

WINTER WARFARE 2015

CALLSIGN NOVEMBER CHARLIE

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AIRSOFT ACTION RECEIVED A REPORT FROM OPERATION WENDIGO, WHERE SNOW, ICE AND FREEZING TEMPERATURES ARE NOT THE ONLY CHALLENGES FACED BY THE PARTICIPANTS.

WARNORD:
Military Grid Reference System: 33VVD
Time zone: GMT+1

1. SITUATION

1st of February Russia attacked Sweden. Within 8 hours they had invaded and seized the island of Gotland and within 5 more hours they advanced into the Swedish mainland.

The Russian troops have sporadically experienced strong resistance but nothing that have halted the invasion. However, south of Eksjö, the invasion have halted for a couple of days thanks to a dedicated Swedish regiment in a joint operation with Special Forces from Denmark and the Netherlands.

Day temperature 0 to -5 degrees Celsius. Night temperature down to -15 degrees Celsius.

Light to gentle breeze. 20-30 cm heavy and wet snow. Daily light snow fall. Ice quality is low; hazard!

a) Enemy Forces:

The Russian troops remains south of horizontal grid line 780.

The troops have high morale and get continuous supplies.

Most likely they will advance north with small hunter troikas, supported by heavy artillery.

b) Friendly Forces:

Swedish troops have a temporary base north of horizontal grid line 810 and move south with light armoured trucks.

Danish troops have reinforced the line of defence south of "Solgenän".

c) Attachments and Detachments:

Assign one medic per group.

2. MISSION

You will be inserted close to frontline on Friday 1200. Your main role is to operate at and behind the frontline to gather intelligence and to slow down the Russian invasion, so that Swedish troops can reinforce with new troops arriving Sunday 1200.

3. EXECUTION

Not disclosed.

4. SERVICE AND SUPPORT

48 hours self-sustained.

5. COMMAND AND SIGNAL

Radio: 155MHz with antenna connection BNC female.

Radio frequency: 155.400 MHz.

Frequency or channel scanning is forbidden!

Tactical operations command: Hotel Quebec

1: Swedish Squad: Sierra Alpha

2: Swedish Squad: Sierra Bravo

3: Dutch team: November Charlie

4: Danish Squad: Delta Echo

5: Danish Squad: Delta Foxtrot

ACKNOWLEDGE

Team leader acknowledge with text containing team name.

WARNORD ENDS





AND THUS IT BEGINS....

After a few months of excitingly waiting, prepping (and spending money), we arrived in Sweden for the winter event we as a team had been waiting for since 2013. In that year we got the taste of what it takes to participate in a sub-zero environment. We joined in on Operation Wendigo II which was a co-hosted event between Tier One Military Simulations and Pandion and were a part of the British team that conducted the operations for the 48h. A great experience and a good learning experience for the 2015 edition.

Anton Holmström, the event organizer and owner of Pandion puts up a MilSim event, or as he calls it a "Realsim event" that will challenge you to go further than you normally would. It's all about mind-set and Anton looks for participants to come to his events with the right mind-set. You don't need to have top dollar equipment but you have to have common sense and adjust your gear to the environment you are signing up for.

Pandion's Wendigo Winter Warfare 2015 kicked off February 13th at noon and went straight on for 48h in sub-zero temperatures, calf deep snow and in a massive tree covered terrain. The Area of Operations is roughly 8 square kilometres and usually MGRS grid references would be provided in 1km resolution. This means that if you get tasked to perform an operation in 81 79 you have a full 1 by 1km grid to search for your objective.

In the weeks leading up to the event we started to receive our intel for this event. The intel consisted of a WARNORD and later on an OPORD. These documents gave us a bigger picture of the scenario the game would be played in and immersed us into a world of political power play and economical motivations.

Our starting mission was to find and destroy a downed UAV behind enemy lines, using an RF tracker to guide us to the UAV. Pyros were provided by the organisation to blow up the UAV. Initially we had some difficulty locating the UAV, probably because of another signal interfering which left us walking in a large circle for most of the afternoon. Switching operators did not help, we were all getting the same result and started to think we followed interference from the TRI PRC117 on the back of our Foxtrot (radio operator), or that perhaps the PTW



of the TL caused a spurious signal. By the time we realized this was not the case and something different was misleading us it already started to get dark and we would soon have to dig in for the night. After contact with HQ we were given a new 1km grid reference to relocate and restart our search anew – but due to the falling of darkness we only made partial headway at the time. A night-time reconnaissance had to be aborted after one of our members crashed through the ice in a ditch resulting in wet footwear and trousers.

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The second day we broke camp and marched out to the new grid reference, loaded with our fighting gear and Bergens. During our infill we were noticed by a substantial enemy force and soon overrun. After a break to respawn we continued our mission, making our way through forests, fields, and other beautiful and often rough terrain.

