

# New 3rd Bde Troops Receive Extensive Training

Story & Photos

by

Sp4 Gary M. Silva

**Dau Tieng** — The men ran, sweat running down their faces. The cadence was

fast, but the soldiers — many still with stateside starch creases in their fatigues — kept up.

They were the newest addition to the 3rd Brigade,

4th Division — replacements.

The replacement center, commanded by Captain Samuel E. Negrea Jr. (Sharon, Pa.), can accommodate 115 men at one time.

"Since October," Captain Negrea said, "we've processed 1,300 new men."

With a working staff of eight people, each new replacement is given almost five days of extensive training before he is turned over to his assigned unit.

Suoi Tre Hall, a new classroom named after the recent battle in which the 3rd Brigade helped killed 631 Viet Cong in four hours, can seat 75 students at one time. In the hall the men learn the finer points of Viet Cong fortifications, patrolling techniques, ambushes and booby traps.

The classroom is not the only training area for the men.

A special area surrounded by barbed wire is filled with American-made Viet Cong traps.

"At first some of the men laugh at the crude ways the

Viet Cong make their booby traps," the 31-year-old captain said, "but when they see the traps actually working the smiles disappear."

The enclosed area is strewn with lethal traps designed to kill, maim and inflict an assortment of agonizing wounds.

A pit, four-feet deep, has numerous deadly punji stakes embedded at the bottom. Normally such a pit would be camouflaged, but for obvious reasons the trap is clearly visible. The new men seldom come close to the edge.

A wicked mace, complete with long bamboo barbs, plunges to the ground. The weight of the weapon alone could break a man's neck — the bamboo stakes guarantee the effectiveness of killing a person. The replacement personnel stress the importance of watching for such weapons.

Complete with a 40-foot tunnel, the area is equipped with foot traps, swinging bamboo traps and minor obstacles designed mostly to inflict small wounds, but serious enough to put a man

in great pain and definitely out of action.

Most of the men arrive at the 3rd Brigade from the 90th Replacement Battalion at Long Binh or Cam Ranh Bay.

Each morning Sergeant First Class Derald L. Leuszler (Buffalo Grove, Ill.) awakens the new men for a full schedule of the Army's "Daily Dozen" and a mile run. The afternoon calls for another jaunt through the brigade's rubber plantation base camp.

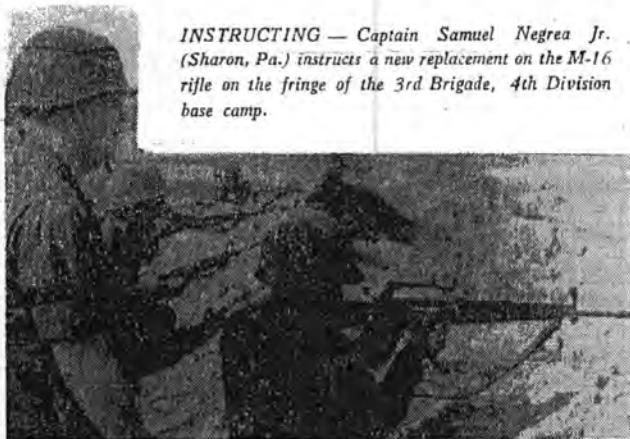
According to Captain Negrea, the men have a rough time with the heat at first, but seem to enjoy the running.

The week concludes with the men relearning the techniques of firing the M-16 rifle, M-79 grenade launcher and the art of throwing hand grenades.

"I believe this training is helping the people because some have returned after going on patrols and said the training they received helped them a great deal," the captain said.



**TELLING** — A handler and his dog from the 44th Scout Dog Platoon show 3rd Brigade replacements the advantage of having such an animal along on operations.



**INSTRUCTING** — Captain Samuel Negrea Jr. (Sharon, Pa.) instructs a new replacement on the M-16 rifle on the fringe of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Division base camp.



**RUNNING** — Two daily mile runs are instrumental in climatizing new replacements at the 3rd Brigade, 4th Division.



**EXPLAINING** — Staff Sergeant John S. Castleman (Inkster, Mich.) explains the firepower and models of different Viet Cong weapons captured by the 3rd Brigade, 4th Division.



**SHOWING** — Captain Samuel Negrea Jr. shows new replacements the working ability of a man-made trap of the Viet Cong during training class at the 3rd Brigade.