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172ND INFANTRY BRIGADE (SEP.) "SNOW HAWKS"

BY CHARLES RICE

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the first installment of a Blood and Guts dispatch. This time out we present one of the most unique and potent units in the entire United States Army: the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) nicknamed the "Snow Hawks". Following the breakdown of the unit's component brigades and battalions and a history of the unit itself you will find several new elite unit feats to allow characters to take the role of a member of this special group of men and women.

The 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate) is a unique unit in many ways. First it is the largest infantry brigade in the United States at 3,089 soldiers. Secondly it is the only infantry brigade assigned to two bases: Fort Wainwright and Fort Richardson, both in Alaska. A completely self-sufficient unit the 172nd has its own Airborne, Artillery, Support and Engineering battalions. Finally the 172nd is the only arctic infantry brigade in the United States Army, capable of operating effectively in conditions of up to -50 degrees Fahrenheit (conditions in which the brigade trains yearly).

Currently the 172nd Infantry Brigade is undergoing Force XXI Transformation. As a part of this overall Army Transformation the 172nd has been delivered some of the new Stryker Armored combat vehicle, further adding to unique character and potent capabilities of this unit.

UNIT COMPONENTS

- ❖ Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC)
- ❖ 1-17 Infantry
- ❖ 2-1 Infantry
- ❖ 1-501 Parachute Infantry Regiment (Airborne)
- ❖ 4-11 Field Artillery Regiment

- ❖ 172nd Support Battalion
- ❖ E Troop, 1st Cavalry
- ❖ 21st Signal Company
- ❖ 562nd Engineering Company
- ❖ Air Defense Artillery Platoon

UNIT HISTORY

The 172nd Infantry Brigade was formed August 5th, 1917 as a component of the 86th Division at Camp Grant, Illinois. In September, 1918 the 172nd reported to Bordeaux, France for combat duty. After serving in WWI without distinction, the unit received the WWI Campaign Streamer without inscription and returned home to be disbanded.

In June, 1921 the unit was reborn as a reserve unit, converted into a reconnaissance unit in 1942 and finally a mechanized reconnaissance unit in 1943; thus as part of the 86th Reconnaissance Troop the unit, after receiving amphibious training, shipped out for France once again on February 19th, 1945. During WWII the unit participated in many amphibious assaults across rivers in Germany and Austria including campaigns along the Danube River. After a brief return home for R&R the unit then went to the South Pacific, arriving at Leyte, Phillipines on September 7th where it served as an occupational force until 1946, when the unit was inactivated and turned into a reserve unit.

On May 20, 1963 the unit was returned to active duty, reassigned to Fort Richardson, Alaska and renamed the 172nd HHC. On April 17, 1998 the unit was redesignated the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate). On July 1, 1998 the unit was as the U.S. Pacific Command's Initial Entry Force, able to deploy anywhere in the Pacific Theater for mission requiring battalion-sized or smaller levels of force. In addition to responding to any potential combat situations the

172nd stands ready to respond to disaster relief and offer humanitarian assistance.

ELITE UNITS OF THE 172ND INFANTRY BRIGADE

The following are components of the 172nd that would make interesting background for Blood and Guts characters. Following the breakdown of the unit and its history a new elite unit feat for that unit will be presented.

1ST BATTALION 17TH INFANTRY REGIMENT “THE THUNDERING HERD”

BATTALION COMPONENTS

- ❖ HHC “The Headhunters”
- ❖ A Company “The Apaches”
- ❖ B Company “The Bulldogs”
- ❖ C Company “Hardrock”

The 1st Battalion 17th Infantry regiment was formed May 3rd, 1861 and originally based out of Fort Preble, Maine. On November 16th, 1986 the unit was transferred to Fort Richardson, Alaska. On April 17th, 1998 the unit was transferred to Fort Wainwright, Alaska and realigned with the 172nd Infantry Brigade.

ELITE UNIT FEAT INFORMATION

You are a member of an elite light infantry regiment specially trained for arctic warfare.

