



Task force at full combat speed

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

Soldiers of Task Force 1-501st Parachute Infantry Regiment went into the mountains along the Khowst-Gardez Highway and came out with a load of contraband, motivation and a better development of intelligence for the area.

The Geronimos spent the



Spc. Daniel Morris and Pfc. Fernandez Ramos-Martinez set up their mortar tube to cover other Company B Soldiers that will be searching the village.

two weeks of Operation Blizzard doing cordon and searches of villages along the highway where coalition forces' convoys and contracted trucks had been attacked. Their searches were fruitful from the start.

On their first day, Company B Soldiers found several thousand rounds of ammo, rockets and mortar

rounds, as well as had several people under control, also known as PUC, for questioning.

"It was a big motivator for my guys to find such a big cache at the first place that we went to, on the first day," said Cpt. David Hale, Co. B commander. "If we hadn't found anything in the first couple days it would have gotten tedious."

His Soldiers did not have to worry about that. The following day in a village a



A recoilless rifle, radios and other equipment are laid out and inventoried prior to being confiscated by task force Soldiers.

couple ridges from where they found the rockets they found a recoilless rifle, radios, a mortar spotting scope and more rounds.

"What has surprised me is the condition and where we are finding the stuff," said Spc. Chad Cuccaro, a task force engineer attached to Co. B for the operation. "Although some of it has been old, most of it has been new, still in the bags and stashed away in little rooms."

All contraband that was confiscated by the task force was identified and logged by type and location found. The rounds and any explosives found were blown up by the task force engineers.

"What we found is definitely going to put a dent in what they can do to us," said

Cuccaro. "Everything we blow up or take is just that much less for them to use against us."

The enemies of Afghanistan lost something else thanks to the watchful eye of a Delta Detachment Soldier. While in the second to last vehicle of a convoy, the Soldier noticed wires on the side of the highway.

Closer inspection of the wires showed they were connected to an improvised explosive device that could have caused damage to a Geronimo convoy and its Soldiers.

Besides the searches Operation Blizzard was also successful on gathering intelligence. The PUCs told the U.S. Soldiers where they

See CACHE page 5

Salerno Happenings

Superbowl party at TOC

The Patriots and Panthers go head to head Feb. 1 starting at 2300. The party begins at 2000 hours in front of the TOC.

Movie night at chapel

The chaplain is hosting a movie night Fridays at 1430 zulu. Keep your eyes open for posters with that weeks' movies.

Band rocks FOB

The 10th Mountain Rock Band will perform a Breakfast Jam at the DFAC 0400, Feb. 13.

Car/Truck salesman

An AAFES salesman will be on Salerno Feb. 12 and 13. Watch for flyers on location and time to get yourself a set of new wheels.

Comedy Show

The jokes and insults will be flying Feb. 21 and 22 when four comedians invade FOB Salerno.

The World

Fund for 84th Soldier

A memorial fund has been set up at Northrim Bank in the name of Sgt. Karl Jones who was killed Jan. 10 while helping a stranded motorist.

The Company C, 84th Engineer Battalion Soldier was helping a woman who was stuck on the Glen Highway median between the Muldoon Road and Boniface Avenue exits. Another motorist lost control and struck them. Jones died of his injuries at Alaska Regional Hospital that night. Donors interested in helping Jones' widow and their two children can contact Northrim at 562-0062.

Websites for ERB, W-2, Voting

To access your **Enlisted Record Brief** go to http://www4.army.mil/ocpa/read.php?story_id_key=5581.

Your electronic **W-2** for 2003 is available at myPay at <https://mypay.dfas.mil>.

Register to **vote** at www.fec.gov/votregis/vr.htm.

Captain Kangaroo dead

Television's Captain Kangaroo, Bob Keeshan, died Friday in Vermont at the age of 76. Keeshan, a former Marine, played the walrus-mustached, bowl-haircut Captain Kangaroo from 1955 to 1991. He also spent five years as the silent Clarabell the Clown on *The Howdy Doody Show*.

FOB faces

Who is going to win the Superbowl?



New England Pats will crush the Panthers, because the Pats rule and after the Red Sox fiasco NE needs the lift..

Cmd. Sgt. Maj. David Turnbull
TF 1-501st PIR



Carolina sticks to basics and plays as a team. They are well disciplined with good veterans and young superstars.

