

SUPPORT COMPANY – Dec 2019

CHQ

2019 provided another year for Support Company to demonstrate why it is the senior company in 5RAR. Commanded by Major Redmond Dale, and Warrant Officer Class Two Joel McMahon, Support Company in 2019 dominated in all aspects of Regimental life.

In the field, Support Company conducted and orchestrated multiple live fire activities; Support Company members exercised in Mount Bunday, Shoal Water Bay, Louisiana, and Java; and numerous Support Company soldiers deployed on Operations Highroad and Okra.

Members of Support Company also represented the Battalion on the ski slopes, the AFL oval, cross country tracks, combative arena, and the swimming pool. In particular PTE Woolmington (MOR) represented the ADF in Rugby League, and PTE McIntyre (SIGS) snow boarded his way to a podium position and a busted anterior cruciate ligament (ACL).

Support Company members also achieved high success on Career and Officer/NCO Specialist courses; such as CPL Marshall (MOR) being awarded Student of Merit (SOM) on Officer/NCO Mortar and MFC Course, PTE H Smith (MOR) SOM for Subject 1 Corporal, WO2 McMahon (CHQ) SOM for Subject 1 on RSMs course.

CAPT M Schumacher

Mortars



Basic Mortar Course and I80 complete at the completion of Ex Tiger's Walk.

From the outset, the platoon has been working hard to re-establish its rightful status as the battalion's senior platoon. And while some obstacles remain, particularly stepping out from the shadow of the prima donna that is Reconnaissance and Sniping Platoon (RS PL), Mortar Platoon (I80) has done a great job so far.

This year saw the conduct of a Basic Mortar Course; where the PT and training program disillusioned the students of any impressions about an easy life in I80. The course led into and culminated with Ex Tiger's Run in which

a week of live fire realised months of hard training efforts by the platoon.

The next big challenge for I80 was Exercise Talisman Sabre, which was preceded by a WFX - just for good measure. A two month adventure in Shoal Water Bay Training Area was an excellent opportunity to see the platoon perform in real time and a testament to the professionalism and grit of the men of I80. This period included long stumps, live-fire support to the rifle company attacks, and plenty of opportunities to outshine DFSW as the masters of effective long range support.



I80 during Ex TS with members of the US 27th Infantry Regiment

The remainder of the year has seen the platoon spread around the battalion, with members deploying to Iraq and Afghanistan; as well as future exercise in Louisiana and Indonesia.

At the time of writing, I80 has settled back into a skill maintenance rhythm. And despite ready for a well-deserved rest, I80 continues to demonstrate and increase its efficiency and lethality.

CPL L Cornish

Recon, Sniper, Surveillance

The men of RS PL had a very productive 2019, led by Lieutenant Nicholas Pullinen (PL COMD) , Sergeant Jason Leuken (RS PL SGT), and Sergeant Matthew Mack (Sniper Supervisor).

The year began with the majority of the PL taking a month long holiday in Perth, which was thinly veiled as a military tasking. LT Pullinen then put his skills as 1 Brigade's premier Adventurous Training Leader to the test, supporting the development of junior soldiers through climbing and abseiling activities.

The PL then participated in EX Tiger's Run 19, which primarily consisted of Live Fire Break Contact ranges for the



5 RAR Sniper Cell members on EX TS 19

entire Platoon, and Advanced Static Field Firing for the Snipers. At the conclusion of the live fire activities, the PL conducted raids on the 1 CSSB defensive position, managing to gently wake the CO of the Battalion from his slumber and take over a machine gun pit without being detected. Of note, LT Pullinen donned his head and shoulders, armed himself with a HK417 assault rifle, and spent 45 minutes perfecting his cam cream before successfully participating in the raid.

June and July were extremely busy, with the PL deployed in support of EX Warfighter and EX Talisman Sabre 19. Some very hard work was put in by the soldiers of the PL, covering long distances in arduous terrain and with heavily weighted packs. Overall, the PL performed to a very high standard, supporting the wider Battle Group and Brigade intelligence collection efforts to enable mission success.

In late August the Sniper Cell conducted additional Field Firing training at Mount Bunday Training Area. The Reconnaissance element also conducted post course retesting of trainees, qualifying additional soldiers as Reconnaissance Patrolmen.

The remainder of the year was focused around members deploying on courses, and to Indonesia on EX Wirra Jaya with a handful of members being selected to deploy on operations. As part of the 'Ready' Bde, the remainder of the PL are always poised to respond to the 'Call of Duty'.

SGT M Mack

Direct Fire Support Weapons (DFSW)



DFSW members on Ex Tiger's Run 19

In 2019 DFSW PL did what they do best; carried heavy and awkward loads over impractical terrain for extended durations.

To kick off the key training for the year, DFSW conducted a live-fire exercise in Mt. Bundy. This was of excellent training value, being able to conduct live break contacts and anti-armoured (AARmd) stalks with the 84mm Carl Gustav. The platoon was able to fire a majority of their weapon systems and in the end only one person caught fire, with another receiving shrapnel from the 40mm Automatic Grenade Launcher (AGL)

(neither with significant injury). All in all, a great success.

Next on the agenda for DFSW was better part of two months in Shoalwater Bay for Exercise Warfighter and Talisman Sabre. Half of the platoon was part of the water insertion, the other half cleared the mountains. Main tasks being anti-armoured blocks, enjoyed by all.

Very soon after returning to Darwin, 64C attached to C Coy for JRTC in Fort Polk Louisiana, which

fittedly was once called Tigerland (Vietnam era). 64C gained some valuable experience, working extremely well and remaining combat effective for the entire Exercise while achieving their task of hunting enemy armoured fighting vehicles.

We also restrained ourselves from stealing anything this year.....

LCPL Adams