

---

# THE SHAMROCK

Newsletter of the Fightin' Irish Battalion

---

Vol. XXI, No. 2

Winter 1996

---

## Cadets Get a Chance to "Show their Stuff" at Dixon Challenge

By C/SSG Christian Nafziger

Dixon Challenge. Now you realize why your lab instructors would say, "You will have to know this for Dixon."

The Challenge began on Thursday, 5 Dec, this year. Something different about this year was that competition was held between platoons whereas, in previous years it was amongst squads. The first event was a modified APFT; the platoons were tested in pushups, situps, and pullups.

However, the day of Dixon Challenge was two days later. Cadets, many of whom had dances the night before, made the early wake-up call. The first event of the day, at 0700, was the camouflage station. After the platoons were judged on their ability to camouflage themselves and their equipment, they were dismissed to their assigned station. There were four other stations, each one testing pertinent material the cadets had learned throughout this semester.

One of those stations was the hand grenade assault course. In this course, two platoons were pitted head to head in two parallel lanes. This would introduce an added level of competition. There were three targets in the lane, testing the three throwing positions. Cadets were allowed


two grenades per target, if needed, and cadets were graded on total time through the course plus any penalties accrued, such as equipment lost or poor throwing form.

Another station was the weapons station. In this station the MS I and II's performed a functions check on the M16A1 rifle. At the same time the MS III's were tasked to put an M60 into operation and to fill out a range card for the M60.

Drill and ceremony was the next station. For some juniors, it was their first opportunity to call commands. Cadets were tasked to follow

commands and keep in step. One of the best aspects of this station is that it allowed platoons to act as one cohesive unit, rather than a group of individuals.

The CTT station was comprised of many tasks covered in labs throughout the semester. Five events were judged here. They were: set-up of the PRC-77 and TA-312 and to communicate on a them by MS II or III's, set-up of a claymore by an MS III, and treatment for shock and pressure dressing by MS I's.

Overall, it was a great day and an excellent competition. Dixon Challenge provided cadets with an opportunity to demonstrate their military proficiency and develop esprit de corps. The winning platoon was A2 with a score of 46 out of 60 points. Enjoy the patch. For those who did not win, keep your heads high, for your time to shine will come. 



Battalion Commander C/LTC Matt Audette presnets the Dixon Challenge 1996 streamer to Alpha Company. C/ISG Shane Bigelow and C/SSG John Kuka post the guidon for the presentation.

## ***Letter from the Professor of Military Science, LTC O'Brien***

### **Letter from the Professor of Military Science**

Dixon Challenge was great!! The weather cooperated nicely; you all were motivated and prepared for the challenges of the day; and the MS IVs did a great job planning, coordinating, and executing a fun-filled, yet stimulating, competition. Congratulations to you all for your enthusiasm and performance. Special kudos to the seniors for their innovative approach to the day. We all learned a lot about teamwork, motivation, and coordination.

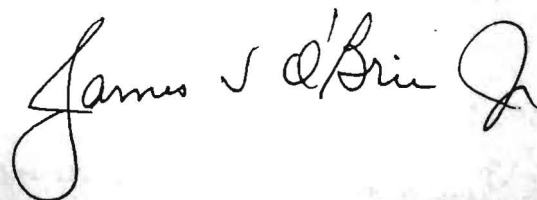
Last week, the MS IVs learned of their "accessions results", that is—were they selected for active duty, reserve forces duty, or education delay; and what branch would they be entering. Although there were a few surprises, the majority of seniors received their first duty choice and one of their top three branch picks. While the needs of the Army always have the highest priority, clearly you remain "in the driver's" seat be doing as well as you can in all Cadet Evaluation System (CES) evaluation—these include overall grade point average (GPA), Advanced Camp performance, and on-campus/ROTC order of merit (OML) and evaluation. GPA is something that we can all work on well before our senior year.

...And speaking of GPA—it's finals time again. I want each of you to do as well as you possibly can in each of your courses. This means quality study time (NOT last minute cramming!!), working together in study groups, and asking questions of your peers and professors when you don't understand something. While it is getting late in the semester, do the above now—rather than the night before the final. Be smart in your finals week preparation. Minimize those "all-nighters" and get adequate rest. Exercise your bodies—it helps to reduce the stress that you might feel. Ensure appropriate food consumption during the week—starving yourself or binge eating upsets the balance of your body's chemistry and may add to your exam week stress. Above all, keep everything in proper perspective. As always, we cadre are here to support you in any possible way.

