

THE IMPACT OF PHYSICAL QUALITIES ON THE TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPECIFIC TRAINING OF THE FIGHTER OPERATING IN EXTREME CONDITIONS

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ABSTRACT:

The war carried out in extreme conditions requires exceptional training involving a degree of difficulty far above most situations encountered on the battlefield, because, on the one hand, the fighter performs missions in conditions totally different from those of a classic warfare and, on the other on the other hand, he must face special physical and mental demands. In order to be able to meet all the demands imposed by the hardness and complexity of these areas of action, it is necessary for the fighters who act in such environments to have a versatile training. Along with the intellectual, technical, tactical and psychological training, the physical component of the training plays a basic role, which in my opinion constitutes a pivot of all the other components of the training. In the paper, along with the demands and rigors of extreme environments, there are presented a series of benefits of an exceptional physical training which, by ensuring a solid motor capacity, also ensures a part of the mental preparation for the fight, elements that are the basis of the training and consolidation of specific combat aptitudes and skills.

KEYWORDS:

Warfare, extreme conditions, physical training, combat technique

1. Introduction

The military operations carried out in the last period of time highlight the fact that warfare has changed its configuration, the forces of the armed forces being resized, placing great emphasis on the qualitative part and especially on the specific training for carrying out certain types of missions. Conceptions regarding the nature, causes, and conduct of wars began to improve and evolve as human society in its turn began to evolve.

The military actions carried out in extreme conditions require deep transformations in the training process of the fighters. In this complex process, the aim is basically to obtain a level of training close to the ideal, which ensures the maximization of the action capacity of the fighters in any

terrain, weather conditions or season, state of the weather, actions of the enemy, physical fatigue or mental strain. The fighter who acts in extreme conditions must benefit from a very good intellectual, technical, tactical, physical and psychological training because the military actions carried out in these conditions impose requirements to the human body to the maximum.

Therefore, the adaptation to the modern battlefield and the achievement of interoperability, capability and standardization of our own military structures in relation to those of the allies includes, in addition to an endowment with modern equipment, a superior training of the human resource which remains fundamental by excellence.

2. Characteristics of the training of fighters who operate in extreme conditions

Carried out in extreme conditions, this type of missions is extremely demanding because they involve a level of difficulty far above most combat actions *“permanently imposed by the uncertainty and heightened unpredictability of the situations in which they are designed”* (Udeanu, 2015). Since the enemy forces create a state of permanent insecurity, the risks in these situations are very high, as well as particularly dangerous, and the physical and mental overload of the fighters is extremely high.

The fighter will have to show flexibility, mobility and efficiency in order to face violent, high-intensity military and non-military confrontations and a great ability to adapt to a harsh regime of life, preparation and training as close to reality as possible.

In addition to all these aspects specific to training, the fighter will certainly have to have the necessary equipment with the technical characteristics that ensure protection according to the specifics of the operations area from a ballistic, communications or NBC point of view.

Therefore, a multitude of factors will contribute to the formation of a high-performance, creative fighter who can face the intense demands imposed by the specificity of these types of missions.

2.1. Aspects specific to military actions carried out in extreme conditions

The character of these types of military operations is given, on the one hand, by the natural characteristics and, on the other hand, by the complexity of the operational contexts.

The natural characteristics specific to certain geographical areas do not exactly offer favorable conditions for the conduct of military actions. This environment determined by the natural characteristics requires soldiers and fighters with a very

high and advanced training, a special equipment, and also an appropriate adaptation in terms of the performance of the combat technique and the armament. These geographical areas are mostly known to impose maximum demands to the biological, psychological and motor qualities of the fighters, but also to the functioning of the armament and combat technique provided. Some of these geographical areas are:

- alpine areas in the mountainous regions located at altitudes of over 2,000 m, which complicate the deployment of military actions;
- jungles, marshy regions and delta areas;
- regions situated in snow in very severe winter conditions;
- desert areas, where the lack of water is the main enemy;
- areas usually heavily affected by natural disasters.

Not to take into consideration the characteristics of the environment and of the climate in which the military actions are to be carried out is a big mistake, as they can cause a series of problems both in terms of the training, as well as of the functioning at optimal parameters of the combat technique and the armament in the endowment.

