

# Famous Eskimo Scout Battalion Trains at Camp Denali

CAMP DENALI, ALASKA—Alaska's famous Eskimo Scouts were training last week in a new organizational set-up which was keyed both to their military mission and their way of life.

The new organization breaks the Scouts down into five-man teams. The teams are like military building blocks, and any number of them can be assigned to work together under a company headquarters.

The first test of the new plan was being made last week at the Alaska National Guard Camp Denali, on Fort Richardson near Anchorage, Alaska.

More than 1,000 men of the 2nd Scout Battalions, 297th Infantry, are in training. The Scout battalions have members in 63 towns and villages in northern and western Alaska.

Colonel Fred O. Reger, assistant Alaska State Adjutant General for Army, said the new plan should have many values.

"In some of the villages there are only five Scouts anyway," Colonel Reger said, "so those men have really always trained as a team. We want these men to make their Scout team a way of life. We want them to work together as teams at home as well as at camp, and we want each man in the team to know where the other four are all the time."

The new organization was worked out by Alaska National Guardsmen to fit the unique situation of the Scout Battalions. It was approved for training purposes just before the Scouts' annual training encampment opened here.

Basically, each Scout will be a member of a five-man Scout Team. The basic team is composed of three Scouts, a radioman, and a sergeant team leader.

Next up the organizational line is the Senior Scout Team. It is organized the same as the Scout team, but has a radio with greater range, and is commanded by a Staff Sergeant. Thus if Scout Team and Senior Scout Team are working together, the Senior

Scout Team leader is the detachment commander.

The organizational plan calls for six company headquarters within a battalion, each consisting of command and control elements and medical and communications detachments.

Any number of five-man Scout teams can be attached to a company headquarters for control, depending upon the mission to be performed.

In command of the entire effort is the battalion headquarters, which has command and control elements, and also has in its structure medical, communications, aviation, and food service detachments which can be used as necessary within the battalion area of responsibility.

The Scout Battalions of the Alaska National Guard are the only units of their kind in the United States defense structure.

Most of the battalion members are Eskimo or Indian, or Caucasians who have lived in remote northern regions for many years. Their mission is scouting, patrolling and reconnaissance around the periphery of Alaska.

"Because the Scout mission is to observe and report, and sometimes to carry out fast guerrilla-type raids, we feel the five-man team concept will be a major organizational improvement," Colonel Reger said.

He said he also feels it will aid morale and the individual Scout's sense of belonging to a military unit, since most of the year the only other Scouts he sees are those who live in his own village, and who now will be members of his team.