

EXERCISE EL ALAMEIN — 11-29 FEBRUARY 80

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B Company with Mortar Platoon were off to Exercise El Alamein. The aim of the Exercise was:

To show some of the organizations, equipment, tactics and techniques used by selected units of the Infantry Division, which are employed in support of the Division. However, B Company's aim was much simpler than that. We were to prove once again that the Infantry Corps is inherently superior to all other Corps. The aim was achieved.

The contingent departed Townsville on 11 February 80 for the dubious pleasure of Puckapunyal.



B Company 'enjoying' RAAF comfort enroute to Puckapunyal.

The flight by C130 was long and noisy and arrival at Pucka was not made any happier on sighting the accommodation. which to put it mildly, was pretty poor. The soldiers' canteen was dismal and it says much for the soldiers that they did not allow the living conditions to affect their attitude to the job at hand.

The first week was allotted for rehearsals. The main problem was the tinder dry condition of the range, and as soon as we fired the range came alight. So we waited ... fired again, the range burnt again, we waited...waited...waited...

Finally, the big day and everybody was ready to get on with the job and as quickly as possible. But would we be allowed to fire? So we waited ... and yes!! the show was to go on!!! The demonstrations went smoothly enough although fire restrictions forced the reverse slope demonstration to be conducted without live firing. The main demonstration achieved the aim with good demonstrations by all Corps. The RAAF unfortunately missed the hill. The infantry demonstration was effective with the sniper and anti-armour segments being especially well received. Mortars demonstrated their devastating effectiveness although we were not sure where they were firing from until the dust cleared. The demonstration of Infantry Platoon Weapons was

carried out with precision and accuracy against some very life-like enemy targets.

After the demonstration, a quick restoration of the range, two nights in Melbourne, and then onto the C130 and home. It was a tired but satisfied group that returned to Townsville knowing they had done a good job in very trying circumstances.



Pte Scheepers and Pte Thatcher firing the GPMG from a reverse slope position during rehearsals for the fire power demonstration.



A troop of tanks from 1 Armoured Regiment engaging 'enemy' targets.