The complexity of these operational contexts strictly refers to the deployment and planning of missions or combat actions, characterized by the uncertainty of some necessary information about the enemy, such as the disposition of enemy forces, the potential of their military structures, which automatically leads to the reduction of some possibilities of decrease and prevention of surprise, these having a negative impact in terms of maintaining cooperation, the constant replenishment of the troops, and also their support by the echelons at the rear of the battlefield, that is, by the higher echelons.

If we refer to the characteristics of the military actions carried out under these conditions, a first element that defines them, according to some reputable

specialists, is complexity. Due to the countless events taking place today, hybrid threats are or will become increasingly difficult to anticipate and counter, due to the rapid pace of production and emergence, as well as to their complexity and diversity, the involvement of a large number of factors and actions.

Another characteristic is vulnerability, determined by the lack of identification elements, the precision in the effort to discover the nature of the enemy's forces, their location as well as the specific characteristics related to the equipment or the operating system. Regarding the processes of planning, organization and respectively of decentralized execution of the command, the lack of geographical delimitation and difficulty in determining the main points of the adversary make countering the threats specific to these areas all the more difficult to achieve.

Another characteristic is complementarity, which is generated by the ability to use the specific advantages of each type of forces, in order to increase the operational efficiency. The use of irregular tactics, i.e. asymmetric actions that are most often specific to an opponent inferior in terms of action capacity and that does not have the possibility to act in these ways. The opponent's vulnerability can be lessened by using tactics with ingenuity. Adaptability, another characteristic, involves the application of conventional means simultaneously with non-conventional ones, as well as their permanent adaptation to the existing situations.

Nevertheless, also from this point of view, the most significant combat actions in which the combatants are exposed to a very advanced and high degree of danger due to the extreme character of these military confrontations are the following:

- military operations in circumstances when a part of the own forces is isolated from the main forces;
- military combat operations carried out in encirclement;

- combat actions carried out during the retreat;

- actions involving the crossing of large water streams;

- combat actions carried out in urban places mostly affected by bombings, explosions or large-scale fires;

- combat actions carried out in areas where the initiative is on the side of guerilla or insurgent formations;

- combat actions carried out in chemically, bacteriologically and radioactively contaminated areas (Floca, 1999).

Clearly, the delta sections, the mountainous areas, the jungles, the desert regions, as well as the natural disasters strongly influenced by bombings, floods or collapses, etc., amplify the demands on the fighters to the maximum, making their action much more difficult, so that the rhythmicity of their actions, which were specified in the operations plan and now are performed in extreme and difficult conditions, will decrease categorically.

In addition, within the framework of military actions, the extreme character is also highlighted by the operational context, one that is not entirely ordinary, in which military structures are engaged and which invoke a high degree of risk and insecurity followed by a space in which everything is entirely under enemy control. Undoubtedly, the difficult natural operational framework of military operations in combination with the natural context maximizes the extreme nature of operations. The diversity of military operations carried out in conditions of prolonged effort, against the background of an extreme massive load, in climate and relief conditions that physically demand the fighter's body to the maximum, can reduce to the maximum the efficiency in carrying out specific actions and even paralyze the fighting capacity of the combatants (Stănciulescu, 2017).

2.2. The contribution of physical qualities to the training of the fighter who operates in extreme conditions

Success in the execution of combat missions carried out in such a space presupposes the training of fighters with special physical qualities who can make the most of their moral, physiological and motor capacities necessary to fulfill the missions.

In this context, the physical training process of the fighter becomes imperative, so that he acquires a physical potential commensurate with the demands, with a view of adapting his body to the functional efforts that the combat requires.

Seen as a process of adapting the body to the efforts imposed by the fulfillment of combat, through the development of strength and resistance to higher parameters, through ensuring some indicators of speed and skill, or through perfecting some basic and applicative-motor aptitudes and capacities, the physical training of the body must ensure the fighter the ability to permanently adapt to the changes occurring on the battlefield.

In order to face these challenges, the fighter must have an organism resistant to prolonged physical effort, must dispose of the strength necessary to carry out combat actions where the fire of individual weapons cannot be used, and show skill and mobility to overcome the existing obstacles.

The manifestation of the basic motor qualities – speed, dexterity, strength and resistance – is to be found in combat actions, in the conditions of real confrontation, substantially contributing to obtaining self-confidence, calmness or self-control, and to ensuring high morale. Good physical training can be found in the agility of the fighters, in their speed of reaction, as well as in the possibilities to apply attack and self-defense techniques with ease and efficiency.

