVER SURRENDER ... “

- WINSTON CHURCHILL

# MAXIMIZE YOUR GAME



See us at the  
**SHOT SHOW**  
Booth #  
**20231**  
January 19-22, 2010  
Las Vegas, NV

1  **MAGPUL PTS**  
Professional Training & Simulation Division  
**Stock**

2  **AMP**  
TACTICAL  
**Scope**

3  **MAG**  
**Magazine**

4  **JAVELIN BBs**  
2000  
0.20s  
**Javelin BBs**

Maximize Your Gun! You have the best gun, now get the best gear. Spartan Imports offers the latest accessories and upgrades from Magpul, AMP Tactical, MAG and Javelin, all at great prices. Ask your airsoft dealer today for the coolest high performance gear that will help you **Maximize Your Game!**

**SPARTAN IMPORTS**  
THE EXCLUSIVE CLASSIC ARMY DISTRIBUTOR IN THE U.S.A.

650.589.5501 PHONE (9AM-5PM PST) | 650.589.5552 FAX

info@spartanimports.com (general inquiries) | sales@spartanimports.com (dealer support)

www.spartanimports.com



# CLASSIC ARMY X-SERIES

## ARMALITE M15A4

Review by Mark Anderson





The M203 adds a menacing touch to any arsenal

Many years ago, I had the chance to fire an M16A2/M203 along with the M79 down range at Lackland Air Force Base. Although it was considerable heavier than the standard M16A2, I quickly forgot about the weight because I was having too much fun lobbing practice rounds at a stack of painted 55-gallon drums.

Needless to say, I was excited when Emory at Classic Army sent me the new X-Series with the M203 attached for a review. I do consider myself a professional mil-sim player and I am always looking for the most realistic weapons in regards to realism, durability, and performance. I also consider the practical side in terms of ease of maintenance and upgrading, as I will most likely be doing both at some point in the future.

**NOTE:** Please bear in mind that the X-Series AR-15 does not come with the M203 launcher, so we requested the X-Series AR-15/M203 combination for this re-

view. Why? Because we could.

## SPECIFICATIONS

**Gearbox:** Type 2 (Pre-upgraded)

**Length:** 840mm

**Accuracy:** 100 feet

**Muzzle Velocity:** 390 fps

**Magazine Capacity:** 300 rds

## FEATURES

- Full Metal Body
- Metal Barrel Assembly
- Front and rear iron sights
- Functional Charging Handle
- Functional Bolt Catch
- Real Style Magazine Release
- Adjustable Metal Hop Up
- Metal Gears & Bushings

## HISTORY

After the M79 proved its value in the field, the Army started looking for a way to combine the accurate fire power of the M16A2 with the destructive power of the M79 so one infantryman could provide both direct and indirect fire almost simultaneously. Once the M203 is attached to a

weapon the whole weapon is referred to as the M203. However for this review we will maintain the separation for clarity sake.

## REALISM

The M16/M4 series weapon is the most commonly seen weapon on the mil-sim battlefield. At first impression, the X-Series AR15/M203 has a menacing appearance. Upon picking it up, you will immediately notice how solid and heavy the weapon is. Even with the M203 attached, the balance located about 23 inches from the rear is not too bad. The only plastic parts are the forward assist, stock, pistol grip, and the M203 heat shield. All of which are of high quality polymer. The different finish on the body components gives a nice color contrast. I also noticed some new contour reliefs on the lower receiver. Classic Army also fixed the issue with the slightly crooked flat top rail by casting a whole new design including the height which is now milspec. They are also using realistic

body pins so no more screws.

One of the first things I was eager to check out was the bolt catch system. The new system allows you to pull the charging handle to the rear to use the bolt catch located on the left side to hold the bolt shield away from the hop-up unit. This makes it very easy to adjust your hop-up without having to hold the charging handle to the rear. Of course, out of habit, I kept slapping the bolt catch before firing anyway. They also changed the design so that there is no longer a small screw in the magazine catch. However, I'm not sure yet how these changes will affect the maintenance of the weapon. Usually more function means more internal complexity. We shall see.

## PERFORMANCE

Although I prefer to use either .25 Excel or Killer Beez ammo, I decided to go with the .20 Killer Beez ammo so that direct comparisons could be made with most other reviews. The weather was about 65 degrees, no wind, and I was at an altitude of 1300ft MSL.

After adjusting the hop-up unit, I was able to place six single shots in a two-inch group at 70 ft from a benchrest position. In full auto, I placed eight shots within a three-inch group at 70ft from the same benchrest position. The X-Series will accommodate any type of Nicad, Nimh, and Lithium battery. As for the M203, we will not be doing much with it since performance is primarily dependant on the type of shell used.

I then preceded to chronograph the rifle. I had a good feeling about this because it seemed to shoot strong during the accuracy test. I was not mistaken. All of the new X-Series come with a 170% spring. So with the hop-up off, it was no surprise that the

rifle chrono'd between 403fps to 406fps. I was very impressed by the tight span but a little worried that I might not be within the limits for some mil-sim events. However, with the hop-up all the way on, I was shooting around 385fps. I decided to chronograph the rifle with .25 Killer Beez as well. With the hop-up off the rifle chrono'd at 373fps to 378fps. This is right at the max limit for many events.

## DURABILITY

So far the rifle has held up very well. The selector switch has a solid, strong click for each position and there is absolutely no wobble anywhere. It would be nice if the charging handle spring could be a little stronger so that it doesn't bump lose. The only issue I found was that you had to be careful with the M203 because the barrel would slide completely off during a reload if you opened it too fast.

## MAINTENANCE & UPGRADING

For those used to the old Classic Army way of disassembling the rifle, you find sev-

eral differences both good and bad. The X-Series seems a bit harder to disassemble due to the realistic bolt catch system. Of course, dealing with the motor is always fun. Maybe someday the gearbox will house the motor as other AEGs do.

The X-Series boasts several upgrades which may keep you from having to upgrade your rifle. It uses a 170% spring, a 7mm gearbox, a ball bearing spring guide, and piston head, as well as an O-ring air nozzle.

Overall, the X-Series is a great rifle. With no price increase, it is well worth the investment. Many will argue that the price of developing more realistic airsoft weapons will often take backwards steps before progress is made. I believe that the X-Series is on the right track.



The X-Series bolt catch holds the bolt back



The new X-Series body components and body capture pins greatly improve the realism

# THE ONLY AUTHENTIC MILITARY EYE PRO OPTIMIZED FOR AIRSOFT



**NEW**

ESS Profile™ Airsoft Goggle  
with Cortex Clip

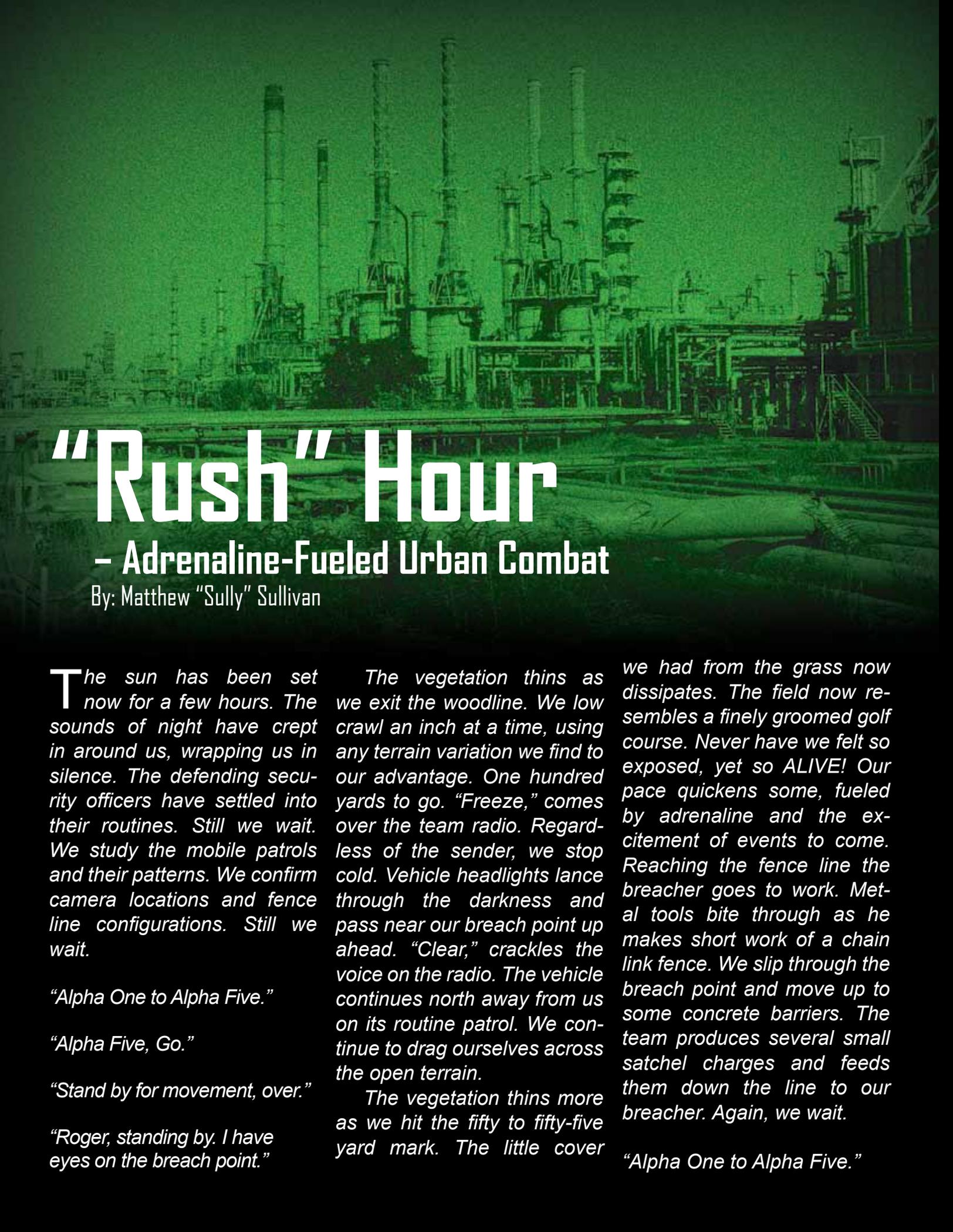
## YOU ONLY GET ONE SET OF EYES

Protect them with the only combat eye pro system optimized for Airsoft. The new *ESS Profile Airsoft™* goggle offers true Mil Spec ballistic protection while the *Cortex Clip™* adds the coverage needed for the Airsoft Battlefield. ANSI Z87.1 & US Mil Spec MIL-DTL-43511D compliant.