On behalf of the cadre, my wife Carolyn and I wish you all a peaceful and enjoyable holiday season. We hope that your break from school is a time of great personal joy and love with your families. Take a break and have fun. Above all, consider safety in all that you will do. Come back in January rested and ready to resume your studies.

I am proud to be associated with each of you. Best of the holidays!!

GO IRISH!!!



## Branch Assignments Arrive For Eager MSIV's

By C/LTC Matt Audette

The 'big day' finally came. All of the waiting, wondering, and worrying could finally come to an end. The ROTC Accessions & Branching process for 1997 was coming nearer to a close on 5 Dec 1996 as cadets all across the country were notified of their selection status and like many others, I found myself asking the question, "Just how do they make their decisions, anyhow?" Well, today is your lucky day because I am about to provide you with the first overview of a process which for some of you (MSI's and MSII's) may seem a long way off, but for others (MSIII's) it is soon to become an obsession. I guarantee it.

To begin, I would like to emphasize the importance of setting the tone for your cadet career right away. The accessions process doesn't begin when you're sitting at a desk full of papers, nearly in tears, trying to find your future and decide exactly how you will "be all that you can be." Don't be one of the people who waits until your MSIII year to get interested in ROTC (and school) with your primary rationale being the fact that you are afraid of that place that I like to refer to as "at camp." Your preparation has already started - as an MSI - and should continue so that by the time you find yourself eating a hefty helping of Chili Mac "at camp" you are ready to excel.

Why all this talk of camp? That's easy. It is a major portion of the accessions process, as well as a place you won't soon forget. (You too, will want to make it the subject of all your conversation!) The score you earn at camp will undoubtedly play a large part in the likelihood of your getting the assignment that dreams are made of. And as I have told you before, it will come sooner than you ever imagined.

Once you've done all of the preliminary work - the big stuff like

completing three years of college along with three hard years of ROTC, completing your tour "at camp," and have made it back to campus for one last year, the paper work trail affectionately known as accessions officially begins. In the first few weeks of school you are invited to decide exactly how you would like to spend the next four years of your life. For some, this deliberation process lasts all of about five minutes. For others, the process lasts up until the last minute, when you see them scrambling around the office making little changes here and there with an *ever-smiling-despite-wanting-to-kill-you* Joan officiating every time you change your mind (and she has to change your paperwork). The whole

*"... you might be given an unexpected assignment which will require you to accept it"*

process culminates with her sending in the packets 100% error free (It's true!! Congratulations Joan Golubski, Secretary of the Army).

Once the packets are sent to Cadet Command, they are ordered into a national order of merit list (OML) according to an even weighting of your GPA, your "at camp" score, and an OML compiled by the PMS. Once the national OML is created, the files go to the Army personnel command (PERSCOM) board who will select each cadet for either active duty, reserve forces duty, educational delay, and for those to which it applies, branch detail.


The decisions at PERSCOM are made according to a predetermined set of criteria about how many will get each branch as well as who and how many will get active duty, reserve forces duty, etc. For active duty, greater than 70% of scholarship cadets must be assigned. The key here, as well as the whole process, is the needs of the Army, as

they will undoubtedly come first when decisions are made.

Understanding this now will prepare you for the day when you might be given an unexpected assignment which will require you to accept it. Once the results are tabulated, they are essentially final.

This year's MSIV class has been notified of their branch assignments and their duty status. A new category was added called Immediate Active Duty and was assigned to 27 of our cadets. These cadets, which include myself, will officially be on active duty upon commissioning. We begin drawing pay immediately, and are invited to take some of our allotted four weeks of leave time to get our lives in order prior to heading off to either OBC, "at Camp," or a Gold Bar Recruiter.

Immediate active duty differs from the traditional active duty selections, of which we have 16, where the new Lieutenant does not enter active duty officially until they report for Officer Basic Course, which typically happens within a few months of commissioning.

Seven MSIV's were selected for Reserve Forces duty, four for educational delay, and of the total group, five were branch detailed. If you have questions about this process or are looking for advice, I suggest you speak with the MSIV's who have just completed the process. As always, I am confident you will find them an endless source of wisdom. Personally, I believe the process is a fair one. I am certain it is difficult for the Army to decide the futures of so many young officers, especially given the wide array of preferences. The large number of variables make this process all the more difficult. You will undoubtedly hear comments from seniors who feel rewarded by the process, yet there are bound to be others who feel cheated. My advice is to prepare for anything, maintain a positive attitude, and drive on. 

