



SURVIVAL SCHOOL—A survival student is about to enter his "home sweet home" during training in the field near Eielson Air Force Base, Alaska. Part of the curriculum for flying crews attending the

Arctic Survival School required living in the field for 2½ days. During this time, students put into practice what they learned in two days of classroom study.

Alaskan Command Air Crew Arctic Survival Training in its 20th Year

The Alaskan Command Air Crew Arctic Survival Training School is in its 20th year of training military fliers...just in case.

The oldest and largest winter survival school in the Air Force was originated October 1, 1947 in Nome, Alaska. It moved to Ladd AFB in 1950 and to its present location at Eielson AFB in 1960.

About 600 students graduate annually from about 20 classes taught during the winter months. CMSgt. William C. Barbour, NCOIC, said "No one flunks the course."

Pilots, crew members, flight surgeons and nurses spend two 8-hour days in the classroom learning about clothing, shelters, food sources, survival medicine and signal and rescue techniques. There are no written tests. The next 2½

days in the field do all the testing necessary.

Students are taken to an area about eight miles off the base and immediately begin putting into practice what they learned in the classroom. Each class of about 30 students is broken up into teams of six.

One of the first things to do is build a shelter. The students, literally working like beavers, dig through about five feet of snow to the ground.

Then tree boughs are placed over the hole. Snow is piled on the boughs giving the students an endurable shelter for their stay in the field.

Sergeant Barbour said temperature outside the shelter can be as cold as 55 degrees below zero; but inside, without artificial heat, the thermometer will read 20 degrees above.

Each student is given two emergency rations—dehydrated foods containing about 800 calories. They supplement their food supply by shooting or snaring rabbits, squirrels, ptarmigan and grouse.

Students have a lot to do in a short time for Alaska winters provide only about 3 hours of daylight in which to build the shelter, gather firewood and hunt for food.

During the dark hours, students attempt to aid searchers by using various signaling techniques. They are scored by instructors flying overhead in small aircraft.

A student who was asked what he did to pass the long dark hours in his makeshift quarters, he replied, "I cried a lot."