

## THE HISTORY OF "BATTLLEDOWN"

"Battledown," as it is now known, was first originated at Fort Knox, Kentucky, by Lt Col Ralph F. Miles now deputy squadron commander of the 24th Constabulary Squadron. In 1943 it was first used as a training medium, to provide soldiers with training in hand-to-hand combat tactics. It was held each week during the operation of the battle training for all the troops stationed at Fort Knox until 1944 when the battle training was discontinued.

Not until 1949 did "Battledown" again appear among the troops of the US Army, this time at

Camp Hood, (now Fort Hood) Texas, during a sports carnival conducted by the Second Armored Division. Once again it was organized and this time it was given the name of "Battledown." And once again Lt Col Miles was the man who put on the event. This time "Battledown" was so successful and drew so much attention from the press and public that the Special Service Branch of the Department of the Army requested detailed plans of "Battledown." This was accomplished by Lt Col Miles, who has become known as, "The Father of Battledown," just prior to his joining this Squadron.



While defenders brace themselves before flag, white shirted attackers slug and claw their way up the final barrier through ankle-deep mud

## MAYHEM IN THE MUD

THE ARMY "PLAYS" A GAME CALLED BATTLEDOWN

In 1943 an Army major named Ralph Miles, remembering the childhood game of "capture the flag," invented an adult version which he called "battledown." Designed to toughen recruits and provide training in tactics and leadership, battledown had more in common with Bastogne than with any boys' game. Last fall, when he was stationed at Camp Hood, Texas, Major Miles introduced his game there. Recently eight battalion teams from the 2nd Armored Division squared off in the mud for a battledown tournament. The 35 members of each team, wearing boxing gloves, attack from opposite ends of a field obstructed by hummocks and muddy pits. Almost any type of assault was permitted, the objective being to down the opponents' flag. The game is not especially popular with the men, who call it "murder pits." The Camp Hood tourney resulted in no fatalities, but it produced 11 minor casualties and some of the muddiest Americans since Guadalcanal.



THE TEAMS ATTACK as battledown begins. Attackers must cross center hummock between white helmeted referees. Each team leaves several men behind to defend flag.

"Life" Magazine reports on "Battledown"



24<sup>th</sup> CONSTABULARY SQUADRON

