

Charlie Company

C Coy arrived back from leave in January 1989 to face the challenges of the year ahead. New commanders, ranging from the OC to most of the section commanders, were ready to strut their stuff.

The company has worked hard and performed well in areas as varied as Tully, High Range, Northern Australia and aboard HMAS Tobruk. Highlights of the year include:

- second (only just!) in the *Mil Skills Competition*;
- first in Rugby, the Cross Country, Squash and lots of other things;
- first (until the relays) in the Athletics;
- the Coy Cricket team winning its first game in living memory;
- Coy HQ having the highest body count on K89; and
- forward run-downs during rapelling training.

C Coy has had a large turnover of soldiers this year – until the end of September, 48 had marched into the Company. Not quite so many have left, going to other companies, other units, other corps and of course other jobs! We wish all those who have left all the best and look forward to crossing paths with them in the future.

While the rest of the battalion is winding down towards Christmas leave this year C Coy is winding up for Rear Details. To the rest of the battalion, sleep well on leave because the country is in good hands! 1989 has proved to be a challenge to us all – if only in endurance to keep going. C Coy looks forward to 1990 and will approach it in the same manner but always remembering to "Stay Loose".



OC C Coy with 2IC and Umpire on K89

7 Platoon

1989 started with only half the original platoon. The numbers however, were soon boosted with the arrival of two new lids, FNGLT "Powy's" and Sgt "I'm going fishing" Macrae.

The excitement of being back from leave was soon enhanced as we were told that the company was off to Tully.

The lids were put in their place as the lads kept reminding them of "the times in the Malaysian Jungle back in '88".

Pte Scholz, ex Alpha, ex Recon, demonstrated his bayonet fighting skill by thrusting the cold steel of his bayonet into human flesh, the only problem was it was his own foot.

By the end of Tully 7 Platoon had proved themselves, with 3 sect being best section. We also found out that this new FNGLT was going to be hard to break in.

Next was the training for *Mil Skills* in which we discovered Cpl Dean Linton's navigation skills. "If there's a hill walk over it". During the water crossing the soldiers found it was easier to water-ski across.

All of a sudden *Mil Skills* was on us. The members of 7 Platoon must have taken it too lightly as this year only 3 sect made it into the top 10 coming 6th. LCpl Ross made the Pl proud by being selected for the Duke of Gloucester Cup Squad.

The next major event was *Scorpion Sting* in which we found out that most APC's float (Don't tell the Government otherwise they will scrap the Tobruk). Also found out that APC's are good for trimming trees. Pte Maher excelled himself by exiting the APC under fire with his Bren Gun stripped. He only lost half the pieces. When the Platoon was waiting to be deployed south of Charters Towers we were taught by the Boss in the use of the PAL as a Cache Destroying Laser.

Now that *Scorpion Sting* was over we had training for *K89* at HRTA. The Platoon was under the experienced command of LCpl MacGregor,

with LCpl Bowman as P1 Sgt. The Platoon got into some very important training "how to hide from the hierarchy". During the night attack "Bazza" Ferris and Pte "Minda" Maher were mentioned in dispatches. They were last seen running into the scrub with their Mag 58's blazing at the retreating enemy.

7 Platoon's next exciting adventure was *K89*. We set off on the Tobruk for a cruise around the Barrier Reef, Gulf of Carpentaria and Timor Sea. 2 Sect took out the *Amphibious Skills Competition* but the only amphibious thing about it was that we were standing on a ship.

Into the exercise 7 Platoon held the record for VCP's and for least amount of enemy sighted. Finally it looked like we were going into the thick of things with the airmobile insertion by Blackhawks into Ngukurr Mission. The only problem occurred when 2 Section's Chopper got lost over Roper Bar and took a SAM 7 up the rear.

Back at Ngukurr Mission we developed our own crowd control against the indigenous children - feed them cam covered hexamine tablets.

