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IVY LEAF

FAMOUS FOURTH

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4th Infantry Division
Museum.

10 Sep 67 Ivy Leaf (description of 20 Aug 67 Battle – Ed)

“Bronco’ Units Tally 53 Enemy Bodies During Hot Battle

DUC PHO — Firing at a resupply helicopter proved to be a drastic mistake by one Viet Cong sniper. Ground units were called to locate him and a battle developed that led to the death of 53 VC soldiers on the coastal plain north of Duc Pho.

The Reconnaissance Platoon, 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry and Company C, 2nd Battalion, 34th Armor took the brunt of the fighting in a well integrated tank and infantry assault.

The 2nd Platoon of the armor Company sped to the location of the sniper fire after receiving a call from the chopper. When they arrived they came under a heavy volume of enemy fire. The automatic weapons were answered with blasts from the 90mm main guns killing at east two VC. More enemy were spotted running for a hole which was immediately destroyed.

As the rest of the tank company arrived, a hasty perimeter was set up from which the armor and infantrymen launched the organized assault.

Pursuing the enemy was made increasingly difficult by the dense hedgerows and trenches that surrounded the rice paddies. The tankers and infantrymen could not observe the fleeing enemy, but to their aid came a Forward Air Controller. As Captain William E. Hocker, the tank company commander, explained, “The FAC radioed the enemy’s direction of movement to me and we caught the VC on the run.”

Disrupted enemy on the run were engaged and brought down by the tanks.

It was a “hot and heavy” battle, related one tanker. With the tracked monsters and recon troops routing out the enemy on the ground and M-60 equipped helicopters flying overhead the VC had no chance, The “Cacti Blues” Companies A and B were helilifted to the action when the fighting had died down enough to permit the choppers to land.

Company A was credited with five VC killed.

In addition to the 53 VC dead, 19 weapons were captured in the battle that was termed a great example of coordination between the tanks and the infantrymen of the Ivy Division’s 3rd Brigade.