Staff Sgt. Robert Bleckler
Delta Detachment



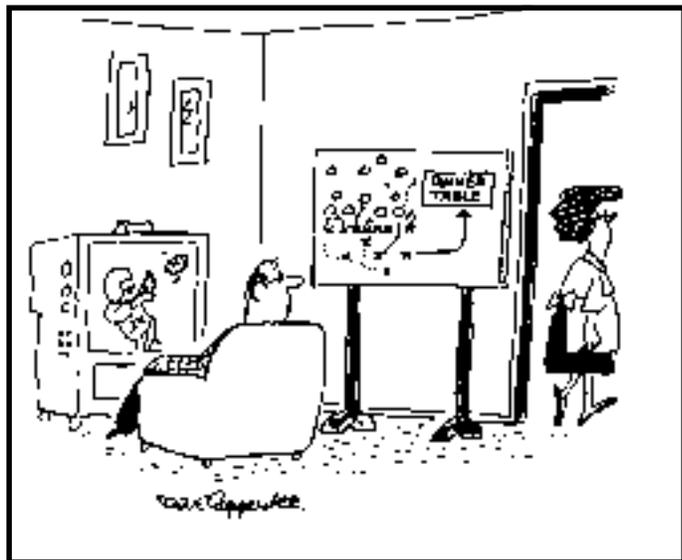
Patriots, because we came here before the season started and we missed one of the best years in Patriot history and miss the Superbowl party at home when they win.

CW2 Paul Santos
E Battery, 101st Field Artillery (TA)



Panthers will win the Superbowl, because they have the best team..

Spc. Andre Lee
Forward Support Company



Preston takes oath as 13th SMA

By Joe Burlas
Army News Service

WASHINGTON – Introduced by Army Chief of Staff Gen. Peter Schoomaker as the right man for the job, Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Preston was sworn in as the 13th sergeant major of the Army during a Pentagon ceremony Jan. 15.

Preston replaces Sgt. Maj. of the Army Jack Tilley who was recognized for his 35 years of service during a retirement ceremony earlier in the day.

As sergeant major of the Army, Preston will act as the Army chief of staff's personal adviser on all enlisted-related matters, particularly in areas affecting Soldier training and quality of life. That job entails extensive travel throughout the Army to observe training and talk with Soldiers and their families. He will also sit on a variety of councils and boards that make decisions impacting enlisted Soldiers and their families and testify before Congress on Soldier issues.

"(Preston) is the finest noncommissioned officer in the (NCO) Corps," Schoomaker said. "We have a real Soldier here. I am confident he will serve our Soldiers well as we transform and reorganize our Army."

One of the Soldiers Preston will serve is his own



Photo by Joe Burlas

Sgt. Maj. Kenneth Preston gets help from his wife, Karen, with putting on his new sergeant major of the Army insignia.

son, Spc. Michael Preston. Michael is a member of the 327th Military Police Company, an Army Reserve unit based in Maryland and currently deployed in Iraq. Michael was able to attend the swearing-in ceremony as he was home on leave under the Central Command Rest and Recuperation Program.

Because his son is a reservist, Preston said he believes that he will be able to better serve the Army Reserve and National Guard as Michael has no problem discussing reserve-component issues – "the good and the bad" — with his dad.

"With 20 to 25 percent of our forces currently in Iraq being Guard or Reserve, their issues are important," Preston said.

Serving the nation in the military is a family tradition, Preston said. His mother

served in the Air Force and his father in the Army during the 1950s. Both attended the swearing-in ceremony. All of his uncles served in the military, during World War II or the Korean War. Four of those uncles were also present for the ceremony.

Among Preston's stated priorities in his new job are: ensuring Soldiers are properly trained and equipped to win against the nation's enemies; instilling the warrior ethos in all Soldiers as "every Soldier is a rifleman first;" facilitating change as the Army embraces new formations, technologies and tactics; and

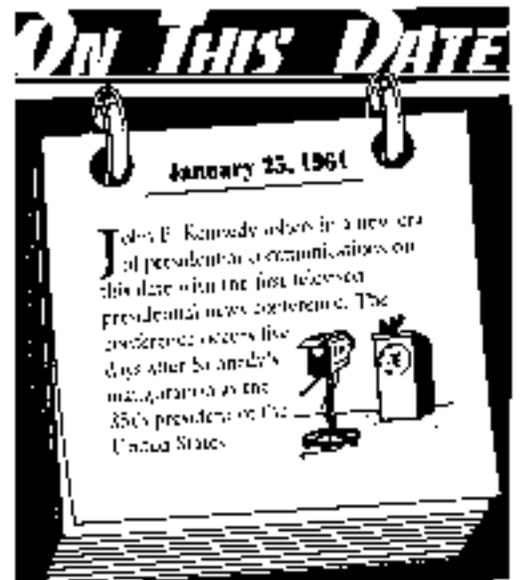
caring for Army families.

