

RECONNAISSANCE & SURVEILLANCE PLATOON

1994 has been a unique and varied year for Reconnaissance and Surveillance Platoon. Despite all good intentions of providing patrol commanders with opportunities to revise and practice SOPs in February, manpower shortages, equipment breakdown and external commitments meant that much of this training never eventuated. The marching of 4 new patrolmen to increase the size of each patrol to 5 men came as a welcome surprise from the CO and the Platoon deployed on Exercise Angel Trump from 7-11 Mar 94, enjoying the pleasures of High Range Training Area and Mt Spec for a week.

Sniper Cell conducted yet another successful pre-selection in late March, identifying 3 potential snipers to attend the Selection Course in Singleton in November. This was followed by another few weeks of patrol level training in barracks which saw the return of Aps and Newts from the SASR Cadre Course due to injury. Members of the Platoon performed well in the Battalion Cross Country in May prior to the deployment of the whole Platoon to High Range Training Area in support of Exercise Redback. This exercise provided some excellent training for Surveillance Section at Fire Support Base Barbara and also taught the patrol commanders the importance of having a good comms plan prior to entering the Impact Sector.

The beginning of June saw the departure of SGT Stanton to Operations Cell and the news of the success of Matt and Slam on the SASR Cadre Course. A large percentage of the Platoon travelled to Mt Vince with the remainder of the Company prior to attempting to conduct some pre-Military Skills training between displays, sport and a series of other commitments. Congratulations must go to Dog Murrells and his section on winning both the Champion Section and Obstacle Course Trophies and to all members of the Platoon who put in a 100% effort despite being asked to perform out-of-role tasks during the competition.

The Military Skills period was followed by the deployment of 11 members of the Platoon on Exercise Pacific Bond, the promotion of Stodds to CPL, Gratts marching in as the Sniper LCPL, and Battalion RDF check and battle procedure for Exercise Maxi Beagle. The boys once again performed well on the exercise, providing timely advice to the companies and conducting some excellent work with 162 Reconnaissance Squadron in the Star/Bluewater area for 2 days. The performance of the patrols in support of the Battalion attack was excellent, seeing an extraordinarily large amount of information being

sent back to OA via Platoon Headquarters. As a result, despite some concerns regarding the new VHF Raven, the exercise proved to be an enjoyable and successful one for all.

On return from Exercise Maxi Beagle, the Platoon lost the services of SGT Galloway, Rocket, Browny, Levs and Keepy to Operation Tamar and shortly thereafter, the Boss to the position of Second-in-Command Admin Company. With few members of the Platoon left on the ground, it fell to Watsy to become OC Recon and Torro the Platoon SGT as the boys prepared to provide reinforcements to B and D Companies for Exercise Swift Eagle. Then, in all of this, despite a lack of numbers, Jacko Malone led the Recon section representing the Battalion in the Commanders Trophy Obstacle Course Competition to the fastest time over the course, only to see the trophy awarded to 3 Brigade Administrative Support Battalion due to highly controversial time penalty being awarded against Jacko's section.

As the training year draws to a close, 1RAR has taken on the responsibility for running the first combined Basic Recon Course for many years. However, 2/4 RAR will still have the responsibility for running the Basic Surveillance Course in November as well as conducting a shortened Sniper pre-selection in October in order to prepare more members of the Battalion for the Selection Course in November.

The Platoon wishes all the best to Torro, Dog, Jacko, Marchy and Troy as they head off on civvie street. We also bid farewell to SGTs Galloway and O'Connor and welcome LT Curtis as Officer Commanding Recon in 1995.

In closing, I would like to personally thank all those members of the Platoon with whom I have worked in the last 2 years for making it an interesting, challenging and (largely) enjoyable time. Particular thanks goes to SGTs Moore, O'Connor, Galloway and Stanton as well as Torro, Marry and Watsy for their enthusiasm and absolute determination to get the job done (albeit not by the most conventional methods in some cases) as quickly and efficiently as possible.

All the best to all the best in 1995.

FO.FE.B.A.!!!!!!!

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Recon Platoon 94



*Jacko Malones section for the
Commanders Trophy Obstacle Course
Competition*



CPL Marr RECON Maxi Beagle 1994