

'Keeping Tabs'

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27th Brigade Combat Team --- Combined Joint Task Force Phoenix VII

Forward Operating Base Phoenix, Kabul, Afghanistan

Standing Tall on the Mountain

GHAR MOUNTAIN, KABUL MILITARY TRAINING CENTER, AFGHANISTAN

At more than 7,000 feet above sea level, members of CJTF Phoenix VII look forward to climbing Ghar Mountain at the Kabul Military Training Center.

It is also another accent to a deployment experience that continues to bond team mates closer. So early on Friday mornings, Soldiers based at Camp Phoenix move in convoy the short distance to KMTC and nearby Camp Alamo where the Training Assistance Group is based.

They signed up for the challenge and their leaders have given them the time off. They move out to the training

area just as the sun is rising and come to the base of Ghar Mountain. They ground helmets, body armor and most other gear and begin the ascent along a designated trail. It gets steep, very steep. But once past the rough part it becomes a steady march to the peak that appears to have a razor-like edge. And then, there is the view... Ghar Mountain is the highest peak along a line of steep hills that divides the KMTC training areas. On the South is the maneuver space, where Afghan recruits practice tactical movements. On the north side is the live-fire range area, where the Afghan National Army fires old Russian artillery, recoilless rifles, machineguns and conducts small arms marksmanship. Units use the trip for special purposes like re-enlistment ceremonies or for physical training. It is a unique opportunity and something unforgettable folded inside the broad experience of this historic deployment.



Holding the American Flag on the peak of Ghar Mountain from the left is SPC Raymond Persons, SPC Bill Rose and SSG James Waleski from HHC 427th Support Battalion .



The view from here

In the photo on the left, enthusiastic Afghan recruits head in from a day of maneuver training with the line of hills that ends at Ghar Mountain in the background. At right, CPT Randall Baker of HHC 427th Support Battalion administers the service oath to SPC Chad Vieth who has re-enlisted in the National Guard from atop Ghar Mountain.



Coalition Partners

CJTF Phoenix contains many partner nations. Recently a new detachment of Romanian Soldiers rotated in and conducted a Relief in Place of their comrades based at Camp Phoenix. The new detachment took over the Romanian mentoring assignment to the Afghan National Security forces. Following the ceremony the outgoing team participated in a group photo with the Task Force commander, COL Brian K. Balfe in front of the flag poles in Patriot Square.

Keeping Tabs –

Is a weekly electronic newsletter produced by the HQ 27th BCT Public Affairs Section for family members and friends back home and is available on-line through the NYS Division of Military and Naval Affairs website at www.dmna.state.ny.us For more information contact the DMNA Public Affairs Office at (518) 786-4581.