

TULLY

JUNGLE WARFARE TRAINING

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The First Division Tropical Training Centre (TTC) was formed on 1 February 1980 with the role of teaching the skills and techniques of operating in a jungle environment. It is located near the town of Tully and enjoys one of the highest rainfalls in Australia.

2/4 RAR was the first unit to undergo training at Tully, with companies going through by platoons and later in the year reinforcements going through in composite platoons. The training at Tully was extremely valuable in helping to restore the skills of jungle operations which have been largely neglected in recent years.

The TTC concept of operation is based on a skeleton permanent staff augmented by selected instructors from throughout 1st Division.



Members of C Company preparing an air marking balloon for receipt of an air drop at Tully.

The Concept of Training

The training was essentially at section and platoon level with individual soldier skills receiving maximum attention. The course was conducted using a progressive series of activities commencing with the basics, then adding further elements. This continued to a stage where the platoon, operating on an entity, practised all aspects of jungle warfare in the various phases of war.



Members of A Company doing their route march to the Tully camp.

The Tully Camp Phase

Training at Tully commenced with a 10 kilometre route march from a vehicle drop-off point to the Tully camp. This introduction immediately set the theme of team work and effort which was to be a requirement for successful completion of the training.

Following the march, each platoon commenced three days of basic training which encompassed revision of the basics such as fire and movement, scouting and grenade throwing.

This phase also incorporated the practice of orders for NCO's and an interesting segment on ambushing with all soldiers producing an ambush plan. This phase left all participants with a thirst to get on with the ten day exercise out in the jungle.

The Jungle Phase

The initial deployment into the jungle gave the soldiers and the section commanders the opportunity to practice a wide range of skills and to use their initiative.

Platoon attacks and ambushes followed and this opened a great many eyes to the difficulty of finding out exactly what was happening and where.

The relief in place and defence was particularly interesting, mainly due to the weather and nature of defence in the jungle. The defence emphasized the



An air drop from a Caribou.

difficulty of maintaining personal dignity and therefore morale in the quagmire of red sticky mud that quickly developed with the incessant wet weather.

The jungle phase culminated with close reconnaissance of a position and a deliberate attack followed by a withdrawal.

To round off this phase, a sharp forced march, 14 kilometres back to the Tully camp, worked up an excellent appetite for a fresh meal and a couple of quiet beers.

The Environment

It quickly became obvious to all who went to Tully that the weather, the vegetation, the constantly wet feet, the incessant insects, the scratches that became infected overnight and the quick rotting of equipment can quickly reduce the effectiveness of the soldier in the jungle.



Corporal G.R. Thompson (A Company) fording a river during training at Tully.

The basic drills and skills of the soldier remain similar to those used in other types of country, but it is the team work and spirit of the soldier, the section and the platoon in overcoming jungle conditions and living with it instead of fighting it that will allow them to operate effectively in the jungle.

Conclusion

The TTC aimed to teach the skills and techniques of operating in a jungle environment. This aim was achieved in a fitting conclusion to the Individual Training Phase of the year. Praise must go to the dedicated and knowledgeable staff of TTC, but most must go to the soldiers of the Battalion who overcame all obstacles to return a creditable performance in this valuable part of the years training.



Private S.D. Murphy (A Company) during a pause whilst on patrol.

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