Change has been and will continue to be the norm for the Army, Preston said.

"Our enemy on freedom's frontier is adapting to our tactics everyday and so must we adapt and change out tactics to defeat this threat," Preston said. "Change and evolution are not new to us. Our veterans here today have seen many improvements and changes in our structure and tactics over their service.

"With the foundation of basic Soldier skills to build upon, we will continue to chart an azimuth to adapt to this ever-changing battlefield."

Preston has served in the Army for 28 years, mostly in armor units throughout his career. Prior to his selection as sergeant major of the Army, he was the command sergeant major for Combined Joint Task Force 7 in Baghdad, Iraq.



Establishing a safe and secure haven

Story and photos by
Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

Giving Soldiers a place where they can safely and securely refit and resupply during long operations has fallen to one man.

During the task forces' two operations, Avalanche and Blizzard, 1st Sgt. Robert Levis, first sergeant for Battery B, 377th Parachute Field Artillery Regiment, has been responsible for establishing four PAAs, or position area for artillery.

"This is what we (artillerymen) do when we go out," said Levis. "We set up fire bases."

But because these PAAs had to hold more than just his 105 mm howitzers he needed to stake out a larger area to house the additional task force elements.

"The first thing I look for when establishing a PAA is

the most probable threat area," Levis said "And then I put the high value targets, the TOC (tactical operation center) and the antenna farm (communication section), farthest away from it."

He then works out from there and designates space for the other task force pieces – the dining facility, the aid station, the Forward Support Company and space for a helipad. Room must also be reserved for when the units are not on mission.

Although Levis was ultimately responsible for getting the site set up he did not do it alone. Prior to moving into each of the areas one of the infantry companies swept the area, searching the low ground and all ridges surrounding it looking for any threats.

Once the main body ar-



Spc. Alex Rudisky and Staff Sgt. Roy Huerta string concertina wire around the primary artillery area, during Operation Blizzard.

rived at the PAAs, Soldiers from all the units there came together to pound pickets and string concertina wire around the perimeter. On surrounding hilltops is another part of

the PAA security – the observation points.

"The big thing when choosing an OP position is that the observers have to be where they can see the avenues of approach to the PAA," said Levis. "They have to

be able to see all the ways the enemy might arrive – mounted and dismounted."

Giving this early warning to those in the PAA is not infantrymen, but instead artillerymen, mechanics, clerks, drivers and other MOSs are keeping a watchful eye out for trouble. This frees up the infantrymen who come in off a mission to have a night free of guard duty.

"It frees them up to come in here and refit," said Staff Sgt. Bobby Floyd, Headquarters platoon sergeant, Bat. B. "We don't need to tie them up with pulling guard for us, after all – everyone out here is an infantry soldier first."



SSG Brandon Thompson gets elevation and distances to surrounding hills as a 105 mm howitzer sets up in Operation Blizzard's PAA2.

Cache: Cont. from page 1

should look for more weapons and for men that the coalition forces was looking for.

One of these leads took Co. A to a village were, according to Staff Sgt. Jason Gray, a teenage boy misdirected them to a farmer and not the al-Qaeda member they were looking for. Because of this the Geronimos held all the males in the area for questioning, including the teenager. To help her son, that boy's mom gave up the information they needed to capture the man they were after.

"When we caught the guy and found out he was a big fish it was a real motivator," said Gray, a squad leader with Company A. After that he said his guys didn't mind as much getting wet, sleeping in the snow or having to walk up the hills or wadis.

"Even down to the lowest ranking soldier they are being able to see how their work at detaining an individual is helping drive future missions," said Maj. Kyle Lear, the task force executive officer. "They see how one person can give up information that can lead to bigger payoffs."

He added that the success of this operation was built off the task force's entire time in Afghanistan. December's Operation Avalanche was the crawl/walk phase and Blizzard was the run phase.



