

5-7 CAV End of Tour Update

5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry arrived at Camp Ujmajor on the outskirts of Veszprém, Hungary on 23 June 2016 and spent the next week receiving equipment and posturing for the training to come.



Training began with a focus on individual, crew, and section skills. Each of the line troops planned their own training for a week to address their own specific training objectives. All three troops included land navigation, high frequency radio assembly and use, and call for fire training which improves the speed and accuracy of our Troopers' use of indirect fires. They also trained various dismounted reconnaissance and surveillance techniques.

During a week of small arms

training, the troops not only qualified on their M4 rifles and M9 pistols in day, night, and NBC (with gas mask) conditions, but also had the time and ammunition to further refine their skills. Short range marksmanship trained Troopers to turn and walk while quickly acquiring, discerning among, and engaging targets. Each troop also conducted a stress shoot which interspersed physical tasks with target engagements to mimic the physical conditions of combat. Although much of the Hungarian Defense Force (HDF) is occupied with border security, small elements of the 2-25th HDF Battalion taught US Troopers how to assemble and fire their AK-47s and RPGs. Finally, the Troopers spent hours each day learning or reviewing room clearing techniques, and the training culminated in teams of

Bandit Troopers conducting dismounted training



US Troopers learning to fire AK-47s under the supervision of a Hungarian NCO

three to four Troopers clearing a two-room building with live ammunition.

Although the Squadron had conducted a full gunnery progression during April in Grafenwoehr, Germany, personnel changes forced the troops to form new crews. Before any collective Bradley live fire exercises, the Squadron conducted Bradley crew qualifications as well as machine gun qualifications on 7.62mm and .50 caliber weapons. Each of the troops then conducted section, platoon, and troop live fire exercises which gave leaders at all levels not only experience firing but also experience planning, maneuvering, and reporting. The squadron's gunners also got the rare opportunity to fire live TOW missiles during the troop live fire exercises and again during the squadron live fire exercise. Meanwhile, the squadron's mortar sections conducted their own certification and fired in support of each troop's live fire. The Bradley maneuvers culminated with a squadron live fire in which two troops maneuvered simultaneously with live mortar support. Highlighting our interoperability, a platoon of Hungarian infantry mounted the Squadron's Bradleys and participated at dismounts in the Squadron's maneuvers. A delegation from the US



TOW missile firing during a Troop Live Fire Exercise

Embassy in Budapest and a group of Hungarian battalion commanders visited to observe the exercise.

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Bradleys maneuvering during troop-on-troop fight

Training in Hungary culminated with a troop-on-troop fight which pitted the line troops against each other in a series of four hour missions

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to determine the best troop. Each troop executed either a zone reconnaissance or a screen with the screen force protecting their command vehicle with special markings. If the reconnoitering troop could find and report that designation within the time allotted, they would win. Apache scored two wins each against Bandit and Crazyhorse troops, earning the title of best troop in the Squadron, and Crazyhorse pulled out a close victory over Bandit to complete the exercise in second place.

Between training, the Squadron took the opportunity to go on several rewarding trips. The lieutenants planned a staff ride to the Battle of Wagram, which was Napoleon's last major victory defeating the Austrian Archduke Charles in 1809. After an overview of the battle, the officers visited two key points along the battle front, and lieutenants assumed the roles of Corps commanders talking through maneuvers at each point. Despite two centuries separation, the officers related to and benefited from the principles of leadership and operational art displayed at Wagram. While the officers were on the staff ride, the rest of the Troopers visited Vienna, Austria. The squadron also went on trips to Budapest, and Lake Balaton, a popular Hungarian tourist destination just south of Veszprém.

The community around Camp Ujmajor welcomed the presence of US Soldiers as a dramatic departure from the communist regime that the older generations still remember. Hajmáskér, a nearby town, invited 5-7 CAV to their village festival where the Troopers displayed their Bradleys, small arms, and equipment and interacted with the local populace. Over the course of July and August, a summer camp operated by HDF for high school kids interested in the military, similar to JROTC, visited three times to learn about US vehicles and even participate in first aid training. Before returning home, Task Force Warpaint held a field dining-in with all Troopers and representatives from our Hungarian partners. As this event corresponded with Hungarian holiday of St. Stephen's day, the Hungarians broke a traditional loaf of bread with the Squadron, and 5-7 CAV displayed all of our cavalry traditions to include preparing a non-alcoholic grog.



CSM Bolyard adds to the grog at the Dining In

After two months of demanding but rewarding training, the squadron is preparing to return to Fort Stewart. The Bradleys have returned to Germany for turn-in and the Warpaint Squadron will board planes and return home in mid-September. While we have improved by building training readiness during our time in Europe, 5-7 CAV has more training to complete before a rotation at the National Training Center in April 2017.



5th Squadron, 7th Cavalry in our last formation together before redeployment back to Fort Stewart, GA