# Ranger Challenge Competition 1996

## "Pushing the Mind and Body to the Limit"

By C/SFC Michelle Marcotte

While most students were either watching the Air Force-Notre Dame game or en-route to a home-cooked meal, several Army ROTC cadets were engaging in more pleasant activities, like throwing grenades or navigating through the woods. On 18-20 October, the Notre Dame Ranger Challenge teams competed in their new region against 12 other teams. This year's competition was located at Fort Custer, Michigan (the site of the fall FTX). This competition was the culmination of six weeks of rigorous training for both the men's and women's Fighting Irish Ranger Challenge teams.

When cadets arrived for the weekend, they were greeted by Colonel Guy A. Berry, the Iron Brigade Commander, in the opening ceremony. Next, they dove straight into a written exam that no sane ROTC cadet would be able to "ace." After this forty-five minute grueling test of military intellect, the Irish Ranger cadets went back to their barracks to get some rest, preparing for the next day's rigors.

Saturday began at 0400 as cadets woke up to get ready for the 0500 Army Physical Fitness Test. Every Notre Dame cadet bettered their previous APFT scores, and all nine members of the male team ran the two mile course in under 13

minutes. After the PT test, the Irish Ranger cadets prepared themselves for the rest of the day. The 14 teams were split into four groups. Each team in the group was sent to the same event at the same time throughout the day.

The first event was rope bridging. The teams had to build a rope bridge over water. They must then successfully cross the water on the bridge that they built. The rope bridging event was followed by land navigation. A Ranger Challenge squad was given forty locations to be found on a map within a time limit of 90 minutes. The third event was weapons assembly; consisting of the M60 machine gun and the M16 rifle. Not only did the weapons have to correctly

assembled, but also done quickly, as it is a timed event. The fourth event in the cycle was the hand grenade assault course. Irish Ranger cadets had to engage three

*"Ranger Challenge presents ROTC Cadets with a learning tool they can find nowhere else."*

targets with only five grenades to use on them. After the cycle of events had finished, both Notre Dame's male and female teams had the opportunity to rest before the intense 10K road march, which would take place at 1700.

Perhaps more important than the technical competence learned through Ranger Challenge training was the valuable lesson of working as a



The Ranger Challenge women's team, led by C/CPT Christine Premeske (far right), ran a 10K time that dominated some competitors men's teams.



*MSII Rachel Cuenca rears back to lob a grenade on the Ranger Challenge Hand Grenade Assault course.*

team. The OIC of the rope bridge complimented the Notre Dame men's and women's teams for having the best teamwork of any school competing. Both teams proved themselves worthy of this praise, and when the day was done, the Notre Dame Rangers felt both accomplishment and pride.

As the only all female team competing in Ranger Challenge, the ND women knew they would have to work extremely hard. With only one returning Ranger, C/SSG Alice Caruso, and one senior, team captain C/CPT Christine Premeske, the road ahead was sketchy. But throughout the training, the women learned their strengths and weaknesses and understood how to use each of them to their advantage. They proved themselves successful when, at the end of the 10K road march, they had accomplished every goal they had set for themselves.

The men's team also proved themselves successful. With six seniors returning to compete, led by C/CPT Seth Roy, the training seemed like a breeze. One week before competition,

though, C/2LT Ben Rost broke his toe. This presented a minor setback for the men's team as they had to readjust their 10K and land navigation times. Overcoming adverse conditions, they placed fourth overall and had the fastest time on the rope bridge event.

Ranger Challenge presents ROTC Cadets with a learning tool they can find nowhere else. For the seniors, it was their chance to lead a group and share their knowledge gained at Camp All-American. The juniors

**Shamrock Staff**

*Editor*  
C/1LT Chris Stein

*Assistant Editor*  
C/SSG Alice Caruso

*Photography*  
C/1LT Chris Stein  
C/1LT David Buckley  
C/SFC Suzanne Inzzerillo

*Information Management*  
C/2LT Nestor Ojeda

*Advisors*  
Captain Patrick Walsh  
Captain Richard Ward

were in prime position to benefit from this knowledge. As one of three MSIII Rangers, C/SFC Suzanne Inzzerillo stated, "Rangers gave me opportunities to experience a little bit of camp that I wouldn't have normally had otherwise." The sophomores and freshmen put themselves far ahead of the game. Joining Ranger Challenge gave them the opportunity to practice some leadership roles. Finally, as Cadet Zach Perry said, "Rangers extends what you believe to be your limits, both mentally and physically."