Special mention for *K89* goes to Pte Allie who was bitten by a poisonous clayton snake and then had a UD in front of the entire brigade. Well done Pte Allie!! We also had the opportunity to have a Pommy Officer in charge of the Platoon for a day. We still believe he was really South African as the gun arcs he gave us tended to point at the local inhabitants.

Finally the 9th Sep rolled up and for 3 members of the Pl there was an opportunity for a cultural exchange in Thailand. Meanwhile back in Australia Pte Ferris and Pte Carran decided to stay in Canberra for an extra week to help celebrate the Raiders win, but too bad lads you missed out on the rapelling. During the week we also managed to get a bit of Scuba Diving done. So hopefully next year 7 Platoon will be used for airmobile/underwater operations.

Now that the years coming to an end we say goodbye to Sgt Ian Macrae who is heading down to Canberra to make 7 Platoon famous in the Army Newspaper.

8 Platoon



LCpl Marr at Roger Bar

Well, the year began painfully, with many a sorry face regretting the fact that they were back, although intense volleyball training soon had us all back to peak fitness.

Then, before we knew it, the spectre that is Tully was upon us and off we went. Tully once again lived up to it's reputation of being one of the wettest places on earth. When asked on what he thought of Tully, a new "lid", Jim Easton replied "I NEVER WANT TO GO BACK TO THAT PLACE AGAIN!!"

Easter Standown was gratefully received and gave the Pl the chance to replenish the booze which had been sweated out at Tully.

Battalion Air Week came which saw the Gurkha's playing enemy, or did they? Unfortunately for the fighting 8 Pl and fortunately for the Gurkhas we rarely encountered them. A memorable moment was when Cpl Kelly was seen to sprint 35 metres in his sleeping bag when confronted by a stalking corpse in the middle of the night! What instincts!

With *Battalion Military Skills* coming up only a week away, an inter platoon night navex was thought to be a good training run and away 8 Platoon went showing their navigation prowess (ha ha).

Then it was on again for *Mil Skills 89*, a pretty tough but interesting one at that. The two sections, 4 section and 6 section led by Cpl's Kelly and Armstrong came in 3rd and 6th respectively earning 8 Pl the honour of being the champion rifle platoon of the Battalion. An excellent effort fellas considering the amount of new guys that had just arrived from Singo.

Before we could allow our legs to stretch and fitness dwindle, 8 Pl was off again on *Exercise Scorpion Sting* and *Live Fire Week*. Gerber probably won't forget the walk back to his sleeping bag from gun picquet.

Next came the Battalion boxing night and "The Fighting Eight" entered some hard nuts by the

nuts by the names of Eddie "Mr Magoo" McKellar, "Chesty" James and Todd Gerber. Anyhow the night was a big success and the boys all did well with Pte Gerber winning his fight. "Magoo" McKellar's opponent was almost scared out of the ring when old Magoo turned up sporting a freshly shaved head that would have scared the wits out of God himself!

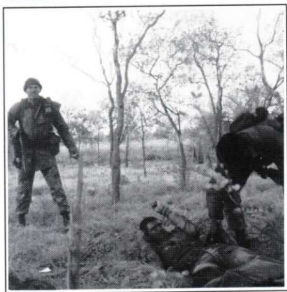
K89. Well it finally happened. The exercise to end all exercises (hopefully) began for Charlie Company with a week long pleasure cruise up around the Cape on the HMAS Tobruk. It was a really good experience for all and a good start to the exercise. Then it was the usual hurry up and wait with a few really good chopper rides thrown in. The attack on Moline Mine was the highlight of the trip for 8 Platoon. Interesting was Cpl Kelly's, Pte Bird's and Pte Walsh's SAS style attack on a lone sniper on a crusher tower. It was a success but Pte Walsh was "killed" for the 3rd time of the exercise, much to his anger with a particular DS.

Four weeks later it was all over bar the shouting and we were flown home victorious by the Flying Kangaroo.

