

CALL SIGNS

By
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Prior to arriving in the 'Nam, I paid little attention to Call Signs and Frequencies. They changed every day most times. Once situated in Echo Co., 52nd Inf. (LRRPs) I found that the Call Signs and frequencies/pushes, did not change. Made it a whole lot easier for this guy to remember. After being assigned at the First Platoon, I had "Slashing Talon One-Five" as my Call Sign. Most everyone in the Cav knew who "Slashing Talon" was, the LURPs and later the Rangers! Toward the end of my tour, I moved to the Operations NCO slot and became "Slashing Talon Three".

During a particularly hectic "Contact" with lots of Call Signs flying thru the airways e.g.; Rash, Cavalier, Apache, Blue Max, and who knows who else, a strange Caller came up on OUR net! "Slashing Talon _ _ , this is Red Baron Six, give me a SITREP!" I hesitated half a heartbeat and grabbed the mike/handset from our RTO in the TOC. "Red Baron Six, this is Slashing Talon Three, get off my Fox Mike, OUT!" Shssssssss Nothing but the "rushing noise" on the net. The support and successful extraction of the Team went on with no further interruptions.

When I DEROSED to CONUS, I was assigned at the 2nd Ranger Co., Mountain Ranger Camp, Dahlonega, GA, as an Instructor/Lane Grader/Advisor in the Patrolling Committee. Worked in the Committee for a while and was reassigned as the Operations NCO.

A new Commander for the Mountain Ranger Camp was assigned, Col. Everett M. Yon, (The Moose). The Camp Sergeant Major had an NCO Call at the club and we all stood in a haphazard receiving line to meet and greet the new Commander. I was near last in the line and the SGM was introducing us and telling the Commander what we did at MRC. He got to me and told the Commander that I was his Operations NCO. He reached out and shook my hand and looked at my right shoulder with the CAV patch and Airborne Tab. He held on to my hand (his hand was a big as a ham and lots of strength) and asked if I had been with the 1st BDE (Airborne). No Sir, said I, I was with Hotel Company, 75th Rangers.

Still holding my hand he asks, what was your Call Sign? Sir, says I, first it was "Slashing Talon One Five, and near the end of my tour, Oct thru Nov, I was Slashing Talon Three". He squeezed my hand and says, "I was 'Red Baron Six'!" I wanted to die. Then he asks how the Team made out that day. I told him that once we cleared the net of unnecessary traffic they did fine and all ended well. He smiled and said, "You did the right thing and I'm glad to have someone like you up at the 'Head Shed'." Right, I thought!

Didn't think much about it at the time, but it was a real compliment that he remembered the Call Sign for the Rangers. I'll not forget our Call Sign and I still remember the "Push" 48.5!!!

Jim
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