*The Ranger Challenge men's team, led by C/CPT Seth Roy (far right), finishes strong during the 10K.*

## United States Notre Dame Command Poses A Promising Agenda for What Lies Ahead

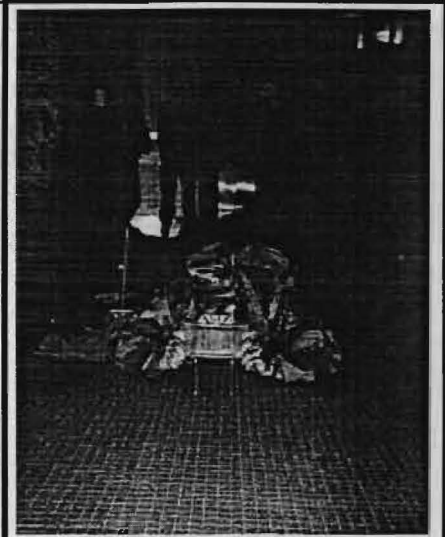
By C/MAJ Eric Strong

In order to foster better understanding and cooperation among the Army, Navy and Air Force Reserve Officer Training Corps programs at the University of Notre Dame, the Joint Council was formed, approximately four years ago. In the past, the Council was organized and operated in much the same manner as the Joint Chiefs of Staff operate. Each program appointed a representative to the Joint Council and one branch would appoint a second person to be the Chairman. The responsibility of chairing the Joint Council would rotate on a yearly basis from service to service. The activities of the Joint Council were best reflected in such events as the Veteran's Day retreat ceremony, the Joint Mass, the Joint Ball, and the Presidential Pass and Review. Despite the success of the Joint Council, a formalized command

structure did not exist prior to this year.

The 1996/97 academic year brought with it the formalization of the Joint Council. Now, the Council is known as United States Notre Dame Command, which is headed by a Commander in Chief (CINC) and a representative from each service, known as a Joint Liaison Officer. The appointed member from each service serves as a liaison between his ROTC detachment and the other detachments at Notre Dame. The liaison officer keeps his respective branch informed of the proposed joint ventures, and the requested support required from each service.

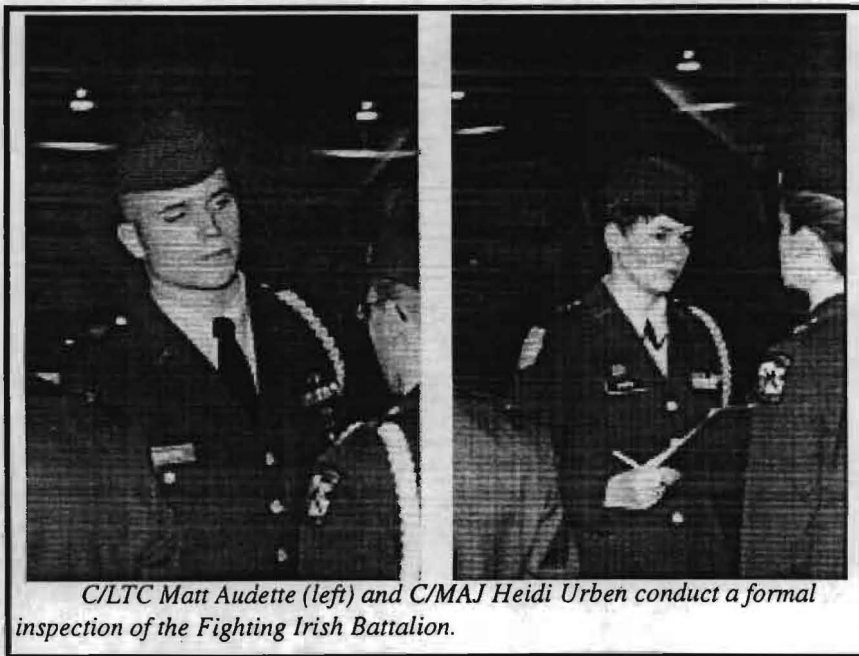
Despite the formal name change, United States Notre Dame Command, differs only slightly from the past. United States Notre Dame Command is still responsible for events like the Veteran's Day ceremony and the



*An MSIII aims an M18A1 Claymore Mine during Dixon Challenge '96.*

Joint Ball. The United States Notre Dame Command member in charge of the individual events is known as a Joint Task Force Commander. For instance, Cadet Major Dan Munter was in charge of the Veteran's Day Ceremony. Coordinating such an event without help from other services would have been a nightmare. Therefore, assisting Cadet Munter were a number of Army, Navy and Air Force personnel appointed by their respective services to the Veteran's Day Ceremony Task Force. Although Cadet Munter is in the Air Force, the ceremony was truly a joint adventure due to the number of personnel from other services assisting Cadet Munter.

