

Stars and Stripes

May 1952

"3d Div Ambush Nets 90 Reds"

WITH U.S. 3D DIV—A reinforced Chinese company probably never knew what hit them recently when they were caught in a well executed moonlight ambush by a 3d Division patrol.

The ambush patrol, from Company K of the 15th Can Do Regiment and led by 2d Lt. John Sherzer, Ann Arbor, Mich., inflicted some 90 casualties on the Reds before withdrawing when their ammunition supply ran dangerously low.

ABOUT 10 P.M., one squad, led by SFC John R. Morrison, Houston, Tex., worked their way through friendly lines and out into no man's land. Carefully, they moved into position on both sides of a draw and set up a base of fire.

Fifteen minutes later, a 14-man unit, headed by Sherzer, began threading their way through the barbed wire, mine fields and rice paddies on their way to join the rest of the patrol. When they arrived, they immediately set up their automatic weapons and assigned fields of fire. The men checked their equipment again and again. Everything must be in readiness. Then they settled down for the long wait.

THE MOON CAME out casting eerie shadows about the place, but still there was no sign of the enemy. An hour passed. Then, the word came back from the lookouts—a large enemy force was approaching from about 75 yards away. Each man braced himself. The time was near at hand.

"I never saw so many Reds at one time," said Sherzer afterwards. "It must have been a rein-

forced company, and they were grouped together."

THE CUTOFF MEN—Cpl. Charles Newborn, Edwardsville, Ala.; Cpl. Gordon Castle, Buho, Iowa; and PFC David Kaminski, Rosholt, Wis.—lay motionless, almost afraid to breathe as the Chinese passed within 15 feet of their positions.

When the entire body had marched into the deadly circle, the trap was sprung. Sgt. Frederick Brown, Spring Hill, Ala., lobbed two smoke grenades—the signal for the murderous barrage to begin.

Machineguns, BARs and rifles opened up and laid down a lethal hail of bullets that caught the frenzied Reds completely by surprise. They dropped in their tracks or scattered for cover.

THE PATROL HAD a field day. Everyone pumped lead into the small perimeter as fast as they could load and fire.

"They were so close we just couldn't miss," Sherzer reported. "Some of the men were firing from only ten to 15 yards away and we really piled them up. The Reds didn't have much of an opportunity to fire back."

After exhausting nearly all of their ammunition, the Can Do infantrymen broke contact and withdrew to friendly lines leaving some 90 enemy casualties behind them. Forty were believed dead and another 50 wounded. The friendly force did not suffer a single casualty.