

Londoner injured by bomb

Pte. Andrew Knisley has lost a leg and suffered a serious injury to an arm

By DALE CARRUTHERS, SPECIAL TO SUN MEDIA

A London soldier is being flown to Germany today to be treated in a military hospital for injuries caused by a roadside bomb in Afghanistan.

Pte. Andrew Knisley, 24, had his right leg amputated above the knee and has serious injuries to his right arm, his father Ken Knisley said last night.

The blast occurred Monday morning while Knisley was patrolling in the Panjwaii district, about 23 kilometres west of Kandahar, said a military official.

Knisley, a Central secondary school graduate, was stationed outside of Kandahar training Afghan police and army recruits.

Knisley's father was informed of his son's injury on Monday.

"Andrew always calls Sunday and he didn't call Sunday," Ken said. "So when I heard the phone ring, I thought, 'Oh my goodness, it's Andrew.'"

But the caller was an army officer who asked Ken to buzz him into the apartment building.

After getting dressed, Knisley opened the door to hear his son's fate.

"The first words out of the officer's mouth -- I'll never forget his face -- were, 'Your son is alive,'" he said.

The officer also told Knisley his son is being taken to Germany for medical treatment.

"With any luck, he'll be home this weekend," Knisley said.

"He's a strong person and he will get through this very well," the father said. "He's coming home with his arm on, so that's positive."

Andrew, whose grandfather served in the Second World War, has been serving in the army for nearly two years, his father said.

"He always had thoughts about going into the military. He always had a huge interest."

This isn't the first tragic connection London has to the war in Afghanistan. On Oct. 7, 2006, 39-year-old Trooper Mark Wilson was killed in a roadside bomb attack, becoming the first casualty from London.

Andrew's father said he is looking forward to seeing his son and telling him he loves him.

"He knew what he was getting into. He was living his life's dream. Unfortunately it was a short dream."



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