

Americans instruct Thai Army in use of trained dogs

By Tom Tegtmeyer

The use of scout, mine and tracking dogs has meant a lot of saved lives to the American forces overseas. These dogs have the ability not only of finding enemy forces, but detecting enemy booby traps before they have been tripped by one of our soldiers.

Earlier this spring, three

men of the United States Armed Forces were sent April 1 and ended on June 27. Included in the program were 9 men who acted as a support team. In addition, each of the three groups was assigned a Thai lieutenant as an observer.

The first week of training was a conditioning period for men and dogs.

training was noteworthy in that it provided the handlers with ideal preparation for frontier operations. The Thai students received specialized training such as cliff and helicopter rappelling, river

crossing and night operations.

On the final day of training, a demonstration was held for the King and Queen of Thailand and high-ranking military personnel. The King presented

the instructors and students with specially-made gold pins to commemorate the project and its success. On the final evening, the instructors were invited to dinner at the Summer Palace with the King

and Queen, who were most appreciative of their work.

Due to the success of the training, Warner will return to Thailand in October of this year to continue the program for Thai dog handlers.



on temporary duty to Thailand in an experiment concerning the use of these dogs in the Thai Army.

SSgt. Barry J. Warner, Scout Dog Instructor, Military Dog Committee, Company Operations Dept., SFC Thomas Nunn, Combat Tracker Dog Instructor, CT Div., S P T A, USA M P S, Ft. Gordon, Georgia, and SSgt. James W. Reali, USMC, Mine-Tunnel Dog Instructor, Military Dog Committee, took five each trained combat tracker dogs, mine-tunnel detection dogs and off lease dogs to Bangkok, Thailand. From there, they traveled 750 km north to the training area near Chaingmai.

The training of the 15 Thai students began on

The weather was extremely hot, so the periods of outdoor training were confined to the morning hours, when the sun was not at its hottest. In the afternoons, classroom instruction was provided. Also included in the first week was basic obedience.

Warner noted that the Thai students displayed good morale and in intense desire to learn. The training areas were outstanding: the terrain was densely vegetated and crossed by many streams. Part of the training was conducted near the Summer Palace on Dousi Ted Mountain, in the second highest mountain range in Thailand. The mountain