

MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

Local Marine injured

Sunday, October 29, 2006

A Martinsville Marine is headed home after being wounded when his squad was hit by an explosive device in Iraq.

Lance Cpl. Thomas "Cody" Surber, 20, of the Marines Corps 2/8 Echo Co., 4th Platoon, was on foot patrol with his fellow Marines in the Al Anbar province region of Iraq on Oct. 22 when the attack occurred, according to his parents, Steve and Lorie Surber, also of Martinsville.

"His right foot is gone," Steve Surber said, after the patrol unit was hit by an Improvised Explosive Device (IED). "They were just walking" and checking for anything out of the ordinary when the IED went off, Surber said. After the blast, rescuer workers in the field "told him (Cody) not to look," Lorie Surber said. But "I looked down and the only thing holding my foot on was a piece of my boot," Cody Surber told his parents.

His right foot was amputated at the ankle, according to the Surbers. His left foot also was injured, but remains intact. However, it will need additional surgery, they said.

The incident occurred around 7 a.m. Iraqi time, the Surbers said. They were notified 12 hours later by a Marine sergeant from Camp Lejeune, N.C. "They said he's been seriously injured," Lorie Surber recalled. The entire group was injured, but Cody's injuries were the most extreme and he may have been the only one put in the hospital, the Surbers said.

"What bothered me was until they got him stabilized, they didn't know if he had internal injuries," Steve Surber said. Fortunately, he did not have such injuries. The Surbers were headed to Bethesda, Md., on Friday to meet Cody, who was flying in for treatment at the Bethesda Naval Hospital after spending the past few days at a hospital in Germany. Cody Surber was serving his second deployment to Iraq, the Surbers said. They last saw him on July 24.

"He left on a Sunday and he was hurt on a Sunday," Lorie Surber said. Through the ordeal, Cody Surber remains in good spirits, Lorie Surber said. "He has approximately two months of rehab" or until he is able to walk, his father added.

Cody Surber's parents are not sure what their son will do following his recuperation, "but that's up to him," Steve Surber said. Cody Surber was in JROTC and ROTC "all through high school," he added. Being in the military "was his dream," Lorie Surber said.



Lance Cpl. thomas "Cody" Surber.

A 2004 graduate of Martinsville High School, Cody Surber joined the Marines when he was 17 years old.

"I had to sign for him" to go in, Steve Surber said.

Cody Surber is the grandson of World War II veteran Sanders Surber, deceased; Geneva Surber; the late Frances Shelton; and Dewey and Juanita Shelton of Ridgeway.