Staff Sgt. James Joslin tests out a periscope confiscated from an Afghani house during a cordon and search.

"During Avalanche we were shaking out how to work together as a unit, it was like a rehearsal," said Lear. "The infantry guys are now used to having heavy armored HMMWVs with them and we are finally operating at full speed as a combat task force."

"The units are now comfortable with being cross attached to other companies. The teams, squads and platoons are also more comfortable with each other, since they now know each others' strengths and weaknesses," Lear said. "We will only continue to get more comfortable with every operation that we conduct – and there will be many more to come."



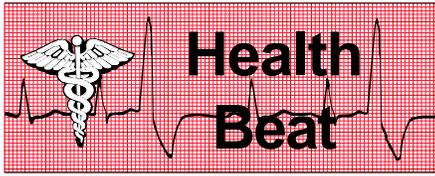
Pfc. Paul Rains and his fellow Geronimos keep a watchful eye so that other Company B Soldiers can perform a village assessment during Operation Blizzard.

Blizzard Booty

The Geronimos rounded up a small army's worth of weapons, munitions and supplies during the operation. The following is some of what was confiscated.

AK-47	34
303 enfield rifle	13
Machine guns	9
Pistols	11
50 cal AP (boxes)	10
.50 cal	105
.50 cal (boxes)	1
105 mm artillery	50
107 mm rocket	161
12.7 mm head	250
12.7 mm complete	3
122 mm artillery	5
2.75 mm rockets	13
303	400
30mm	50
7.62 ball	27,645
7.62 mm ball (boxes)	10
7.62 link	100
7.62 long rounds (boxes)	2
7.62 long rounds	133
7.62 tracer	100
73 mm recoilless	10
75 mm	23
81 mm mortar rounds	11
82 mm mortar rounds	75
9mm round	75
ZSU-23-4 rounds	10
Shotgun shell/flares	140
Bolt action rounds	44
RPK rounds (can)	1
Artillery rounds	5
DsHK barrels	4
DsHK rounds	10
DsHK rounds (box)	1
RPG rounds	433
Grenades	17
Mines	54
Dynamite, sticks	143.25
M68 artillery rounds (box)	1

STAY OUT OF MY ICU



CPT. Joe Bick RN, C
691st FST Post -Op/
ICU Head Nurse

Feeling bad, got a cough, maybe a little bit of a temperature? What do you think you should do? Lay in bed all day? Avoiding meals and water so you don't have to hike to the latrine? These are all the wrong answers if you don't want to spend quality time with me!

You probably have an upper respiratory infection that is affectionately referred to as the "Salerno Crud". The crud will make you feel like crap and you can end up in the ICU (With Me) if you don't take care of it right.

If you feel sick and have a cough go see your medic and go to sick call. You can't just tough it out even if you are a hard core 11B.

If you do have the crud you will need to be put on Antibiotics.

But that is not the end of it. Once you go back to your hooch with your profile for light duty, don't just lay there and wait to get better. You need to drink water, lots of it.

I know this sucks because then

you have to move out to the latrine every hour, but that's OK too (here is your chance to be a Spartan). People infected with the crud end up in ICU when they don't drink enough water and they get dehydrated.

You will also have a fever and this will make you feel the worst. Take Tylenol 650 mg every four hours and Motrin or Ibuprophen 800 mg every six hours to control you fever and make you feel like walking to the latrine.

Take all of your antibiotics until they are gone or you will get sick again. It is all connected.

Not getting the crud is the best way to deal with it. Also, sleep head to toe in your tents and wash your hands frequently throughout the day.

In the FST we use Purrell hand sanitizer (still no running

water). It is Alcohol jell that kills 99.9% of infection causing bacteria. (I know what your thinking, but you can't drink it, you'd go blind)

People back home are always

pestering you about what you need them to send, so have them send hand sanitizer and carry it around with you. If you have the crud, take one for the team and wash your hands after you sneeze or blow your nose (in addition to before meals and after you use the latrine). Police up those dirty tissues on your way to the latrine every hour and wash your bedding when you feel better.

If you smoke your 80% more likely to get admitted , so if you have the crud DON'T SMOKE.

