



The battle for Raspberry Creek Alamo

MARINE'S WORDS AND PICS
CORPORAL JONATHAN WRIGHT,
31ST MEU
ADF WORDS VARIOUS ADF
OFFICERS (AMALGAMATED AND
EDITED BY BRIAN HARTIGAN)
AND PICS: LEADING SEAMAN
ANDREW DAKIN AND
ABLE SEAMAN LEE-ANNE MACK

THE MARINES HUG THE WALLS
INSIDE THE BUILDINGS AS THEY
TRAIN THEIR EYES SKYWARD
FROM THE EDGES OF THE
WINDOWS. THE LOW HUM
THAT DROVE THEM TO COVER
BECOMES LOUDER, AND HIGH
ABOVE THE TOWN HANGS THE
SILHOUETTE OF AN AUSTRALIAN
UNMANNED AERIAL VEHICLE.

As dawn approaches the quiet town, a harsh voice cuts through the silence.

"Stand to!" it calls, "Enemy sighted at 200 metres!" Elements of Company G, Battalion Landing Team, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, 31st Marine Expeditionary Unit, have held this defensive position since 27 June in an area called Raspberry Creek, during Exercise Hamel 2012, a multi-national training exercise.

The Marines of 3rd Platoon and Weapons Platoon, with Australian participants acting as either the local police force or the civilian populace, have been holed up in a simulated small town in preparation for an impending attack from the Australian 1st Brigade.

"They're out there, but they're being very cautious in how they advance," Lance Corporal Luis Duran, squad automatic weapon gunner with Company G, says.

"In the meantime, UAVs have been constantly flying overhead, while small reconnaissance teams have been testing our defenses."

1st Brigade, the Australian Army formation that is undergoing certification for operational deployment during Exercise Hamel 2012, is tasked

with pushing back the Marine contingent and eventually eliminating them.

Per the scenario, as of 1 July, all Marine advances have been repelled back to Raspberry Creek, which serves as a dividing feature between the two forces.

"I give it up to the Australians for treating this exercise like it is a real conflict," Sergeant Jose Morales, squad leader with Company G says.

"Any procedures they would conduct in a combat environment are practiced, such as treatment of enemy prisoners of war. No corners are being cut in this exercise."

Aside from various skirmishes past the Raspberry Creek lines, no major offensive has occurred. 1st Brigade has been preparing for the assault against the town through use of continuous UAV surveillance, flyovers by jet aircraft and ground reconnaissance.

Using recon hides and artillery assets of their own, the Marine reinforced contingency has been fending off 1st Brigade's intelligence-collection attempts and is keeping them at bay – for now.

