

Richmond Times-Dispatch

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA'S NEWS LEADER
A MEDIA GENERAL NEWSPAPER

MONDAY, MARCH 24, 2003

FINAL

SOBERING SUNDAY

ALLIES 100 MILES FROM BAGHDAD DESPITE CASUALTIES, POWS

FROM ASSOCIATED PRESS REPORTS

Iraq used ambushes and even fake surrenders to kill and capture U.S. troops yesterday, inflicting the first significant casualties on the allied forces driving toward Baghdad.

Up to 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.

Allied forces said the invasion was on target, despite a day of dispiriting developments.

The U.S.-led forces, advancing relentlessly, were less than 100 miles from Baghdad after four days of the ground war. They also tended to a growing northern front.

But any expectation that Iraqi defenders would simply fold was gone.

"Clearly they are not a beaten force," said Gen. Richard B. Myers, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

"This is going to get a lot harder."

At the end of a day filled with plenty of bad news for allied forces, U.S. officials said troops were examining several "sites of interest." They said it was premature to call a facility in Najaf a chemical weapons factory.

Early today, Baghdad was bombarded with what appeared to be its strongest airstrikes since Friday, even as a mosque blared "God is great" and "Thanks be to God," perhaps to boost Iraqis' morale.

Allied soldiers came under attack in a series of ruses yesterday, U.S. officials said. One group of Iraqis waved the white flag of surrender, then opened up with artillery fire. Another group appeared to welcome coalition

SEE WAR, PAGE A8 ▶



SIMON WALKER/
THE (LONDON) TIMES VIA
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Developments

■ **Iraqi television** aired footage of what it said were dead Americans and interviews with five U.S. prisoners answering questions. U.S. officials confirmed that 12 soldiers and perhaps one aircraft were missing in southern Iraq — some possibly lured into a trap by Iraqis pretending to surrender.

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

■ **U.S. Marines** defeated Iraqi forces near the southern city of An Nasiriyah in the sharpest engagement of the war so far, U.S. Central Command said in Qatar. However, as many as nine

Marines died. That brings the number of U.S. military deaths to 23; 16 British troops have been killed. **Page A9**

■ **In Umm Qasr**, a port city on the Persian Gulf, a four-hour battle ended with an airstrike against Iraqi forces. Coalition troops had taken Umm Qasr earlier, but opposition forces continued to fight.

■ **The northern front** against Iraq appears to be building, with American planes landing in the Kurdish north and more airstrikes pounding positions of a militant Islamic group with alleged al-Qaida and Baghdad ties. **Page A11.**

■ **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.

■ **Hundreds of police** and security agents in Baghdad searched for a possibly downed coalition pilot, shooting into the reeds and shallow water alongside the capital's Tigris River. The U.S. military said there were no reports of coalition aircraft being shot down or a missing pilot. **Page A11.**

Members of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit fire a Javelin missile during a battle with Iraqi troops at the port in Umm Qasr.

CAPTURED AMERICANS

Iraqi TV shows prisoners, 4 bodies

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

"Iraqi Television."

A senior defense official said the Pentagon did not know precisely how many captives there might be and declined to identify the unit involved so as not to panic troops' families.

Some Iraqi soldiers acted as though they wanted to surrender, then opened fire, the official said.

Al-Jazeera quoted unidentified Iraqi officials as saying the Iraqis are using a defensive tactic of falling back, allowing their enemy to overextend itself and become vulnerable to attack behind the lines.

Speaking on CBS, Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld charged that if those seen on television were indeed coalition troops, "those pictures are a vi-

SEE POWS, PAGE A9 ▶

INSIDE



DON LONG/THE TIMES-DISPATCH

Paul and Patricia Neuroth of Charlottesville and their daughter, Lydia, sing "The Star-Spangled Banner" at the Rally for America at Innsbrook.

■ **Rally is big draw** Thousands turned out for yesterday's Rally for America at Innsbrook, chanting "USA," waving American flags of all sizes and cheering the U.S. troops in the Persian Gulf. **Page B1**

■ **Protesters march downtown** An anti-war rally spills over into downtown and three arrests result. **Page B1**

■ **The battle for An Nasiriyah** What was expected to be a benign ride to secure bridges over the Euphrates turned into a day-long firefight. **Page A9.**

■ **The battle for Najaf** U.S. forces defeat an Iraqi armored column near Muslim holy city after rush across desert puts them within 100 miles of Baghdad. **Page A10.**

FRIENDLY-FIRE DEATHS

2 die as U.S. missile strikes British jet

FROM WIRE REPORTS

CAMP AS SAYLIYAH, Qatar — A U.S. Patriot missile battery shot down a British fighter plane yesterday near the Iraqi border with Kuwait, killing the two fliers on board, the British military said.

The RAF Tornado GR4 was returning to Kuwait from air attacks that destroyed Republican Guard forces outside Baghdad, U.S. Brig. Gen. Vincent Brooks said in Qatar.

A statement from the Royal Air Force base at Marham in Britain confirmed the two crew members were dead. It did not identify them.

"They were returning from one of many successful and professionally conducted missions in Iraq, and I would like to pay tribute to their expertise and

dedication," Wing Commander Mike Oldham, of the Marham base, said in a statement.

The downing was the first confirmed "friendly-fire" death in the U.S.-led war on Iraq. Fourteen other British servicemen have died in two accidents during the war — the crash of a CH-46 Sea Knight helicopter on Friday and a midair collision of two British Royal Navy helicopters on Saturday. Five Americans also were killed in those incidents.

Oldham said the crew's families had been notified and that an investigation was under way. The statement gave no further details.

For British military planners, yesterday's news was a nightmarish replay of their experi-

SEE PLANE, PAGE A9 ▶

MONDAY

ONLINE ▶ <http://www.timesdispatch.com>

Today's weather

Mostly sunny.
High: 66.
Low: 43. /B6

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Regional bee winner

Joe Lynne, an eighth-grader from Caroline Middle School, spells his way to the championship of the Richmond Times-Dispatch Regional Spelling Bee.

Metro /B1

Warner's raise plan

Gov. Mark R. Warner will recommend a plan to guarantee a 2.25 percent pay raise for state workers, government sources say.

Metro /B2

Day of upsets

Butler shocks Louisville, Auburn tops Wake Forest and Michigan State stuns Florida in the second round of the NCAA tournament. But top-ranked Kentucky whips Utah by 20.

Sports /C1

And the Oscars go to . . .

"Chicago" wins as best picture, Nicole Kidman as best actress, Adrien Brody as best actor, Catherine Zeta-Jones as best supporting actress and Chris Cooper as best supporting actor.

Nation /A6

INDEX

A	National & World News	
	LOTTERIES	A3
	EDITORIALS	A12
B	Metro & Virginia	
	OBITUARIES	B5
C	Sports	
D	Metro Business	
E	Flair	
	TELEVISION	E2
	COMICS	E4
F	Classified	
	BRIDGE	F1