\*WARNING: Airsoft is a hazardous activity. Always use Airsoft-specific eye protection, such as the ESS Profile Airsoft™ with Cortex Clip™.



[www.essairsoft.com](http://www.essairsoft.com)



# "Rush" Hour

## - Adrenaline-Fueled Urban Combat

By: Matthew "Sully" Sullivan

**T**he sun has been set now for a few hours. The sounds of night have crept in around us, wrapping us in silence. The defending security officers have settled into their routines. Still we wait. We study the mobile patrols and their patterns. We confirm camera locations and fence line configurations. Still we wait.

"Alpha One to Alpha Five."

"Alpha Five, Go."

"Stand by for movement, over."

"Roger, standing by. I have eyes on the breach point."

The vegetation thins as we exit the woodland. We low crawl an inch at a time, using any terrain variation we find to our advantage. One hundred yards to go. "Freeze," comes over the team radio. Regardless of the sender, we stop cold. Vehicle headlights lance through the darkness and pass near our breach point up ahead. "Clear," crackles the voice on the radio. The vehicle continues north away from us on its routine patrol. We continue to drag ourselves across the open terrain.

The vegetation thins more as we hit the fifty to fifty-five yard mark. The little cover

we had from the grass now dissipates. The field now resembles a finely groomed golf course. Never have we felt so exposed, yet so ALIVE! Our pace quickens some, fueled by adrenaline and the excitement of events to come. Reaching the fence line the breacher goes to work. Metal tools bite through as he makes short work of a chain link fence. We slip through the breach point and move up to some concrete barriers. The team produces several small satchel charges and feeds them down the line to our breacher. Again, we wait.

"Alpha One to Alpha Five."



*“Stand by 3-0 seconds, then clear to breach, One.”*

*“Roger, standing by.”*

*Thirty seconds. The breacher double checks his charges. Twenty seconds. A vehicle patrol approaches from our left coming back for another pass. Ten seconds. As the vehicle patrol is moving away two team members come up to a kneeling position. The breacher lobs charge after charge into the forward fence and concertina strands. The vehicle patrol brakes; a heads-up officer spots him in the rear view mirror. The second team member is waiting for this and smiles as he places two rounds into the officer’s head. Both team members duck back down; I give the breacher a nod. He initiates the device and explosions rip through fence fabric creating man sized holes.*

*Quickly we pass through*

*the fence lines and the intrusion detection system. A hopeful sniper watches our movement, waiting for opportunities. We get to our target building and effortlessly breach its locking mechanism with a small charge. The team spills into the now open doorway. Automatic gunfire erupts from positions on the mezzanine deck above us. At least two team members go down as we move to initial cover. We hunker down and exchange rounds with the men and women in hardened steel plate positions. Another team member goes down. “Frag, out,” I hear another one say. He tosses the fragmentation grenade up towards a bunker to our 1 o’clock—a one in a million throw. The grenade passes up across a railing and into the position’s gun port. Using the new found momentum I yell, “Moving!” and dash to our left towards our next door breach. Gunfire erupts again as my team covers my*

*movement. More team members follow in a similar fashion of shoot and move technique. In the small hollow of cover near the door I wait for them to link back up with me.*

*Nothing. Not the shuffle of feet or equipment. No sounds of gunfire being exchanged. “So be it,” I mutter. I check my magazine. Three rounds left. I set the rifle down and draw my sidearm. Moving through my next door breach, I continue down the hallway to my first target. It’s eerily quiet as I move down a set of stairs and on to my target room. I place my charges and set the timer.*

*Moving back towards the stairs, I see feet descending slowly. I quickly step to my left behind an electrical cabinet for cover. Crouching down, I lean to my right and fire two rounds at the officer. One round narrowly misses him and impacts the concrete wall behind. The other round glances off the stair’s railing and imbeds itself into the ceiling. The officer fires back from the hip, and scrambles about trying to decide whether or not up or down is the best option. While he’s busy deciding, I get back to shooting. Two more rounds slam into his chest ending his decision-making process.*

*I move past his body and collect his pistol magazines. As I near the top of the stairs, I encounter another officer. My weapon snaps into po-*

sition from the low ready to take aim on her forehead. Her shoulders sag in defeat as she realizes her mistake. She crumples lifelessly to the floor, the same floor her barrel had been pointing at moments before.

*I continue down the hallway towards my final target. As I near it another officer darts from my right to left down the hallway. He's seeking cover in a doorway; I press the fight to him. Firing as I move, I empty my magazine into him and exchange it for another. I'm very close now...*

The story ends here. Some of the details have been slightly adjusted for story telling purposes and to protect the people involved. I decided to put this article together from an old training exercise. It illus-

trates some points to consider for fighting in urban areas.

**Point #1: Planning.** The details of your assault plan should not only have back up plans, but alternate back up plans. Using the acronym PACE may set a good example for you. PACE stands for: Primary, Alternate, Contingency, and Emergency. This four step planning method should be conducted after any intelligence gathering and ideally before the bullets start to fly.

**Point #2: Training.** Any time you can spend training with the weapons systems of your choice the better. The only reason I fared better than the officers I encountered in some of those situations was training. Carrying a weapon on a daily basis doesn't make you an expert. You have to

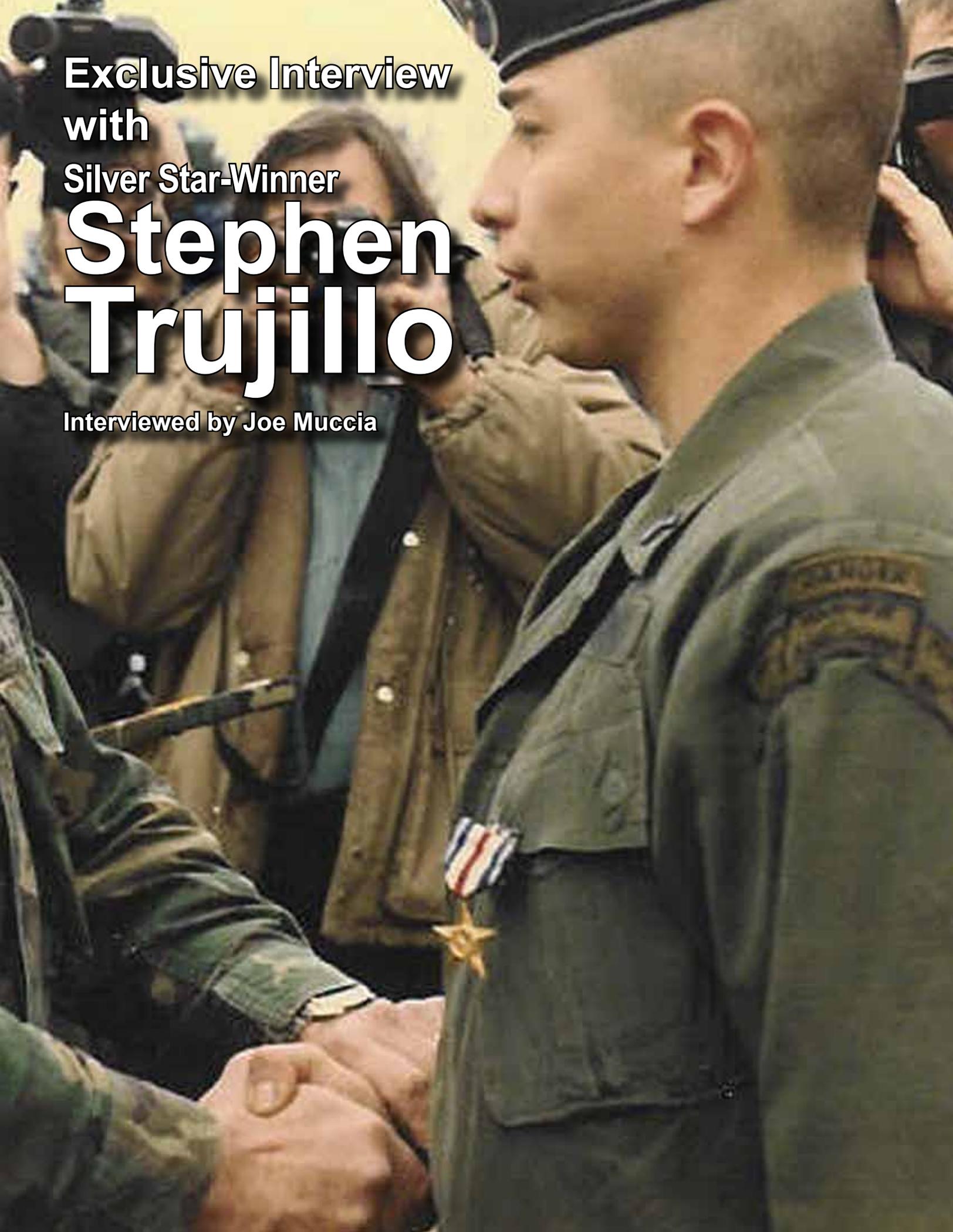
get out to the range and do as much shooting as you, or your budget, can handle. Remember also, quality outweighs quantity. I'd rather have four hours of good combat simulation shooting than twenty hours of weak flat range training. Don't get me wrong, the flat range has its place, but people aren't two-dimensional and they don't just stand there. Set up a training plan if necessary and stick to it.

**Point #3: Mindset.** If your movement takes you from wooded areas to an urban environment you need to adjust your mindset slightly. Even though the pace in this story increased it was never careless. We like to call this speed a "careful hurry." Be ready to do battle at all times. Don't give up until your body shuts down and makes it physically impossible, a.k.a. death or simulated death. That officer on the stairway could have owned me if she hadn't given up.

So with these three things in mind go out and have fun with it. Take them with you to your next mil-sim event or local airsoft pickup game. If you have the right planning, the right training, and the right mindset, the sky is the limit. Enjoy the sport and remember: attitude is a choice!

Until next time, good luck and God speed!





**Exclusive Interview  
with**

**Silver Star-Winner**

# **Stephen Trujillo**

**Interviewed by Joe Muccia**

I recently spoke with former 2nd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger) veteran Stephen Trujillo about his experiences during Operation Urgent Fury on the island of Grenada in October 1983.

**What's your name and where are you from?**

Stephen Trujillo, from Denver, CO.

**Where were you stationed prior to Urgent Fury?**

Ft. Lewis, WA. After Basic at Fort Leonard Wood, AIT at Ft. Sam Houston (MOS 91B, Combat Medic), Jump School at Ft. Beginning, and a two month stint as a Hometown Recruiter. I went to RIP on North Fort, Ft. Lewis, survived, then was assigned to Co. A, 2d Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry.

