

# The Imjin Scouts Patch

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On July 7, 1965, I reported for duty at the headquarters of the 2nd Infantry Division (“Indian Head”) at Camp Howze, ROK. Howze was located on the MSR a few miles south of Mun’san-i, which is on the south bank of the Imjin River. The Division covered the Main Line of Resistance (MLR) astride the Kaesong Corridor south of the Imjin on a west-east line between Munsan-i on the west to Changpo-ri in the east, with one brigade north of the river on the DMZ.

The river was bridged at both villages, presenting the planners with a dilemma any first year ROTC cadet with a map could immediately see: if the North Koreans wanted to bag an Allied brigade, they could do so by dropping the two bridges with artillery fire within the first five minutes of hostilities. If, on the other hand, they wanted the bridges left standing to facilitate their advance on Seoul, the Allies had to worry about when to blow the spans (which were heavily laden with demolitions) so as not to strand the friendlies north of the river. It was an exercise in timing, and the brass fretted about it constantly. The troops north of the Imjin were referred to as the Lost Brigade.

The 7th Infantry (“Hourglass”) Division was located to our south and east in and around Camp Casey, covering the Uijongbu Corridor. The 7th had no direct responsibilities for the DMZ, a division of ROKs being stationed between them and the Zone.

There were no civilians north of the Imjin in the area between the river and and the DMZ in those days. When the armistice was implemented on 27 July, 1953, the two sides each pulled back the prescribed two kilometers from the line of contact, establishing the Demilitarized Zone. The land, at least on our side of the Military Demarcation Line (MDL), had subsequently been allowed to return to nature. All the entrenchments, minefields, barbed wire, battle clutter and garbage (ration cans) had been left intact.. The border between North and South Korea was simply a strip of white Engineer tape laying on the ground. One



Figure 1. Jamison’s original design for Advanced Combat Training Academy



Figure 2. Design as approved with “Imjin Scouts” at top



Figure 3. Second version, with “DMZ” in base

could merely step across it. The DMZ was thickly forested and populated with deer, wild pigs, huge pheasants, and snakes. Both sides sent spies across the Zone, and both patrolled actively to intercept the other’s infiltrators.

In July, 1965, I was a 1LT of Infantry, straight out of C Company 2/505, 82d ABN, and fresh from Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. I reported at Howze less than a week following the exchange of colors between the 1St Cavalry (“Horse Blanket”) in Korea and the 2nd Infantry at Ft. Benning, and there was much bitching on the Korean side of the swap, mainly concerning the fact that the 2nd patch was smaller than the Cav’s (as was every other patch in the Army). It was felt that, because of fading patterns, the change would require everyone to purchase new uniforms.

I lucked into a plum assignment. I was given command of the Division NCO School at Camp McGovern, which was located approximately three miles east of Howze on the south slope of the Easy Queen Complex, one of the key positions on the MLR. McGovern was home to the newly-redesignated 2nd Battalion, 9d’ Infantry (the Manchu Raiders, until a week ago, 2nd Bn, 7d’ Cav). It was to take a long time for the troops to break themselves of saluting with “Gary Owen, Sir!” (The official greeting of the 9th Inf was “Keep up the fire, Sir!,” a relic of the Regiment dating from the Boxer Rebellion. Cynical young officers tended to respond to the official greeting with, “Bang f—kin’ bang.”)

The NCO School consisted of me, a half dozen senior NCO instructors, and a clerk. We taught a 7-day course covering administration, map reading, and tactics. We would teach three sessions back-to-back, then take a one-week cycle break.

In mid-August, 1965, classes were “temporarily” suspended at the order of Brigadier General Roland M. Glezser (USMA ’40), Assistant Division Commander for Operations. We were ordered to set up and conduct testing for the Expert Infantryman’s Badge (EIB), which we did.

It soon became apparent that we'd be doing EIB certification for a long time.

One afternoon in mid-September, 1965, I had a pair of drop-in guests appear in my orderly room. They were CPT George Maracek and 2LT Gerhart Frick. Maracek informed me that he had been commissioned by BG Glezser to establish a new, ambitious school for the Division. This new school was to be located north of the Imjin and concentrate on certifying troops for patrolling inside the Zone; but it was also to include mountaineering skills, foreign maps, demolitions, enemy weaponry and virtually anything else we wanted to throw in. Glezser wanted a showplace.

Maracek had been plucked out of the 23rd Infantry (stationed along the Zone) where he had already gained a certain amount of fame during his tour. In June, a patrol he was accompanying bounced a band of North Korean infiltrators. A nasty firefight ensued, during which George was wounded by grenade fragments. But he managed to capture an enemy 1LT and a couple of weapons (a PPS "burp gun" and an AK47).

George Maracek was one of the most colorful characters I was to meet in the Army. Czech born, he enlisted in the early 50's, and saw action during the Korean Conflict with the 2<sup>nd</sup> Division's 23rd Infantry ("Rock of Chickamauga"). Following the war, he obtained his commission and became a Green Beret. Prior to the current Korean assignment, he had earned a Silver Star in Viet Nam, no easy task in 1964. (George was to retire a full Colonel with a Distinguished Service Cross, a couple of Oak Leaf Clusters for his Silver Star, a Distinguished Flying Cross, and multiple Air Medals, Bronze Stars, Purple Hearts, and Legions of Merits). He was an extremely ambitious (in the early 90's, he aspired to the presidency of the Czech Republic), high-energy, "can do" soldier, and BG Glezser could not have chosen a better man to set up his showplace.

