

Sgt. Tomlinson: A Man of Valor and Heart



Sgt. Tomlinson has done more than his share for our country since he enlisted in the Army in '86 -- Desert Storm, Bosnia, Afghanistan, Iraq and back for another tour in Afghanistan.

He has watched as his comrades have bled and died. He has been moved to the center of his being by the many acts of selfless courage, valor and dedication of the people he has served with on the battlefield and at home.

And it's very clear that he cares deeply for "his" people. In true Mother Hen fashion, he inquires after the well-being of his troops: "Anderson, did you replenish your hydration kit? Jackson, did you call your wife - is her dad out of the hospital?" In short, he looks after his people and he takes care of them the best that he can.

*But the concern he has for each of his team members doesn't override the fact that he's a professional who's been ramrodding enlisted people for a long time. He's no pushover -- if someone screws up, the hard-a** NCO in him emerges quickly, and he unhesitatingly provides harsh verbal admonishment to anyone in the platoon who doesn't toe the line: "Wysicki! Dude, I'm telling you right now that you better have*

*your s*** squared away today or I'll plant a boot where the sun don't shine."*

"My job is to make sure my people make it home, safe and sound... everyone one of 'em," Tomlinson tells me. "We've been through a lot of stuff together and I fully intend to see to it that they all get home to their families, their wives and kids."

"America has some of the very best serving right here. Some of them have been either to Iraq or Afghanistan more than once. They don't have it easy - especially lately - but they keep doing their jobs in spite of everything."

Tomlinson says that his platoon's morale is "pretty good," but he believes it would be better if "most of the media" would stop understating the efforts here.

Up until recently, operations in-country and all of the troops have been "pretty much sluffed to the side" by events in Iraq, he says. "We're like red-headed stepchildren here... no one wants to talk about us or what we're accomplishing."

And being the NCO that he is, it angers and saddens him that his troops are being slighted; "It's not fair to these people, they deserve better... they've done so many great things... they risk their lives everyday to bring freedom to the Afghan people and I wish somebody would start talking about it."

*Sgt. Tomlinson's correct. They do deserve better. And so does a tough-as-nails, hard-a** and caring NCO by the name of Tomlinson.*

- Jerry