**What rank were you and what was your MOS?**

At the time of Urgent Fury, I was a Sergeant. MOS, as I recall, was 91B3V or 2V. I also had the HALO identifier. I attended Special Forces Medics course in its entirety, including 300F1, OJT (Ft. Dix), and Med Lab. After that, I went to HALO school, deployed to Coronado with A Co as Company Senior Medic, and then went to North Fort as RIP Cadre Medic, and on to Yakima for HALO Jumpmaster Course just before we got alerted for the mission.

**What unit were you with and what was your position within that unit?**

I was the 2nd Battalion RIP Cadre Medic. For the operation, I got pulled back to A Co. Rather than bumping down my old junior medic, Gerry Holt, who had

taken over as Senior Company Medic, I just went back to my old Platoon, 1st PLT, "Bad 'Muthers," Co. A, 2/75.

**How and when did you find out about the alert?**

I was out at Yakima for the Military Free Fall Jumpmaster course. The morning we got alerted, we were all in the rack, it was like a Saturday or Sunday or something...some kind of day off...and when someone came in and said we were on alert, we were all like "yeah, right, like they're going to truck us all the way back to Ft. Lewis to do a road march."

Well, they did truck us back. So automatically, we knew something was up. You don't just ride away from MFF instructors TDY from Bragg and C-130's laid on for support unless it's something serious, and a road march wouldn't qualify. The last thing I did before jumping on the deuce and a half was grab a newspaper. It had two articles of note. One regarding Beirut. The other, Grenada.

**You had a long flight from Hunter to Grenada. What was it like in the C-130's during the run in to Point Salines DZ?**

I distinctly remember looking back over my right shoulder at the pilots on the flight deck, and the guy I saw in the left seat, his arms were shaking, and I could see orange balls of tracer fire arching up past the windscreen.





I can only imagine what it looked like to them from up there in their balcony seats. I remember the bird shuddering as it took hits. It sounded like sledgehammers to me. Slow ones. Boom. Boom. Like that.

**When you jumped, what did you see before landing?**

Tarmac...exploding mortar rounds...Rangers in the prone on the tarmac, firing...tracers crisscrossing the runway below me...tracers arching through my suspension lines.

**What were your actions**

**upon hitting the DZ?**

I got the heck off it, and moved as fast as I could to the tall grass beside the runway. I was looking for a blue pennant flying from a radio antenna (which was the signal for the Battalion assembly area). I do not think that I ever saw it. We were just trying to find one another, consolidate, and get together so we could execute our missions. While we were doing this, we were sweating our balls off, running, getting up, getting down, up and down, up and down, engaging the enemy when we saw them.

**On the second day of the operation, the 26th of October, you took part in the rescue of 236 students from the Grand Anse campus of the medical school. Could you describe the mission from your point of view?**

We flew in on Marine CH-46s, and our bird got hit and was abandoned in the surf. Our clue that things were not good was when the door gunners DITCHED their guns in the water, and followed them out. I was focused on getting out of that bird. We hit the sea wall, and then we realized, after a lot of



confusion, that we were in the WRONG PLACE. We then ran south to our blocking positions. After the students were evacuated, the helos came back in for us. We were on the last bird to get out, though...it was extremely overloaded, and the crew chiefs and pilots were yelling at us to hurry up. We were still taking fire as we exfilled.

**The final mission 2nd Battalion undertook was an air assault into the Cuban/Grenadian training complex on Calivigny peninsula on the 27th of October. The OpOrder brief pointed to it being a “suicide mission,” with several hundred enemy troops at the camp. Can you describe the air assault and your subsequent actions at the camp?**

I was on the lead bird (of eight). We landed hard. The bird bounced when it hit the ground. The pilot stood that Black Hawk on its tail, flaring out, trying to dump air speed, then slammed it onto the ground. Our bird was the only one of the first flight of four to get out. The three birds downed on the compound were birds two, three, and four.

The birds were burning, and I mean the friggin’ magnesium aircraft skin was melting, and rounds were cooking off all over the place. I distinctly remember seeing the silver of the fuel cells in the back of one Black Hawk that was on fire. It didn’t erupt, at least not at that moment. There was incoming fire on that DZ including at least one RPG round, and probably more.

The second chalk of four got in and out OK. They landed somewhere else on the compound—behind us, or on the right side, I don’t remember. I didn’t see them, and I don’t clearly remember them. The DZ was a mess.

Only two medics were up front at the crash site on Calivigny at first, and it felt like it was for a long, long time...Gerry Holt and I. While we were triaging, we were also looking for my junior medic Kevin Lannon. We thought he might have stayed with his platoon, instead of coming back to us where we were establishing the casualty collection point. Well, I found out later that he was right there with us all along. I just didn’t realize it.

In actuality, Holt and I were probably only alone for 15 or 20 minutes. When you've got helicopters burning and bullets smacking into the shacks around you, you can't tell precisely where the bad guys are, and your platoon is fighting forward ahead of you through the objective, it can feel like an eternity.

After I cleared the near side of the crash site, and pulled (1LT Bill) Eskridge away from the birds, I was able to get two IV's into him and stabilize him. Holt went around, did a complete 360 around the crash site looking for other casualties, then came back with Jose Gomez and one of our snipers, SGT Frederick Omlstead. Gomez got smacked with a rotorblade that snapped off and hit him in the lower back or on his rear end. He was really bruised up bad and couldn't move too well. He may have had a separated shoulder, too. Omlstead had gotten whacked upside the head with a rotorblade and had a severe concussion along with a broken elbow from the crash.

There was another guy there...a SP4, he was an RTO, I think...when I left Eskridge and the others, I told him to watch Eskridge's IV's, and slow them

down if he started running out before the next wave came in. I knew there would be more medics on the second sortie. I was worried about my platoon, as there was a lot of gunfire up ahead. I moved forward as soon as I could, of course they were all fine, and finally got into a fighting position with Scott Bressealle. Later, when we readjusted the perimeter, I ended up in a hole with 1LT Mahoney. We ended up

pulling back to Salines the next day and flying back to Hunter that night.

*For his actions on Calivigny, SGT Trujillo was awarded the Silver Star. Trujillo was later commissioned and completed his service in the United States Army as a member of Special Forces.*



# Pro Communitas

## For The Team

By Jeem "Krayzie" Newland

When team Strikers was formed, it was much like the sport itself, new and undefined. An outgrowth of the sport of paintball from the 1980s and 90s, the use of more realistic airsoft weapons spawned a new interest in military simulations. Started by two friends who truly believed in the sport, the roster of Strikers grew from 2–17 members over three short years. During this time, most events were simple pick-up games that were held on small farms, sfields, and organized on-the run.

The strikers were a group a little more advanced in age than the average airsoft team. The median age remained somewhere around 30 as people joined. Principally well-established individuals with a strong interest in the community, the Strikers took on roles within the community, providing guidance, aid, and training. Strikers came from many different backgrounds, pulling people from other countries and from states as far away as California, all to the teams center in Ohio. Because of the diversity of the Striker's backgrounds, there were occasionally language barriers, as well as conflicting political and religious views, but everyone on the team came together under a common





umbrella, and everyone was accepted, first and foremost as a Striker, no matter what their first language was or what they believed in. The unit was a family. The Slogan “pro communitas” was decided as representative of the spirit of the people involved, and was summarily adopted and placed on the specially designed unit patch. It is a Latin derivative, meaning “for the team.” The members of Team Strikers take this to heart, and it encompasses their commitment to each other above all else. The training mantra designed to foster trust and support of each other in tactical situations, “I got you,” eventually moved off the battlefield, and became a personal commitment to each other in hours of personal need as well.

As the team grew, and the sport expanded, the reality set in that small loosely organized events were a thing of the past. The Strikers found themselves attending events where participants numbered in the hundreds, and began hosting their own events that would pull in participants in equal-

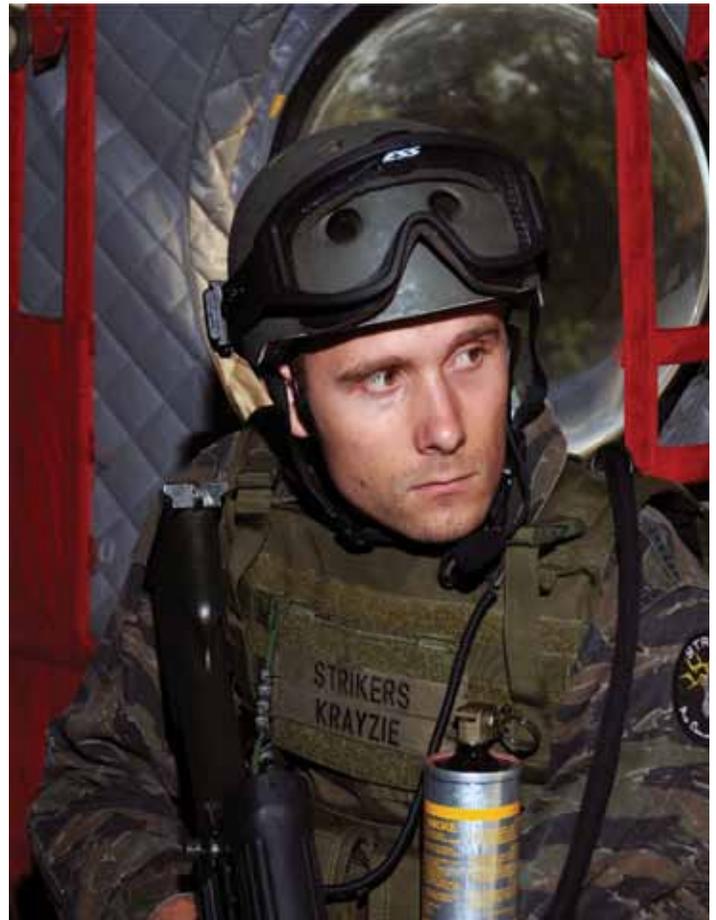
ly large numbers from many surrounding states. Events like Operation Lion Claws, Operation Night Scorpion, Blind Fury, Operation Northern Wind, and Operation Irene were on an entirely new scale. As the number of people involved climbed, the medical risks grew as well. The team decided there had to be a standardized means of response for medical emergencies. The team established the role of liaison officer to handle coordination with local authorities and EMS/Fire units. Immediately after, the team established an official medical officer role who took on the voluntary responsibility for immediate first aid to field injuries while advanced help arrived. Originally designed for intra-team use only, it was quickly discovered that anywhere the Strikers went, they were the most medically prepared unit on the field willing to help others. The result was that this medical officer role expanded to include injuries to any and all players on and off the field. The medical officer role migrated into a medical team, eventually consisting of a first responder, an EMT and a nurse, and



included available team-wide first aid and CPR training so any member could provide care until a member of the higher trained medical team could reach the injured person. General medical supplies were carried in field, and advanced equipment was kept on hand for exigent access in case of emergencies.

