

1st Marine Corps Scout Dog Platoon
MILITARY POLICE COMPANY
HEADQUARTERS BATTALION
3d Marine Division, FMF

RVW:jfp
29 April 1966

From: 1stLt. Robert V. Wilder, Platoon Commander, 1st Scout Dog Platoon
To: Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
Via: Commanding Officer, Military Police Company, Headquarters Battalion,
3d Marine Division, FMF
Subj: Scout Dog training, Recommendations for.

1. Our biggest problem is getting the dogs used to the heat. More schooling should be given on symptoms of heat exhaustion and immediate treatment. Each dog handler should have his own rectal thermometer and know how to use it. Dogs should be used or worked during the hottest part of the day in order to better prepare them for the climate here. Most of our work is searching villages, and this is always done during the day.

2. More village training should be scheduled with more emphasis on gear such as rifles, electrical wires and batteries. More tunnel work should be scheduled. At least two weeks on the VC village is necessary. During this two weeks, the Marines should stay out in the field for the duration and walk to the village everyday, search it and walk back, with decoys along the way.

3. The decoys should not be in utilities but rather civilian clothes. They should have black trousers and white skivy shirt if possible. There should be a shotgun directly behind the dog at all times so the dog can get accustomed to having a shotgun. Many shotguns are getting bitten by the dogs. There should be chickens and pigs in the villages. There should be "dead scent" in the village and the handlers should be able to tell the difference between "dead scent" and "live scent", for example, in a tunnel.

4. Mostly all our night work is on Listening Posts and ambushes. Dogs must be taught to remain quiet when a flare goes off.

5. Dogs should be trained to stop in their tracks when they hit trip wire. Also they should be taught to alert on freshly dug holes with panji stakes and/or grenades in them, and then covered up.

6. Dogs should be walked close to each other and dog fighting should be greatly discouraged. In thick brush, dogs may be required to work off leash and dog fighting can not be tolerated.

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7. Each handler should shoot pistol with dog by his side.
8. Dogs should be fed less. (two canteen cups) Overweight dogs such as "Hero" are having a lot of difficulty with the heat.

Remarks:

Eager and/or anxious dogs should not be sent over because they cannot cope with the heat. The dogs with the greatest heat problems are: "Matt", "LBJ", "Tiger", and "King". Dogs should be taught to remain quiet and still when they are not working. "Taking a break" should be discouraged since it gets the dog excited and excitement over here leads to heat exhaustion.

We have a supply of "Friskies" and "Ken-L-Ration (canned)" here so the dogs diet will remain basically the same.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert V. Wilder
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Lt. USMC