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OP-160 best view in Afghanistan

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ARGHANDAB, Afghanistan– Trudging up the steep incline carrying an M4 rifle and wearing a protective vest and kevlar helmet one starts to wonder why anyone would want to climb this mountain. But then, the summit is reached and the view of the Arghandab River valley is breath taking; the lush green valleys end only when they meet the backdrop of mountains and from this perspective the poor mud villages look quaint and picturesque.

Looking to the left on the very edge of the cliff is Observation Point-160, which is manned by the Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, and they have the best view in Afghanistan.

“It’s beautiful up here,” said Staff Sgt. Shelton Stansbury, noncommissioned officer in charge of OP-160. “You get to see a different perspective of a war torn country; you get to see the quietness and stillness of it.”

“Most people think this country is dirty and gross looking, but when you’re up here you can actually see the beauty of this place,” said Cpl. Christopher Gojdycz, a team leader with OP-160.

“It doesn’t feel real,” said Pfc. Joshua Witt, a communications specialist with OP-160. The Soldiers may have amazing views but they are defiantly not living a privileged life.

“You have your good days and bad days coming up (the mountain),” Gojdycz said.
“Depending on the supplies we have to carry up it can be tough.”

“The cases of MREs, cases of water and big stuff are air dropped in,” Stansbury said. “But most (everything else) we carried up. Anything we need to get us through the week we ruck up ourselves.”

“Not having any electricity and being that the generator is down they rely on two solar panels that charge the batteries for the radio systems,” said Sgt. 1st Class Cameron Davis, NCOIC for S1 who doesn’t work at OP-160 but likes to climb the mountain any chance he gets.

There are two teams of men who switch out every week and keep the operation running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Though it can be a tough OP to run, it is vital to operations in the Arghandab.

“If there is a foot patrol out and they can’t get a hold of battalion (on the other side of the mountain), we relay the message for them,” Witt said.

“We act as an over watch for any activity that goes on in the valley and a re-trans site for the battalion,” Stansbury added.

The official name of the post is OP-160 but the Soldiers have taken to calling it something else.

“We call it OP-Slap-shot,” Stansbury said. “I’m responsible for this mountain so I named it after the mascot of my favorite hockey team, a CL team from Fort Collins, Colorado. Because we own it we took pride over it and named it Slap-shot.”



OP-160

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ARGHANDAB, Afghanistan— On the edge of a cliff sits Observation Point-160 overlooking the Arghandab River valley. OP-160 is vital to the operations in the Arghandab River valley. The Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, who man the post, relay messages from one side of the mountain to the other and watch all activity within the valley. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ruth Pagan, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division PAO)



Toilet with a view

110920-A-VX278-002

ARGHANDAB, Afghanistan— Staff Sgt. Shelton Stansbury, the noncommissioned officer in charge of Observation Point-160, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, demonstrates the steps taken in order to utilize the facilities Sept. 20. OP-160 is at the top of a mountain in the middle of the Arghandab River valley and does not have modern day conveniences like electricity and indoor plumbing, but the view is unbeatable. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ruth Pagan, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division PAO)



Lookout

110920-A-VX278-003

ARGHANDAB, Afghanistan— Cpl. Christopher Gojdyz, a team leader at Observation Point-160, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, looks out over the Arghandab River Valley, Sept. 20. OP-160 is vital to the operations in the Arghandab River valley. The Soldiers who man the post relay messages from one side of the mountain to the other and watch all activity within the valley. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ruth Pagan, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division PAO)



Making coffee

110920-A-VX278-004

ARGHANDAB, Afghanistan— Pfc. Joshua Witt, a communications specialist for the Observation Point-160, from Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Battalion, 67th Armor Regiment, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division, pours a bottle of water to boil in order to make coffee Sept. 20. OP-160 is at the top of a mountain in the middle of the Arghandab River valley and does not have modern day conveniences like electricity and indoor plumbing, but the view is unbeatable. (U.S. Army photo by Sgt. Ruth Pagan, 2nd Brigade Combat Team, 4th Infantry Division PAO)