

To the members of USAF CAP Rochester Composite Squadron: photos of a soldier's life in Iraq. Sgt. Ben Schaus is Cathy Ryan's (Friends of Cadets) nephew. He is scheduled to return home in January 2004. He thanks you for your letters and packages. Sgt. Ben wishes all of you a very Happy Holiday season. Capt. Kay S. Hartsen, Personnel



2.75" rockets on a tower pointed at our compound on the outskirts of SW Baghdad.



Sgt. Benjamin Schaus taking a breather as the sun rises after a night on ambush.



Sgt. Phil Gant, a friend since we served together in the 1st Cavalry Div., both ending up as Forward Observers in C Co., 2nd Battalion, 325th Airborne Infantry.



AH-64 Apaches flying overhead security and route recon on our way out to a raid in Abu Disheer.



This is the standard Iraq. Notice the free-roaming sheep in the suburbs, going house-to-house, eating grass/trash.



Barely visible is the battle roster number on the helmet band. It is also stenciled on T-shirts. If we're hit, they call up the B.R. # to higher for N.O.K. Also, blood type is written everywhere: helmet, T-shirt, DCU top sleeves, boots, etc. BFS 0373: B=2nd Battalion 0325, F=Forward Observer, S=Schaus, 0373=Last 4 of SSN.



The Farmers' Fields. We use a thermal weapons sight to scan for attackers. Rocket-propelled grenades still hit us. Usually, we can defend ourselves with the 240 and our M4s.



The AK-47. The weapon of choice for untrained, unskilled people whose basic rifle marksmanship is firing from the hip on full auto.

Note:

*Blue tape on helmet band identifies C Co (Blue), 3PLT (3 marks).

*Personnel in combat arms, especially light infantry, wear NVG mounts screwed on the front of our ballistic helmets.

*Hook-Pile Tape (Velcro) is for "Glint" tape; that way, birds coming in weps free can see us by illuminating with IR.



The Guard Post. Boredom. Stories. Jokes. The Name Game. Anything to stay awake and alert. Notice the M240 GPMG.

"HAPPY HOLIDAYS" TO USAF CAP ROCHESTER COMPOSITE SQUADRON FROM SGT. BEN SCHAUS. THANKS FOR THE LETTERS AND PACKAGES.