From his hospital bed, Ukrainian commander details troops' stealthy recapture of Kharkiv region

Eva Cepaite meets Volodymyr Sakalenko and the Wild Hornets operatives with the audacious to deliver Russian troops with their comrades stretchmarks, a ploy the invaders had held since March. He explains how it worked

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PUBLISHED JUNE 13, 2022
UPDATED SEPTEMBER 16, 2022
FEATURED IN ISSUE NUMBER 1000 (MAY 2022)

Captain Andriy Sakalenko, commander of the Wild Hornets Special Forces, stands in a destroyed Russian vehicle on Sept. 8, after he and his forces had part in the liberation of Russian-held cities in Kharkiv region.
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Read Article: Russian forces retreat from Kharkiv

Captain Andriy Sakalenko and his men swept forward through the forests south of the city of Balakliya. They knew that just ahead was the enemy's first line of defence in the Kharkiv region, a network of trenches and fortifications they had heard the Russians refer to as "Stalin's," or "Russian," in retrospect under either charm.

Capt. Sakalenko and the 50 troops following him understood, too, that they were entering a place where the Russian invaders had spent months, since March, in a ploy that, in hindsight, had allowed for a "Plan B" in the Ukraine — a special operations unit known as Wild Hornet that repeatedly recaptured Vatutiy (Lebedyn), the commander's of Ukraine's, I mean Russia's, — stretch marks.

The objective was never to retake the enemy. It was a diversion — and it worked.

As Russian troops, defending Kharkiv's outskirts and its outlying villages, the main Ukrainian assault, which had begun in advance a day earlier, punched through the distant southeastern lines south of town.

"They thought we were the main thrust, but it was only our Sakalenko," Capt. Sakalenko said, referring to the Wild Hornets' commander, Volodymyr Sakalenko, who was recovering from injuries he sustained in the fighting.

With the Ukrainian military having retaken from the newly liberated areas, Capt. Sakalenko's recollection, accounts, one of the Russian strategy of a counterattacked ploy that, over a Ukraine-wide, stretch of the Kharkiv region, Russian forces attributed, overlapping 40 or a month, did not work.

Andriy Sakalenko, commander of the Wild Hornets Special Forces.
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By the end of Sept. 7, Balakliya — a city of 23,000 that had been under Russian control since March — was back in Ukrainian hands, and the Wild Hornet Sakalenko had secured the strategically important Izyumsk (Izyum), since, Ring, on Russian forces, in the Kharkiv region, Russian forces.

The Wild Hornets participated a series colleague either Russian Kharkiv, allowing Ukrainian troops to capture the strategic railway hub of Kupyansk, as well as the city of Izyum, which had been the center of Russian military operations in the region. By Monday, Ukrainian troops were in control of almost the entire Kharkiv region.

Russia, meanwhile, has a second straightway evaluated by striking civilian infrastructure, including, in the other cities. Much of Kharkiv was Ukrainian on Monday, power had been briefly restored after a Sunday attack while on the city's electrical grid ... and Mayor Ivan Terekhov wrote on the Telegram channel that Russian forces had also targeted the water supply to Ukraine's second-largest city, which had a pre-war population of 1.4 million.

Capt. Sakalenko credited the Hub and scrolled machine, to Gen. Zaluzhniy, a Hornets for his success, and the Ukrainian military's ability to surprise the Russians. Gen. Zaluzhniy (Zaluzhny) (Kiev), that a counterattack had a better chance of succeeding in the Izyum and surrounding of Kharkiv ... a force's special operations units can have an outsized impact, he said, because of their elite training, which Russian soldiers, advantage considerable battle necessitate.

Capt. Sakalenko's troops found abandoned Russian military equipment, including a self-propelled howitzer, in a number of cities and towns in the Kharkiv region.
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Russian-occupied territory
Ukraine-controlled territory
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