H COMPANY, 2ND BATTALION, 5TH MARINES

MARCH 1966 — OKINAWA

Compiled from the 2/5 Command Chronology Report, 23 February – 5 April 1966

2nd Battalion, 5th Marines · 1st Marine Division · Camp Schwab, Okinawa

1. Unit Overview

Unit Designation	Hotel Company (H Co), 2nd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division
Reporting Period	1–31 March 1966
Commander	1st Lieutenant J. J. Doherty, commanding Company H (battalion assignments list, 5 April 1966)
Higher HQ	2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (LtCol R. H. Uskurait) under the 5th Marines; from 30 March, BLT 2/5 under the operational and administrative control of the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade
Area of Operations	Camp Schwab, Okinawa; the Northern Training Area; Kin Beach
Combat Posture	Pre-deployment training and embarkation for Vietnam
Base of Operations	Camp Schwab, Okinawa
Corps Area	Not applicable — Okinawa

2. Commander's Summary

March was the battalion's last full month of preparation. “The period of 23 February 1966 to 5 April 1966 was a period of maximum training of units within the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines and the accumulation of supplies needed for Viet Nam,” the commander wrote. “The personnel situation stabilized within the battalion and the degree of unit cohesiveness within the units increased significantly.”

Every company, Hotel among them, spent eight days at the Counter-Guerrilla Warfare School in the Northern Training Area, with formal instruction, patrolling and a two-day guerrilla problem. On top of that came two days at the Land Mine and Demolition School and a day on the jungle lanes, day and night live firing, sniperscope instruction, helicopter support training, LVT training, and a forward observer school run by Battery E, 2/11, attended by 34 men from the letter companies and six from the 81mm mortar platoon. A rifle requalification detail of 161 men fired with an 81 percent qualification rate.

Battalion Landing Team 2/5 was activated again on 25 March, and 69 non-deployable Marines were transferred out. On 30 March operational and administrative control shifted from Regimental Landing Team 5 to the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade. The battalion closed the period with a four-day

amphibious landing exercise at Kin Beach and then embarked: “we are trained, ready, and eager to become a part of the military force in Viet Nam.”

3. Operations Overview

Operation / Activity	Dates	Description
Counter-Guerrilla Warfare School	March 1966	Eight days per company in the Northern Training Area of Okinawa — formal instruction, patrolling and a two-day guerrilla problem. Land Mine and Demolition School (two days) and the jungle lanes (one day) followed.
Supporting-arms and mobility training	March 1966	Helicopter support training and a forward observer school run by Battery E, 2/11 (34 men from the letter companies, six from the 81mm mortar platoon); one day of helicopter training per letter company; LVT training covering the employment of amphibian tractors in combat operations.
Battalion exercises	March 1966	Two command post exercises and a three-day battalion field exercise with attached units; a rifle requalification detail of 161 men fired with 81 percent qualifying.
BLT 2/5 activated; embarkation	25 March – early April 1966	BLT 2/5 was activated on 25 March and 69 non-deployables were transferred. Control shifted from RLT-5 to the 9th MAB on 30 March. A four-day amphibious landing exercise was held at Kin Beach before embarkation; the battalion sailed for Chu Lai on 8 April 1966.

4. Chronology of Company H Activities

Compiled from the battalion's command chronology report for 23 February – 5 April 1966, which records command changes and training by date but does not break activity down by company.

Date	Activity / Events
4 Mar	1stLt W. M. Kay became battalion S-1, relieving 1stLt D. R. West.
10 Mar	Fifty-seven seventeen-year-olds joined the battalion — the largest single influx of the Okinawa period; 34 of them were transferred before deployment. The same day Capt R. A. Hickethier, commanding Company F, was transferred to the 9th MAB and 1stLt G. S. Burgett took the company.
14 Mar	1stLt A. J. Boccuti joined as Motor Transport Officer, relieving 1stLt W. E. Smith.

Date	Activity / Events
18 Mar	Capt J. S. Cooper joined and took command of Company E, relieving 1stLt D. E. Marcum, who moved to H&S Company as liaison officer with the S-3 section.
Throughout Mar	Counter-Guerrilla Warfare School by company in the Northern Training Area; Land Mine and Demolition School; jungle lanes; day and night live firing; helicopter support and forward observer training; LVT training; two command post exercises and a three-day battalion field exercise.
25 Mar	Battalion Landing Team 2/5 activated by CG 1st Marine Division message; supporting units attached and 69 non-deployables transferred.
30 Mar	Operational and administrative control of the BLT shifted from Regimental Landing Team 5 to the 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade.
Late Mar – early Apr	A four-day amphibious landing exercise at Kin Beach, Okinawa, then embarkation. The tactical air control party had spent about two weeks on live-fire work in the Philippines beforehand. BLT 2/5 departed Okinawa for Chu Lai on 8 April 1966.

5. Notes and Caveats

This file was rewritten on 19 September 2026 directly from the 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines command chronologies. The notes below record what changed and where the record is thin.

1. SOURCE. The 2/5 command chronology report for 23 February – 5 April 1966 (Texas Tech item 1201048067) covers all of March. The Kin Beach landing exercise is recorded in the following report, for 13–30 April 1966 (item 1201048068).

2. TRAINING DETAIL CORRECTED. The earlier version of this file described a “Jungle Warfare School — Final Phase” with graduation activities and weekly phases. The record describes the Counter-Guerrilla Warfare School, eight days per company, plus mine and demolition training, the jungle lanes, supporting-arms schools and a battalion field exercise. The phase-by-phase dates in the old file were invented and have been removed.

3. THE 8 MARCH ANNIVERSARY. The old file marked 8 March as the anniversary of the 9th MEB landing at Da Nang. That is a general Marine Corps date, not an entry in this battalion's chronology, and it has been dropped.

4. NO COMPANY-LEVEL DETAIL. The report does not separate Hotel Company's training from the battalion's. The commanders' list of 5 April 1966 shows 1stLt J. J. Doherty still commanding the company.

5. ORIGINALS. National Archives and Records Administration, Record Group 127, Records of the United States Marine Corps. For full records contact National Archives II, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park MD 20740, or Marine Corps History Division, Quantico VA 22134.

6. Sources

This document was compiled from the following primary and secondary sources:

PRIMARY SOURCES

— 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology Report for the period 23 February 1966 to 5 April 1966, dated 5 April 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048067).

— 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology for the period 13–30 April 1966 (Texas Tech University Vietnam Archive item 1201048068).

SECONDARY SOURCES

— “Hotel Company.” Hotel 2/5 Combat Marines. https://hotel25vv.com/hotel-company

— Related files in this collection: H_Co_2-5_Marines_1966-04_April.docx.

Document prepared for historical research purposes. For authoritative casualty figures, unit rosters, and engagement details, consult original 2/5 Command Chronology records at NARA RG 127. | Hotel Company, 2/5 Marines, March 1966