Next semester USNDC will be responsible for planning the Joint Ball on 31 January, the Presidential Pass and Review, and Commissioning Ceremonies, along with a multitude of other events. With the formalization that accompanies United States Notre Dame Command, it is hoped that a better understanding of the responsibilities of a Joint Staff will be formulated, so that future operations and future commands will find the road to a successful joint operation a little easier to travel.



*C/LTC Matt Audette (left) and C/MAJ Heidi Urben conduct a formal inspection of the Fighting Irish Battalion.*



# Irish Eyes Were Smilin' When the *JFK* Came to Dublin

By 2LT Andrew Dekever, '95

As officers and future officers of the United States Army, we are taught that no game plan is set in stone, and thus we must be prepared to adapt and overcome to the changing circumstances of a given mission. The same holds true to a military career—no matter how thoroughly we plan, opportunities arise and plans do fall through, forcing us to reconsider our futures. In my own personal case, the Army approved my request the day after I graduated to delay Field Artillery Officer Basic Course for one year while I went to Ireland to pursue a Master's degree on active duty. As I disembarked from my plane on 26 September 1995, I fully expected my year in Dublin to be exciting, but to be limited to study and travel.

Oh, how wrong I was:

Because of my military affiliation, I fell under the charge of Colonel William Torpey and the Defense Attaché office of the American Embassy in Dublin. A few months into the year, Colonel Torpey told me that the aircraft carrier USS John F. Kennedy would be visiting Dublin for Independence Day 1996. He promised to get me on board, but I didn't plan on doing anything in conjunction with the preparations for the visit. However, when word of the JFK's visit was announced to the Irish press in February 1996, the Irish people went berserk, everyone wanting the chance to go on board the largest ship ever to visit the Emerald Isle. The American

Embassy eventually received 10,000 phone calls and over 1000 letters from people requesting tickets; 177,000 post cards were sent to the Irish national lottery for 2500 packages of 4 tickets to visit the carrier. It became clear to both Irish and Americans alike that the JFK visit was going to be one of the largest events of recent Irish history. As the workload multiplied, Colonel Torpey decided to pull in every available asset to him . . . including a US Army 2LT pursuing a Master's Degree in Dublin.

Before long, I was working at the Embassy ten hours a day, five days a week. The Colonel gave me many responsibilities, the main one being to coordinate the logistics for the activities of the US Navy Atlantic Fleet Band, which would be making 18 appearances all around Ireland to support the JFK visit. My work put me in extensive contact with the Irish military and civilian populations, the US Navy, and the US State Department. All along, I was conscious of the fact that my actions were not only reflecting on me, but also the US military and on the United States of America. The work was stressful and intense, but all of us in DAO

were motivated out of loyalty to each other and out of the knowledge that the JFK was coming to Ireland in order to strengthen US-Irish relations, which would enhance the American position in bringing peace to Ireland.

This experience provided me with adventures that few Army officers would ever experience: Colonel Torpey once arranged for a US Navy plane from the United Kingdom to fly me to meetings I had in Galway and Cork in conjunction with the JFK visit. More impressively, I flew to the carrier on a C-2 Greyhound, doing the same tail hook landing and catapult take-off as seen in *Top Gun*.

I encourage all cadets of the Fighting Irish Battalion to fully investigate the many opportunities the Army has to offer to its active duty officers. There is no reason for my adventure in Ireland to be unique; any cadet who goes on active duty, has a stellar GPA, and meets other regulations can also pursue a Master's Degree while on active duty. Colonel O'Brien is more familiar with the regulations, and would be more than willing to help out any cadet who is interested.



**Congratulations to CPT Rick Ward and Haerim on the birth of their son, Alexander Carlton!**  
**23 Oct 96 -- 6 lbs. 8 oz. -- 19.5"**