Prerequisite: Active or Reserve Duty (U.S. Army), MOS Infantryman, Arctic Warfare College

Effect: +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and to saving throws to resist any of the following: fatigue, hunger, torture, brainwashing, fear, combat fatigue and intimidation. The terrain specialization bonuses to attack and skill checks granted by the Arctic Warfare

college feat are increased by an addition +1.

Special: This feat counts as an elite unit for the purposes of qualifying for the Esprit de Corps feat (a character must belong to an elite unit or a special operations prestige class to qualify for that feat).

2ND BATTALION 1ST INFANTRY REGIMENT “COLD STEEL”

The first infantry regiment is an extremely old and prestigious unit of the United States army. The 1st Infantry Regiment was formed in March, 1791. In 1792 the unit took part in the Battle of Fallen Timbers, the first victory of the United States Army following the Revolutionary War. The unit next saw action in the War of 1812 where it served in the southern theatre command where it played a vital role in the Battle of New Orleans with General Jackson.

Following the War of 1812 the 1st Infantry Regiment continued to see action in the various Indian conflicts of the age, including the Black Hawk War in 1832 and the Second Seminole War which lasted from 1839-1842 (during this time the regiment was commanded by future President then General Zachary Taylor).

In 1846 General Taylor took the 1st Infantry Regiment across the Mexican border during the war between that country and United States, where the unit was engaged in savage house-to-house fighting in Monterrey. Following this action the unit was placed under the command of General Winfield Scott and engaged in the first modern amphibious landing by an American military unit during the attack on Vera Cruz.

The end of the Mexican War saw a return of the 1st Infantry Regiment to Indian campaigns, battling the Comanche in Texas. This is where the unit was when, in 1861, Civil War erupted between the North and the South. Suddenly the unit, which sided with the Northern Union forces, found themselves surrounded by hostile forces and a violent withdrawal was conducted northward. During the Civil War the 1st Infantry Regiment fought in Missouri and then served

under General Ulysses Grant at Vicksburg. The unit served the remainder of the war garrisoning New Orleans.

Following the Civil War the unit returned yet again to anti-Indian campaigns, this time against the Sioux and from 1882-1886 the Sioux, led by perhaps the most dangerous and tactically skilled of all the Indian commanders, Geronimo.

In 1898 the USS Maine was sunk off the coast of Cuba and war was declared against Spain. The 1st Infantry Regiment quickly made its way to Florida where it was ferried to Cuba, participating in the storming of San Juan and the capture of Santiago. On its way to aid refugees being evacuated from China during the Boxer Rebellion, the unit was diverted when the Spanish captured the Philippines. For two years the regiment would engage in brutal jungle warfare against Spanish forces, only to return and fight them again from 1906-1908.

During WWII the unit again saw action against Japanese forces, delivering a crushing defeat of their enemy at New Guinea that earned the unit a Presidential Unit Citation. The regiment then participated in MacArthur’s return to the Philippines in 1945. Following WWII the unit was sent to Korea as an occupational force but was temporarily disbanded in 1946.

When the Korean War broke out the 1st Infantry Regiment was activated once again, this time as a training unit for active duty forces on their way to Korea. The unit performed its training mission so admirably that in 1956 it was assigned to serve the same function at West Point. In 1958 the unit was reorganized, returned to active duty and assigned to Fort Benning, Georgia.

In 1966 the unit again traveled overseas to participate in the Vietnam War where it would serve six bloody years including the Tet Offensive. In 1994 the unit was briefly disbanded and then assigned to Fort Wainwright with the 6th Infantry Division (Light).

This unit, along with the 1st Infantry Regiment was reorganized in 1998 and renamed the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate).

ELITE UNIT FEAT INFORMATION

You are a member of one of the prestigious units in the history of the United States Army, currently specializing in Arctic Warfare.

Prerequisite: Active or Reserve Duty (U.S. Army), MOS Infantryman (Level 2), Arctic Warfare College, BAB 3+

Effect: +1 morale bonus to attack rolls and to saving throws to resist any of the following: fatigue, hunger, torture, brainwashing, fear, combat fatigue and intimidation. The terrain specialization bonuses to attack and skill checks granted by the Arctic Warfare college feat are increased by an addition +1. You also gain a +2 Initiative bonus.

