Yo-Yo rescue saves downed chop per crew

By SP4 William Hayes

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – Three occupants of a helicopter that crashed near Hiep Duc recently were rescued minutes after impact by a crew chief who leaped weaponless into a ring of fire from his aircraft as it hovered 15 feet above the crash scene.

Specialist Five Arnold C. Dietrich, of Nortonville, Kan., crew chief on a "Rattler" UH-1H of the 71st Aviation Company leaped from his seat to where the burning LOH of Division Artillery aviation section lay on a steeply-sloping hillside near LZ West.

The unarmed LOH had been attempting to extract wounded infantrymen from an LZ too small for a normal medevac helicopter. Heavy small arms fire tore into the ship as its pilot tried to gain altitude as he left the LZ. Fuel spilling from its ruptured fuel cells ignited, turning the aircraft into a ball of flames which quickly spread to the surrounding seven-foot high elephant grass.

Specialist Dietrich was the first to spot the pilot and artillery observer waving from the ground.

"We saw the fire, and right in the center I saw two people standing there waving. We couldn't set down–there were too many rocks and trees," said Specialist Dietrich.

The "Rattler" aircraft commander, Lieutenant Thomas V. Pratt, Ontario, Calif., acknowledged over the intercom what each man on board knew: "We've got to get in there and help them."

Over the intercom, somebody said, "I'll go."

"Without hesitating, Specialist Dietrich grabbed a hand radio and jumped out of the aircraft," said Captain R. J. Sienkiewicz of Gilbertsville, N.Y., the pitlot.

The door gunner, Specialist Four Harold E. Justice, Sylva, N.C., readied a McGuire rig the crew had used on a previous mission that day.

On the ground, Specialist Dietrich had already made contact with the pilot and helped him into the McGuire rig's leg and torso loops.

Once the first man was in the rig, Lieutenant Pratt ascended vertically, and when the dangling man had cleared all surrounding obstacles, made his first run toward nearby LZ West.

As the helicopter disappeared over the trees, the artillery observer showed Specialist Dietrich where a third man lay injured a short distance from the LOH wreckage.

Within minutes the helicopter returned and the second pilot was extracted. Again the chopper left, and Specialist Dietrich began to assess the third man's injuries. The other two had sustained minor injuries, but were able to move wihtout help.

Determining that he couldn't be slung as the others had been Specialist Dietrich decided to extract the third man using only the torso strap.

"I told him it would be uncomfortable, but it was the only way we could get him out," Specialist Dietrich said.

He had reported the extent of the man's injuries to the aircraft commander, who relayed to medical personnel on West. They

(continued on page 6)

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

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Weekly recap, 92 killed

Decrease in Division action

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) -- Action was light for the week as units of the Americal killed 92 of the enemy in numerous small engagements. The "Brave and Bold" of the 198th Infantry Brigade, in Operation Geneva Park killed 17 enemy soldiers and confiscated several weapons and munitions. The "Chargers" of the 196th Infantry Brigade, in Operation Frederick Hill claimed 41 of the enemy. Elsewhere in Operation Iron Mountain the "Jungle Warriors" of the 11th Infantry Brigade had a light week as they inflicted 10 casualties on the enemy.

Geneva Park

At the beginning of the week, Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry engaged six evading Viet Cong northwest of Quang Ngai. The "Ready Rifles" swept the area and found six field packs containing rice and food. Later while following a blood trail in the same area, Alpha found a large hooch containing an SKS rifle.

In the mountains west of Quang Ngai, Alpha Company observed and engaged six VC, killing one and capturing on AK-47 rifle, 200 pounds of rice, and seven hammocks. Later, Alpha spotted and undetermined number of VC approaching their night position. The infantrymen engaged the enemy, killing three.

Later in the afternoon the next day, Delta Company, 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry engaged an NVA element as the enemy approached their position west of Chu Lai. The "Professionals" swept the area and found four NVA killed.

The next day Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry found several tunnels well concealed by vegetation. The "Ready Rifles" searched the tunnels and found one rocket-propelled grenade round, 59 mortar rounds and four booster rounds.

Late in the week Delta Company, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry engaged and killed two VC in two separate skirmishes southeast of Chu Lai. Captured were an AK-47 rifle and two AK-47 magazines. Later the "Regulars" of Delta found one SKS rifle badly damaged by shrapnel. And finally, the infantrymen found the body of a VC who was determined to have been killed by gunships working the area two days prior.

Echo Recon, 1st Battalion, 52nd Infantry moving from their night position in early morning, received one rallier who led them to a structure where he said several VC were hiding. Just before reaching their objective, the men from the "Ready

(continued on page 6)

Camouflage fails five enemy

By SP4 Peter Sorensen

FSB BRONCO (11th INF BDE IO) – The enemy population of southern Quang Ngai Province is quickly learning that it must improve its camouflage techniques or face extinction at the hands of Promo, the 11th Infantry Brigade's aviation section. In two days of action southwest of Duc Pho, LOHs claimed five enemy dead. In three incidents the natural features of the terrain were not enough to conceal VC soldiers from the sharp-eyed birds of prey.

Working a visual reconnaissance mission for the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry, Chief Warrant Officer James M. Call, North Wilkesboro, N.C., was brought on station when larger gunships required the smaller helicopter to route out an armed VC who was evading along a heavily vegetated trail. The LOH layed down a heavy base of fire which halted the trapped soldier's progress. On a final pass CWO Call stopped the VC dead with a burst of mini-gun fire.

