

tive benefits. They raise soldiers to their highest levels of performance; in a competition, merely meeting the Army standard will not ensure winning. Instead, a competition pushes each soldier to his limit in support of his squad's overall effort. In this way, a squad competition builds squad unit cohesion since all

members strive toward the group goal of winning.

Competitions cause squad leaders to get totally involved in their squads' training, which raises the readiness of the entire unit. Most important, squad competitions develop in soldiers the aggressive winning spirit that is essential in

combat, and combat is the ultimate competition.

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Traveling Overwatch

LIEUTENANT MICHAEL FIACCO

The tactical doctrine of the U.S. Army states that there are three types of platoon movement techniques—traveling, traveling overwatch, and bounding overwatch. The traveling technique is used when speed of movement is desired and contact with the enemy is not likely. The traveling overwatch technique is used when contact with the enemy is possible. The bounding overwatch is used when contact with the enemy is expected, or when the platoon is crossing a danger area. The most commonly used—and abused—of the three is the traveling overwatch.

Often when an infantry platoon is using the traveling technique in moving through wooded or thick vegetation or rough terrain, the platoon leader feels he cannot sufficiently control the movement and also maintain the proper interval between the lead squad and the main body of the platoon. He therefore shortens the interval between the two elements, changing from traveling overwatch to the traveling technique. By doing this, however, he sacrifices security for control. During a chance contact with the enemy, the main body is now far more likely to be initially engaged, and this will limit its freedom to maneuver.

The purpose of the traveling overwatch is to make contact with the enemy with only the lead squad being decisive-

ly engaged. This requires an interval of at least 50 to 100 meters between the lead squad and the main body of the platoon, and an even greater interval in open terrain. This interval allows the main body of the platoon to maneuver



and flank the enemy with maximum firepower upon contact.

By observing the proper interval during movement, the platoon also increases its security by maintaining its freedom to maneuver. Control during movement is maintained through proper planning, navigational techniques, and the use of halts.

During planning for the movement, the navigator for each of the platoon elements must make sure his route is exactly the same as that of his counterparts. Azimuths, distances, terrain features, rally points, and route checkpoints must all be planned for and known by each navigator. Aids such as navigation sheets could be helpful, and duplicate sheets could be used for the guidance of both the lead squad and the main body of the platoon. (See Swap Shop item on navigation sheets by Captain Karl A. Miller in *INFANTRY*, November-December 1986, page 11.)

The use of halts during movement is important in keeping the lead squad and the main body from losing sight of each other. If halts are scheduled every 300 to 500 meters, depending upon the terrain, movement can be easily controlled. These halts may be pre-designated at rally points, route checkpoints, or listening halts.

Halts can also be used when the lead squad encounters a danger area or an obstacle that may require a change of route. At these halts the lead squad stops and waits for the main body to approach close enough to pass hand and arm signals. Danger areas, rally points, the signal to rally key leaders, and the like, are communicated between the elements. Any route changes or actions to be taken by the platoon should be discussed here.

When the lead squad makes contact with the enemy, the squad leader must immediately contact his platoon leader and pass on the information he has. Within the platoon, SOPs should be established for the use of radio, runners, whistles, or other means of communication to relay that information. In the

absence of communication, the platoon leader must react to the sound of the battle in maneuvering his platoon.

Proper use of the traveling overwatch technique comes with practice and use. Security and control can be maintained even when moving through woods or thick vegetation, but only if platoon

leaders know their jobs, are tactically proficient, and have properly trained their subordinate leaders.

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SWAP SHOP



FLASHBULB CLAYMORE

Claymore mines rarely get the attention they should in a training environment, because they do not exhibit any real effects. Often in a training exercise, opposing force soldiers will walk through a mechanical ambush that has been set, but nobody (including the controllers) notices the claymores were there.

But there is a way to set up a claymore that will give off a visual signal and allow soldiers to feel as if they have set up the real thing. This is known as a flashbulb claymore.

Before a flashbulb claymore can be put into operation, several modifications must be made to the live claymore residue wire:

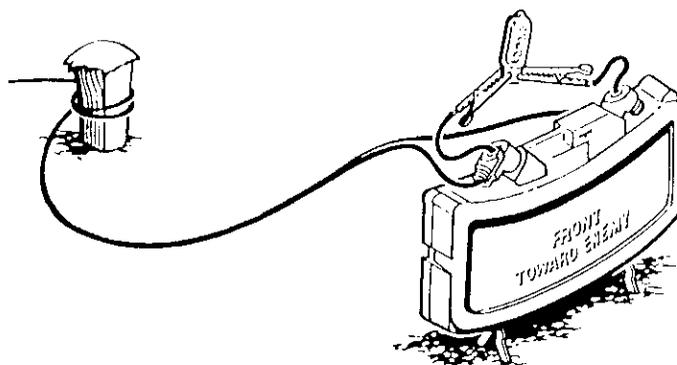
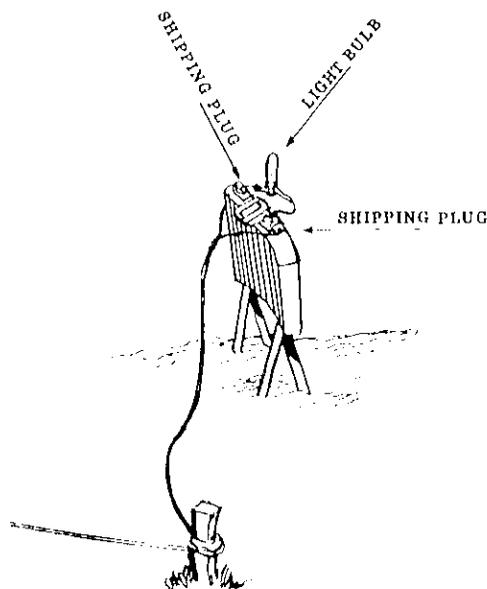
- Obtain live claymore residue wire from any ASI or ASP. (Don't use the inert wire with an inert blasting cap, but save it for its intended training purpose, which is to give soldiers feedback on installing, disarming, and recovering claymores.)
- Unroll the residue firing wire.

- Separate the end of the firing wire until there is six inches of separated wire.

- Remove about one inch of insulation from both pieces of wire and attach an alligator clip to each bare wire.

Once the fourth step has been completed, the flashbulb claymore is ready to be put into operation. To do this, first perform all the performance measures outlined in the Soldier's Manual. (NOTE: To use the test set, make sure both alligator clips are clipped together to complete the circuit.) Stop at the step that involves inserting the blasting cap into one of the detonating wells. Instead, run the wire through both shipping plugs and tape a flashbulb to the top of the claymore. Then connect both alligator clips to the flashbulb. (NOTE: Do not let the alligator clips touch each other.)

To detonate, just squeeze the M57 firing device and there will be a flash of bright light that simulates a blast from a claymore. (EDITOR'S NOTE: See also the article "Ammunition: Dummy, Inert, and Simulated," by Captain Derek A.N. Soriano, *INFANTRY*, November-December 1987, page 11.)



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