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Mother relieved after son escapes car bombing with minor wounds

By Barb Ickes

GALVA, Ill. — Sometimes, a mother's gut tells her when something's happened to one of her children.

Tami Siemers said she knew Tuesday morning that something was wrong with her son, Lucas, a 20-year-old National Guardsman serving with Battery F, 202nd Air Defense Artillery unit, based out of Galva.

"I had my intuition," she said Wednesday. "When he called me Tuesday morning from the hospital, I wasn't all that surprised."

Luckily, Lucas is going to be OK, she said, and had already returned to his unit by Wednesday. He was one of five soldiers wounded while on traffic patrol in Iraq. One of the soldiers was seriously injured, Lucas told his mother. A spokesman for the Guard confirmed that information. Names, hometowns and other information about the soldiers was not made available Wednesday by the Guard.

Siemers said her son told her his group was directing traffic around a stopped car when another vehicle exploded about 25 feet away. Although details were vague, she said it seemed fairly clear that the five Americans were lucky to survive what was obviously a planned attack.

"It's kind of a reality check — a reminder of where they are and how serious it all is," she said. "I'm one of the lucky ones because I don't have to talk about my son in the past tense."

Lucas' unit was deployed in November 2003, arrived in Iraq at the end of March and is due to return home in March 2005. The unit is comprised of more than 120 soldiers.

"I try not to count the days, and I don't watch the news," Siemers said. "Considering what Lucas has been through, he's doing OK. So am I."

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