



### **A Special Operations Teammate**

On June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2003, Marine Corps Special Operations Detachment 1 (Det 1) was activated. The Program Director of Operations, then Staff Sergeant Jamey Slife was one of its founding members (Figure Above). Jamey and his teammates at Det One were hand selected from thousands of possible candidates. They were assessed on intelligence, physical and mental toughness, tactical and technical proficiency and personal character. Colonel Robert Coates, Det 1's Commanding Officer wanted "tough, rugged bastards." Jamey was further selected to be part of the forty-man assault force. Their primary mission was direct-action operations against high value enemy targets.

Det 1 had seven months to train before deploying to Iraq. It was brutally intense. Every Thursday morning, they would hike at least fifteen miles with a fifty- pound ruck-sack (backpack). At the conclusion of the hike, they would engage in various, physical team competitions. Their "workday" would begin upon completion. Each sailor and Marine conservatively shot one hundred thousand rounds of ammunition from both their



M-4 Carbine long rifles and Kimber .45 caliber special operations handguns. They would free fall jump out of airplanes at twenty- five thousand feet in the dark of night with a fifty to seventy- five pounds of combat equipment strapped to them. They would dive out of submarines and then kick- fin while pushing their packs and weapons in front of them over five miles to land. They would spend weeks in the forest or dessert living only off what they could carry or forage.

They pushed themselves past the point physical and mental failure. It was not only condoned but expected. They learned from each failure, becoming smarter, stronger, faster, tougher and more proficient.

We all fill one of two roles in our families, athletic teams, school groups or corporations; that of a Teammate or Team Leader. Regardless of the team or our title on it, we must be prepared to fulfill either role as injuries, lay-offs and numerous other circumstances might require us.

However, not every member of our team or organization is a leader nor do we need them to be. We don't need all forty Marines of the Det- 1 Assault Force to be leaders, nor a hundred leaders on a football team, fifteen leaders on a basketball team nor a thousand leaders in a manufacturing company. Sometimes Mom is in charge and sometimes Dad. We need a few great leaders certainly though. Then, we need warriors; a collection of great teammates to carry out the mission. Great teammates are held to two standards: meet the organization's standards and then hold teammates accountable to meeting them, as well.

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Some of the toughest and most courageous, dependable, and honorable men and women with whom we have had the pleasure of serving were not leaders. They were outstanding teammates and our teams could never have accomplished our missions, much less survived, without them.

Although very few missions in any military unit go exactly, "according to plan," many are completed without a major, unforeseen event occurring. This was true for Jamey and his Det 1 teammates, as well. The quality of the Marines selected for Det 1, their development throughout an incredibly intense training period prior to deployment and then an extreme focus on detailed planning for combat operations while in Iraq, ensured it. Det 1 conducted hundreds of successful missions that went if not exactly "according to plan," without major incident. One did not. . .



To find out what happens to The Program Director of Operations, Jamey Slife and his Det 1 Teammates, as well as to learn not only what it means to be a great teammate, but also how to develop them, buy The Program Book. Out Now!

**Eric Kapitulik & Jake MacDonald**

The Program

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