Standown followed with the boys going their separate ways back to families, girlfriends or just the pub. After standown with eyeballs still hanging out of sockets, the platoon went through the intensive touch footy phase and then it was on to the Battalion Swimming Carnival with Pte 'Arfer' Harris showing his mettle in all his events. Well done to Matrix for trying, but don't bother coming back next year!! Ha ha.

Well, as everyone knows, all good stories must come to an end and at the time of writing, 8 Pl are quietly "resting" and awaiting the beginning of the Battalion Courses.

P.S.: when the word "resting" is mentioned above, it means resting or recovering from unarmed combat lessons!!



Sgt Holmes, Pte Bird & Enemy

9 Platoon

The first bush trip of 1989 for 9 Pl was an enemy trip for 102 Fd Workshop. This was quite an interesting adventure. Cpl MacLean and section spent two weeks training and harassing the "pogoes", playing "World Series Baseball" at High Range in their spare time. The short Ex culminated with the En assaulting the 102 position. "Flight of the Valkeries" thumped from a rock box as the En inflicted 55 KIA (including CHQ) with only 6 En killed.

March was soon upon us and with it came "Tully", always memorable but even more so this year with:

- Pte Lloyd taken out with blood poisoning after finding the barbed wire on the Obstacle Course;
- Pte Yorke setting off a trip flare early in the morning during battle admin, the result – Pte Yorke caught with his pants down, outside the Perimeter without webbing or rifle. The CO enjoyed the fireworks!!
- Cpl MacLean, after being bitten by ants, to Pte Pettingill, "Gasp, pant, can't breathe, got a durry?" – He was stretchered out;
- Pl Comd, Pte Meyer, Pte Stoddart and LCpl Weir return from tracking course in Malaysia and hurry to Tully to rejoin the Pl. Bad luck boys;
- Pte Murphy sets off red smoke in his basic pouch on the 5km Forced March.

Our next adventure was the *Battalion Bush Week "Bangalore Hardknuckle"* was captured early in *Exercise Scorpion Sting* by the C Coy Pl Commanders. He was caught in a compromising situation in a female sympathizer's safe house. The capture was made illegal due to political back biting in the higher ranks and he was set free. 9 Pl suffered heavy casualties during the *Exercise*. The Pl was tasked to clear an enemy feature. Bn Int reported 3-5 En dug in. On dismounting from APC's, 9 Pl encountered a further 19 En. The platoon conducted a cluster formation attack in all directions, with the firefight lasting 1 hour. When the smoke cleared, 9 Pl suffered 10 KIA, 2 WIA and Lt "Bullet Proof" Braithwaite KIA twice. One APC was also destroyed. The enemy lost 23 KIA. LCpl Fotheringham took command of what was left of the platoon. This contact effectively struck 9 Pl off the Coy ORBAT.

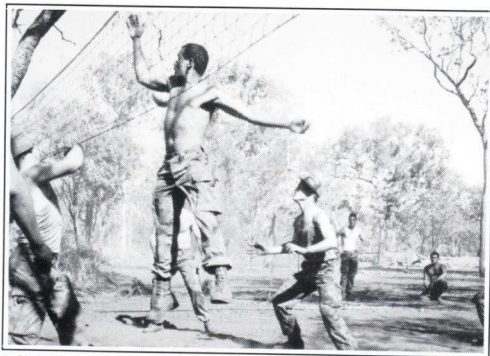
Ex K89 was the Pl's last major event, and we got off to a good start with a seven day cruise on HMAS Tobruk – Beer and Deck Games were the order of the week. Once in our AO, things really deteriorated. Contacts for 9 Pl were as follows:

Week 1 – nil

Week 2 – nil

Week 3 – day 6, 9 Pl contacts D Coy, result 9 Pl – 4 KIA, D Coy 5 KIA. Sorry Delta.

Farewell and good luck to all those who have departed during the year.



Volleyball on K89