Five hours later in the same area, CWO Call added three more VC to the day's toll. Recounted the Army aviator, "I was on a visual reconnaissance mission when I spotted three VC evading toward a river. One apparently had been wounded in a previous action, for he was wearing a white bandage on his arm. They dove in and started swimming underwater. I guess they didn't think that we could see them underwater from the air, but that water was clear and I got all three with our mini-gun."

On the following day, Warrant Officer Gregory L. Latham, Woodland Hills, Calif., spotted an unlikely looking bush wearing a hat. Moving in, Primo doorgunner Specialist Four Frank R. Brown, Birmingham, Ala., killed the "bush" with his M-60 when it became apparent that the lively foliage had hit the ground and was crawling with an AK-47 clutched in one of its limbs.

It is generally known that camouflage improperly employed betrays rather than conceals. Local VC cadre evidently have not been stressing this point too strongly, but Promo has helpfully been driving the point home.

Strained activity marks the order to fire as these cannoneers bring smoke on the enemy. The crew is from Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 18th Artillery, at LZ Cindy.

Special R&R series, part 4

Hunting boar in Australia's 'outback'

Editor's Note: The following story was written by the Americal Information Office's News Chief, Staff Sergeant Tim Palmer. Sergeant Palmer recently spent four days of his Sydney R&R trip on an organized hunting expedition with High Country Safaris, an organization sponsored by Proscenia Tours Ltd. in Sydney. Similar trips are available to all R&R servicemen and may be arranged for through Proscenia Tours located in the lobby of the R&R hospitality suite in Sydney.

NYNGAN, AUSTRALIA (AMERICAL IO) – We left Sydney by light airplane at 7 a.m. Just the two of us had decided to make the trip to hunt wild boar in the vast "outback" plains of New South Wales, about 350 miles from the glitter and excitement of Sydney. My companion for the hunt was a young Marine captain.

After a two hour flight we arrived in the town of Nyngan, our guide for the hunt, Mr. Kevin Laughton met us as we deplaned with a hearty welcome - the first of many such receptions we encountered while in the country. He promptly loaded us into his crowded Land Rover and we were off, and then bounced our way across 50 miles of perfectly flat terrain to our base camp.

After unloading the Land Rover we gathered enough firewood to keep the old-fashioned wood burning stove happy when lunch time came, and then set to checking out our rifles and ammo for the first crack at the pigs. Kevin had told us that the largest he had ever bagged was a mean 525 pounder with nine and one-half inch tusks. As we drove off that first morning I was rather hoping to find something a little smaller to start with, and it wasn't long before we were rewarded.

There are two ways to hunt the big boars. You can either wait for them to appear in the open or flush them into the open and then take your shot from a distance with a high-powered rifle. Or you can go in after them in the high grass and hope your 12 guage shotgun reacts before the boar's powerful charge reaches you. The later method often involves shots from under ten feet and if you don't think that can get a little hairy try it sometime with a big ugly 300 pound tusker charging you!

But we went out with the big rifles that first day. The captain carried a .243 and I had a Winchester .270 with a 4X scope. We parked the Rover some distance from where Kevin figured we'd find the game and while my companion and I readied our positions he (Kevin) unhooked the Honda trailbike which he tows behind the Rover. The guide normally runs the bike through the high grass to flush the boars toward the hunters. As it turned out later we were all to see a little saddle time on the Honda, but that can be fun too. Especially when one of the big porkers decides to run at you instead of the other way. Talk about furious gear-grinding, the first time that happened I took off on that bike like Steve McQueen!

But back to the story. We got our pigs that afternoon. On the first sighting after about an hour's wait we spotted a pack of nine or ten grazing about 250 yards away. We got set quick and with the first squeeze I dropped the largest of the bunch, it turned out to be a sow weighing around 200 pounds. The captain wasn't far behind me and he got another big porker, also a sow, weighing only a little less. So we posed for the pictures with our first trophies smiling. Not bad for starters?

Well the day wore on and we had excellent hunting. About four o'clock in the afternoon we teamed up with the manager of the ranch we were hunting, a delightful World War II Spitfire pilot name Ian McKellar. Ian had the itch to do a little duck hunting so the four of us selected our shotguns and set off in Ian's station wagon.

Well we had fine shooting and had opportunities for many beautiful wing shots. The only problem was the length of time elapsed since my last Vermont duck hunt. I couldn't hit a thing, but did manage to down one big "blackie" and one smaller Teal, but must have used up 15 shells getting those two.

By the time we had finished darkness was approaching so we headed back to pick up the Rover where we had left it earlier and started back to the shack to get some dinner going.

In Kevin's "tuckabox" as he calls it, a huge provisions case which we had gruntingly unloaded earlier, we found countless canned goods along with a large plastic sack full of lamb chops and fresh beff suasage. Combined with 4 beautiful roast ducks we had quite a meal, all cooked by our guide, chef and local interpretor.

Sunrise found us shivering through a quick coffee before getting the early start after the boar. The second day went even better than the first. I addition to many successful pig shots we had occasion to observe from quite close; Kangaroo, Emu (Ostrich), and such a variety of birds that I wouldn't know where to begin in terms of classifying them. Thousands of parrots, quail, pidgeons, yaks and many others.

That night we ate a leisurely dinner of roast duck, beef sausage, and fresh flour and whipped egg omelets. After the cold water cleanup Kevin suggested we get in the Rover and try our hand at a little night time fox hunting. Fox hunting sounded good. Having never hunted fox nor seen many for that matter, I didn't have the slightest idea how we were to go about it.