As the team developed these new specialized roles, the natural fallout became a further establishment of specialization within the team. A council that had been adopted earlier was ratified to handle administrative matters, while another division within the team was established to handle operational matters. A voting process was enacted along with term limits for members. Team leader became an elected position. A formalized recruit application and training process was established, ensuring all applicants received equal opportunity and training. A public relations officer role was created. The officer was responsible for handling outside affairs and inter-team communications when coordinating for national events. The establishment of two fire teams within the unit created an operable unit of regulars who were all on the same tactical operational page and equally capable of responding to situations, while the second fire team implemented experimental equipment, uniforms and weaponry to test field-suitability of new designs and advancements. A chief tactical training officer position was created, and under this position, the members of the team who had specialized experience, including former military and law enforcement SWAT, coordinated under this officer to provide tactical training to the entire team. A regimented training schedule was established and classes were standardized to ensure compatibility of all operators whether they attended training a month ago or yesterday. A set of operator code voice commands was created, and these standardized terms were used to shout to other positions under fire and coordinate unit movement and tactics in code so the enemy wouldn't understand the terms.

Before the establishment of striker-specific tactics and codes, standardized military and law enforcement tactical terms were used, and when shouted, any enemy combatant with any degree of training knew what the unit was going to do and



could move to effectively counter the tactic. Another tactical shift within Strikers was in the analysis of real world tactics and their application to the airsoft world. Tactics from different SWAT units across the US, and tactics from different military units and Special Forces units around the world, were examined to determine what the basis of the tactic was and why they were effective. From there, the tactics were evaluated for applicability in the airsoft world. The most suitable tactics were then modified to form special, unique, airsoft-specific tactics. Counter tactics were developed as well. Most airsoft teams the Strikers went up against operated off real-world tactics, which depend on factors unavailable in the airsoft world to remain effective, such as grenades and body armor. In a one-hit, one-kill world where a round to the tip of the boot takes you out, many of these tactics were no longer applicable. Developing a set of counter tactics which took advantage of the weaknesses in the real world strategies most often employed by opposing teams granted the Strikers a field advantage relatively unmatched among their competition at the time.

Most recently, the team has run structured



training in all the individual skills needed for an infantryman to be able to function as part of a unit rather than just as an individual. This included basic weapon skills, patrolling, immediate action drills, close quarters battle, and raids. Not only was this excellent training, it helped build team unity with newer and older members who went through it together.

In addition to the excellent training regimen put in place by the Strikers training cadre, the team has been fortunate enough to receive advanced real-world training in a number of military and law enforcement disciplines. MSG "Mad Max" Mullen, Jeem "Krayzie" Newland, and others have provided us with a broad range of skills. On the military side, we have had specialized classes in general combat proficiency, land navigation, and urban warfare. On the law enforcement side, we have been certified in less-lethal weapons (i.e. OC gas, impact munitions) and explosive/shotgun breaching. Professional operators such as LE SWAT teams, Army Rangers, and Special Forces soldiers augmented these classes.

Another factor that cannot be ignored is the resources the team has been fortunate enough to obtain and build. For several years, we have had access to a four-story industrial building for winter training and CQB practice. We also have access to a 240-acre piece of property that has every kind of terrain you could ever want. In recent years, we have built structures for training and games that include several



villages, industrial complexes, and an airfield. And these aren't built like a kid's clubhouse. Thanks to some skilled carpenters on the team, some of these are multi-level structures with multiple entrances, windows, rooms, stairs and roofs.

The uniqueness of the Strikers in the field, and the differences in their tactics and operations, stood out clearly to everyone on the field or observing them from afar. Even in a sea of woodland camouflaged operators, the Strikers could still be picked out. This uniqueness is what got the Strikers noticed by so many different teams and event VIPs, and ultimately got them their sponsorship and subsequently the title of being the first professional airsoft team in Ohio, and likely even the United States, although the latter has not been confirmed. With their recognition, more opportunities became available to the team to gain national recognition. The Strikers were contracted as models for a radio products company selling military and law enforcement grade products. The Strikers were among a select group of teams invited to attend and participate in the U.S. Army birthday anniversary celebration and put on a staged tactical response demonstration for an audience as well as manning a public airsoft weapons booth and

explaining the use of airsoft as a training tool. The Strikers have also been involved with the Zussman training complex, helping to train US soldiers prior to deployment overseas in simulation-based role-playing situations. Members of the Strikers with specialized training and certifications have also begun working on offering force-on-force role playing and simulation adjunctive training for local law enforcement and civilian security agencies interested in advanced training opportunities. The goal is to provide a service to the government and security communities offering an inexpensive alternative to typical training programs, allowing training officers for various agencies to design their own training scenarios and use Striker personnel and weaponry as opposing force. This lower-cost training alternative would help reduce the departmental cost in training multiple officers and would send officers back out into the community with increased experience and knowledge.

There are great expectations for this team in the future. I don't believe we've heard the last from them. The Strikers have made themselves a name in the airsoft community and intend to continue providing a service both to the airsofting world and to the officers and soldiers who help keep us safe.

# OPERATION PINE PLAINS

**Climb to Glory – Fort Drum, New York**

by John Bucciarelli, MAJ, IN, US Army (Retired) – Blacksheep6



# FRAGO

– Three terrorists have taken control of a bus within the city limits and have one female hostage. The company mission is to neutralize the terrorists and rescue the hostage, alive. The Company Commander assigns the mission to a squad and a sniper team. The squad moves into position to create a diversion and attract the terrorist's attention. The sniper team moves into position in a two-story building across the street from the bus. The squad illuminates the bus. The sniper, equipped with a bolt action Sun Project M40. has three targets—three shots and the terrorists are down. The hostage is rescued.

Operation Pine Plains is designed to provide a “real” military experience through a continuous tactical simulation. Safety and training are the highest priorities in replicating combat scenarios. Our ultimate goal is to provide civilians with a positive military experience through the simulation of combat and strategy.

## Operation Pine Plains History

In 1908, Brigadier General Frederick Dent Grant, son of General Ulysses S. Grant, was sent here with 2,000 regulars and 8,000 militia. He found Pine Plains to be an ideal place to train troops. The following year, money was allocated to purchase the land and summer training continued here through the years. The camp's first introduction to the national spotlight came in 1935 when the largest peacetime maneuvers were held on Pine Plains and surrounding farmlands.

Thirty-six thousand, five hundred soldiers came from throughout the Northeast to take part in the exercise. For 36 hours, young men from offices, factories, and farms marched, attacked, and defended in tactical exercises on the 100 miles the Army had leased for its war games.

Operation Pine Plains—Climb to Glory—is becoming one of the premier Mil-sim/airsoft events in the United States. Once again, young men and women from offices, factories, and farms will march, attack, and defend during a 20-hour military simulation (mil-sim)/airsoft competition at the Fort Drum MOUT (military operations on urban terrain) CTF (collective training facility).

## Creating MSATO (Mil-sim Airsoft Training & Ops)

Crossfire and I are cousins—our mothers are sisters. We grew up playing every kind of simulated combat game—sticks for rifles and dirt clods for grenades, to BB guns (not recommended), to paintball, and finally turned to airsoft. Many years ago, we couldn't afford paintball guns so we bought wrist rockets (sling shots) and used paintballs in them—it was an amazing experience. When we finally purchased paintball guns, we played tactical games with our kids and their friends.

Crossfire hates this story, but I have to tell it anyway because it makes a significant point. Crossfire brought a few of his friends to a backyard game one weekend—they had the best paintball guns, radios, and all the fancy gear. They challenged a bunch of teenagers and I to a battle. Using the terrain, I set up a V-shaped defense that would funnel them into the kill zone. They fell for it and we—teenagers with fogged goggles—kicked their butts! The point I'm making is that tactics are the key element of the game—not the weapons, uniforms, equipment, and gear.

Crossfire continued playing competitive paintball and eventually transitioned to airsoft. I retired from the US Army in 2001 as a career Infantry officer. Crossfire was hot on getting me to play this new thing called airsoft—I resisted for about three years, having had my fill of “playing Army” for twenty years. I finally agreed to be a commander for a large regional game in Massachusetts called Battle for Tolland in 2004. I had no idea what I was getting into...

I showed up the morning of the game and was introduced to my platoon leaders. At the STARTEX formation, I stood in front of 150 players—wow—they were geared up and could have been my Infantry company on active duty. In the field, things proved to be extremely different—tactically they didn't understand what I was talking about: individual movement techniques, buddy team movement, fire and maneuver, squad tactics, offense, defense, etc., and the “respawn” rules totally destroyed unit cohesiveness. We came to the conclusion that if this sport was to move upwards and attract real professionals (soldiers, police, etc), we would have to increase the tactical proficiency of



the players. It took a while for me to adapt “real” military tactics to work in a “game” environment. I wrote the Mil-sim Tactics Manual and the Mil-sim MOUT Manual as guides for players that focused on building basic proficiency to squad level tactics. We created MSATO to run one-day training sessions to teach the building block approach to tactics. It worked—players started to believe in the power of the tactics.

After we had built a base of tactically proficient players, we decided to start looking for an urban facility to host a national event. I approached Fort Drum with the idea of hosting a premier mil-sim/airsoft event at their urban training facility. It took six months of staffing to get approval and we were finally in. Operation Pine Plains I occurred in November 2008 with about 100 of New England’s die-hard players taking the leap of faith in what we were trying to accomplish. They were blown away with the realism and spread the word. Operation Pine Plains II occurred in May 2009 with over 300 players from a wide geographic area—many didn’t know what they had signed up for. Operation Pine Plains III occurred in September 2009 with about 150 players and 80% were veteran players—they knew exactly what they were in for and couldn’t get enough of it.

### **Why Operation Pine Plains?**

Operation Pine Plains is the “Op” part of MSA-TO, it is a force-on-force, objective-oriented, 20-hour tactical military simulation conducted at the Fort Drum MOUT CTF. This exercise will test you tactically, physically, mentally, and spiritually. We will never dumb down this game—we expect you to rise to the challenge!

### **What Makes Operation Pine Plains Different?**

There is a hierarchy in any sport—local, regional, national, and international competitions. Airsoft is no different. There are local games hosted by airsoft retailers or clubs. There are regional or state games. There are national and international games. Operation Pine Plains is becoming one of the premier Mil-sim games in the country—think of it as the marathon of Mil-sim events. Hopefully you wouldn’t think of running a marathon without preparation. Operation Pine Plains requires the same mental, physical, and tactical preparation of a marathon athlete—it’s not a walk-on game!