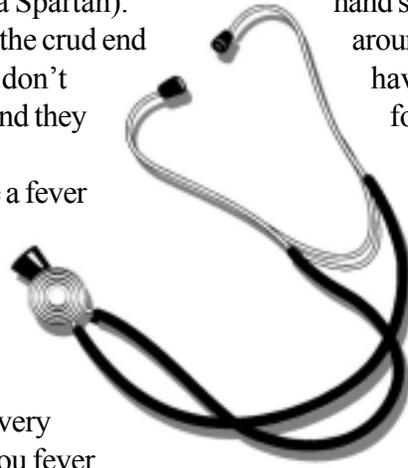
Some other reasons to take care of your self and avoid the ICU:

The Nurses are not pretty
You will get an IV
It's boring as hell
The nurses are mean
There are rocks in the beds
You may be forced to use the bedpan

Other ways to avoid the ICU:

Wear your IBA and Kevlar
Watch out for trip wires
Avoid IED's
Shoot first
Seek cover during rocket attacks
Stay low, move fast

If you have any questions, see your medic, stop by the aid station/ FST or come see me and I will square you away.



The closest to a pretty, nice nurse on FOB Salerno.

Around Afghanistan

4 men arrested over planned attacks in southern Afghanistan

KANDAHAR – Four men, including two wearing women's clothes, have been arrested in the main southern city Kandahar on suspicion of planning bomb attacks, the city's military chief said yesterday. Two men carrying grenades and wearing all-enveloping head-to-toe burquas used by most Afghan women, were arrested Wednesday in Kandahar's crowded Herat Barwaza district, Ahmad Shah said.

"They were planning a terrorist attack," Shah said.

Two other men were arrested separately in the same district earlier this week "for placing bombs," he added. The Herat Barwaza shopping district is close to the site of a bicycle bomb explosion in early December which injured some 15 people. Meanwhile, five people have been killed in a landmine explosion in south-central Afghanistan, a district governor said Wednesday.

"A civilian vehicle which was on its way from Deh Rahwood district ran over a mine which killed five and injured one," Char Chino district chief Abdul Rahman said. The mine was apparently newly planted along the road in Uruzgan

province's Char Chino district, the same district where a US military operation led to the deaths of at least five people on the weekend. Despite US rebuttals, Rahman has insisted that 11 civilians, including women and children, were killed by US fire in the attack. The US maintains it killed five armed men.

Rahman said the latest incident, which occurred on Tuesday, killed three civilians and two Afghan soldiers, all from the same district in neighboring troubled Zabul province.

President, NATO Secretary General Discuss Situation In Afghanistan

DAVOS, Switzerland – President General Pervez Musharraf and NATO Secretary General Jaap De Hoop Scheffer in a meeting on the sidelines of World Economic Forum Thursday discussed the situation in Afghanistan. (PNS)

Afghan probe into children killed by US attack

KABUL – Afghan President Hamid Karzai said Saturday that his government had launched an inquiry into allegations that US troops killed 11 civilians, including women and children, during a recent operation.

The US-led coalition in Afghanistan has denied the claims made by local officials, saying that five adult males who had been attending a mid-level Taliban meeting were killed in Char Chino district of central Uruzgan province when troops fired from an aircraft. (AFP)

Jirga member rules out postponement of Afghan elections

ISLAMABAD – Member-elect of the Afghan Loya Jirga (Grand Assembly) and a former diplomat Abdul Jabbar Naeemi has ruled out postponement of the elections in Afghanistan scheduled to be held in June this year.

In an interview with Online on return from Kabul on Friday, Jirga member said the electoral exercise will be held as scheduled and will usher in a new era of prosperity in the war-torn country. (Pak Tribune)

Indo-Afghan military exchanges in the offing

In a significant move, India and Afghanistan on Friday paved the way for high level military exchanges, with the head of the newly raised Afghan Army General Bismillah Khan arriving in New Delhi on a three-day official visit. (Press Trust of India)

Don't Think... Know!



Photo by Staff Sgt. Jeff Troth

Don't let a negligent discharge ruin your life and end your buddy's. Know your business and know weapon!



ASK MSG NORDSTROM

If you have a question for MSG Nordstrom, drop it off at the ALOC.

Dear MSG N,
I'm thinking about starting to smoke cigars to give me that distinguished look. What brand do you smoke?
Signed, LT Pink Lung

Dear War Dog 5,
Does your mother know you're smoking? Hav-A-Tampa Jewels with the birchwood tips, are my favorite, but, seriously, you've got to be over 18 to buy tobacco at the PX. Of course the plastic tipped ones they sell at our PX here might remind you of the baby bottle nipples that you were just weaned from.

