

# 5 PLATOON

It was a big year for the Battalion's senior rifle platoon (yes four and six platoon we were raised before you came along). After a short Christmas break the Platoon arrived back early in the new year ready for what was going to be a big year. The immediate focus of the section commanders and PHQ was to remove the obvious signs of a good leave break. Some of the blokes like Barney and Ohly had trouble fitting into their cams. After a few weeks of individual training it was time for the platoon to deploy to Holsworthy for its first field training exercise. Blue Phoenix was conducted successfully except for Rufus' impromptu recce party which saw him and the rest of 5 section disappear into the vortex for a few hours.

It was only a few short weeks before the Platoon was off on our next field deployment. This time it was to participate in training from another angle as the enemy for 3RAR on exercise Swift Canopy. For many of the new soldiers this was their first opportunity to travel on a RAAF Hercules, and they were especially fortunate to visit that most scenic and picturesque of locations, Puckapunyal. Not only did the Platoon have heaps of fun fooling around in enemy cams but they managed to capture a 3RAR recon platoon signaller with all his classified gear intact. I suppose the idea of Rufus, Gilly, Ned and the rest of 5 Section bearing down on you was too much for our pea hearted paratrooper friend from 3RAR.

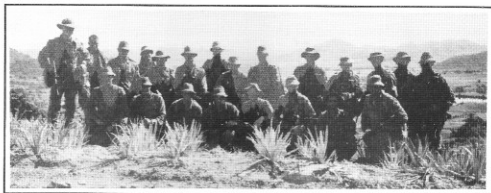
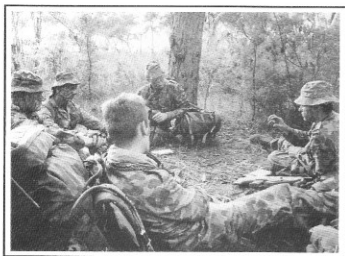
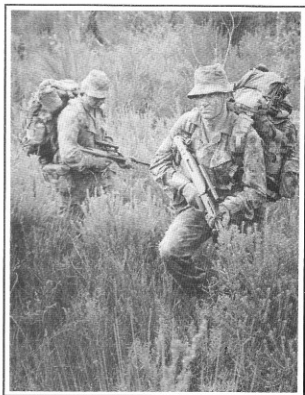
By now we were well into the training year featuring several more exercises, numerous ranges and the NBC week which allowed the Platoon Commander the perfect opportunity to jack on the diggers and do so legally! The Company's shortened trip to Canungra was to prove a highlight for the Platoon. The keenness and professional attitude shown by all members of the Platoon allowed us to gain very good results in all aspects of the course. Even the mentally imbalanced platoon DS relaxed and became semi-human towards the end of the Canungra trip. The Platoon's deployment to Canungra was to be the first time the Platoon had trouble with motorcycles. On this occasion it was Private Lilly's promising career in Infantry that was to be so tragically cut short by these two wheel fiends.

After Canungra the focus of the Platoon was firmly fixed on the impending trip to Malaysia. But before the platoon could deploy we had to hand out a comprehensive thrashing to all the other platoons in the Battalion's inter platoon competition. The young soldiers in the Platoon saw Butterworth as the true Pearl of the East that it is and they made sure of every opportunity to expand their mental and physical horizons. In the case of the Platoon Sig, Ohly, this meant get fat. Apart from another encounter with our platoon nemesis, the motorcycle, which made the CSM's job of doing a guard roster simple, the tour went well and all returned to Australia for the most part morally and physically better people.

As the year draws to a close the focus for the Platoon has shifted to those brave and skilful men from 5 Platoon who make up the Battalion's first Duke of Gloucester Cup Squad since the Battalion was re-raised. We know that they will give it their best shot. With a full-year of demanding training now behind the Platoon the men have bonded together well and stand ready to tackle any new challenges thrown towards them by the Battalion's new role in 1997.



8 Sect - 6 PI - EX SWIFT CANOPY



6 PI - THAILAND - EX CHAPEL GOLD - AUG 96