**REALISM:** It’s as close as we can make it to real combat without signing up for the armed forces. Here are some highlights.

**CADRE:** We use retired or active duty Infantry

soldiers to fill key positions to support the game—Range Safety Officer, Observer/Controllers, Commander, First Sergeant, and Platoon Leaders. These guys have been there, done it, and used the T-shirt to clean up the mess. They coach, mentor, and teach squads in the performance of tactical missions.

**FOG OF WAR:** Total immersion in a battlefield environment. Twenty hours of battle sounds and twenty hours of simulated artillery fire. Burning cars. Smoke. High intensity.

**FORCE ON FORCE:** We create the battlefield environment. You fight the opposing team to gain control of the town and complete special missions. It doesn't matter how many people you shoot. It's all about completing missions and working as part of a larger team effort. Buildings in the MOUT CTF are assigned point values. Points are awarded at intervals during the game—called SNAPSHOTS—to the team that has properly marked the buildings it controls. FRAGOS are issued throughout the game to each company—some are on-site and most are off-site—that are also worth points. The team with the most points at the end of the game wins.

**MEDIC RULE:** The “MEDIC RULE” is used to maintain unit integrity, provide a fluid tactical scenario, and reinforce squad tactical fire and maneuver. Squads will remain together throughout Operation Pine Plains. There is never a reason for a player to leave his/her squad. Each squad has two medics designated, one per fire team. Medic role may be transferred from one “LIVE” player to another “LIVE” player at the discretion of the Squad Leader. When a player is “hit,” a medic can regenerate the “wounded” player after three minutes. If a medic is “hit,” another medic can regenerate the “wounded” medic after three minutes. A player may NOT regenerate another player. A medic can only regenerate one person at a time, therefore regeneration times become sequential—for example, it would take one medic nine minutes to regenerate three players (three minutes each). Each medic is issued eight bandages for use within the squad—total bandages per squad is sixteen. Bandages must be tied to the wounded player's left arm. When all bandages have been used, the squad must move to the Command Post





for resupply. There is no limit on the number of times a squad may be resupplied with bandages. If an entire squad is “wounded,” they must move as a squad to their respective Command Post to be regenerated after five minutes and then remissioned.

**READINESS CONDITION (REDCON) REPORTING:** Squad leaders must report Readiness Condition (REDCON) to their Command Post at required intervals as determined by the Commander, upon request from the Commander, or when the squad reaches the following thresholds. This is important information for your Commander and replicates actual military reporting requirements, although the thresholds have been modified for game purposes. When reporting, Squad Leaders must identify the reason their squad is at a certain REDCON level—personnel, weapons, ammunition or water—and your ability to fix the problem. This allows the Commander to determine the correct course of action for that squad—resupply, reinforce, relief in place, or withdrawal. In some cases, it may be advantageous to withdraw a unit to the CP for five minutes than to wait the sequential time to regenerate in place.

\*\*\* REDCON 1 \*\*\* Squad is 100% mission capable on personnel, weapons, ammunition, and water. (11 squad members are ready).

\*\*\* REDCON 2 \*\*\* Squad is 75% mission capable on personnel, weapons, ammunition, or wa-

ter. (10-8 squad members are ready).

\*\*\* REDCON 3 \*\*\* Squad is 50% mission capable on personnel, weapons, ammunition, or water. (7-5 squad members are ready).

\*\*\* REDCON 4 \*\*\* Squad is 25% mission capable on personnel, weapons, ammunition, or water. (4-1 squad members are ready) MANDATORY WITHDRAWAL for personnel as directed by the Commander.

\*\*\* REDCON 5 \*\*\* Squad is 0% mission capable on personnel, weapons, ammunition, or water (zero squad members are ready). If a squad suffers 100% casualties, they must disengage from the area they were defending or attacking with a red flag on their head and moving to their respective Command Post for regeneration and remission. MANDATORY WITHDRAWAL for personnel, weapons, ammunition, or water.

**MORTARS:** Indirect fire is a significant combat multiplier if used effectively. We give each company a replica of an 81mm mortar system. They must emplace the mortar, call for fire, and simulate shooting rounds. We use a “whistle rocket” to simulate “shot out” and an “explosion rocket” to simulate “splash.” The Observer/Controllers are fire markers. The system of indirect fire replicates that used by the US Army at JRTC, NTC, and CMTC. Mortar fire can clear a building by firing the following number of rounds: 1 round = one-story building; 2 rounds = two-story building; 3 rounds = three-story building; 5 rounds = hotel (building 4); basement are considered bomb shelters and can’t be cleared by mortar fire. Companies are resupplied mortar rounds in increments of 10 for a total of 40 rounds per game.

**UNMANNED ARIAL VEHICLES (UAV):** We contacted a remote-controlled aircraft club to provide observation and intelligence. These planes have video cameras that feed real-time information to the command post of each company.

**WAR STORIES!** Here are some comments from Operation Pine Plains veterans:

“Big thanks to the Major, Crossfire, and the rest of the MSATO crew for giving us all the opportunity

to play like the pros.”

-Reaper82nd

“First off, let me say that this op was by far the best I have ever been to, and the realism of the whole 20 hours was so much more than I expected. Having been in the Army for 10-plus years, I have a lot of real world tactical experience in small unit tactics and dismounted combat. I had to use all the knowledge and experience I had to stay alive. I have been through a lot of combat simulation exercises, even at the special operations level. I have to say this was without a doubt right up there, as realistic an exercise as I have ever seen.”

-Ruffneck

“Blacksheep, Crossfire, and all the other members of the event staff—this is *the* event to attend because you’ve made it so! My hats off to you all! Oooh-Rah!”

-USMC6888

“Overall, OPP3 was a truly great experience. I found that I pushed myself harder, both physically and mentally, than I did at the previous game, and I accomplished more than I thought I could.”

-TrickyKitty

“My team and I were able to recognize our weak areas and will work harder to improve our skills and tactics. We were able to learn a lot more about tactics and find more variety from our norm. We know what works for us and tend not to deviate from it too much; we were able to learn and further our knowledge of the game. My team and I will work together and return to OPPIV, hopefully better prepped and more skilled.”

-CAP

“Since this was my first OPP, I can not compare this game to the other, but I have to say this was by far my favorite game that I have ever played. The game was well planned out and created a realistic combat. As Major Buch said during the debriefing, this is not MILSIM but MILEX. Thanks again to the staff of the event and the players who made the game extremely entertaining.”

-Johnny Mad Dog

## We Would Like to Thank Our Operation Pine Plains III Sponsors!

Airsoft Extreme – AEX (<http://www.airsoftextreme.com>)  
Bradley's Military (<http://www.military-mall.com>)  
Combined Tactical Systems (<http://www.less-lethal.com>)  
ESS Airsoft Goggles (<http://www.essgoggles.com>)  
Inflict Clothing (<http://www.inflictclothing.com>)  
Red Wolf Airsoft (<http://www.redwolfairsoft.com>)  
Spartan Imports (<http://www.spartanimports.com>)  
Spec-Ops Brand gear (<http://www.specopsbrand.com>)

## Operation Pine Plains IV!

We are not ones to rest on our laurels—we continuously strive to improve this game to make it the most realistic combat simulation in the sport. Are you ready for the challenge?

Fort Drum has approved Operation Pine Plains for international participation. We have had squads from Canada participate. We are looking for other international teams to come and test their mettle against the best. International players must present their passport number during registration. We have to submit the player roster to Fort Drum for security screening 30 days prior to the event.

Operation Pine Plains IV is tentatively scheduled for May 2010 pending approval from Fort Drum. We are planning on holding only one event at Fort Drum this coming year—so plan accordingly!

Check out the official Operation Pine Plains website at <http://oppineplains.com>. Read the lessons learned so you can prepare to meet the ultimate airsoft challenge.

Contact MSATO – <http://www.msato.org> or [crossfire@msato.org](mailto:crossfire@msato.org)





# WELCOME TO THE MOG

by Denny Fry



The clear blue skies over Mogadishu were filled with choking black smoke. Burning tires all throughout the city overwhelmed the midday air and brought visibility to a minimum. The blazes had been set by the enraged people of Mogadishu as a warning to the Somali Militants. The signal was clear—get ready to kill the incoming Americans!

Two years prior to this smoke screen, the President of Somalia, Mohammed Siad Barre, was forcefully removed from office by an alliance of opposing clans, known as the United Somali Congress. Soon after taking power, the USC divided into two clans and then divided again shortly thereafter. With the uprising of several rival clans came both civil unrest and continual fighting all throughout Somalia. By September 1991, the fighting had become so far reaching and severe that over 20,000 Somali people had died. The massive loss of life began to take its toll and led to the breakdown of the country's agricultural system, which, in turn, led to starvation on a biblical scale.

The international community saw this breakdown and quickly initiated a movement to feed the people of Somalia. In only a few months, aid was on the way. Food was delivered to the ill-fated residents and right away, the warlords of the rival clans saw this as an opportunity to grab more power. The leaders of the clans began hijacking and hoarding the food, using it as leverage against the locals and as a bartering tool for more weaponry from neighboring countries. By July of 1992, it was estimated that 80% of the food coming into



Somalia as relief was being seized by clan leaders. The confiscation of this food led to the death of another estimated 300,000 Somali people.

The extraordinarily high casualties were beginning to take their toll all over Somalia. The leaders of the rival clans knew that the only way to bring the ever-rising death toll down was to begin working together.

On March 15th, 1993, in Addis Ababa, all 15 of the rival clans met for a conference to set in motion a plan of restoring both peace and democracy to Somalia. The rival factions were well on track to keeping to the agreement, but in the following May, General Mohammed Farrah Aidid had already stopped adhering to the newly inked plan. On June 5, 1993, 24 UN troops were massacred in an area of Mogadishu controlled by Aidid. This led to immediate action as an American-led operation was launched on July 12, 1993. The plan of the operation was to have AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters move in on Aidid's clan in a safe house during a meeting and eliminate high-ranking gunmen. The operation went as planned and after the dust had settled, it became known that the men

who were killed were not gunmen, but elders of the clan. This incident is known to have enraged and unified the Somali people. Even those who opposed Aidid's clan came together to fight the U.S. efforts in Somalia.

On October 3, 1993, Operation Gothic Serpent was to be carried out. The plan involved Task Force Rangers, U.S. Special Operations Forces (Bravo Company 3rd Battalion, 75th Regiment), Delta Force operators (1st SFOD-D), and the "Night Stalkers" (160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment). All had been collected at the temporary U.S. Army headquarters based in the Mogadishu Airport. On mission codeword "Irene," the task of capturing two high-ranking officials in Aidid's clan was underway. The Ranger Force was to fast-rope in from MH-60 Black Hawk helicopters and detain all targets during a conference of Aidid's men being held near an extremely hostile area of Mogadishu. Four Ranger chinks were also fast-ropped in to set up a square perimeter around the operation area. After all targets had been seized, a ground extraction convoy was to arrive and move both targets and Ranger Forces back to safety.