MSG N

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
I've heard so much about your coffee that I want to give it a try, but every time I go, the pot is empty. When's a good time for a fresh cup?

Signed, LT Need Caffeine

Dear Sir,
So you've noticed that too. Funny how everyone says how bad my coffee is, but the pot always ends up empty. Don't worry, I'll brew another batch. Stay away from the ALOC's "foo-foo" brew - the S1 and S4 are

trying to poison us with some Hazelnut-Pumpkin Spice-Snow Fairy Chocolate blend! I tried some; had to clean my cup for the first time.

MSG N

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
Being that this is the centennial anniversary of flight, I heard that your first jump was from the Wright Brother's flyer. Were your first airborne wings made of wood?
Signed, Nat'l Guard PSG

Dear Nasty Leg,
Looking forward to your arrival. Plan to smoke you like the cheap cigars the Salerno PX sells!

MSG N

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
How was it pulling guard on the burning bush?
Signed, SSG Howoldareyoureally

Dear SSG H,
I wouldn't know, the PA had that assignment, ask him.

MSG N

Dear MSG Nordstrom,
I did my pushups for asking you about the MOS of standing on the porch and just smoking cigars and drinking coffee. Weren't you a little hard on me?

Signed, SPC Push-Ups

Dear PU,
OK, sorry. Do flutter kicks this time! I

know you Nintendo/Pepsi generation kids need hugs but you can go see SFC Easter for those. I've got my shop so wired tight, that all I need to do is supervise and take care of the 3 "C's:" Coffee, Copies, and Comments!

MSG N

Dear MSG N,
Haven't seen you with your Geronimo coffee mug lately. What's up?
Signed, PFC Wondering Mind

Dear WM,
I had a terrible tragedy out in the field last time. I was just finishing with a visit to the "Levis Throne" when I slipped and had to choose between my cherished cup and my kevlar. At least the cup had a proper burial in PAA1. Anyone with an extra cup, bring it by!

MSG N

VALENTINE NOTES

Tell a loved one how much they mean to you. A page of the next *Geronimo* will be reserved for Valentine notes. Submissions can be no longer than 15 words and must be turned into Staff Sgt. Troth no later than Feb. 10. Space is limited, so first come first published. And the Afghani word "howyoudoing" does not count as one word.

P	I	S	S	G	S	N	I	K	S	D	E	R	I	L
G	N	P	N	S	L	A	G	N	E	B	Y	S	P	L
L	S	S	G	S	S	C	H	I	E	F	S	A	O	N
S	T	H	L	P	C	R	E	B	L	B	O	L	A	S
H	I	L	T	E	S	T	P	R	F	I	R	G	N	Y
I	I	P	O	G	S	T	A	O	O	T	A	A	P	O
B	S	A	E	A	S	I	C	N	R	S	I	B	S	B
Y	W	T	G	S	I	B	K	C	T	H	D	C	V	W
E	S	R	E	I	L	O	E	O	Y	P	E	R	I	O
C	K	I	G	E	A	C	R	S	N	S	R	A	K	C
F	S	O	C	S	L	N	S	S	I	E	S	M	I	B
O	Y	T	L	L	I	E	T	S	N	Y	B	S	N	R
S	O	S	A	I	L	A	R	S	E	R	S	C	G	R
C	O	L	T	S	D	T	Y	S	R	S	T	R	S	C
A	T	D	O	L	P	H	I	N	S	S	N	E	K	G

SUPERBOWL

How many of these teams that have made multiple trips to the superbowl can you locate in the puzzle?

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------|
| BENGALS (82, 89) | GIANTS (87, 91, 01) |
| BILLS (91, 92, 93, 94) | PACKERS (67, 68, 97, 98) |
| BRONCOS (78, 87, 88, 90, 98, 99) | PATRIOTS (86, 97, 02, 04) |
| CHIEFS (67, 70) | RAIDERS (68, 77, 81, 84, 03) |
| COLTS (69, 71) | RAMS (80, 00, 02) |
| COWBOYS (71, 72, 76, 78, 79, 93, 94, 96) | REDSKINS (73, 83, 84, 88, 92) |
| DOLPHINS (72, 73, 74, 83, 85) | STEELERS (75, 76, 79, 80, 96) |
| FORTYNINERS (82, 85, 89, 90, 95) | VIKINGS (70, 74, 75, 77) |