

2018
John K. Singlaub/Jedburgh Award
Master Sergeant Clyde F. Whitmore II,



Master Sergeant Clyde F. Whitmore spent his last two years as the Operations Sergeant on Special Forces Operational Detachment - Alpha (SFOD-A) 5324. During this time, MSG Whitmore led his team through three, six-month combat deployments, at remote locations throughout northeastern Syria in support of Operation Inherent Resolve (OIR). During his initial OIR deployment in 2016, his Detachment conducted combat operations against ISIS that contributed to the seizure of Manbij, Syria, which removed a key ISIS center of gravity for launching attacks against the United States and its European allies. MSG Whitmore took the lessons he learned from this combat deployment, specifically, his experience in the coordination of multi-echelon fires, advising and maneuvering a partner force, and integrating new communication systems back to 5th Special Forces Group. He displayed adaptive thinking and flexibility by integrating these lessons learned into the Detachment's training over the next nine

months, and sharing them across the formation.

Over the next nine months, SFOD-A 5324 experienced a high turnover of personnel. MSG Whitmore stabilized his team and led them through a training plan that built tenacity in thought and action into each member of his Detachment. This training cycle concluded with the Detachment conducting pre-mission training at the Joint Readiness Training Center (JRTC), Fort Polk, Louisiana. MSG Whitmore planned and led a split-team nighttime high altitude, high opening infiltration into an unmarked, unknown drop zone that originated 20,000 feet above sea level. His split team then conducted four-days of special reconnaissance and close target reconnaissance of a battalion-sized objective, answering priority intelligence requirements while remaining undetected. After conducting link-up with the remainder of the company and partner forces, he assumed the role of assault force sergeant major, while his Detachment assumed the main effort role for the assault. His resilience and willingness to accept calculated risks earned MSG Whitmore's Detachment accolades from multiple JRTC advisors.

In the summer of 2017, MSG Whitmore led his Detachment through a second six-month deployment in support of OIR. MSG Whitmore personally briefed the US Central Command Commander, the US Special Operations Command Commander, and the Combined Joint Task Force - OIR Senior Enlisted Advisor on Special Forces operations. During the deployment, the Detachment promoted stability in northeastern Syria by training more than 2,000 internal security force soldiers and advising the nascent security apparatus within Raqqah Province. In November 2017, the Detachment and a contingent of Navy Explosive Ordinance Disposal

(NEOD) specialists began conducting a three-day clearance of a local Syrian Hospital to remove ISIS improvised explosive devices (IED) from the building. During the third day of operations, after the Detachment and NEOD had removed and disposed of nine IEDs and neutralized three

vehicle borne IEDs, an IED exploded, wounding the detachment's lead NEOD specialist, CPO Stacy Kenton. MSG Whitmore rushed into action, organizing the casualty evacuation, ensuring strict security, and preparing for movement out of the area. Despite the loss of a close friend and comrade to life threatening injuries, he pulled his team together and led them through the continuation of their mission.

The team redeployed to Fort Campbell, KY in February 2018. MSG Whitmore remained the pillar of strength as he led the Detachment through another six-month training cycle in preparation for the next deployment to OIR. He balanced the need for realistic training with the need to allow his Detachment to rest and recuperate from the last deployment. MSG Whitmore focused the Detachment's training on combat skills required to prosecute an irregular war in eastern Syria and focused on quality over quantity of training. By the summer of 2018, thanks to MSG Whitmore's guidance, the Detachment was among the best in 3rd Battalion, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and prepared for a third combat deployment in support of OIR.

In October 2018, MSG Whitmore's Detachment occupied a remote base in northeastern Syria under near daily threat of attack from ISIS indirect and small arms fire. During this deployment, a group of more than 100 heavily armed and organized ISIS fighters seized an opportunity during a sandstorm to cover and conceal their movement to launch a coordinated attack against the Detachment while the ODA supported

partner-force clearance operations. From the outset of the engagement, ISIS controlled the high-speed avenue of approach and used multiple vehicles to remain highly mobile in an attempt to fix and finish the Detachment. MSG Whitmore and the members of the Detachment rushed to an adjacent hilltop to suppress and repel the enemy attack in an attempt to disengage from the enemy assault. During the hour-long firefight, the enemy fire was so intense that the team expended every Carl Gustave 90mm-recoilless rifle round, 60mm mortar round, and every 40mm grenade. MSG Whitmore personally resupplied members of the team to maintain pressure on the enemy, updated the ground force commander on the enemy's composition, disposition, and strength, directed the treatment of a wounded Marine, and coordinated the retrograde of the force. MSG Whitmore's actions during the firefight directly contributed to saving lives. His calm levelheaded decision-making under enemy fire and his dedication to training the Detachment prior to the deployment made the difference on a day where the enemy had the tactical advantage but failed to achieve their objective. He fully embodies the ARSOF promise to "Protect the Nation, Without Fear, Without Fail, and Without Equal."





MSG Clyde F. Whitmore II 5 Point Summary For the MG (Ret.) JOHN K. SINGLAUB Award

- Over a 16-year career, MSG Whitmore has demonstrated the bravery, tenacity, thoughtful decision making, and integrity that are the hallmarks of the Special Forces Regiment and the Special Forces NCO corps.
- MSG Whitmore has deployed eleven times in support of contingency operations in the CENTCOM AOR, conducting tasks ranging from counter-terrorism to building partner force capacity.
- MSG Whitmore spent the last two years as the Operations Sergeant on SFOD-A 5324. He led his team through three, six-month, combat deployments in support of the Defeat-ISIS campaign. Senior leaders from across the Regiment, CJTF-OIR, and USCENTCOM, have sought his council for the ground truths that he consistently provides.
- In 2018, MSG Whitmore's SFOD-A came under intense attack during a four-day ISIS assault against Coalition and partner force positions. MSG Whitmore demonstrated his bravery, repeatedly engaging the enemy, coordinating counter-attacks, and orchestrating the defense of Coalition positions. His actions helped to minimize Coalition casualties and directly led to saving the lives of members of the Coalition.
- MSG Whitmore's focus on NCO development, building warfighting capability, and

sound council are without equal. Despite the grueling OPTEMPO of the past two years, he pushed his team to cross-train, develop new combat skills, and become adaptive, innovative thinkers. His tireless actions resulted in a Detachment ready for the perils of combat.