

Engineers Engage 3 NVA

Quant Tri (14th Engr)

Several Army engineers working on the upgrade of a fair-weather road to Fire Support Base Rakkasan in the rugged mountains north of Hue recently engaged three enemy soldiers near their work site, killing one and driving off the others.

Captain Charles E. Olson of Denver, commander of the 18th Engineer Brigade's 630th Engineer Company, Specialist Four William Jones of Clinton, Iowa, Private First Class Steve Pyron of Lancaster, California, and an infantryman from the 101st Airborne Division surprised the enemy at a cave hideout while investigating footprints.

101st Airborne troops alerted the engineers to footprints along a stream near the road they were working on. Captain Olson and the two enlisted men with the 101st soldier as a guide went to the scene to investigate. They surprised a North Vietnamese Army (NVA) soldier near the cave he and two others had been hiding in and opened fire as he raised his weapon. As the first man fell dead, the others jumped from hiding and fled.

The dead soldier carried an AK-47 rifle, three mortar round, a rocket-propelled grenade and personal supplies. Examinations of the small cave revealed that it had been used for storage, at the time it held 100 AK-47 rounds, eight pairs of sandals and one entrenching tool.

The incident was a lesson to Captain Olson and his men on just how close the engineers can be to sudden action at remote work sites. "We learned something about being prepared for anything out here," said the captain.

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