By the time we left camp it was pitch dark, just shortly after eight. Kevin had told us that it was easy to spot the fox at night because their eyes were readily visible at a long distance. He was right again. It wasn't long before the Rover headlights were picking up bright sets of glassy eyes at regular intervals. When we were within 300 to 400 yards of one of these sets Kevin trained his home-made and quite efficient spotlight on the animal. Even at our distance of over 300 yards it was a beautiful sight; pitch blackness with only the lithe form of the red fox silouhetted in the glare of our spot.

At this point he quietly wheeled the Rover into a position parallel to our target so as to allow the big spare tire strapped to the hood to be used as a shooting rest. As I scrambled out to take position Kevin began blowing through what looked to be a bent beer can top. I later found out that was exactly what it was. The whistle lured the fox immediately and he began moving directly toward us at a cautious rate. So now we have old Mr. Red coming straight for us; bathed in light against a perfectly black background. But that long rifle shot still stood between me and the trophy, so I'm happy to report that the first squeeze from my supported position hit pay dirt and fox number one was down. Over 200 yards at night.

Our third and last, we thought, day started beautifully with the sun streaming into our shack at five. Though we didn't make it up right away due to a particularly long night of celebration toasts the evening before, we were out in the bush, fully fed and ready to go, by eight. Another fine day in the field though we knocked off early, about two because we had a few clean-up chores to attend to before starting out on the long ride to the airport for our 8 p.m. flight. On our way to the airport we stopped to have a pint and as one pint led on to another we never got to the airport but stayed over again and the following morning was pleasurably spent duck hunting. By 11 o'clock we were all packed up again and this time did make it to the airport in time, just barely. That two hour flight back to Sydney seemed awfully long after spending such an enjoyable four days in the Austrailian "outback."

(Above) High Country Safari's guide Kevin Laughton prepares to salvage a set of trophy tusks from a 200 pound wild boar. The Honda trailbike is used to flush the game out of the tall Austrailian grass. (Left) Staff Sergeant Palmer returns from an early morning duck hunt with a brace of "Blackies." (Photos by SSG Tim Palmer)

SOUTHERN CROSS
AMERICAL DIVISION

THE SOUTHERN CROSS is an authorized publication of the American Division Information Office for division units in the Republic of Vietnam. Opinions expressed are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army. Contributions are encouraged and may be sent to the Information Office, Americal Division, APO 96374. Tel: Chu Lai 2414. The editors reserve the right to edit all contributions.

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Country Fair brings Allied progress

Away from their village in the shadow of the Viet Cong frequented mountains, these Vietnamese are some of the 1,000 persons who for three days participated in Operation County Fair. Protected, fed and sheltered by American and GVN soldiers, the villagers found that GVN can treat them better than the Viet Cong. (Photo by SP4 William Hayes)

By SP4 Kenneth Perry

FSB 4-11 (11th INF BDE IO) – Supported by the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry, over 60 personnel from the National Police Field Force (NPFF) and two companies from the 30th Regional Force (RF) Group launched a two-day search and pacification operation in the Son Tinh district of the 11th Infantry Brigade.

The mission's two-fold purpose was to identify and detain suspected VC while rallying the people in support of the government. The former objective was of immediate importance and entailed a brief interrogation of the villagers, who had been directed to a nearby site, followed by a thorough search of the village. Since the latter goal was of long range significance, the principle efforts of the operation were directed toward providing the people with both information and services. Temporary shelters were provided, food and water were distributed and medical attention was made available through a joint Vietnamese-American MEDCAP. This approach, in addition to the festive atmosphere which it created resulted in the operation being tagged, "Country Fair."

Early one morning companies from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry and the 30th RF Group moved into position to secure the area around the hamlets, Minh Than One and Two. Shortly afterwards, Sergeant Pedro Cruz, Guanica, P.R., and his squad of six engineers from Company C, 26th Engineers began sweeping with mine detectors the site selected for the "Country fair." Their intensive search, conducted over an area 400 square yards, uncovered a booby-trapped 82mm mortar round which was immediately destroyed.

Later that day, a partial search of the village conducted by NPFF teams revealed false floors in some of the hooches as well as several tunnels. The following day, the NPFF teams, assisted by Company B, two scout dog teams, and the squad of engineers uncovered three 55 gallon drums of rice and one 55 gallon drum of maize.

During the two day period, over 300 villagers were screened by Vietnamese military intelligence teams. Out of these there were 22 VCS and five VCI detained. In all, there were 1000 people, mostly women and children, involved in the operation. With the aid of a public address system, an entertainment format was utilized to broadcast messages encouraging the people to denounce the VC and come to the support of their government. A PSYOPS team including several projectionists provided equipment and assistance to the operation as well as pro-government movies. Although the long range effect of such activity may be difficult to determine, its immediate impact encouraged two VC to rally.

It was primarily the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry's responsibility to provide logistical support as well as security for the operation. Before noon of the first day, personnel of the support platoon from FSB 4-11 had stockpiled 400 cases of C-rations, 500 pounds of polished rice, and 2000 gallons of water. In addition, nine general purpose tents, several generators and numerous medical supplies were delivered. The people had brought nearly all of their possessions which included cooking utensils as well as livestock.

Six Vietnamese medical personnel, the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry's sergeon, Captain Kenyon Kuglar, Kansas City, assisted by four US medics and First Lieutenant James W. Randall, Chamberlin, S.D., of the Medical Service Corps treated 105 villagers during the operation. The Vietnamese personnel handled most of the routine cases which consisted primarily of skin disorders and infections, referring the more serious patients to the US staff.

