

## Man survives two-day detainment by Iraqis



(AP) — Munitions expert Chad Hall returned to the United States on Monday after a "roller-coaster" two-day ordeal in custody in Iraq.

"You can't imagine how happy I am to be home," Hall said upon arrival at Washington's Dulles Airport. He was greeted by his wife Susie and sons Chad and Craig.

The 50-year-old Texan was captured at gunpoint Thursday afternoon in a disputed section of Kuwait's border with Iraq. The incident threatened to ignite a new confrontation between Baghdad and Washington only weeks before the U.S. presidential elections.

Iraq said the capture was due to confusion along the unmarked frontier and released Hall to U.N. custody in Baghdad on Saturday. He was flown to the U.N. border headquarters at Um Qasr for a medical examination Sunday before being escorted to the U.S. embassy in Kuwait.

Hall, who told reporters in Kuwait that he was not mistreated while being held, spoke of the "roller-coaster of feelings" he experienced when an Iraqi police major and army colonel seized him along the border.

"I realized I was in trouble when (the colonel) pulled a gun on me," he said.

Hall, a retired U.S. Army major who served in Vietnam, said

he succeeded in getting the Iraqis to release his Pakistani co-workers. But for him, he said, "it was a matter of either going or being shot."

Hall is a bomb-disposal expert working for Environmental Health Research and Testing out of Lexington, Ky. He was under contract to Kuwait's Ministry of Defense to remove munitions left from the Persian Gulf War.

Company officials said Hall was captured on the Kuwaiti side of a 15-kilometer-wide demilitarized zone running down the border. Iraq does not recognize the new border drawn up after the war, which shifts oil wells and farmland to Kuwait.

Hall said his Iraqi captors stuck guns in his rib cage and to his head as they led him away from the border and to various military outposts. The next day he was put in a red Fiat, told to put his head down, and driven north to Baghdad where he was issued a prison uniform.

"My heart dropped at that point because I thought I was in for a very long term in Iraq, based on what happened to the others," Hall said in Kuwait, referring to two Britons and three Swedes arrested in the disputed zone over the past three months. They all received seven-year prison terms for illegally entering the country.

## Bush wrong about Magic's record

WASHINGTON (AP) — Earvin "Magic" Johnson attended two meetings of the National Commission on AIDS. That's one more than all three members of the president's cabinet who have seats on the commission.

"We've been very disappointed," Carlton Lee, chief liaison officer of the commission, said of the cabinet secretaries' personal attendance record.

Lee said Monday that the biggest disappointment was Dr. Louis Sullivan, secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, who has attended only one of the commission's two dozen meetings since it was formed in 1989.

The attendance records became an issue during the first presidential debate Sunday night, when President Bush criticized Johnson's decision to resign from the commission and his poor attendance at the meetings.

The Lakers basketball star — who announced last year that he had HIV, the virus

that causes AIDS — resigned from the commission last month, saying the administration was not taking its work seriously enough.

"I was a little disappointed in Magic because he came to me and I said, 'Now, if you see something we're not doing, get a hold of me. Call me, let me know,'" Bush said Sunday. "He went to one meeting and then we heard that he was stepping down."

Bush was wrong.

"He says I only went to one meeting," Johnson said in an interview with KNBC-TV in Los Angeles. "He lied. I went to two meetings. I couldn't make the other ones because of scheduling problems. Of course they only had a couple more after that."

Lee confirmed Johnson's presence at two of the six meetings the commission held while Johnson was on the panel.

## Campus gunman confronts classmates

LINCOLN, Neb. (AP) — A University of Nebraska graduate student confronted about 20 classmates with a rifle Monday, but everyone escaped unharmed when the gun jammed, police said.

A student pushed a desk into the gunman after the gun failed to fire, knocking him into a corner so the others could get away, said campus Police Chief Ken Cauble.

The gunman gave no motive for his actions, witnesses and authorities said.

Lancaster County sheriff's deputies later arrested Arthur McElroy, 43, at his home in nearby Bennet. He was held for

investigation for making terroristic threats, false imprisonment and use of a firearm to commit a felony, Cauble said.

The .30-caliber carbine had a 30-bullet clip, and McElroy had another 30-round clip in his pocket, Cauble said.

The gun jammed when McElroy allegedly tried to advance a bullet into the rifle's firing chamber when another bullet was already in place.

Students in the class, which McElroy was enrolled in, threw themselves to the floor to avoid being shot.

"I'm just grateful that it didn't work," Cauble said. "It's a pretty helpless situation."

McElroy was a graduate of Rutgers University in New Jersey and received a law degree from the University of Nebraska in 1989, university Vice Chancellor James Griesen said.

He was considered a full-time student because he had enrolled in three classes, Griesen said.

Cauble said McElroy was described as a loner.

"Nobody had much to do with him, and it doesn't appear that he had any single student in mind as a victim," he said.

Student Patrick Causgrove of Nebraska City said the man didn't utter a word after the gun failed to fire.

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