

IN SPORTS: UCONN WOMEN BEGIN DEFENSE OF NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP WITH 91-44 THRASHING OF BOSTON UNIVERSITY

The Day

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AMERICA AT WAR

ALLIED FORCES SUFFER WORST LOSSES

Iraq Airs Footage Of POWs On Television

Stoicism, fear show on faces; bodies of 4 soldiers also seen

By DANICA KIRKA
Associated Press Writer

Doha, Qatar — Looking by turns frightened or stoical, five captured U.S. soldiers were thrust in front of an Iraqi TV microphone and peppered with questions Sunday. The footage also showed at least four bodies.

U.S. officials confirmed that 12 soldiers were missing after Iraqi forces ambushed an army supply convoy around Nasiriyah, a major crossing point over the Euphrates northwest of Basra.

The scenes of interrogators questioning four men and a woman were broadcast by the Arab satellite station Al-Jazeera with footage from state-controlled Iraqi television. Each was interviewed individually. They spoke into a microphone labeled "Iraqi Television."

A senior defense official said the Pentagon did not know precisely how many captives there might be and would not identify the unit. Some of the prisoners are from Fort Bliss, Texas, said Jean Offutt, a U.S. Army spokeswoman at the base.

Several families of the soldiers had gathered at the base Sunday evening, she said. "The mood, of course, is very tragic."

The 507th Maintenance, part of the 11th Air Defense Artillery Brigade, is stationed at Fort Bliss, and at least two of the interviewed prisoners said they were with the 507th.

Al-Jazeera quoted unidentified Iraqi officials as saying the Iraqis are using a defensive tactic of falling

See IRAQ page A8



MIKE ZERBY, Minneapolis Star / AP

■ **Above**, Marine bearers bring in a wounded U.S. soldier to the Shock Trauma Platoon at Camp Viper from southern Iraq Sunday. ■ **Below**, a Marine cries during a memorial service Sunday for four Marines killed Friday when their helicopter crashed south of Basra, Iraq.



PAULA BRONSTEIN / Getty

FIGHTING LEAVES AT LEAST 20 DEAD, 50 WOUNDED

By PATRICK E. TYLER
New York Times News Service

Kuwait City — American and British ground forces on Sunday suffered their worst casualties so far as they battled determined Iraqi forces on two fronts in what an American commander said were "the sharpest engagements of the war."

Military officials in the war zone reported that at least 20 American soldiers were missing or killed and 50 or more wounded in a day of ambushes, accidents and tank and artillery engagements. Precise casualty figures were not immediately available.

Late Sunday night, American ground forces began to attack Iraq's Republican Guard for the first time, apparently hoping to weaken the divisions guarding the roads to Baghdad.

Most of the American losses occurred at Nasiriyah, along the Euphrates River, about 100 miles north of the Kuwaiti border, where an Army maintenance convoy was ambushed, resulting in the death or capture of about a dozen soldiers, some of whose images were beamed around the world by Arab television.

Later, Marines attacked the city, and during a fierce battle with about 500 Iraqi defenders, a rocket propelled grenade struck a troop carrier, witnesses said, killing up to 10 soldiers.

Military officials said dozens more were wounded in the battle, and late on Sunday helicopters were seen ferrying the wounded out of the city.

Meanwhile, the main force of the allied army — the Army's 3rd Infantry Division and the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force — raced toward Baghdad, with the largest Army force passing Najaf. It paused on the approach to Kerbala for the night, about 100 miles south of the Iraqi capital, Baghdad.

In general, allied forces skirted centers of population, keeping their focus firmly on Baghdad. The central American objective of the war is the removal of Saddam Hussein's government from power and the subsequent disarmament of the country.

Sunday night, Lt. Gen. John Abizaid, deputy commander of forces in the region, said he would not confirm casualty figures because "first reports are almost always wrong."

President Bush said he grieved

See ALLIED FORCES page A5

INSIDE

A U.S. Air Force helicopter crashes in Afghanistan Sunday, killing all six people on board. **A2**

Coalition forces suffer their first confirmed "friendly fire" deaths of the Iraq war, when a U.S. Patriot missile battery downed a British fighter jet near the Iraq-Kuwait border, killing the two fliers on board. **A3**

A U.S. soldier most likely acted out of resentment when he threw grenades into tents at a 101st Airborne Division command center, killing a fellow serviceman, an Army spokesman said. **A3**

A day after massive anti-war rallies attracted thousands across the nation — including more than 100,000 people in a march down Broadway — hundreds of people gathered in Times Square and other cities Sunday to show support for the war in Iraq. **A4**

Casino operators want to be sensitive to issues of the war, but they still need customers to come and play. **C1**

A Montville woman and member of a Groton National Guard unit takes calls throughout the day from worried relatives of the 200 members of the 1109th AVCRAD deployed in the Mid-

Submarine-Launched Tomahawk 'Looks Different In Daylight'

By ROBERT A. HAMILTON
Day Staff Writer

Aboard the USS Providence — The Providence took part in its first daylight strike into Iraq on Saturday morning, its fifth combat mission in the two days since the war began.