Five medical evacuations were necessary. One of these was instrumental in saving the life of a 17 year-old girl who had suffered severe miltiple fragmentation wounds to the back after having tripped a booby-trap. Commenting upon the overall success of the MEDCAP, Lieutenant Randall said, "The working relationship between the Vietnamese and American medical personnel brought about a more effective patient treatment.

Kham Duc commo link installed

By SGT Bob Nordyke

LZ HAWK HILL (196th INF BDE IO) – Communications experts from the communications platoon, 196th Infantry Brigade overcame distance, mountains and bad guys to install a multisystem communications network linking brigade headquarters on LZ Hawk Hill to Kham Duc airstrip, 13 miles east of the Laotian border.

The system, operational in three days, was completed in its final complex form in five days, providing both secure and clear communications to higher headquarters.

The towering mountains surrounding the Kham Duc airstrip presented the major problem. Most Army radios are FM, meaning they transmit radio signals in relatively straight lines which can be blocked when traveling over rugged terrain.

The solution at Kham Duc was found through aerial and map reconnaissance. A deep gorge in the mountains was so situated that radio waves could pass through it on a straight line from the top of the ARVN-American command post at Kham Duc, LZ Kala, to another 196th Infantry Brigade fire base, LZ Center. From Center the signal could easily be relayed to Hawk Hill.

From there on, the mission rested with logistic support and the proficiency of the commo personnel.

The three-man commo team, headed by Sergeant Frank Myers, Greenville, Pa., arrived at Kham Duc late the first day of the operation with 700 pounds of equipment.

"We got to Kham Duc about 8:30 that first night," recalled Sergeant Myers. "We were dropped at the side of the runway and just started digging; we were just guarding the perimeter that night."

Early the next morning, the team was lifted to the top of LZ Kala.

For the first three days of the operation, the commo relay was made through airplanes circling Kham Duc 24 hours.

After the third day the relay through LZ Center was operational, and after the fifth day of the operation, the RATT (radio-teletype) system was working.

The remainder of the crew's stay at the outpost was spent connecting all command posts at Kham Duc to the commo net with land wire lines and training radio operators from the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry, to take over the set-up.

Kham Duc exemplifies the capabilities of the brigade communications men. Similar systems have been installed as the 196th moves to new locations to engage the enemy, including three new firebases--Mary Ann, Prep, and Mellon.

Viets get high school

By PFC Guy Winkler

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – A high school for Vietnamese students is presently being constructed at Duc My through contributions from the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry and 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry of the 11th Infantry Brigade. The school will hold 100 students when completed.

Chaplain (CPT) G. K. Norton, battalion chaplain for the 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry is the special project officer for the construction of the school. He says that the students are now having to walk to Mo Duc which is about six miles away. He says, "We have set a goal of $2,300 to pay for the school. The labor will cost $1,300 and the rest of the money will be used as needed. So far we've raised close to $1,400 through the Chaplain Fund Council."

Chaplain Norton says that the material needed to build the school has largely been donated from various sources and that much of it has been "scrounged." He says that thus far, the men from the Brigade have managed to get 285 bags of cement and three truck loads of sand from Quang Ngai. He says, "Without the contribution of this material, the school would cost in the neighborhood of $7,000."

The school will be sponsored through the Christian and Missionary Alliance connected with the Protestant Church and will be supervised by the World Vision, a missionary group that works in the orient.

Chaplain Norton says, "We are in need of wood and other construction equipment. Anyone who wishes to help may call S-1 Puncher (rear) at Duc Pho and leave his name and telephone number where he can be contracted and we'll get ahold him."

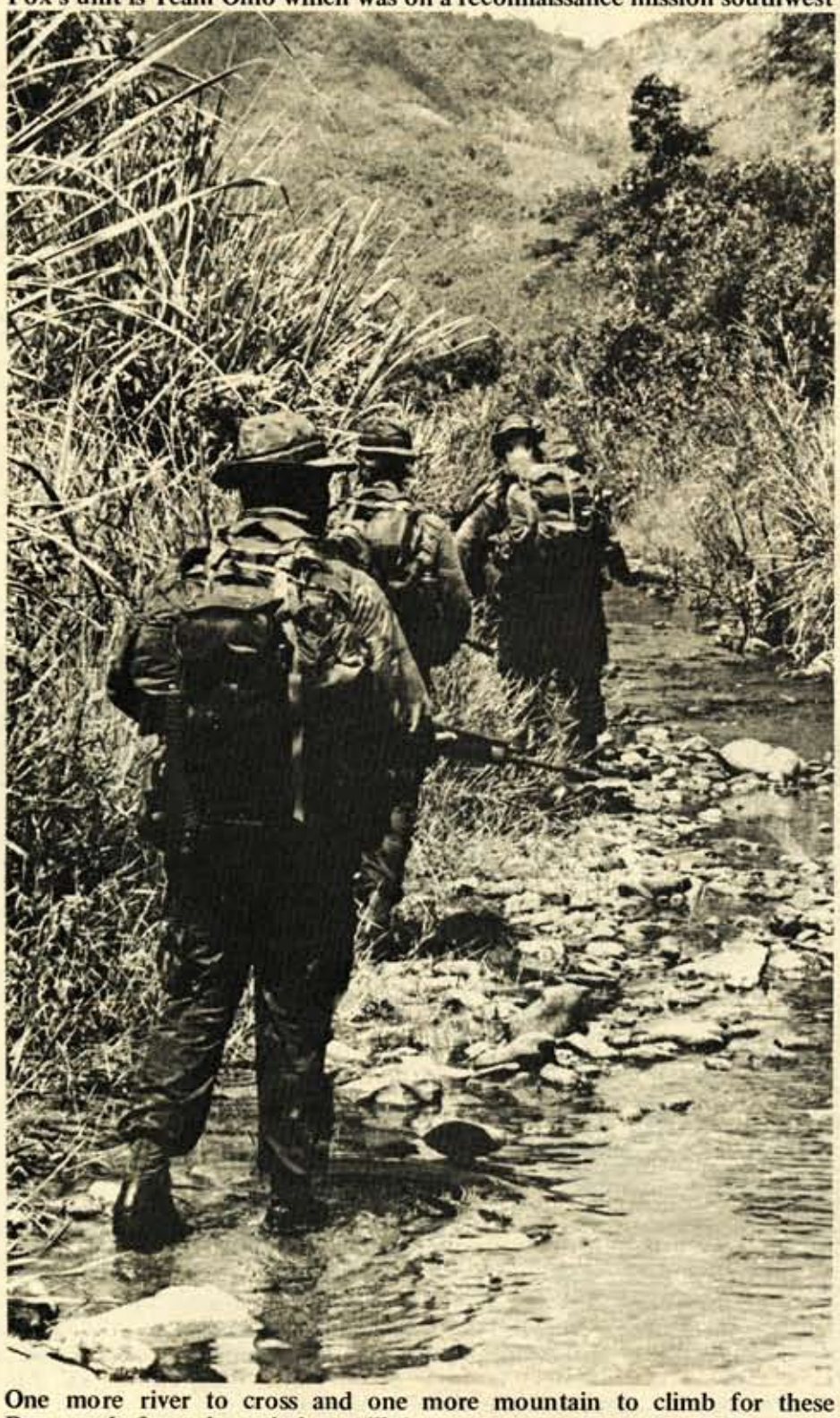
Chaplain Norton says, "We yet do not know where all of the material is going to come from, but with God's help and through the efforts of the two battalions, we know that the job will be done."

