

# Excalibur Round Debuts in Afghanistan

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Pvt. Corey Rodriguez pulls the lanyard on the M-777A2 during the first firing of the Army's new GPS-guided Excalibur Round Feb. 25 at Camp Blessing, Afghanistan. (U.S. Army Photo by )

KUNAR PROVINCE, Afghanistan (Army News Service, March 10, 2008) -Soldiers fired the first 155mm GPS-guided Excalibur artillery round in Afghanistan Feb. 25.

The GPS-guided Excalibur round was given the proper grid coordinate to seek out and destroy a target using the Enhanced Portable Inductive Artillery Fuse Setter by placing the system on the tip of the round and sending a digital message containing the coordinate for the round to find.

"The Excalibur round travels farther and is designed to hit targets that conventional ammo does not always hit," said Army Staff Sgt. Darius Scott of C Battery, 3rd Battalion, 321st Field Artillery Regiment.

The Excalibur was fired using the M-777A2 155mm howitzer. The M-777 is designed to be a digitally programmed weapon and is about 9,800 pounds lighter than the more commonly used M-198 Howitzer and is reportedly more accurate.

"The main purpose of the M-777A2 is that it is more able to help the units in the Korengal Valley by providing more timely and accurate fire," said Army Capt. Ryan Berdiner, 28, commander of C Battery, 3rd Bn., 321st FAR.

"By using the Excalibur, we are mitigating a lot of collateral damage that other rounds may cause," said Scott.

The test fire was deemed to be a success when word came back from the impact area that the Excalibur successfully completed its mission by finding and destroying the target at the provided grid coordinate.

(Sgt. Henry Selzer serves with 173rd Airborne Brigade Combat Team Public Affairs.)