Shatt al Hillah

AR RUMAYTHAH

Nu'man Bin Humud

Abbas al Hamadi

Mapping/Lives/Rekaart/NIMH

1 Football stadium (Camp ‘Sun City’)

2 New base camp Moegahjem al Salam
   Bravo Company NLBG

3 ICDC/ING barracks

4 Town council building

5 Police station

6 Town hall

7 Hospital

8 Water purification plant (old)

9 Water purification plant (new)

10 Fire station

11 Train station

12 Ambush 14-15 August 2004

13 Medina Mosque

14 Chicken market

15 City centre (roundabout)
Al Muthanna was the birthplace of the notion of a relatively subtle and allegedly successful ‘Dutch approach’ to stabilisation operations. (Photo: mcb)
From a British base in Kuwait Dutch troops head for Southern Iraq, 19 July 2003. (Photo: mcd)
‘Spot the difference’. Dutch policymakers emphasised the difference between the Dutch Stabilisation Force (SFIR) and the US occupation force, but for Iraqis it may have been difficult to tell a US Marine (left) apart from his Dutch colleague (right), As Samawah 31 July 2003. (Photo: MCD)

American troops hand over command to the Netherlands Battle Group (NLBG) in the presence of Iraqi officials, 31 July 2003. (Photo: MCD)
At Tallil Airbase near Nasiriyah, the crew of a Royal Netherlands Air Force Chinook helicopter prepares for take-off. (Photo: mcd)
Dutch forces raid the Al Khidr market in search of illegal weapons, September 2003. (Photo: mCD)

The lightly armoured wheeled Patria was the heaviest vehicle in the Dutch Battle group’s arsenal. (Photo: mCD)
Iraqi informants recognise one of the persons listed as a suspect during Operation Greenfield, a major raid on the As Samawah sheep and weapons market, 21 October 2003. (Photo: mcd)

Two of the eighty Iraqis arrested during Operation Greenfield, 21 October 2003. (Photo: mcd)
Sunrise over Camp Smitty, the Netherlands Battle Group’s main base just outside As Samawah. During the Summer of 2003, temperatures would often surpass 50 degrees Celsius. (Photo: MCD)
Governorate Coordinator Dick Andrews installs governor Mohammed al Hassani, who had been elected during a provincial level caucus procedure that became known in CPA circles as the ‘Al Muthanna model’, 18 October 2003. (Photo: MCD)
Iraqi police and Dutch Marechaussees (Military Police) inspect fuel distribution at a petrol station in As Samawah. (Photo: mcd)

Voting in El Sweir, December 2003. (Photo: Nicholas Blanford)
A Dutch Marine and a recruit from the Iraqi Civil Defence Corps (ICDC) on joint guard duty in As Samawah. (Photo: MCD)
A Dutch Marechaussee instructs local policemen during an arrest and self-defence course. (Photo: mcd)

Dutch platoon base Victoria was created on the edge of the desert town of As Salman as part of an effort to intercept possible terrorist infiltrations from Saudi Arabia, November 2003. (Photo: nimh)
Iraqi policemen are instructed in the use of their new Dutch-supplied Glock pistols. (Photo: mcd)

A Marechaussee inspects the As Samawah prison. (Photo: mcd)
Several hours before the ‘Eric O. incident’ (see page 118) two Marines hold a crowd at bay around Route Jackson, 27 December 2003. (Photo: NMBG)

A US soldier fires a smoke grenade in order to disperse looters looking for stranded supply-trucks around Route Jackson, November 2003. (Photo: MCD)
A Dutch Marine handles an Iraqi detainee directly after Operation Thunderstruck, 31 January 2003. (Photo: mcd)

A forced entry during Operation Gonzalo, 28 February 2004. What the Dutch battle group euphemistically called ‘Knock Talk Search’ operations were in fact often arrest operations, directly targeting criminal or insurgent groups. (Photo: mcd)
A Vehicle-Borne Improvised Explosive Device (IED) detonated near a US convoy in As Samawah on 31 May 2004. IEDs were a rare occurrence in Al Muthanna during 2003-2005. (Photo: MCB)
A Dutch-monitored patrol by the Iraqi Civil Defense Corps (icdc) in As Samawah, April 2004. (Photo: mcd)

A patrol in a Mercedes Benz all-terrain vehicle (mb) near As Samawah, July 2004. (Photo: mcd)
During the first Sadr revolt, Dutch troops intensified their weapons searches at mobile vehicle checkpoints such as these, 6 June 2004. (Photo: mcb)
During a patrol, a Dutch infantryman shows Iraqi children his skills in riding a bicycle. (Photo: mcd)

The CPA-building, here at the left of the As Samawah water tower, offered a vulnerable target for a possible attack during the two Sadr risings of 2004. (Photo: mcd)

NLBG Special Forces snipers in action, 15 May 2004. They intimidated Sadrist fighters with .50 calibre warning shots and thus helped prevent an armed take-over of Al Muthanna’s capital As Samawah. (Photo: kct)
The Dutch had their first fatal casualty on 10 May 2004, when a sergeant who was guarding the main bridge over the Euphrates river died as a result of injuries sustained during an attack using hand grenades. (Photo: mcd)

Dutch troops guard two Iraqis whom they caught transporting 107mm rockets in the boot of their vehicle, 24 April 2004. (Photo: nlbg)
Two of the total of six Dutch Apache attack helicopters that the Netherlands sent to Iraq after the first Sadr revolt hover over Camp Smitty. (Photo: mcd)

A 120mm mortar in action in Camp Smitty, As Samawah. (Photo: mcd)
CPA chief Paul Bremer sits next to governor Al Hassani during his visit to As Samawah on 17 June 2004. On the right is Commander 3 NLBG Lieutenant Colonel Van Harskamp. (Photo: mcd)

A local interpreter joins Dutch infantrymen on patrol in Ar Rumaythah, August 2004. (Photo: mcd)
On 14 August 2004, during the second Sadr revolt, the Dutch took their second deadly casualty during an ambush in Ar Rumaythah. MP-colleagues pay tribute to their fallen comrade as his coffin leaves Camp Smitty. (Photo: mcd)

A CMIC staff officer visits a renovated school in the village of El Sweir. (Photo: mcd)
After their more aloof stance in the wake of the transfer of sovereignty and the second Sadr revolt, the Dutch intensified their urban patrols late in 2004. (Photo: MCD)

Iraqis during the celebrations for the start of construction of the As Samawah circular road, 15 December 2003. (Photo: MCD)
Dutch troops unload their rifles upon their return to base after a patrol. (Photo: MCD)
Dutch Defence Minister Henk Kamp meets Provincial Chief of Police Kareem, January 2005. (Photo: mcd)

A Dutch patrol from 5 NLBG passes personnel from the tsu Emergency Battalion in As Samawah, January 2005. (Photo: mcd)
An Iraqi police officer searches those waiting in line to cast their votes, As Samawah, 30 January 2005. (Photo: mcd)
On patrol in Ar Rumaythah, January 2005. (Photo: mcd)