Special: This feat counts as an elite unit for the purposes of qualifying for the Esprit de Corps feat (a character must belong to an elite unit or a special operations prestige class to qualify for that feat).

1ST BATTALION 501ST PARACHUTE INFANTRY REGIMENT (PIR) “GERONIMO”

BATTALION COMPONENTS

- ❖ Headquarters and Headquarters Company “The Hatchet”
- ❖ A Company “Apache”
- ❖ B Company “Blackfoot”
- ❖ C Company “Comanche”

The 501st is the very definition of an elite unit. It made its first airborne assault five hours before the amphibious landings on June 6th, 1944. Scattered during the insertion individual components of the 501st PIR fought individual actions to delay

German defense plans and protect the beaches from counterattack. For this action the 501st was awarded its first Presidential Unit Citation.

On September 17th, 1944 the 501st made its second jump into Holland where it protected the advancing British forces during Operation: Market Garden. Finally, in Bastogne the 501st was hand picked to lead the counterattack that ended the last German offensive of WWII. During this fierce battle the 501st, fighting alongside the 101st Airborne was outnumbered four to one, cut off and completely isolated from any assistance. The unit repulsed repeated attacks by no less than eight German divisions for six days, from the 22nd to the 27th of December. For conspicuous gallantry the unit was awarded the Belgian Fourragere and its second Presidential Unit Citation.

In 1967 the unit was assigned to Vietnam where it served with distinction until 1972, producing two Medal of Honor winners.

Currently the unit is station at Fort Wainwright, Alaska where it serves as part of the 172nd Infantry Brigade (Separate).

ELITE UNIT FEAT INFORMATION

You are a member of one of the finest airborne units in the United States Army.

Prerequisite: Active or Reserve Duty (United States Army), MOS Infantryman, Jump School

Effect: +1 Morale bonus to hit and to any Saving Throw to resist any of the following: fatigue, hunger, torture, brainwashing, fear, combat fatigue, and intimidation. +1 morale bonus to damage on all melee and ranged weapon attacks (30 feet or less) for one minute following an airborne insertion.

Special: This feat counts as an elite unit for the purposes of qualifying for the Esprit de Corps feat (a character must belong to an elite unit or a special operations prestige class to qualify for that feat).

562ND ENGINEERING COMPANY “THE ARCTIC SAPPERS”

COMPANY COMPONENTS

- ❖ 1st Platoon
- ❖ 2nd Platoon
- ❖ 3rd Platoon
- ❖ A&B Platoon
- ❖ Maintenance Platoon

The 562nd supports the 172nd Infantry Brigade with mobility, countermobility and survivability missions in combat. Further it is capable and specially trained to perform all these missions in an arctic environment.

The 562nd was formed on December 8th, 1942 when it was known as the 175th Chemical Smoke Generating Company. After conversion to a full-fledged engineering unit the 562nd served in Germany and Central Europe throughout WWII. On December 16th 1957 the unit was transferred to Fort Richardson, Alaska. It served there until 1998 when it was transferred to Fort Wainwright, Alaska and merged into the 172nd Infantry Brigade.

ELITE UNIT FEAT INFORMATION

You are a member of a vital support team for the 172nd. You also have the distinction of being one of the only arctic engineering companies in the entire Army.

Prerequisite: Active or Reserve Duty (U.S. Army), Combat Engineering, Arctic Warfare College

Effect: +1 Morale bonus to hit and to any Saving Throw to resist any of the following: fatigue, hunger, torture, brainwashing, fear, combat fatigue, and intimidation. Your attack and skill bonuses from the Arctic Warfare College advanced training feat are each increased by +1. In addition you gain the skill bonus from that feat (+3 total) on Craft (structural) checks made in an arctic environment.

Special: This feat counts as an elite unit for the purposes of qualifying for the Esprit de Corps feat (a character must belong to an elite unit or a special operations prestige class to qualify for that feat).

4TH BATTALION 11TH FIELD ARTILLERY REGIMENT “ON TIME”

The 4th Battalion 11th FA Regiment offers fire support for the 172nd in all conditions including arctic weather and terrain.