Having adopted these infantrymen of the 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, this Vietnamese couple show their hospitality in daily preparation of the evening meal of rice, vegetables and C-rations. The 11th Infantry Brigade infantrymen involved in an intensive pacification effort, quickly adapted to the use of chopsticks.

(Photo by CPT Terry N. Thrasher)

G Co, Rangers are the eyes of the America

Sergeant Johny Fox, Ogden, Utah, provides security for the rest of men while they cross the open stream bed. Sergeant Fox's unit is Team Ohio which was on a reconnaissance mission southwest of Chu Lai.



One more river to cross and one more mountain to climb for these Rangers before the mission will be over; or maybe two. Besides the elements of nature the Rangers always must be alert and spot the enemy before he spots them. His life depends on it.

Photo by SP4
Brad Mandel
G Co, 75th Inf

Staff Sergeant Robert Hamm
watchful eye out as he bri
Ohio of G Company, (
operations southwest of Chu

Private First Class James A. Novis, Temple City, Calif., takes advantage of
stomach with a package of LRRP rations. Private Novis is with Team Michiga

ond, Yucaipa, Calif., keeps a
gs up rear security for Team
Rangers) 75th Infantry on
Lai.

break to fill the void in his
of the Rangers.

Team leader of Team Ohio, Staff Sergeant John W. Sausville, Bennington, Ver., never lets his guard down as he takes five to cool off from the noon day heat. The team operates throughout the division AO out of its base in Chu Lai.

Team members of Team Ohio cautiously cross a stream as they continue their game of hide and seek with the enemy. The Rangers serve as the division's eyes in remote areas where concentrations of the enemy is suspected.

1st-46th Inf uncovers 1300 pounds of food

(continued from page 1)

Rifles" received small arms fire and saw three VC evading from the structure. The infantrymen returned fire, killing one.

Later, an element of H Troop, 17th Cavalry observed and engaged four VC moving south of Chu Lai. The troopers killed two and captured one pack.

Frederick Hill

The "Gimlets" of the 3rd Battalion, 21st Infantry maintained their productive pace for the week, beginning with Company A finding a grave with one VC killed. The kill was credited to C Company in a contact they had two earlier.

By mid-week most "Gimlet" units had made their mark on the enemy. With small arms fire Company B engaged a lone VC while on sweep northwest of Tam Ky. The wounded VC was evacuated to Chu Lai for medical attention.

After being fired on by Company B an NVA quickly surrendered and was extracted for questioning.

Taking their share of action the Recon platoon killed three NVA with small arms fire in the triple canopy jungle northwest of Tam Ky.

Also that day a "Charger" light observation helicopter while on a visual reconnaissance mission called in fire on an NVA who was trying to hide in a spider hole. Alpha Battery, 3rd Battalion, 82 Artillery completed the mission.

Elsewhere in the 196th Infantry Brigade AO infantrymen from Company C, 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry showed their concern to keep Charlie slim and trim when they confiscated 800 pounds of rice and 500 pounds of corn in a shelter southwest of Tam Ky.

While on a visual reconnaissance mission Helix 17 observed 3 enemy soldiers trying to hide in a bomb crater southwest of Tam Ky. Rockets were fired into the crater killing two of the VC while the third escaped into a nearby woodline.

Operating west of Tam Ky Recon platoon of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Infantry found two NVA bodies that were credited to the gunships of the 71st Aviation Company.

Iron Mountain

Early in the week the "Always First " of Delta Company, 3rd Battalion, 1st Infantry netted two VC in a stay behind ambush at their old night laager in the lowlands northwest of Duc Pho.

