

CORPORAL ANDREW RAPP

3rd Special Forces Group

CSM Doug Russell Award 2003 Recipient



A native of Emlenton, Pennsylvania, Andrew Rapp graduated from Allegheny-Clarion Valley High School in 1991 and attended Gannon University in Erie, where he studied Secondary Education and English. After graduation from college, he worked part time as a mentor for at-risk students in the public school system and full-time as a residential house manager for the physically and mentally challenged. He also taught English and coached baseball and basketball at both the middle school and high school levels. Enlisting in 2000, CPL Rapp completed Counterintelligence (CI) Agent Initial Entry Training at Fort Huachuca, Arizona and then Airborne School at Fort Benning, Georgia.

In 2001, CPL Rapp was assigned to the MI Detachment, 3rd Special Forces (SF) Group (Airborne). He provided critical support to Operation ENDURING FREEDOM by conducting force protection threat and vulnerability assessments and installing perimeter security systems for the CJSOTF-A (Combined Joint Special Operations Task Force-Afghanistan) compound. His accomplishments included identifying collection attempts by local national personnel and implementing countermeasures; and locating a possible infiltration route into the base complex. He deployed forward numerous times, providing unsurpassed CI and Force Protection support to operational detachments of Special Operations Forces (SOF).

Throughout his deployment in Afghanistan, CPL Rapp took part in numerous combat operations including Special Reconnaissance, Direct Action, Unconventional Warfare, and Counterterrorism missions. On one such mission, the patrol was conducting a search of a suspected compound when it was ambushed. During the ensuing firefight, several individuals were injured, one fatally. CPL Rapp reacted immediately to secure

the wounded and provide cover support. His heroic actions resulted in his recommendation for the Bronze Star with "V" device.

During each mission, CPL Rapp functioned as an integral member of the operational detachment providing critical Human Intelligence (HUMINT) support, and when necessary, additional combat power. He was instrumental in identifying the Taliban and Al Qaeda threat, conducting battlefield interrogation of captured and detained personnel for both tactical and operational intelligence information, and processing captured documents containing critical intelligence on enemy operations, capabilities, and training. His efforts not only ensured the safety and survivability of SOF personnel, but the local populace as well.

After each mission, CPL Rapp wrote detailed HUMINT reports which provided commanders at all levels critical, time-sensitive tactical intelligence. Many of his reports were subsequently utilized at national levels.

During all missions, CPL Rapp not only "sold" CI as a combat multiplier to the supported SOF Detachment Commander, but also validated HUMINT tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) in combat operations. He identified shortcomings in current TTPs and identified several innovative techniques to enhance HUMINT support to forward-deployed elements. These new techniques were immediately put into use by SOF HUMINT personnel deployed in Afghanistan.

CPL Rapp's knowledge was so well respected that he was frequently asked by the supported commander for his personal analysis of the local threat and probably enemy intentions. Additionally, local national personnel and Afghan National military members often approached him to provide information and intelligence on enemy operations and intentions.

Intelligence and information collected by CPL Rapp greatly enhanced the security and survivability of forward-deployed SOF elements and others throughout Afghanistan. The intelligence he collected was used for security and operational planning at not only the local command level, but also at the theater and national levels. Additionally, his innovative collection techniques and ability to gain the confidence of the local populace provided critical lessons learned for future HUMINT collectors.