

## **SMOKE 'EM IF YOU GOT 'EM**

By Keith **PHILLIPS**

The mission I was on just prior to the "cease fire (?)" for Christmas in '71 is one that stands out in my mind because of a brief moment and phrase that makes me chuckle to this day.

The team was composed of Woody (Ronald WOOD), TL; "Smitty" (Thomas E. SMITH KIA 02/20/72), ATL; "Stubby"; "Jackson" (David W. JACKSON); and "Unknown", I have always thought his name was COOPER. He carried a Swedish 9mm submachine gun.

Anyway, I was walking Rear Scout and was sure we were being followed. Smitty and Woody peeled off as the rest of the Team continued to parallel a hard packed trail. We had barely gone 10 meters before all hell broke loose. Smitty and Woody ambushed three Viet Cong who had been following us.

As I was lying on my back, reloading, utilizing my ruck sack for cover (the ruck contained 3 claymore mines, 4 pounds of C4, det cord, 300 rounds of ammunition, 2 Willie Pete grenades, extra smoke grenades, extra frags, 15 second fuses and of course 10 gallons of water, and a few LRRP meals).

I kept hearing someone yelling, "PHILLIPS". As I looked to my left, I saw JACKSON with this grin on his face and he yelled, "You can smoke now, I thin they know where we are!" His statement was due to the fact I always kept an unlit cigarette in my mouth. We all made it out OK and sometime during the mayhem I broke the cigarette. Anyway, so much for war stories.