

2 PLATOON

1984 began for 2 PI with rear details, courses and a new PI Sergeant (not necessarily in that order). Some of the older faces such as Swampy Hindmarsh, and Leon Helmrich had left us, but we were joined by others such as Sgt Steve Howe, Greg Barnsley and Steve Hart.

Training began with a section attending FFBS Tully with the A Coy reinforcement Platoon. 2 PI distinguished itself with a certain soldier who 'borrowed' a unit landrover and scored 168 hours for his efforts (no names, no packdrill).

The Platoon began to train as a whole for the first time at Mt. Vince with Sgt Howe holding the reins. The week of shooting was interspersed by such old favourites as the 30km route march (or was it 34km?).

Our first major tactical exercise for the year was Exercise Winton Run. This was the first time that many of the Platoon had experienced APC work, and it was certainly an experience. It was a classic case of short bursts of high intensity attacks and assaults followed by long bouts of rattling in a tin box. After 10 or so days in an APC, even a walk was a welcome change. The most memorable part of the exercise was the radio chatter. Such gems were heard as:

- "Contact BMW wait out",
- "I am @!%c&* speechless", and
- "12 this is 10, you are following the wrong star".

The BDE exercise "Spartan Challenge" followed immediately after our armoured experience. The 90 or so kilometres covered were not easy, but 2 PI distinguished itself as being the only Platoon to complete the exercise with its original complement.

The first half year's training concluded with A Coy's live firing exercise at High Range. It was notable in that no-one got shot and that our command detonated trip flare would not detonate during the Platoon ambush. Extra training required in trip flare erection!

Exercise Northern Warrior ended the years training cycle. It was a big event, (even our sportsmen attended). Once again 2 Platoon managed to conduct a months training with only three enemy contacts and one cut parachute.

2 Platoon was required to protect CHQ from the ravages of modern warfare, during the first part of the exercise, so it was a welcome change to work independently in the "J" at Paluma. This close country phase will be remembered largely for Sgt Howe's lack of success in inflating a first generation marker balloon.

The years training concluded with the absence of major dramas. It has also seen Cpl Les Lindgren moving to Spt Coy and being replaced by Cpl Mark Chester. The emphasis now is preparing for Malaysia 84/85. Howe will we do it?

OC 2 PL



Howe's Marauders in the "J".

3 PLATOON

1984 began in early Feb for a small contingent of 3 PI. They spent 13 beautiful days holidaying in FFBS. Floatation was required to remain in ambushes, the obstacle course was a challenge, as you could not see the obstacles! The remainder of 3 PI had trivial little tasks back at Lavarack like Subject Courses. The start of 1984 did not look bright, however March opened doors for this glorious high spirited PI. We zoomed off to HRTA as enemy for Jezzine Barracks (Army Reserve). This exercise provided humour of a different nature — instead of being laughed at we were doing the laughing!

Characters — Psycho, feared by all because anyone who carries five knives you don't argue with or call a bluff. Then again with Psycho you couldn't argue with because he "no understand". Then there was Lt Bosi as "Mr. War", and not forgetting "Birby" who carried two packs, and a radio, whilst using a gun on the run — he always travels light!

Due to our kill record, A Coy drifted off to Mt. Vince for our annual shoot. All was seen to be fine until a night stroll was sprung upon us. Still recovering from Mt. Vince A Coy went west on dreaded "Eat and Run". Confused and cramped we still performed well. Hour after hour saw us cramped in those 4'x3' "Tucker Boxes". On the command 'Ramps Down' - the response was no surprise as soldiers trickled out like the water pressure back at Lavarack. For a laugh the CQ Staff Krenke was there! Like APC's you could always hear him before you saw him. But like all good things — it came to an end.

On return we commenced Spartan Challenge (Lost Soldier). This separated the men from the boys. After the first 2 days we were over the cramps and heat and started enjoying the walk. Lucky for us because we still had 60km to go!

There was no time to become slack between exercises and before long we were off to High Range for a week of live fire section attacks, and as Pte Douglas pointed out — orders in the attack fell on deaf ears! All sections blasted their way through to a high standard and the night ambush, like Stiletto's, went off with a bang! Standown followed, as rest to recover was required most urgently!

Adventure training for some of 3 PI was conducted up North at "Burketown". The women there were almost as big as the hills. Oh yes, that's what the Coy was doing, chasing scrub bulls — strange, (sounds like a bull story to me).

On return to Lavarack a welcome rest was in store for A Coy — Mil skills! Oh what the hell, what's a few days of running, shooting, and drill to a soldier!!

Once the easy part of the year's training was over it was time to get down to real soldiering, Exercise Northern Warrior (Northern Rush). 3 PI walked its way through the phase rather easily, except for our new boss. He didn't (and still doesn't), know who to believe or rely on as most of 3 PI are easy to work with except the 3 section commanders and 2IC's.

Patrols, digging and ambushes were highlights of phase 1. Phase 2 provided 3 PI with a chance to destroy the 1 PI command structure by ambushing them, an incident thoroughly enjoyed by the lads.

Quotable quotes for the year:

- "I've got a top fire pos' over here" (Birt everytime the shooting started),
- "Lucky you had an I.A. or I'd be dead!" (Williams - fire and manoeuvring through an enemy pit),
- "Wait - wait - wait - wait out" (19),
- "Don't joke this is not funny" (Lt Bosi in a serious mood).



Sgt Hughes, 2Lt Coughlan and Pte Rees "take five"