



13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary)

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Combat patch received by the 96th SBDE

13th Sustainment Command (Expeditionary) Public Affairs

CAMP TAJI, Iraq – The Soldiers of the 96th Sustainment Brigade received their wartime shoulder sleeve insignia, commonly referred to as a combat patch, in a ceremony held here Oct. 12.

The ceremony marked the first time that the Double Diamond patch has been used during Operation Iraqi Freedom since the 96th SBDE was created in September, 2008.

“I had never really thought about getting a combat patch,” said Spc. Jesse Flink, an administrative clerk for Headquarters and Headquarters Company from South Jordan, Utah. “This is my first patch, and my first deployment. I hadn’t thought about what a historical moment it is. It’s a big deal.”

Flink, who has been in the Army Reserve less than two years, says he attended the ceremony because he was “excited to see what was going to happen. They gave us a lot of good information about who we are, and why we’re here. It’s not just about Utah; this patch has a lot of meaning,” he said.

The distinctive shoulder insignia of the 96th SBDE is a white diamond and an overlapping blue diamond, both superimposed over a hexagonal patch with a khaki background.

The Double Diamond design was originally approved for the 96th Division on Feb. 14, 1927. Since the division was organized using personnel from Washington and Oregon, those states are represented by the two squares. The use of blue and white signify the colors used by the United States.

Shoulder sleeve insignias originated with the 81st Infantry Division in 1918. After training at Fort Jackson, S.C., and sailing to France, the men of the 81st attached an olive drab felt patch with the silhouette of a wildcat, in honor of Wildcat Creek, which runs through Ft. Jackson. When other divisions challenged their right to wear the patch, Gen. John J. Pershing ruled that the Wildcat Division could keep its patch, and suggested that other divisions develop their own insignia.

The right shoulder sleeve insignia is awarded to personnel who were assigned, attached, or under the operational control of a divisional or higher unit that actively participated in, or supported ground combat operations against hostile forces in which they were exposed to the threat of enemy action or fire, either directly or indirectly. The military action must have lasted for a period of 30 days or longer, or less than 30 days if individuals or units come under one day of direct or indirect fire.



Col. C.J. Read, a Layton, Utah native and the commander of the 96th Sustainment Brigade, returns a salute after receiving his combat patch from deputy commander Maj. Anthony Francia, a resident of Guam in a ceremony held October 11, 2009. The 96th SBDE recently assumed control over support operations at Camp Taji.



Spc. Araceli Balderaz receives her combat patch from Roy, Utah native, Command Sgt. Major Vicki Briggs, the senior enlisted advisor to the 96th Sustainment Brigade, during a patch ceremony held Oct. 11, 2009. Balderaz, a native of Mcallen, Texas, is a SPO effects specialist for the 96th SBDE.

-30-

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