The 4th Battalion was formed July 1st, 1916 at Douglas, Arizona. In 1986 the unit was assigned to Fort Richardson, Alaska and in 1994 relocated to Fort Wainwright, Alaska.

ELITE UNIT FEAT INFORMATION

You provide fire support to aid the 172nd Infantry Brigade in the performance of its duty.

Prerequisite: Active or Reserve Duty (United States Army), MOS Field Artillery, Arctic Warfare College

Effect: +1 Morale bonus to hit and to any Saving Throw to resist any of the following: fatigue, hunger, torture, brainwashing, fear, combat fatigue, and intimidation. Your attack and skill bonuses from the Arctic Warfare College advanced training feat are each increased by +1. When directing an artillery crew

(whether you are firing the weapon or simply serving with the crew) you reduce the weapon’s reload time by one round. This is cumulative with any teamwork bonus to reduce the weapon’s reload time.

Special: This feat counts as an elite unit for the purposes of qualifying for the Esprit de Corps feat (a character must belong to an elite unit or a special operations prestige class to qualify for that feat).

ARCTIC WARFARE SPECIALIST

You have mastered the art of a deadly arctic warrior.

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an Arctic Warfare Specialist, a character must fulfill the following criteria. (The fastest path into this class is through the Tough Hero base class).

Base Attack Bonus: 2+

Skills: Survival 6 ranks, Drive 4 ranks

Feats: Arctic Warfare College, Endurance

CLASS INFORMATION

The following information pertains to the Arctic Warfare Specialist advanced class.

Hit Die: 1d10

Action Points: 6 plus one-half character level, rounded down.

Class Skills: The Arctic Warfare Specialist’s class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Balance (Dex), Climb (Str), Demolitions (Int), Drive (Dex), Handle Animal (Cha), Hide (Dex), Jump (Str), Knowledge (Current Events, Physical Sciences, Tactics) (Int), Navigate (Int), Spot (Int) and Survival (Wis)

Skill Points at Each Level: 5+ Int. modifiers

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are features of the Arctic Warfare Specialist advanced class.

Combat Skiing: The Arctic Warfare Specialist is trained in biathlon-type skills (skiing and shooting on the move from skis). He has his full defense while skiing and may fire a weapon while skiing at no penalty.

Snow Leopard: When using skis the AWS suffers no movement penalties from arctic terrain and receives the listed bonus to his movement rate in combat. Using snowshoes the AWS suffers no movement penalty from arctic terrain but receives no movement bonus. Also trained in cross-country skiing the AWS moves 1 mph faster in overland movement at 5th level and 2 mph faster at 10th level.

Arctic Warrior: The AWS adds the listed modifier to his attack and skill bonuses from the Arctic Warfare College feat. This ability also modifies any saving throws to avoid environmental damage from the cold in an arctic environment.

Snow Ghost: At 5th level the AWS is a master of arctic camouflage techniques and can hide in plain sight in an arctic environment.

Snow Blind: At 7th level the AWS can choose terrain in a fight on a Survival skill check (DC 15) to cause his opponents to suffer a –2 penalty to attack and skill checks from arctic terrain.

Bonus Feats: At 3rd, 6th and 9th level the AWS may choose any advanced training feat as a bonus feat.

TABLE 1-1: THE ARCTIC WARFARE SPECIALIST

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Defense Bonus	Reputation Bonus
1 st	+0	+2	+0	+0	Combat Skiing; Snow Leopard +5	+1	+0
2 nd	+1	+3	+0	+0	Arctic Warrior +1	+1	+0
3 rd	+2	+3	+1	+1	Bonus Feat	+2	+0
4 th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Arctic Warrior +2	+2	+0
5 th	+3	+4	+1	+1	Snow Ghost; Snow Leopard +10	+3	+1
6 th	+4	+5	+2	+2	Arctic Warrior +3; Bonus Feat	+3	+1
7 th	+5	+5	+2	+2	Snow Blind	+4	+1
8 th	+6	+6	+2	+2	Arctic Warrior +4	+4	+1
9 th	+6	+6	+3	+3	Bonus Feat	+5	+2
10 th	+7	+7	+3	+3	Arctic Warrior +5; Snow Leopard +15	+5	+2

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