The result of a well-conceived and efficiently conducted training is found in the formation of well-motivated fighters, self-confident, with a great power of concentration and with a well-developed body, resistant to specific efforts.

The results of an exceptional physical training can be found in the success achieved by the American, British and other states' soldiers who participated in consecrated wars. The success in battle of the British army in the Falkland Islands, or of the Americans in Afghanistan and Iraq is also due to a special physical training that allowed the bodies of the fighters to easily adapt to the climate and relief conditions, and also to carry out exceptional military actions at an increased speed and resistance rate (Clausewitz, 1982). During their captivity in Vietnam, many American soldiers declared that physical activities were the things that managed to keep them alive because they provided them with a good state of physical and mental health, as well as with psychological comfort, helping them to endure the harsh conditions of life in captivity for 5-6 years (Jensen, 2014).

Physical training increases productivity and mental alertness, promotes cohesion and the degree of maintenance and development of the combat capacity, substantially contributing to the formation of a well-prepared fighter, able to withstand the tension and stress of combat. It must determine the maximization of the moral-volitional and physical components of the combat capacity, help to increase the general mental and physical health, develop a resistance to the states of fatigue, fear, panic and hunger. Physical training contributes with a multitude of physical and mental stress factors during the fight, developing the combative spirit, determination, courage and group cohesion (Jones, Smith, Burns, Braithwaite & Turner, 2020).

A good physical training leads to the increase of the power of survival in unfavorable combat conditions and helps to quickly solve various problems encountered in the accomplishment of missions.

Here are the specific objectives of physical training:

- increasing the ability to act quickly by using the weapons and equipment provided in the conditions of fighting the battle, while moving and stationary;

- training and developing resistance to long physical efforts, when moving on foot, in vehicles, in difficult terrain and climate conditions, as well as increasing the capacity to endure static and reduced mobility positions for a long time;

- development of physical strength, for loading and unloading materials on vehicles and boats;

- increasing the speed of reaction and execution of the neuro-motor coordination in the execution of the movements of handling weapons and combat technique;

- adapting and increasing the body's physical resistance to sudden changes in temperature and pressure;

- quick and efficient adaptation to the special physical and mental demands of the battlefield;

- increasing the capacity of resistance to long efforts;

- optimum morphofunctional indices, corresponding to the specific requirements of conducting combat actions;

- development of resistance and strength specific to close combat.

Countering the negative effects generated by a poor physical condition is achieved through intense training programs, intelligently conceived and rigorously applied in which the efforts have a high degree of maximization, but the results are extremely beneficial (Dragnea & Mate-Teodorescu, 2002). Here are only some of the benefits of exceptional physical training:

- increased ability of the fighter to carry out close combat actions with great efficiency, as well as to act at a speed rate by using individual weapons or combat techniques;

- adaptation of the body to any type of effort that the combat requires;

- increasing the body's resistance to sudden changes in temperature or pressure;

- ensuring some indicators of development of an exceptional motor capacity, allowing the performance of any physical activities;

- developing the ability to withstand stress;

- increasing productivity, and promoting the level of survival in terms of the combat capacity.

This type of training is extremely beneficial for the militaries operating in extreme conditions.

The continuous development and improvement of the physical skills (general and specific physical resistance, physical strength, agility, coordination in complex situations) and of the combatant skills contribute to the achievement of self-confidence, perseverance, courage, determination, develop the spirit and mentality of a winner and ensures excellent health.

3. Conclusions

The continuous physical demands due to a wide variety of combat actions carried out in not quite usual, more extreme conditions, such as those resulting from natural causes (cold, heat, marshy areas, areas affected by natural disasters, etc.) can strongly affect the combat ability of unprepared fighters at a level at least above a normal level of training. Intense physical training, performed in accordance to major standards, can allow fighters to go through even more demanding conditions, at the same time being able to have a very high level of effort and fighting. Physical activities carried out repeatedly, performed daily, can teach fighters how to control and coordinate their bodies, strengthening their muscles, improving their reflexes, increasing the elasticity of their joints, thus helping them to obtain a better acquisition of the motor aptitudes and skills and a much more advanced physical and moral balance than before.

It is extremely important for the fighter to manage the impact that the battlefield has on his mind and body so that he can adapt his body to the demands of each mission.

The solution for all these situations is the systematic and continuous development of physical activities in order to ensure special physical qualities that provide the pivot on which to support the other components of the specific training.

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