



Bravo Company

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Maj Stovell



WOJ Seberk

1988 was indeed a busy year for Bravo Company 2/4 RAR. As a Company with an indomitable spirit it has proven that professionally it is second to none. From New Guinea to the Gulf, the company always gave its best and forever furthered its capabilities as part of the Operational Deployment Force.

The year began with the usual individual and section work, with our first trip bush being to Paluma Dam with the rest of the Battalion in mid February. This was highlighted by a brisk 15km walkout at the end. From there the Company ventured to Mt Vince in mid March for a week of range practice, with Cpl "Tinnie" Heron being declared the Company's champion shot.

The month of April, the last of our three month stint as ODF priority company, saw 5 Platoon at Koombakombia Dam playing enemy for the SAS Patrolling and Tracking Course. In the jungle for four weeks the exercise proved very valuable to the younger soldiers, which was the majority of the platoon, as they learnt a lot about the environment and the rather wet conditions one has to live with in such a setting. It rained twenty-one out of the twenty-four days 5 was there. However, 5 Platoon were preparing for the Battalion Military Skills Competition. Although at an immediate disadvantage by having to enter six sections while a Platoon of the Company was away, each section involved applied themselves well and certainly gained valuable experience from the exercise.

May proved very much the busiest and most exciting month of the year, particularly between the 20th and 24th. This was a time of sheer excitement at the prospect of being deployed on operations to Vassata. For five days

the Company was at its busiest working extremely long hours. It appeared that all the training we had done would finally be put to the test, in the only real way it can, and that is in an operational setting. Within two days we were ready for deployment; more than meeting the requirement. It was interesting to see those soldiers BMS and seeking discharge suddenly forget their problems and attempt to be part of the show. Lesser events in May included an airborne assault on the Australian Institute of Marine Science and a stint at Tully from the 11th to the 18th of May. The former was successful, with each Platoon securing their objectives. In fact 4 and 6 Platoon were so successful they celebrated with a swim whilst waiting to be extracted. The latter (Tully) also provided valuable training. Once again, much was learnt even for Cpl "Dolly" Dalton on his ninth trip. Furthermore, the Company, along with Pte Brodie, discovered what a "Phantom" snake really is and Pte "Pop" Lanagan uncovered a novel means of warming his horse blanket.

June witnessed the Company on exchange to Port Moresby to the 1st Royal Pacific Islands Regiment on Exercise "Wantok Warrior". This certainly proved to be an eye-opener and it did not take long for the boys to find the more popular night spots, who will forget "Moonlight" or the "Firehouse". However, it was the Yacht Club which probably proved the most popular with regular sojourns made by all in a quest to meet the "not so tanned" females of the city. Pte Les Young will never forget his time in Port Moresby after entertaining some locals in a vehicle whilst being held at gun point.

It was not until the second week that the company really started work with a live firing Exercise on the Goldie