

# ASSAULT PIONEER PLATOON

As usual the year started off with everyone back at work with nothing to show in their wallets, and a keenness to renew our skills. It was an auspicious start for Assault Pioneer Platoon after tendering for, and being rewarded the contract to construct two footbridges at 5 Aviation Regiment. A simple enough task that stopped and started thru-out the year due to exceptional administration constraints i.e. - the 'sods neglected to order the timber in advance. Apparently it was still growing in a field down in Rockhampton --- OUTSTANDING!!!

After dispatching Greeny and his boys off to New Zealand early in February the remainder of the Platoon wandered off to the picturesque Wild Horse Sector to carry out The Pioneer urge to destroy all manner of inanimate objects in the form of high explosive placed in cunning positions. A good week in which old skills were practised and improved. OLD JUNGLE SAYING --- Always take sheet explosive and a socket set to Dems 2 you never know what you may find there.

Watermanship is a skill that should be practised regularly or at least once a week and early in March the Platoon ventured to Cowley Beach to do just that. Rough weather conditions tested skills and boats providing a launching pad for our more adventurous operators. A mixture of speed, excitement, and of course perceived fear especially when JJ or Seagull were driving, ended up in the odd out of body experience and plenty of nervous energy.

Eventually the time came to practice a slice of our favourite and yours Combat Construction. Exercise Sitting Duck with our unmentionable comrades (not), in Engineers who believed that their way was the right way and all inferiors should be forced to endure a living hell to prove it. After locating a suitable piece of High Range Training Area we set about to turn it into the seventh level of hell. Late at night when the dogs howl and bay at the moon the sound of generators and plant could be heard as the chain gangs toiled on into the night attempting to produce a suitable target for our brothers in arms in the RAAF.

After four weeks of ceaseless toil the Army was surplus one by Base, Fire Support and Patrolling. Fire Support Base Barbara or Bastard Base to those who experienced the drama. After the RAAF had completed playing with our minds Pioneers returned to the scene of their greatest torment to provide work parties to the rifle companies and sentries for the various ranges on the Live Fire

Exercise. Throw in the odd bit of battle noise simulation and the obligatory bangalores in the wire and it was situation normal for the Platoon. A brief respite was offered when Support Company commenced its annual pilgrimage to the holy land of Mt Vince. Astounding feats of marksmanship saw the Company return with a strangle hold on the Battalion Shooting trophy.

Maxi Beagle offered the Platoon the chance to construct a command post our way, however due to unspeakable acts thinly disguised as appeasing the Engineers, we were forced to hand over our pride and joy lovingly crafted into being in the confines of the Pioneer yard; the Operational command post. The Engineers happily reminded us on numerous occasions that they were the Technical Experts. It resembled a famous Italian tower once they were complete. After much sweating, swearing and manipulation the Platoon produced a functional command post complete with bomb proof entrance least the Battalion was ever deployed to Bosnia, where we have it on good authority they are all the rage.

The Platoon, after digging down to Stage Two redeployed to D Company to become Callsign 4-4 and were used surprise, surprise in something resembling our role instead of Rifle Company fillins. Mixed in between all of this excitement the Platoon managed to win the Military Skills competition and was named the Champion Platoon for 1994. Well done to all on that one.

On Swift Eagle we unswore our loyalty to the Queen and swapped our shirts for Kamarian Raiders to fight the Fascist imperialist Australians. After becoming Naval Commandos and successfully blowing the Weipa bridge the politically correct umpires declared the bridge undamaged and clear for use! Two Kiwas and a Land Rover later we became a reincarnation of Platoon Bravo Two Zero and engaged in mortal combat against the bullet proof Infantry Combat Badge of the First Battalion.

With no course to run this year the remainder will be spent on a short demolitions, watermanship, field engineering and an adventure training exercise on Palm Island.

RCCADTE



*Pioneers at home.*



*Constructing Fire Support Base Barbara*



*PTEs Cook, Jones, Wilson & Redlich on Exercise Red Back*



*Watermanship Training*