A salvo of Tomahawks sped into the clear blue sky over the Red Sea as faces in the crowded control room fixed on the large television monitors throughout the room. The missiles, which had been ob-

scured by the fireball of the rocket motor in nighttime launches, could be easily distinguished in the full sun.

"Looks different in daylight," observed the chief of the watch to the silent room.

Providence, which fired its first missiles on Thursday and then three salvos on Friday in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom, continued its combat status Saturday.

Among the crew, the chatter seemed to be as much about missing another "field day" — the dreaded weekly three-hour,

top-to-bottom cleaning of the ship — as it was about the launches.

In the control room, everyone seems to have settled into a more comfortable routine than on the first launch.

The captain, Cmdr. Jonathan H. Kan, who had moved from station to station on the first night offering words of encouragement to his men, spent most of Saturday morning in the center of the room, hands clasped behind his back, rarely speaking. Since the room snaps to attention whenever he talks, that allowed peo-

ple to focus more on their jobs.

A few minutes later the next missiles were on their way.

"This is the captain," he said over the ship's public address system in a terse telegram-like announcement. "Missiles away. Successful transition to cruise. In-bound Iraq. Carry on."

Since the war began, crewmen on the Groton-based Providence have been setting a hectic pace.

See PROVIDENCE page A5

Even half a world away, children vulnerable to effects of war

Experts advise more talk and less television

By JUDY BENSON
Day Staff Writer

Turning off the television can be one of the wisest actions a parent can take to quiet the fears and uncertainties that children can have about war and terrorist alerts.

That's the recommendation of child psychology experts locally and around the na-

tion, and the approach favored in the Bardo, DeVirgilio and Mullen households, among others.

"We limit what she watches on TV," Peggy Bardo, mother of 6-year-old Alexis Walker, said Friday morning in the kitchen of her Groton home, talking over the voices of CNN reporters coming from a television in the adjacent room.

Her daughter, a first-grader, was in her classroom at William Seely School at the time. Many of her classmates' fathers have been deployed, and Alexis sometimes asks if a soldier she sees on television is her

friend's father, Bardo said.

"We always watch the five o'clock news," she said, "and she knows we're at war, but she doesn't understand why we can't just arrest him (Saddam Hussein). She asks about the other people over there."

Bardo restricts her child's exposure to the war against Iraq to the one newscast, but if it begins to show footage of bombs falling, Bardo said, she'll ask her daughter to leave the room.

A bakery manager at the Plainfield Big Y, Bardo, 24, lives next door to her mother,

Karen DeVirgilio, 42, and her two children, 8-year-old Kaitlyn and 13-year-old Lori. DeVirgilio said she hasn't put any specific restrictions on television, but her children aren't watching anyway. She's talked with her children about why the United States decided to wage war against Iraq, but they haven't shown any heightened levels of fear or anxiety.

"It hasn't sunk in with a lot of children," said DeVirgilio, a banker at Foxwoods Resort Casino.

See CHILDREN page A2



'We always watch the five o'clock news and she knows we're at war, but she doesn't understand why we can't just arrest him (Saddam Hussein).'

Peggy Bardo, with daughter Alexis

INSIDE TODAY

NEWS

75th annual Academy Awards

"Chicago" won best picture, and actor Adrien Brody, right, won best actor for his role in "The Pianist." **B1**



Ideal for casino employees

Study finds apartments in Chelsea Towers could be marketed at rents ranging from \$700 to \$1,875. **C1**

WEATHER

Another beautiful day

Today, mostly sunny and mild. High 55, low 38. Tuesday, partly cloudy. **D8**

INDEX

Classified **C6**
Comics **B7**
Daybreak **B1**
Dear Abby **B5**
Editorials **A6**
Movies **B4**
Obituaries **C4**
Police logs **C2**
Region **C1**
Sports **D1**
State **C5**
Television **B4**
World/Nation **A2**
Weather **D8**