On our approach to our destination (a blind guess within the 1km grid) from which we intended to restart the search for the UAV we were unlucky enough to run into the very same enemy force who had earlier taken us out. They were stationary and we were both moving and outnumbered, with predictable results. Both firefights were conducted with great sportsmanship and even though we lost they were thoroughly enjoyable. Kudos for those guys!



Taking another route and firing up the tracker we were getting better results. The tracker took us in somewhat of an arc – and to our surprise we finally found the UAV on the very 10m grid location we had ‘guesstimated’ at the start of the morning. After blowing it up with our pyro’s we reported back for new orders



Orders were given using the 155MHz radio frequency. At the beginning of the event we got issued an 8 meter long wire antenna to have an optimal length to send and receive orders but the odds were not in our favour. First our own flex antenna broke off just before we had to move out, the backup radio had problems sending and receiving messages probably due to the cold, the backup of the backup – which was not intended to use as backup but as intra team communications – wouldn’t send but could receive! After fixing the problem with the broken off antenna by replacing it by the wire antenna all our issues were sorted for the moment. Even using a 5W power, radio contact was intermittent at times. Where necessary we either relayed through (and for) other teams, or used text messaging as a final fall back option. But Murphy’s Law kicked in again! The primary radio (a TRI PRC-117G with a 25000Mah battery) wasn’t handling the cold that well and leaving it turned on all night didn’t do the battery capacity any good. This was the first time we used this radio so we now have some useful hands-on experience that will help us in future events.

After the primary means of communications failed, we only had the backup-backup radio that could only receive on the 155Hz channel. We got this news to HQ and all orders were sent now out from HQ using radio and acknowledged by us via text message. This functioned quite well but was the last resort but we have to get our equipment up to speed to work better next time.

Our next objective was to head over to a new location – one very close to our starting position. With dusk setting in, we ended up setting up our harbour position just short of the intended objective.

After we finished our Dutch issue boil-in-the-bag meals we got tasked to head out and find an enemy campsite and blow it up with the use of a 66mm LAW (pyro). Unfortunately one of our members could not come along – wet footwear, even with multiple changes of socks having become a real frost bite risk. After ensuring that all that no medical attention was needed and getting him warm and dry would sort him out, we went on with the task at hand. On our route in we had followed a railroad track, flanked by forests, fields and under a star lit sky, which provided a stunning backdrop through our NODs.

As we got closer and closer to the designated MGRS grid, adrenaline started to kick in. We used the forest as cover, scanning all our sectors, our senses tuned to maximum. Every 100-odd meters we took our time to soak in the environment, listening to the sounds of distant noises. Nonetheless we did not find what we were looking for.

After a status report with HQ we got tasked to ambush a small hunter troika force, expected to pass our grid. With the use of vegetation and taking advantage of our NODs we silently waited in ambush for the opposing forces. After a few minutes the force consisting of 4-5 pax closed in and stopped on the road a mere 7 meters in front of us. In one fluid motion we laid down our fire and took out all but one. The poor fellow, without the advantage of night vision equipment, had no idea where our fire was coming from and decided to surrender. After this successful ambush we exfiltrated the area, again following the railroad. By now we were tired and looking forward to the return to our harbour position and patiently waiting bivvies. A day filled with walking with Bergens and kit, walking on rough terrain and performing on a higher level than normal live tends to eat away your energy.



On Sunday 0600 we got orders to move out and take out an enemy encampment south-east of our location. We got orders to move south and follow the road heading to our designated MGRS coordinates. Little did we know that our infill onto the designated target area had already been noticed. The opposing forces ordered an air strike on our location. The explosions were deafening, smoke was thick as fog and sparks flew over our heads. This ended our attempt and took us out for the next while.

After respawning and still with 2 hours game time left, we got orders to move up near the principal farm and be sure to bring our LAW. As we closed in on the location, still unseen, we identified opposing forces holding a crossroad with multiple 4x4 vehicles. This was the moment to shine and take out the 4x4 using our anti vehicle rocket. Even though we missed, we suddenly found ourselves reinforced by the Sierra Alpha callsign, moving up on our flank with their Swedish all-terrain vehicle and mounted machinegun.

In the intense firefight that followed, we made it half way to the enemy position before being downed in a hail of bbs. With only half an hour left on the clock this marked the end of the event for us, and we relocated to the sauna near the lake to enjoy the end-of-game BBQ!!

Soon we were joined by participants from Sweden and Denmark for a very enjoyable conclusion of the event. After the BBQ we changed out of our military kit for the long trip home – the first stage a drive down to Copenhagen for showers, beer, pizza and a warm bed.

We would like to thank Anton from Pandion for organizing this great event, as well as all players for their fair play and overall general good times.

And a special thanks to Karl Herolf, for the use of some pictures.

