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PRESS RELEASE

MILITARY POLICE PUT THE BOOT IN

Two Royal Military Policemen based at the Headquarters Multi National Division (South East) at Basrah International Airport took the opportunity to stretch their legs whilst out on patrol with troops from 1 Royal Scots and 1 Royal Green Jackets. Staff Sergeant Sav Kyriakou, a reservist from St Albans, and Sergeant Mick Swaby from Grimsby are both members of the Special Investigation Branch Major Investigation Team. Both were on patrol as part of an investigation they are conducting to photograph and video various locations within Az Zubayr, a town to the south east of Basrah city.

"Any soldier with a camera is a major attraction to the local Iraqi people, especially the children, who will do anything to be caught on film," Sergeant Mick Swaby remarks. In Iraq, everyone loves football. "It's a quick and easy way to win hearts and minds. You don't need to be able to speak – just kick a ball about". This time round, an impromptu football match between the local children and the patrol resulted in a 2 – 0 win to the British Army!

Staff Sergeant Sav Kyriakou managed a few words between shots, "The local population was very welcoming and there was no sense of fear or intimidation, even when we got swamped. It was certainly a stark change from when we have been down here in the past. The camera seems to break down barriers and everyone wants to star in the video." At this point he was marched off by a group of men to pose for a photo with them. Smiles all around!

Sergeant Swaby said, "We were briefed beforehand that there was potential for crowd disturbance but once they saw us taking photos, they all wanted to be part of the pictures I was trying to take. Everyone was very welcoming and friendly and certainly made our job easier and there were no signs of hostility towards us – even when we won!"

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