Frick was a Green Beret buddy of Maracek's, picked by George to assist in his organizational efforts. Gerhart was a 40-year-old recent graduate of OCS. A German veteran of WWII, Gerry was one of the most humorous and thoroughly delightful soldiers with whom I was to ever serve. On this day, George explained his plans for the new school, and announced that he had come from the General with an immediate mission in two parts, which were:

1. Develop a name for the school
2. Design a patch for it

We attacked the first part of the mission vigorously, with all the intensity of Madison Avenue admen in a brainstorming session. First decision: "school" would not be a part of the name. It was too bland. It lacked prestige. "Academy" would carry much more weight, so "Academy" it was. We discarded the term NCO as being too narrow - we had a much wider target audience in mind. But what were we doing? Well, training, obviously, so "Training" went into the mix. What kind of training? We batted around several words, but George kept coming back to "Combat." Still, isn't most training supposed to be about that? Ah... our training will be "Advanced!" We wrote it on the board in big letters: "Advanced Combat Training Academy." George and Gerry loved it. I thought it created a question as to whether we were offering advanced training or advanced combat, but the humor was too subtle for two soldiers for whom English was a second language. In any event, we not only had a name, we had an acronym! ACTA! I knew right away we were locked in and discretely retreated. The second mission involved patch design, and on this subject, the General had a couple of ideas. It was obviously to be a pocket patch. Specifically, he wanted it to include an arrowhead ("Like the 101st Recondo patch," explained George), and he wanted the Division's Indian Head logo included somehow.

To me, putting the Indian on the arrowhead and superimposing them on a map of Korea was a no-brainer. I took a 5x7 buckslip off my desk and sketched, with a ballpoint BIC, a rough rendering of what the patch was to actually become. George and Gerry said "Ja," and George wanted to take the sketch down to the village right away and have some made, but I objected. "Give me an hour."

George consented. While he was gone, I got a sheet of graph paper and a set of colored pencils and drew the patch twice the intended size in full color. (Figure 1) It should be noted that this initial design did not have the "Imjin Scout" legend at the top. The patch stopped at the Yalu. It was otherwise identical to the patch finally adopted.

Maracek came back on time, snatched the drawing, and then threw me a curve. "What does it mean?" he asked. "We've got to give the General an explanation of



Figure 4. DI for Advanced Combat Training Academy

the symbolism."

This was, actually, no great challenge. I was a former high school newspaper editor and speed-typing champion. I cranked a sheet of paper into my clerk's old manual typewriter, and in less than five minutes banged out a string of corny cliches. "The arrowhead of the 2nd Infantry Division pointed at our enemy's throat like a dagger ... ready to plunge north ....held in place only by the slender thread of the DMZ," etc., etc. I had trouble keeping a straight face. I knew George would buy it (he did), but hoped BG Glezser would see it for what it was and embarrass Maracek. To my great disappointment, Glezser swallowed it, too.

George took the scale drawing and the explanation and dashed off to the village, where he had five patches made. The following day, he took the package to Howze for review by Glezser. I spent the day with my feet on my desk, feeling smug. Until, that is, Maracek showed up at about 1400 hours. "We've got to change the patch. The General wants it to say 'Imjin Scouts.'"

I was offended and argued against the addition. I thought it was trite, unnecessary, and would unbalance the patch aesthetically. I was unaware that the term "Imjin Scouts" dated back to the war. But, no matter: 02's don't win arguments with 07's, so I suggested to George that he simply go back to the village and have the patch changed." No", he said, "we needed another drawing." I sent him away for a couple of hours while I did another scale drawing, sulking the entire time. Maracek had the drawing turned into a second group of five patches overnight. This version was approved and went into production .



The author wearing his DI creation on his right breast pocket



SFC Miguel Ramos, an NCO instructor at ACTA, wearing his Imjin Scouts patch on his right fatigues shirt pocket.

On 9 November, 1965, long after the matter had been settled, I mailed one of these patches home to my wife. It is this patch, one of the first five to be marked IMJIN SCOUTS, which is now in COL Dillingham's collection (Figure 2). Figure 3 was adopted later.

George and Gerry, entrepreneurial types, secured a source which produced patches at \$.13/each. We sold them to graduating students for \$.25.

After obtaining approval for the patch, we pushed the envelope. George wanted berets, but this was disapproved. The cadre was, however, permitted to wear dark blue baseball caps. I never understood the significance of the color. Since we were supposed to be leaders of the Division, we sought approval to wear green tabs on our epaulets; this was also disapproved.

One of our ideas met with limited success. We designed a DI which we intended to be worn on the epaulets of the Class A and B uniforms consisting of an Imjin Scout patch on a black shield the size and shape of the Division crest (Figure 4). It was disapproved for its intended use, but was al-



Capt. George Maracek wearing the DI on his "crown".

lowed as a hat device for enlisted cadre, and all ranks could wear it on the right pocket of Class A's and B's. It should be noted that the patch used on the crest is my original design, i.e., without the Imjin Scout logo on the patch itself. The Scout legend does appear across the top of the shield, however. My crest, one of the original batch, is also in COL Dillingham's collection.

We moved into our new compound

north of the river 10 November, 1965. It was a tent city, deliberately - we lived, ate, slept and taught under canvas. We named it Camp Sitman, and we opened for business with our first class on 2 December 1965. The curriculum ran 22 days and the average working day exceeded 12 hours.

Glezser got his showplace - while I was there, virtually every flag officer in the Pacific Theater, to include ADM U. S. Grant Sharp (CINCPAC), came to see us. We were

designated the official school of 8th Army. And it was a career builder, too, for the original 40 cadre who opened the school.

I make no claim to the paternity of the Imjin Scout patch. It was a collaborative effort, involving Glezser, Maracek, Frick and me. I was, at best, only one of the contributors. But I did put it together on paper in both of its iterations, and, even though I didn't like the final version, still think of it as "mine".