While working in the lowlands northwest of Duc Pho in the middle of the week Alpha Company discovered a hooch which was being used as a booby trap factory. Found in the hooch were chisels, scrap metal, shrapnel, files and artillery casings.

The next day Alpha Company observed three to four VC evading in the same area. The resulting contact with the enemy produced one VC killed and another wounded and detained.

Early in the week while operating in the mountainous terrain southwest of Duc Pho, Delta Company, 4th Battalion, 3rd Infantry discovered an enemy sapper school. The area consisted of classrooms, benches and barb wire. The enemy facility was destroyed by the "Old Guard."

The next day Bravo Company, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry engaged three to four VC while patrolling in the lowlands north of Duc Pho. The ensuing fire fight, which saw "Shark" gunships from the 174th Aviation Company called to station, resulted in one Viet Cong killed and another wounded and detained.

Later in the week while sweeping an area in the lowlands northwest of Duc Pho Alpha Company and E Troop, 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry found four graves containing the bodies of VC soldiers. Credit for the enemy kills was given to Charlie Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd Artillery.

This 196th Infantry Brigade soldier is calling in for further instructions as his platoon begins search and clear operations west of Tam Ky.

Infantryman's bluff pays off

FSB LIZ (11th INF BDE IO) – Private First Class Danny Garcia, Santurce, P.R., of Company D, 1st Battalion, 20th Infantry, 11th Infantry Brigade proved that he is one of the division's best showmen. He recently gave the performance of his life on the Gaza Strip, ten miles north of Duc Pho.

The search started after the battalion commander, Lieutenant Colonel Gordon P. Lynch, Warwick, R.I., spotted seven enemy soldiers with weapons and packs from his helicopter. Colonel Lynch had been visiting Delta Company's day laager position and was being flown back to this firebase. Captain David Jones, Garden City, N.Y., the company commander, immediately organized a four element sweep of the area.

Private Garcia, a grenadier from the third squad of the first platoon, momentarily separated from his squad to check a thick hedgerow. He fired one round from his M-79 into a distant woodline where he heard movement. He started to reload his single shot weapon while walking, but only had time to remove the expended shell when he almost stepped on a hiding NVA soldier.

The guerrilla jumped up and pointed his AK-47 assault rifle directly at Private Garcia's head. In less than a split second Private Garcia snapped shut the breech of his empty weapon and pointed it at the enemy soldier. He then used what little Vietnamese he knew and exclaimed. "You no chieu hoi I crocodile you." The bluff worked! The bewildered guerrilla dropped his rifle and raised his hands. Private Garcia snatched up the rifle. Later he said he was the happiest soldier in Vietnam, especially when he noticed that the selector switch of the AK-47 was on automatic.

"My heart felt like it dropped a foot," said Private Garcia. "I was surprised and too scared to think of anything, but God told me what to say."

Private Garcia strongly expressed his desire to use an M-16 the next time he goes on a sweep because he feels he has used up all the luck in his single shot M-79.

The Judge gets a 'standown' rest

By PFC Ed Breidenbach

CHU LAI (AMERICAL IO) – This is an exclusive interview with "The Judge" of the 1st Squadron, 1st Cavalry. Some of them might remember "The Judge" which to the Army is just another tank.

To a group of guys who drove him he was a welcome home on wheels. All the evidence of home are on him. Take for instance the candy wrappers and the newspapers from home. A connection with the good old life is what keeps men alive at times.

Presently "The Judge" is enjoying a rest in a kind of "stand down" for tracked vehicles. Maybe he is just in for repairs, perhaps an overhaul, although his bullet wounds don't appear to be that devastating. Whatever the symptom, there is a special look about him that portrays the fact that he has character and was busy proving it when nature called for a time out.

Although "The Judge" is in from the field he is still outfitted for his task. An example is the storage collar screen girdling most of his 360 degree neck. All shapes and sizes of ammo boxes, flares and other implements of war are there. On the deck under his pride lie many spent cartridges in oily dirt and sand. His tracks and wheels that give him go and make people say, "here comes 'da judge," are dried in mud from the quagmire on the way back. Poor fella could use a shower but he'll have to wait his turn. The asphalt looking stuff in his tread is missing in spots.

But up on top three quarters of the way up the antenna is the reason he's over here. The flag is very tattered and torn and in that way looks like part of his soul. But he's still all there. Soon he'll be humping again.

This MEDEVAC helicopter from the Americal stands ready for casualty evacuation from units operating near the Kham Duc runway. The runway was recently reopened after two years of enemy control. (Photo by SSG Tim Palmer)

Copter crew rescue

(continued from page 1)

warned that the man should not be moved. A ground rescue party was sent down toward the crash site but ran into heavy small arms fire from enemy positions between them and Specialist Dietrich.

Again the chopper returned, and by now the fiercely burning grass had almost engulfed the two men. As the third man was readied for extraction, the rotor wash from the hovering ship was the only thing saving the two men from the flames.

"Lieutenant Pratt did a fantastic job, keeping the aircraft aloft in all the turbulence from the fire. We had numerous blade strikes, but he kept his cool and stayed with it," Captain Sienkiewicz said.

When the ship left for the third time, Specialist Dietrich was alone–really alone. Again, the gunships had stayed with the helicopter leaving him without air support. Uphill from the crash, the rescue group from West was still in enemy contact, and to the downhill side were the enemy gunners who shot down the LOH.

Weaponless, he hid between the rocks until he could hear the ship approaching, then he ran into the open and stepped into the dangling loops.

