

# Cacti Green Find Snake In the Grass

OASIS—The last thing in the world that the 1st Squad, 3rd Platoon of Alpha Company, 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry of the Famous Fighting Fourth Division expected to see on a recent sweep was a 15 foot python.

Sergeant David Reed of Cloquet, Minn., leader of the sweep, spotted the large reptile after some of his squad members had walked by.

"My first reaction was to yell and warn my men about the snake," stated Sergeant Reed. "Then I radioed for permission to kill him."

After receiving permission, Private First Class Rudolph Hoffman of Junction City, Kan., fired one M16 round through the python's head.

Then the Cacti Green soldiers picked up the snake and carried it tug-rope style on their shoulders back to the company's location. That was only the first step on the way to Landing Zone (LZ) Oasis where the snake was to be skinned.

The skin was returned to PFC Hoffman for an unforgettable treasure.

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# Cacti Blue Soldiers Crash Enemy Meal

By SGT Michael Tousey  
HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS — The point element of Bravo Company, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry interrupted a group of five North Vietnamese (NVA) relaxing at breakfast ten miles southwest of Kontum City and killed one.

The action began when the scout dog working with the point element of Bravo Company alerted the Cacti Blue soldiers, and before the action subsided 21 NVA were dead.

"After the dog's warning we all got down and carefully surveyed the area," said Specialist 4 Charles Tanner of Campbell, Mo., the point man. "We saw a poncho hanging in a tree, and some packs and gear on the ground."

First Lieutenant John Barbeau of Sparta, Ill., and Sergeant Dale Eagle of Newberry, S.C., opened fire killing one. The four other NVA who were eating breakfast fled the area when the firing began.

"Then we moved out again with my platoon on line," said Lieutenant Barbeau. "We found several open packs containing 60mm and 82mm mortar

rounds; apparently they were trying to get the rounds out of there but did not have the time."

The company began to receive heavy fire again and pulled back to call in additional artillery and air strikes. More than 500 rounds of artillery were poured into the area.

"The enemy mortars were approximately 200 or 300 meters away after we pulled back," said Captain Stanley E. Traeb III of Detroit, Bravo company commander. "It took about 24 seconds from the time the round left the tube for it to reach us, so we moved by counting to 20 after the shot and then hitting the ground."

"As soon as the round went off, we would get up and move for another 20 seconds. There were NVA on our right side, and I would guess they had a forward observer from the way the rounds were coming in."

Bravo Company pulled back to allow room for the artillery, gunships and air strikes to work and prepared to return for a sweep of the area the following day.

The sweep uncovered 21 NVA bodies.

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# Get Monsoon Relief

OASIS—With the arrival of the monsoons in the Central Highlands, the daily life of an infantry soldier has become a little tougher.

Under a new program instituted by Lieutenant Colonel James Burris of Chattanooga, Tenn., commander of the 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry, platoons of the Cacti Green's five companies, on a rotating basis, will have from a five to seven day stand down at the Oasis.

The 1st Platoon of Bravo Company was the first element to use the new facility and, naturally, the order of the day was cold beer and soda, hot chow, and a shower. The men also had the opportunity to receive routine medical care and to resolve any personal problems they may have had.

"The stand down that they have set up for us is great. We have a chance to enjoy good food, cold drinks, take a shower and receive clean clothes," said Specialist 4 James Reed of Dallas, Tex. "It gives us a chance to rest before we go back to the field."

Other platoon members voiced the same opinions, adding that the stand down gave them a chance to write and even call their relatives back in the United States through the MARS (Military Affiliated Radio System) facility.

Various sports equipment was also available to the men.

As one member of the platoon said, "At least when it starts raining here, we have a tent to run to. We truly appreciate the stand down."

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**It's Only A Bear**

**HIGHLANDER HEIGHTS**

"We were humping up a hill when all the sudden we heard movement," stated Sergeant John Prielipp of Marion, Mich. "We headed for cover thinking it must be a battalion of NVA to make that much noise."

"We were all ready to open up, and then we saw it — a bear came roaring down the hill crashing through the brush. It must have weighed 300 pounds."

"I was so relieved it wasn't the NVA I didn't even think to take a shot at it. And just think what I could have carved on that tree over there: 'JOHN PRIELIPP KILLED A BEAR HERE.'"

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