Pakistan HQ X

X Crash Site # 1

Olympic Hotel X

X Crash Site # 2

National St.

Shalalwi St.



An AH-6 Little Bird attack helicopter, seen armed with 2.75in rockets and 7.62mm mini-guns.  
Photo credit: US DoD via Court Chick

Makeshift roadblocks and burning obstacles delayed the ground extraction convoy. These barricades put the convoy drastically behind schedule. During the deployment of the Rangers at about 70 feet above ground, an RPG was fired and hit one of the Black Hawks. The Black Hawk, Super 61, crashed into a hostile area killing both pilots and injuring the rest of the men on board.

Even under concentrated fire from the opposing militants, another Black Hawk moved in to deploy men to the crash site. The injured men from the crash on the ground were then moved to a more secure position and a makeshift barricade was built from parts of the downed Black Hawk.

During this time, some confusion arose as the extraction convoy and Ranger Force were waiting to be contacted by one another before either would move forward with the extraction. While this waiting continued, a second Black Hawk on over-

look, Super 64, was hit by an RPG fired from militant ground forces and crashed.

The assaulting American forces made their way to the first crash site where they found themselves under heavy fire from the Somali militants. The intense opposition effectively trapped them for the night in nearby homes of Somali residents. The air support was limited and could do little more than keep the attacking militia at a distance. As the night progressed, the number of injured soldiers grew.

The second crash site was overtaken before nightfall, even with the efforts of two Delta Force snipers. The two snipers had twice requested, and twice been denied, the opportunity to be fast-rope in to protect the injured at the crash site. Upon the third request, permission was granted and they both were inserted near the crash site, which they helped to defend until they were killed.

The site was then overtaken by Somali militants.

In the early hours of the morning, a relief convoy of Task Force 2-14 Infantry, 10th Mountain Division, and UN Forces (comprised of Malaysian and Pakistani Soldiers) moved into the city in full force. There were more than 100 vehicles in line as the convoy rolled out. The collection included tanks, humvees, APCs, and five-ton flatbed trucks. Just above the rolling force, several Black Hawk and Cobra attack helicopters watched over and provided air support.

Using the armored convoy as cover, the men who had fought all throughout the night ran alongside their fallen as they exited the city. The run became known as the “Mogadishu Mile.”

It was just before 6:30 a.m. when the American forces finally reached the safety of the UN-Paki-

stani base. What was thought to be a 30-minute operation had turned into an almost 15-hour battle.

A total of 18 U.S. soldiers gave their lives and 83 had been injured in the Battle of Mogadishu. The Somali causality reports gave numbers from 315 to over 2000 dead.



The only known photograph taken on the ground during the Battle of Mogadishu, on 3 October 1993.  
Photo credit: US DoD

# THE BATTLE OF MOGADISHU: FIRSTHAND ACCOUNTS FROM THE MEN OF TASK FORCE RANGER

Reviewed by Don Roff

When Staff Sergeant Matt Eversmann fast-ropeed seventy feet down the nylon rope, his hands burned despite the leather gloves he was wearing. He was having trouble seeing because of the Mogadishu dust blowing everywhere, caused by the hovering Black Hawk helicopters. He was roping into a “brown out.” Only moments earlier, the pilot exclaimed, “I can’t see shit,” before the thirteen members of Chalk Four of the Bravo Company, 3d Ranger Battalion hit the ropes mounted on either side of the aircraft and slid down into oblivion.

The mission was supposed to be a simple in-and-out procedure, like cutting out a cancer with a scalpel—isolate the target building, where warlord Mohamed Farrah Aidid was reported to be, so that no enemy could get in or out. On Sunday, October 3, 1993 at 1530 hours, the mission was supposed to only be 30 minutes maximum. By 1400, the Rangers would be returning to the hanger, with the PC (precious cargo) in tow. But fate had other plans.

There were four blocking positions used by Task Force Ranger to surround Aidid’s target building and SSG Matt Eversmann was in charge of one of them, Blocking Position 4. At 26-years-old, he had twelve Rangers assigned to his squad. He was in charge of setting up the L-shaped blocking position on the northwest corner of the target. All four L-shapes from the four blocking positions would secure a 360-degree perimeter around the target three-story building.

But when SSG Eversmann was coming down off the nylon rope, his hands still hot, his heart sank. On the ground was a crumpled Ranger in tan BDUs. Eversmann thought that the Ranger had been shot. He straddled the body and the medics came over to assist. It was Todd Blackburn. He had somehow

missed the fast rope and plummeted 70 feet down to the dirt street. The Rangers were under a steady stream of fire from the Somali militia and armed civilians. It was like they had kicked over a hornet’s nest, 7.62 bullets from AK-47 rifles stinging the air, buzzing past Ranger’s faces. From that point forward, the American soldiers engaged in the fiercest 15-hour ground combat not seen since the Vietnam War’s Tet Offensive in 1968.

Since Eversmann had been in the Army, he always wanted to be tested in combat. In December 1989, when the Rangers deployed to Panama during Operation Just Cause, Eversmann was in Ranger school. He was impressed to see many of the Ranger School students from the Ranger Battalion leave school, fly to Panama, engage in combat missions with their unit, and return back to the arduous Army course to complete it. When the Gulf War started in 1990, Eversmann was with 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum. His unit didn’t deploy. That was it, he wanted to go to a unit that would go into the fight—he joined the 3rd Ranger Battalion in Fort Benning, GA.

Two years of working with his fellow Rangers, many younger than him who sported Combat Infantry Badges, the coveted combat scroll on the right arm, and the gold star, “mustard stain” on their jump wings, a combat jump, Eversmann still had no combat experience. When he arrived in Mogadishu on August 26, 1993 with Task Force Ranger, he ran a few missions. But those were nothing in comparison. This was a historical battle in the making that would leave 18 US soldiers dead and an estimated countless numbers—estimates are anywhere from 300-1,000—Somali hostiles lying cold in the streets.

The Mogadishu conflict sparked the interest of journalist Mark

Bowden, who had no military or combat experience, to chronicle the event in his amazing book, *Black Hawk Down: A Story of Modern War*. The book was a New York Times bestseller in 1999 and then made into a hit film released in 2001 with A-list actors Josh Hartnett portraying SSG Eversmann and Tom Sizemore portraying Col. Danny McKnight.

Though the battle was chronicled through countless interviews with Rangers and other special ops participants such as Delta Force and Air Force Pararescuemen, or PJs.

*The Battle of Mogadishu: Firsthand Accounts from the Men of Task Force Ranger* is a book broken down into a handful of eyewitness accounts by soldiers who participated. There is Matt Eversmann’s account, “Operation Gothic Serpent.” It is followed by Raleigh Cash’s “Sua Sponte: Of Their Own Accord,” who was a Ranger Forward Observer responsible for controlling and directing fire support for the platoon. Cash entered the furious battle in the ground convoy sent to rescue his besieged Ranger brothers in arms.

Ranger RTO Mike Kurth, who was a 22-year-old Specialist at the time, wrote “Through My Eyes.” Kurth was one of only two African Americans in the battle. He confronted his buddies’ deaths and soon realized that “the only people whom I had let get anywhere near me since I was a child were gone.” On the Combat Search and Rescue (CSAR) team for Task Force Ranger, Sergeant John Belman accounts his participation in the battle in “What Was Left Behind.” He roped into the biggest firefight of the battle and considered some of the mistakes that were made, such as using Black Hawk helicopters to provide sniper cover. Belman’s team was the sole contingency force on the mission who was to rescue any survivors if a helicopter crashed. His team got more than they bargained for when two Black Hawk MH-60 helicopters went down during the fight.

An Air Force PJ, Tim Wilkinson warns “Be Careful What You Wish For” in his account of the battle. Wilkinson was a 30-year-old, highly trained pararescuemen for whom their motto “That Others May Live” is no catchphrase but a credo. Wilkin-

son sums up his incomprehensible courage as “just holding up my end of the deal on a bad day.” And finally, Air Force combat controller (CCT) Dan Schilling, one of the original planners for the deployment of SOF forces to Mogadishu in the spring of 1993, wrote “On Friendship and Firefights.” CCTs provide vital command and control radio capabilities in the forward area, perform surveys of austere landing/assault/drop zones, and are qualified with demolitions to clear obstructions and hazards. During the battle, he survived the initial assault and carnage of the vehicle convoys only to return to the city to rescue his two closest friends, becoming, literally, “Last Out.”

I had the opportunity to fire off some questions to both Matt Evermann and Danny McKnight regarding the Battle of Mogadishu. It should be noted that these are the first, exclusive interviews since Bowden’s book.

## **COL Danny McKnight**

**What units were you assigned to before becoming Commander of the 3d Ranger Battalion?**

Some of my assignment highlights prior to taking command of 3rd Ranger Battalion were as follows: Company XO/Ranger Instructor, Camp Frank D. Merrill, Mountain Phase of Ranger School; Aide-de-Camp, CG 2nd Infantry Division, Camp Casey, Korea; Company Commander, C Company, 1st Battalion 58th Infantry, 197th Infantry Bde, Ft. Benning, Georgia; Regimental Adjutant/S1, 75th Ranger Regiment, Ft. Benning, Georgia; S3, 3rd Battalion 14th Infantry, 2nd Bde, 10th Mountain Division, Ft. Benning, GA; Executive Officer, 3rd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Ft. Benning, GA; Regimental Executive Officer, 75th Ranger Regiment, Ft. Benning, GA; Battalion Commander, 4th Battalion 27th Infantry, 3rd Bde, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, Hawaii; Battalion Commander, 3rd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, Ft. Benning, GA; Retired January 1, 2002.

**What was your role in the Battle of Mogadishu?**

I was the Commander for all Ranger personnel in Task Force

Ranger on a day-to-day basis. Some of the Rangers were part of the fulltime security force for our compound area—12 Rangers at a time with two shifts (24 Rangers committed to 24-hour force security). On each operation (seven total) executed in Somalia, like the October 3-4 battle, I was the Convoy Commander. On the October 3-4 operation, the convoy was to be used as the extraction element to get everyone out of the target area—this included all Task Force personnel on the ground as well as the captured Somali personnel. I commanded this convoy.

**Is there one specific image or event that you remember from the battle?**

No, not really one specific image or event, but actually numerous ones, like the following:

- Being at the target building, loading the prisoners, and having Ranger Todd Blackburn brought to me on a stretcher.