"All that was left of the LOH by this time was ashes and a four-foot section of the tail," Specialist Dietrich said.

Within minutes, Specialist Dietrich was back on West, rejoining his ship and crew after his half hour among the flames.

The mail that you're sending home now days is being slowed down a bit. Yes it no longer goes by air once it hits stateside; instead, it goes by first class handling. Now if this puts a kink in your style or you have something that just has to get through in a hurry, just stick an airmail stamp on it and you're in like Flynn.

Blue Ghosts destroy NVA standown area

By CPT David W. Owen

CHU LAI (16th CAG IO) – Picture Corporal Nguyen Van Dong of the Second NVA Division standing back admiring his recently finished camouflaged hootch, one of over a hundred he and the other members of his unit just finished constructing in a canopied jungle area about 14 miles southwest of LZ Mary Ann in the southwestern reaches of the 196th Infantry Brigade's AO.

"After all these months of being exposed to the elements and the harrassment of Allied attacks, ambushes, artillery fires and airstrikes it will be nice to be able to refit and rest," muses Nguyen.

Nguyen's thoughts are suddenly interrupted by a high pitched drone which he immediately recognizes as the sound of a rapidly approaching light observation helicopter flying low level. Nguyen makes no attempt to retrieve his weapon which is in the hooch because his unit is under strict orders not to fire at enemy helicopters lest they betray the location of the base camp.

Through a hole in the trees he catches a glimpse of a death's head painted on the bubble of the LOH as it speeds by and spots two Cobras and a Huey circling overhead. Nguyen recognizes an old foe, the "Blue Ghosts" of F Troop, 8th Cavalry. He is cheering himself with the thought that today "Blue Ghost" will present no problem when once again the LOH streaks over his location. This time he hears a muffled crack followed by the sound of something falling through the trees. A small gray cannister trailing yellow smoke finally tumbles through the branches and comes to rest at his feet. The next sound, is the ear splitting crack of 2.75 inch rockets passing through the sound barrier as they race to a deadly rendezvous with the yellow smoke.

For Nyugen the war is over and for his comrades-in-arms the first rockets and yellow smoke marked the beginning of an afternoon of hell filled with 2.75 inch rockets, 20mm cannon rounds, 500 pound bombs, napalm cans, plus 155mm and 175mm artillery rounds.

The initiators of this holocaust were CW02 Robert Drury, Oconomowoc, Wis., the "Blue Ghost" team leader, and WO1 Phillip Weiland, Orchard Lake, Mich..

"Once we were aware of the magnitude of the base area and finally began taking heavy fire out of it, we realized it was a target for "fast-movers" and contacted Helix (forward air controller)," recalls CW02 Drury. "We stayed on station and after each set of fighters dropped their ordnance, we went back in and did a bomb assessment and marked new targets for the next set. It went on like this all day long; I was really beat when we finally broke station for Chu Lai."

Beat the "Blue Ghosts" were. But nowhere near as beat as the former residents of the by then smoldering base camp.

(By SP4 Joel Andrewjeski)

Divarty LOHs provide link for Div fire support bases

By SP5 Rush Wood

CHU LAI (DIVARTY IO) – With some 35 fire support bases distributed about over the Division's area of operations, the Division's artillery must depend upon an intricate and efficient aviation system to consolidate, coordinate and control all aerial resupply and troop movement.

The artillery aviation section ably meets the task of providing aviation support to its headquarters, the six artillery battalions, the one air defense battery (Quad 50) and the radar detachments.

There are OH-6 helicopters (LOHs) at the direct disposal of the aviation section commander Captain Robert G. Tetu Jr.

These light observation helicopters are used primarily for flying visual reconnaissance, transporting commanders, staffs, troops and supplies in support of combat operation. This machine, which is minute in size in comparison to the larger UH-lH or the giant double rotored Chinook, is capable of carrying three passengers in addition to the pilot.

Although there are no UH-lH or Chinook crafts attached directly to the artillery aviation section, it remains the section's responsibility to coordinate the scheduling of the resupply hops made by these helicopters to the various fire bases each day.

Operating over an immense territory that stretches from FSB Charlie Brown some 10 miles south of Duc Pho northward to FSB Hawk Hill some 30 miles north of Chu Lai and extending inland as far west as the recently established fire base at Kham Duc only some 10 miles from the Laotian border, the artillery aviators are kept quite busy making their daily rounds.

A glance at the log books reveals that the artillery aviators average approximately 45-50 blade-hours per day, and Captain Tetu proudly points to his section's distinction of having won the Americal Division's Air Safety Award in nine of the last 12 months.

Newly assigned pilots must undergo a training and transition period, normally two weeks in length, to acquaint the aviators with the characteristics of the OH-6A as most pilots have not had previous training on this specific craft.

"A LOH pilot is kept quite busy," explained Captain Tetu, "simply because there is no one to help him. He must rely solely upon his own abilities and resources."

The LOH craft, which has a maximum gross weight of 2,400 pounds, normally cruises at 85-90 knots, and the pilots fly most routine missions at an altitude of 1,500 feet.

"If we get lower than that for any length of time, we're apt to get shot at," warned Captain Tetu. "However, the LOH is known for its crash resistance.

Among the enlisted men attached to the artillery aviation section are the crew chiefs or door gunners.

The possibility of encountering enemy sniper fire is not the only hazard that faces the artillery aviator in his daily routine.

"One of the biggest dangers is avoiding the other aircraft," the captain admitted. "This is because the LOH is such a small craft that coming near a larger one would shake it considerably."

