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## Two Galva Guardsmen wounded in Iraq as unit begins preparations for long trip home

By TAMMY WILKINSON and DAVE CLARK Of The Star Courier

CAMP COOK, Taji, Iraq -- As the families and friends of the Galva National Guard unit serving in Iraq count the weeks and days until they'll be heading home, word was received this week of two members who were wounded in attacks earlier this week.

SPC Joshua Simpson, of Toulon, and SSG Derrick Glisan each sustained injuries in separate attacks while on patrol.

Family spokespersons of SPC Joshua Simpson, 22, of Toulon, confirmed that he received a concussion after his helmet was struck by a piece of shrapnel after a bomb exploded near his location.

Simpson's mother, Lisa Orwig, of Davenport, Iowa, received a phone call from her son at 5 a.m. Monday in which he told her what had happened and that he was all right.

Simpson received the injury while on patrol as a gunner with 1st Platoon of the Galva National Guard unit. At the time of the attack, Simpson was reportedly seated in the gunners chair of an armored humvee which struck an undetected roadside bomb and caused it to detonate.

The Toulon soldier was checked over by medical personnel before being returned to active duty a few hours later.

In addition to the concussion, Simpson reportedly suffered other minor cuts and bruises. He is a 2000 graduate of Stark County High School.

SSG Glisan was on routine patrol with 2nd Platoon on Tuesday when the Galva soldiers were ambushed by machinegun fire, according to word from the unit commander, Maj. Mike Kessel received by Glisan's parents, Wayne and Cheryl, of Galva. A bullet went through calf of Glisan's left leg in what was described as a "clean" wound and damaged no bones. A medic from another unit was injured in the forearm in the attack, according to Kessel. The commander said, in an e-mail to his parents, that Glisan, 27, was treated at the Army hospital in Baghdad and is now recuperating in his room at the unit barracks and that "his spirits are very good."

"He is a tough young man and a great soldier," Kessel told the Glisans.

According to the e-mail, no other members of Battery F were injured, although two vehicles were heavily damaged but Kessel estimated that their maintenance team would have them up and running in a few days.

Families here have received word that the Galva unit will tentatively be leaving Iraq around March 1 and should be returning home by the end of the month.

In a recent interview with the Galva News, Kessel said that since the unit moved from a base near the Baghdad airport to Taji, a city about 30 miles to the north in November, two platoons have been manning a station "in an effort to maintain coalition presence and prevent the terrorists from taking over the community like they did in Fallujah."

Kessel said the third of the battery's three platoons is attached to another unit and are engaged in keeping the main route open and secure. "The bad news," Kessel said, "is that we haven't been together since we got here and won't be until we get ready to leave. The good news is that we have now packed and sealed some of our stuff" and are getting ready to head home.

The public has been advised to not send any mail to members of the unit at their current address after Tuesday (Jan. 25). The last day to mail packages was last Saturday.

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