- Seeing Super Six One (Cliff Wolcott’s helicopter) smoking and spin-



**Ranger Task Force area with hanger (right side) with Blackhawks on the airfield. Picture taken from the operations building by Col. McKnight**

ning out of control as it was about to crash.

- Being in the streets fighting a 360-degree battle—enemy everywhere as we moved through the streets.
- Finally returning to the airfield with the prisoners and my convoy personnel—and then seeing the unbelievable number of Task Force casualties, especially the KIAs.

**How well do you think the movie portrayed the events of the film? You?**

The movie was a reasonably good portrayal of the events of October 3-4, 1993, although not perfect, a respectfully good portrayal. I would say that the movie was generally 70-75 percent correct ... there was little to no exaggeration of what took place during the battle. The things that were incorrectly portrayed in the movie were just movie-making nuances I was told. As for the portrayal of me, I guess it was all right. I had no input to my portrayal, and little to no input to the movie—period. The actor, Tom Sizemore, told me that his portrayal of me was based on conversations with some of the Rangers in the Task Force. I will leave it at that and take his word for it. I correct one thing in the movie involving me—I did not go out with the rescue force. I was ready to go out but was told to stand down by Colonel Jerry Boykin, who was my commanding officer. He later told me that I was not physically ready to go back out due to the wounds I had suffered during the initial fight.

**Is “Operation Irene” sort of a way to “perfect” the execution of the famed battle, airsoft style?**

I guess “Operation Irene” could be looked at that way, especially in the world of airsoft battles. However, I believe “Operation Irene” is more focused on re-creating the October 3-4 battle for the primary purpose of paying tribute to those who fought that day, especially the 18 American soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for our country and their comrades-in-arms. In the world of airsoft, “Operation Irene” is the epitome of paying respect for every American soldier—past, present, and future.



Photo Provided by SSG Eversmann

**It’s been said that on your speaking engagements, you visit the graves of soldiers lost during the battle. Does this help bring an inner peace and resolution for you?**

Yes and no. As a motivational speaker, I am so blessed with the privilege to travel across our great country and speak with great audiences everywhere from sea to shining sea. During my speaking travels, I will quite often be in the vicinity of a cemetery where one of my fallen Ranger heroes is laid to rest...there are five such cemeteries (Ft. Bliss, TX; Ft. Benning, GA; Arlington National Cemetery; Vineland, NJ; and Rehobeth, MA). I do visit them all whenever possible and will always do so. As a matter of fact, every five years, around the anniversary of the October 3-4, 1993 battle, I take a “special journey” to visit all of them in a 6-7 day period. In all honesty, I have an inner peace (resolution) about the events of October 3-4, 1993...it was what it was and can never be changed—it is part of our country’s military history. The main reason I visit my fallen Rangers, and will continue to do so, is to

make sure they are never forgotten. That’s important for them, their loved ones, all Rangers, and to me personally as their Commander/Leader.

## SSG Matt Eversmann

**What units were you assigned to before joining the 3rd Ranger Battalion?**

I was assigned to the scout platoon, HHC, 2/87 Inf, 10th MTN DIV before I reenlisted to Bravo Company 3/75.

**What was your role in the Battle of Mogadishu?**

I was initially the Chalk leader of Chalk 4 with TF Ranger on October 3rd. We were tasked to man a blocking position on the NW side of the objective IOT deny enemy access to the objective. Also, we were to act as a backstop to catch any enemy squirting off the objective.

**Is there one specific image or event that you remember from the battle?**

The most salient memory of the entire battle occurred when my SAW gunner, SPC Dave Diemer, told me that a Black Hawk had crashed. We were engaging Somali militia in a pretty intense firefight, and very calmly, Dave looked over his shoulder and pointed to a pile of rubble a few hundred meters away. It was so surreal that during the intense fire fight, Dave, while lying in the prone behind a car that had been shot up, so calmly gave me the heads up that Super 61 was down.

**How well do you think the movie “Black Hawk Down” portrayed the events of the film? You?**

The movie did a pretty good job of depicting the events on October 3. It was very authentic thanks to Lee Van Arsdale and Tom Matthews (both TF Ranger vets) who acted as full-time consultants on the set. It’s not chronologically accurate due to the complexity of the various battles around the target building, but in general, it portrays the heroism and tenacity of the men of TFR. Watching Josh Hartnett portray me in the movie is an absurd reality. I think he did a good job showing a young Ranger squad leader. The charac-

ter SSG Eversmann is actually a compilation of several men on the battlefield, so it’s not quite realistic to say he portrayed me accurately. The character is far more introspective than I am in real life.

**Why was it important for you to write a book on your experience at Mogadishu?**

When presented the opportunity by Random House to put together an anthology of the events, I initially hesitated. However, it gave me an opportunity to get other members of TFR the chance to share their firsthand accounts that might not have been described in Mark Bowden’s book. Like any historic event, it is important that as many stories are shared for posterity. The modern military does a poor job of showcasing the heroism of so many of the men and women who serve. I hope that the BOM at least gives a few more men an opportunity to tell the story from their perspective.

**LTC Larry Perino**

“... And then I climbed up that courtyard wall and put my strobe on top. It was about ten feet up or so and, you know, I bet that thing is still

there today. All night we could hear the Little Birds above us. It felt like the whole world was being ripped apart every time they made their gun runs, especially whenever they were bringing it in close.”

Lieutenant Colonel Larry Perino began his military career in 1986 when he stepped onto the sacred grounds of WestPoint Academy. He was commissioned in 1990 and later that year, after attending the Infantry Officer Basic Course and Ranger school, he served as a platoon leader in 1-503d Air Assault, 2nd Infantry Division in Korea. For the next two years he served in Korea, and in late 1992, he returned to the States and was promptly assigned to 3d battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment.

The WestPoint graduate had just made 1st Platoon Leader of Bravo Company ten months prior to the Battle of Mogadishu. He was stationed at Ft. Benning, Georgia but had been at Ft. Bliss, Texas doing training exercises when he and all of Bravo Company were sent to Ft. Bragg, North Carolina. While at Ft. Bragg, he began training with Task Force Ranger; then within a 24-hour period, he was sent back to Texas just to find out that he was being sent to Somalia. He soon discovered that he was going to be part of a mission to capture Mohammed Farrah Aidid in the heart of Somalia so that he could be delivered to the U.N.

By the end of August, 1993, he found himself at the Mogadishu Airport in an airplane hangar preparing for the spark that would green-light missions to capture Aidid’s highest ranking officials. His days were filled with going over the task of capturing Aidid’s men with a template-style plan that could be put into place at a moment’s notice. For weeks, Larry and his men were prepared to go into action, and for weeks they waited for some form of credible Intel that would lead to the mission’s instant launch.

The template-style plan had been designed so that it could be adjusted to make any building inside Mogadishu the target structure. There was surveillance imagery of every structure in the entire city to prepare the U.S. forces to move in and hit any building identified. This model plan relied heavily on an inside source being able to effectively ID a location within the



**SSG Eversmann**  
Photo Provided by SSG Eversmann



Ranger on security during routine training.  
 Photograph by Col. McKnight

city and mark it for the U.S. forces.

Once trustworthy Intel did come in, the plan was quickly outfitted for the marked building and put into operation within thirty to forty-five minutes. Little Bird and Black Hawk helicopters were to deliver assault forces via fast-rope entry. There was also a portion of the forces coming into the city as a convoy that had enough trucks and humvees to collect all assault forces as well as the targets collected during the operation. One CSAR Black Hawk aircraft, armed with snipers, orbited over the target building to keep overwatch.

"Some situations would call for a limited amount of us to go in, but this one called for all of us. We were all going in."

There were four ranger chinks being delivered to the target building. Larry was the leader of the Ranger Blocking Force. He fast-rope'd from Super 64, which was steadily floating over 40 feet above the earth. He descended the thick black rope in an instant and when his boots touched the streets of Mogadishu, he bolted into action.

The four chinks were comprised of men from both 1st and 2nd platoon. Their objective was to keep control of the crowds both inside and outside of the target area. Nobody was to get into their perimeter area and nobody was to get out of

their perimeter area.

The 3rd platoon was an advancing convoy. Their objective was to sweep in and collect any and all targets captured once the mission was complete. Then the 3rd platoon with their humvees and five-ton trucks were going to move both targets and assault forces away to safety outside the city.

"We were seconds away from getting out of there..."

The targets had been captured and loaded onto several trucks and the mission was all but a success when an RPG hit Super 61 as it floated above the action. It drifted a few city blocks to the North and crashed to the ground. The plan to evacuate the area with the targets had changed; no longer was it going to be a quick in and out mission. As the helicopter fell to the street, Larry knew he and his men were going to be moving to the crash site.

"We had never taken fire like this...we'd never been challenged like this."

The gunfire was intense and the incoming RPG rounds came quickly and often. The extreme hostile firepower was unlike anything Larry had seen before. Larry and his men moved towards the crash site and the fight became a moving gun battle through the cramped urban terrain.

"We moved two blocks North-

east and one block Northwest."

When Larry and his men began heading towards the crash site, they were right in front of several humvees from the progressing convoy. But within a few blocks of intense fire-fighting, they were somehow separated from the vehicles. The armored humvees were out of sight. There was no more cover in the streets as they closed in on the downed Black Hawk.

"It was like a rolling battle and as we got closer to the crash site, the fighting got more and more intense. Once we actually got to the helicopter, it got really hairy."

Once Larry and his men had reached the crash site, the fighting had gotten so intense that they were taking fire from several different directions. The only safe haven from the onslaught of small-arms fire was inside some nearby residential buildings. The buildings also became a collecting point for any injured soldiers throughout the fighting.

The concentrated close quarter battles along with the waves upon waves of enemy combatants added many more men to the list of casualties and injuries. The combat in the buildings was very treacherous and trying. The men inside the buildings found open courtyards and secured all of the entrances in a defensive perimeter with interlocking fire. Any person trying to get inside the buildings and courtyards paid dearly.

"There were a lot of things going on at one time. There were waves of fighting. As a platoon leader, it was a challenge to keep track of what everyone was doing, especially when you had to deal with what was going on right in front of you. You had to rely on the radio and verbal reports to piece together exactly what was happening.

It was like watching a football game through a straw."

As night fell, it became more and more apparent that running out of the buildings was not going to be an option. Larry realized only three of his original sixteen men were not injured at this point. There were so many injured men, that trying to leave the safety of the secured courtyard and accompanying building was not going to work at all.

One of Larry's men was shot in the femoral artery and passed away in the night.