Add to all this the danger of flying the OH-6A in turbulent or rainy weather, and it can easily be understood that the task of consolidating, coordinating and controling all aerial resupply and troop movement for Divarty is indeed intricate.

3 day refit for infantrymen

By SP4 Terry Williamson

CHU LAI (198th INF BDE IO) – How would you like three carefree days on the Chu Lai beach with your own hooch, refrigerator, and all the food and drinks that you can handle? That is exactly what infantrymen of the 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, 198th Infantry Brigade receive when they are selected Soldier of the Month.

Bravo Company has set the pace thus far by winning the coveted prize all three times it has been offered, and so far has dominated the special hooch on the beach which is just for the winner of the monthly contest.

Command Sergeant Major Lorenzo DeLeon, Corpus Christi, Tex., of 5th Battalion, 46th Infantry, originated the idea for the contest as an effort to help troop morale and to give a deserving individual a break from the rigors of patrolling the rice paddies.

The winner resides in his own beach front hooch for three days and can have anything he wants to eat, providing it can be procured at the messhall.

Each company sends a candidate before a special Soldier of the Month Board which is comprised of the sergeant major and any available first sergeants from the battalion. The session is conducted much like a promotion board.

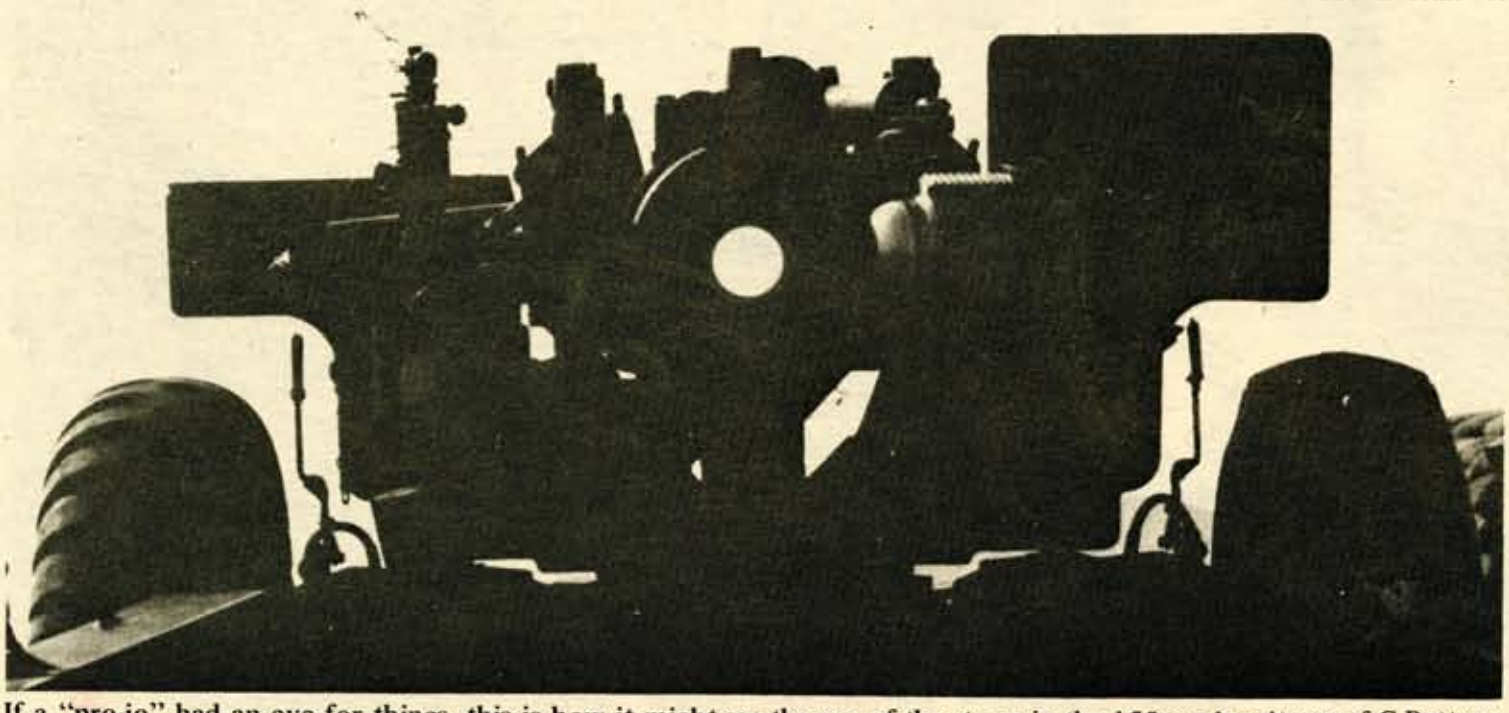
Questions asked include chain of command, current events, basic tactical problems and the history of the battalion. Competition is limited to field troops.

The first three winners were Sergeant Terry W. Clements, Carbon Hill, Ala., Specialist Four Donald J. Neuworth, Chicago, Ill., and Specialist Four Douglas A. Torrey, Worthington, Mass.

"I really like the whole idea," said Specialist Neuworth. "They even let you pick the three days of the month that you want."

"I just cooked steaks, swam in the ocean, and got plenty of sleep with no one bothering me the whole time," said Specialist Torrey.

Even though Bravo Company has swept the event in the first three outings, you can bet that other infantrymen in the battalion are preparing for a battle royale.



If a "pro-jo" had an eye for things, this is how it might see the eye of the storm in the 155mm howitzers of C Battery, 1st Battalion, 82nd Artillery. (Photo by PFC Robert J. Smith)