

Reconned by Fire

by Paul Turnan

Situation

Your battalion intends to conduct a night attack on foot tomorrow night from north to south in order to clear the enemy from your zone of operations—an isthmus 2 kilometers wide and 5 kilometers long.

Your four-man fire team and one other team have been assigned to observe and report enemy positions and activity in preparation for tomorrow morning's attack. The previous night your patrol established an observation post (OP 1) on the forward slope about 50 yards from the crest. Visibility and fields of observation are good across the treeless grassland. Radio communications with battalion and OP 2 is loud and clear. Your position is well-con-

cealed. Between both OPs you have reported to battalion the positions of the enemy as shown on the map. You observe that the enemy position is well-entrenched. The enemy is behaving rather casually, lining up for chow, doing laundry, etc. The enemy dispatched squad-sized patrols to the northeast earlier in the day.

The time is now 1130. You observe a frenzy of activity on the enemy position. The enemy begins to fire on OP 2 with machineguns and small arms. You monitor OP 2's report to battalion that they have taken casualties. OP 2's request to battalion for artillery is denied. Looking to the south you can see OP 2 pop smoke. OP 2 goes silent and does not respond to radio calls from battal-

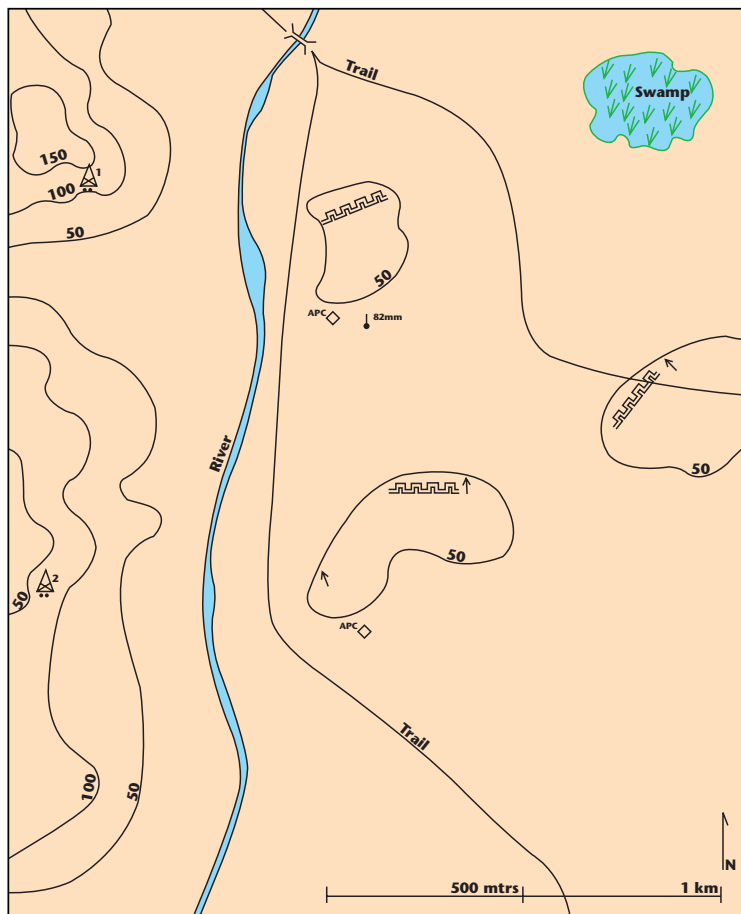
ion. The enemy continues firing. Now enemy rounds begin to impact all over the hillside you occupy. This fire seems random. You are confident that your OP remains undetected, yet enemy fire intensifies. One of your Marines calls out that he's hit. An enemy round splashes you with dirt. What now?

Requirement

In 2 minutes decide on a course of action, and issue your frag order. Provide a sketch and rationale for your action. Submit your solution to *Marine Corps Gazette*, TDG #03-6, P.O. Box 1775, Quantico, VA 22134, fax 703-630-9147, or e-mail <gazette@mca-marines.org>.



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