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DEVELOPMENTS

Iraqi television aired footage of what it said were dead Americans and interviews with five U.S. prisoners answering questions.

The U.S. Central Command said Marines defeated Iraqi forces near An Nasiriyah in the sharpest engagement of the war so far.

U.S. troops found a suspected chemical factory near the city of Najaf, about 85 miles south of Baghdad, and were trying to determine whether it was involved in making chemical weapons.

In Washington, President Bush demanded that American troops held captive in Iraq be treated humanely and said he was pleased with the progress of the war.

Explosions shook Baghdad early today as the Iraqi capital came under another heavy air attack.

A U.S. Patriot missile battery mistakenly shot down a British Royal Air Force fighter aircraft near the Iraqi border with Kuwait, killing both fliers on board.

RELATED STORIES

USS Kitty Hawk prepared for action Page 5A

Wichita economy may see boost from war in Iraq Page 1B

Military rations as varied as a restaurant's menu Coming Wednesday in Food

TODAY'S FORECAST

Baghdad Daytime: 77 degrees, clouds and sun. Night: 60 degrees.

Basra Daytime: 84 degrees, partly sunny. Night: 62 degrees.

Kirkuk Daytime: 70 degrees, brief showers. Night: 47 degrees. Moon: In the third quarter.

TIME DIFFERENCE



6 a.m. Topeka 3 p.m. Baghdad Iraq is nine hours ahead of Topeka time.

ONLINE

CJOnline.com will provide constantly updated coverage of the war in Iraq.

The site includes video coverage of local reaction and archived material about the conflict.

The site includes message boards to discuss the conflict and an interactive poll.

OPERATION IRAQI FREEDOM

BATTLES INTENSIFY

KANSAN AMONG U.S. CAPTIVES



A U.S. Marine is carried on a stretcher from a Marine CH-46 helicopter after arriving at Camp Viper in Iraq. The injuries were sustained during a battle northwest of Basra on Sunday.

TROOPS AMBUSHED; 9 MARINES KILLED

By Calvin Woodward The Associated Press

Iraq used ambushes and even fake surrenders to kill or capture up to 21 American troops on Sunday, inflicting the first significant casualties on the allied forces driving toward Baghdad.

As many as nine Marines died and a dozen U.S. soldiers were taken prisoner in surprise engagements with Iraqis at An Nasiriyah, a southern city far from the forward positions of the allied force.

On the third day of the ground war, any expectation that Iraqi defenders would simply fold was gone.

"Clearly they are not a beaten force," said Gen. Richard Myers,

chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. "This is going to get a lot harder."

Even so, the U.S.-British coalition fought to within 100 miles of Baghdad and tended to a growing northern front.

At the end of a day filled with plenty of bad news for allied forces, U.S. officials said troops had made what could be an important discovery: a suspected chemical factory near the city of Najaf.

Early today, Baghdad was bombarded with what appeared to be its strongest airstrikes since Friday, See TROOPS, page 5A



A U.S. soldier carries an artillery shell of a self-propelled gun in the Iraqi desert.

FAMILY IDENTIFIES CAPTURED SOLDIER

By Roxana Hegeman The Associated Press

WICHITA — A Kansas soldier held captive in Iraq has been identified by family as Pfc. Patrick Miller, of Park City, Kan.

The father of two was among five captured soldiers thrust in front of an Iraqi TV microphone and peppered with questions Sunday.

The soldier's half-brother, Thomas Hershberger, 27, of Derby, said his mother spoke to Miller's wife Sunday. She had received confirmation from the military that Miller was being held by the Iraqis.

Hershberger said his brother has a 4-year-old son and 7-month-old daughter.

Hershberger said he hoped the

media coverage would make it less likely that his brother would be hurt.

"The more of an asset he becomes," he said, "the less likely he is to be hurt."

The video footage aired on Iraqi TV showed Miller answering questions in a shaky voice, his eyes darting back and forth between the interviewer and another person who couldn't be seen on camera.

Asked why he came to Iraq, he replied, "I come to fix broke stuff."

Prodded again by the interviewer, he was asked if he came to shoot Iraqis.

"No, I come to shoot only if I am shot at," he said. "They (Iraqis) don't bother me, I don't bother them."

U.S. officials confirmed Sunday that 12 soldiers were missing after

See SOLDIER, page 5A

No limits for K-State's Wecker

Always athletic, Marysville native hurdled gender divisions

By Kevin Haskin The Capital-Journal

MARYSVILLE — Like practically all girls when they are little, Kendra Wecker received a doll once for Christmas.

Only once. "Oh, the look of dejection on that girl's face when she opened up that box," recalls her father, Randy Wecker. "That was the last one she ever got. You could tell that obviously wasn't her thing."

Mounting it on a fence or in a tree and firing

fastballs at it, now that would be OK, though Randy Wecker said he vaguely remembers his daughter stashing the doll under her bed and leaving it there.

While that anecdote says something about the competitive desire that drives Wecker, a 5-foot-11 forward on the Kansas State women's basketball team, the story behind her remarkable zest for athletics can be traced to her birth.

"My mom actually played fast-pitch (softball) when she was pregnant with me," said Wecker, a 20-year-old with a December birthday. "She

was like six months pregnant, which is kinda crazy, so I just grew up around that."

"I must have been a little like her," conceded her mother, Pam Wecker, "though I don't remember being that competitive."

Randy and Pam were high school sweethearts in Marysville and talented enough athletically to earn scholarships to Hastings College. Randy played football, Pam played basketball and each participated in track.

See WECKER, page 6A



Kendra Wecker is K-State's leading scorer, averaging more than 19 points a game.

Wildcats advance

The K-State women defeated Harvard, 79-69, in the NCAA East Regional. They will face Notre Dame at 8:27 p.m. Tuesday.

Sports, page 1D

Upcoming

This is the second in a series of three profiles of K-State women basketball players. Coming Tuesday: Laurie Koehn

Online

View a profile of Nicole Ohlde and Kendra Wecker's statistics and find expanded coverage of K-State women's basketball. www.cjonline.com

