

Softball Association's Hall of Fame in Oklahoma City.

The first few years are the toughest according to Vidabel. "The fans and coaches will antagonize you," he said. "It takes a good three years before you gain their respect, or they will chase you away from the game."

Sometimes the players will come after you. Once he recalls getting knocked back by a pitcher's fastball. "If they think you are not calling the game right, some will try to hit you."

Police supervisor Charlie Pikas has been doing all local levels of baseball for the past 15 years. However, he won't do softball. "My son coaches softball at West High School and I don't want to cross paths to with him," adds Pikas.

He points out how sometimes the arguing is not always between the coaches and umpires. Sometimes the managers fight

among themselves. "The other evening I had a long 4-hour, extra inning game and the managers were yelling at each other. I just let them go." After doing little league officiating while his sons played, Distribution Facilities Specialist David Hernandez, sat out for a number of years, but started again this year. "I enjoyed doing it before," said Hernandez, "I'll do it this year and see if I want to continue. I like the challenge of making the right call. The players are giving it their best, they deserve the right call."

Material handler Robert Martinez is also in his first season doing high school softball. "The only other time I've officiated has been in front of the TV," he said. "I've played every sport, but I was never more scared than my first game umpiring," Martinez said. "They were calling me 'Blue' and I didn't even realize it was me they were talking to."

DDJC Supports Stryker Brigade Certification Exercise

In May, Defense Distribution Depot San Joaquin, CA (DDJC) built and transported seven Configured Loads (CLs) of essential supplies supporting the Stryker Brigade Certification Exercise held at the Joint Readiness Training Center, Ft Polk, LA. DDJC assembled the CLs, which included Class I (Meals-Ready-to-Eat and bottled water); Class III (petroleum products); and Class IV (barrier material).

The shipment was transported via DDJC trucks to Travis AFB and airlifted to Alexandria, LA. There a Stryker Brigade Logistics Unit transported the items to Ft Polk to meet the Required Delivery Date.



This Stryker Infantry Carrier Vehicle carries a nine-man squad and a crew of two. It is designed to enable the SBCT to maneuver more easily in close and urban terrain, while providing protection in open terrain. The 19-ton, armored vehicle can reach speeds in excess of 60 mph and comes in 10 different configurations. A total of 2,112 will be fielded to six SBCTs.

The air pallets contained a real-time satellite tracking system that provided visibility of the loads from the time they left DDJC until they were loaded on an aircraft.

The Stryker Brigade Combat Team (SBCT) is an infantry unit with 3,600 soldiers that uses technology to fill the operational



Motor Vehicle Operator Art Wilson tightens down configured loads headed for the Stryker Brigade Certification Exercise at Ft Polk, LA.

gap between the Army's heavy and light forces. The SBCT is a speedy, early entry force that would provide greater firepower, armored protection and ground mobility than exist in airborne or light infantry units. Unlike tanks and Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicles, the Stryker vehicles are small and light enough to fit on the Air Forces C-130 transport vehicles.

The first Stryker unit, the 3rd Brigade of the 2nd Infantry Division based at Ft Lewis, WA, concluded its certification exercise—Arrowhead Lighting II at the JRTC in May. As Stryker Brigade units fought the enemy in one region, they were engaged in civil-military operations elsewhere. The battlefield took on additional threats to include terrorists, car bombs, and sniper attacks as part of the contemporary operating environment.