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Cowboys cheerleaders interact with U.S. Soldiers in Iraq

By Brian Hilderbrand, www.armedforcesbowl.com

Fort Worth, Texas, December 30, 2009 - Ally Traylor, a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader for three years, was having the time of her life Wednesday afternoon playing "Guitar Hero" with U.S. Soldiers from Iraq and Afghanistan via webcam.

Judging by the reaction of the troops who were taking part in the "Guitar Hero Challenge," which played out on a large-screen TV in the Armed Forces Insurance booth at the Armed Forces Adventure Area outside Amon G. Carter Stadium on the TCU campus, Traylor wasn't the only one having a blast.

Traylor was one of six Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders taking part in Fort Worth for the program that was administered by Pro vs. GI Joe, a nonprofit organization that provides troops serving all around the world with an opportunity to take on professional athletes and celebrities in head-to-head video game competitions.

"We normally do it with professional athletes but today we've got the Dallas Cowboys Cheerleaders," Greg Zinone, founder of Pro vs. GI Joe, said. "I've never seen troops overseas so excited. I have to thank AFI for bringing us down here because we wouldn't be here if it wasn't for them. This is one of our best events ever."

Traylor said it was important for her and five of her fellow Cowboys Cheerleaders to take part in the event, which was being held in conjunction with the Bell Helicopter Armed Forces Bowl.

"This is a very personal day for all of us because we actually have just been overseas, talking with our troops, interacting with them. We got to spend the holidays with them, so we know how important it is to be able to say thank you and interact with them and take their mind away from their everyday duties of keeping us safe here at home."

Traylor said she and the other Cowboys Cheerleaders jumped at the chance to take part in the "Guitar Hero Challenge" and any other event that involves U.S. troops.

"There are a lot of really cool things about being a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader but definitely being able to go overseas and meet with the troops and talk to them first-hand about their personal experiences about how they keep our nation safe day in and day out – literally a 24/7 job that takes a very special individual to do -- definitely ranks top 10 of everything we get to do. It's a lot of fun and we get to do some good.

"Being a Dallas Cowboys Cheerleader is all about being able to put smiles on faces, so for our troops we do anything we can."

The Armed Forces Adventure Area features booths from military branches and other corporate partners, as well as displays of military hardware and equipment. It is located outside of the main entrances of Amon G. Carter Stadium and will be open Thursday from 8:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.