Over the radio came word that

Little Birds that had been equipped for night fighting were going to fly constant strafing runs all throughout the night to provide as much protection and cover for the holed-up men as possible. The Little Birds flew over Larry's position every few seconds through the night air spraying heavy firepower into anything that tried to move in on the assault forces on the ground.

Some of the men in the assault force had IR strobes that they placed nearby to mark the buildings that they were in. The pilots of the Little Birds were flying overhead pumping round after round into anything moving that wasn't marked with a strobe. The powerful sound of the mini-guns shook the earth all through the night, and in doing so, effectively kept away many opposing forces.

"All night we could hear the Little Birds above us. It felt like the whole world was being ripped apart every couple of seconds as they made their gun runs."

Even before the sun began to rise, the 10th Mountain Division, Task Force 2-14, some elements of Task Force Ranger, and both Malaysian and Pakistani forces had begun forcing and fighting their way towards the bounded men. This rolling convoy was bigger and stronger than the initial force from the day before and it was also being escorted by several Little Birds and Black Hawks.

"The gunfire gave away their position. As it got louder, they got closer."

The progress of the monstrous line of vehicles became easier to track as it got closer to Larry and those alongside him.

Once the procession got to the secured courtyard, the injured men and the KIA were loaded into the APCs. The remaining uninjured men who couldn't load into the APCs planned to stay beside the moving shields as they made their way out of the city and to a safer location. The convoy began to roll, and within seconds, the men were left in the dust.

"Those things took off... and we didn't know how far we were going, but we all knew we were running there."

The men were running to the Pakistani Stadium. As they ran, daylight broke and over the radio came the call that the Little Birds

were going to make one more run with guns blazing.

As Larry ran passed a burnt out building that looked an old bus station, he saw a surprising sight. Inside was a collection of fifty or so U.S. soldiers that were gathered together and were waiting to be picked up by some humvees that were en route. Of the fifty men, forty-five were able to squeeze into the vehicles and begin slowly advancing toward the stadium. Larry and four others didn't fit. But soon after the vehicles took off, a Pakistani M113 APC piled high with Rangers rumbled by. Larry and the other four remaining men knew that they had to get into that Pakistani M113 APC. After forcibly stopping the Pakistani M113 APC, they squeezed into the already cramped quarters and began to head towards safety.

"I don't think my feet even touched the ground in that thing. I shoved my hands up in another guy's body armor and just held on to him as he dangled off the back door while it hung open all the way back."

## BACK OUT OF MOGADISHU

Larry grabbed a pen and his Platoon Sergeant grabbed an MRE box as they began taking a head count once they reached Pakistani Stadium. He had a list of those who were safe, those who had been injured, and finally, those who had been killed in action.

As they returned back to the base at the airfield, they had come to find that another Blackhawk had gone down and there were six unaccounted for men. One of the men missing was being held captive and the U.S. forces continued to train for an operation that, in the event that his location was found, would send them back into Mogadishu to retrieve him.

"I remember feeling very numb. I cleaned my weapon, got something to eat, took a shower, and fell into a very deep sleep. I was still groggy when a classmate of mine from West Point woke me up just to check on me."

Larry and the Rangers of Bravo Company continued training for the rescue mission, but within two weeks and without any kind of rescue mission, the soldier was freed. Shortly thereafter, the Task Force Rangers pulled out of Somalia.

"Somalia greatly influenced my career. It gave me an even stronger desire to serve."

Since that time in Somalia, Larry has continued to serve in the Army as a company commander, battalion operations officer, battalion executive officer, planner, and most recently, as a battalion commander.

"Ever since that day, I have been continuously humbled by the fantastic soldiers of then and today. These are Warriors that I'm proud to be serving with."



Task Force Ranger compound, living quarters (left side) and the operations building (right side).

Photograph by Col. McKnight

# WALL OF HONOR

Our eternal thanks to those who gave their lives in the Battle of Mogadishu

## 1ST SPECIAL FORCES OPERATIONAL DETACHMENT-DELTA (DELTA FORCE)

MSG GARY GORDON • SFC RANDY SHUGHART  
SSG DANIEL BUSCH • SFC EARL FILLMORE  
SFC MATT RIERSON • MSG TIM MARTIN

## 3RD RANGER BATTALION, 75TH RANGER REGIMENT

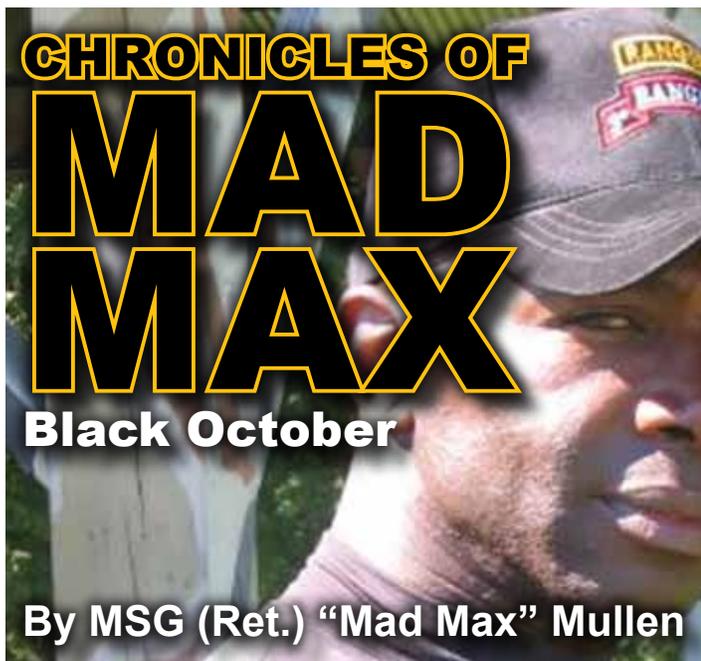
PFC RICHARD KOWALEWSKI • SPC JAMES CAVACO  
SGT CASEY JOYCE • CPL JAMIE SMITH  
SGT DOMINICK PILLA • SGT LORENZO RUIZ

## 160TH SOAR (NIGHTSTALKERS)

SSG WILLIAM CLEVELAND • SSG THOMAS FIELD  
CW4 RAYMOND FRANK • CW3 CLIFTON WOLCOTT  
CW2 DONOVAN BRILEY

“WE FEW, WE HAPPY FEW, WE BAND OF BROTHERS. FOR HE TODAY THAT  
SHEDS HIS BLOOD WITH ME SHALL BE MY BROTHER; BE NEVER SO VILE.  
THIS DAY SHALL GENTLE HIS CONDITION ... “

- WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE



Isaiah 6:8: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, 'Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?' Then said I, 'Here am I; send me.'"

"Recognizing that I volunteered as a Ranger, fully knowing the hazards of my chosen profession, I will always endeavor to uphold the prestige, honor, and high esprit de corps of my Ranger Regiment."

The month of October, out of all the months of the year, seems hold a significant amount of history in the 75th Ranger Regiment. The American Ranger history is a long and colorful one that begins all the way back to the 1700's—Captain Benjamin Church formed Church's Rangers and fought against hostile Native American tribes during the King Phillip's War. Then, there was Major Robert Rogers whose company of Rangers fought in the French and Indian War. And on to Darby's Rangers, who fought gallantly during World War II; and let's not forget Major General Frank D. Merrill and the famous Merrill's Marauders who took the fight to the Japanese during the war in the Pacific China-Burma Campaign.

During the Korean War, also called "The Forgotten War," Rangers gallantly fought up and down the Korean peninsula. There was also the little known U.S. Army's first, last, and only all-black Ranger Company that was formed, assigned to the Eighth United States Army, and attached to the 7th Infantry Division. They took the fight to the communists, carrying on the legacy of the "Buffalo Soldier," and securing their place in Ranger history. During the Vietnam War, the LRRP/Ranger companies were the eyes and ears of the Infantry divisions they were assigned under.

At the end of the Vietnam War in 1974, General Creighton Abrams created the 1st Battalion

Ranger 75th Infantry and the 2nd Battalion Ranger 75th Infantry. What makes the month of October so sacred in Ranger History is that the 2nd Battalion (Ranger), 75th Infantry was activated on October 1, 1974. The modern-day Rangers received their baptism under fire on October 25, 1983. The 1st and 2nd Ranger Battalions spearheaded "Operation Urgent Fury" by conducting a daring, low-level parachute assault to seize Point Salines Airfield and rescue American citizens at True Blue Medical Campus. They conducted the first combat jump since the Vietnam War, earning the rare and highly coveted gold combat star, which signifies a combat jump.

The 3rd Battalion, 75th Infantry (Ranger), and Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 75th Infantry (Ranger), received their colors on Oct. 3, 1984.

On October 3, 1993, the Rangers conducted a daring daylight raid with 1st SFOD. For nearly 18 hours, the Rangers delivered devastating firepower, killing an estimated 600 Somalis in what many have called the fiercest ground combat since Vietnam's Tet Offensive. This battle became known as The Battle of Mogadishu, "Black Hawk Down," and "Operation Gothic Serpent."

On 19 October 2001, 3rd Battalion and 75th Ranger Regiment spearheaded ground forces by conducting an airborne assault to seize "Objective Rhino" in Afghanistan in support of "Operation Enduring Freedom."

So as you can see, the month of October holds a special place in Ranger History and in my life. I had the rare privilege of having served in three Ranger Battalions, and at Headquarters 75th Ranger Regiment. Not one day goes by that my mind doesn't drift back to my days of serving in the 75th Ranger Regiment. I find myself waking up and night from dreaming of being back in the Regiment. Reading Joe Muccia's story of the Raid on Grand Anse campus brought back memories as if it happened yesterday. Why? Because I was on that mission! I have no regrets serving in the Regiment, in fact, it is a memory I will always cherish—having served with, and under Ranger legends, of whom were instrumental in forging my life.

Having the opportunity to serve under and with men such as COL. Danny McKnight, 1SG Matt Eversmann, LTC. Larry Pernio, and Silver Star recipient Doc Stephen Trujillo of Operation Urgent Fury fame, each story in this issue holds special meaning to me. Freedom doesn't come easy—so let's not forget the Rangers who gave the ultimate sacrifice of laying their life down for our country.

John 15:13: "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends."

*Rangers Lead the Way!*

# TACTICAL MAGAZINE MILSIM

NOVEMBER 2009

## The 26 Minute RESCUE

There are over 100 students  
and they need to be rescued.

Pro Communitas  
Strikers take this to heart

## OPERATION PINE PLAINS

22 Hours of mil-sim action

Welcome to the MOG  
Follow the Rangers  
into Mogadishu during  
Operation Gothic Serpent

SPECIAL EDITION

# BLACK OCTOBER

Operation Urgent Fury  
Operation Restore Hope



**WEAPON REVIEW**  
CLASSIC ARMY X-Series