

The Shamrock
Spring and Summer 2011



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Army ROTC

Fightin' Irish
Battalion



A Better Way to Travel: UH-60s Provide Airlift to Combined FTX

By ANDREW GASSMAN

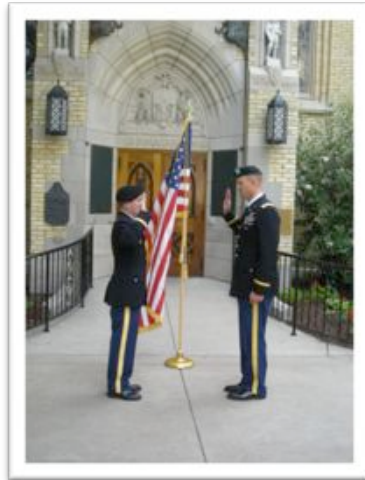
Each year, Notre Dame Army ROTC cadets participate in Field Training Exercises (FTX) in order to provide more real-life training than is possible during Wednesday Lab sessions. Usually we board a bus for the two hour trip to Fort Custer, Michigan. However, for this year's Combined Field Training Exercise (CFTX), we were met with a pleasant surprise—we would be skipping the bus ride and would take UH-60 Blackhawk helicopters to the FTX.

Friday afternoon, cadets met at the Pasquerilla Center and took a bus to the South Bend Regional Airport. Waiting there were three Blackhawks and their respective crews. After a brief pause for photos, the cadets divided themselves among the three helicopters and received a safety brief from the crew. After the brief, cadets were allowed to examine the “birds” and ask questions. We then boarded the helicopters and fastened ourselves in. Anxious cadets waited for the engines to fire up; a few took some photos inside.

As the engines fired up and the rotors began spinning, cadets couldn't help but smile like children (myself anyway). The “birds” taxied onto the runway and simultaneously took off. Flying in perfect formation, the helicopters soared above the fields and pastures of Indiana and Michigan on their way to Ft. Custer. The usual 2 hour trip only took about 45 minutes, still long enough for a few cadets to catch a quick nap. As Ft. Custer approached, the “birds” began their descent. Shortly after touchdown, the doors opened up and cadets filed out quickly. Once everyone was clear of the helicopters, they lifted off and everyone waved goodbye to the crew. It was a unique experience and an exciting start to a productive weekend of training.

*Congratulations to our
Class of 2011
Second Lieutenants...*

Alex Barbuto
Christopher Bennett
Anthony Conklin
Ryan Degnan
Neal Dillon
Miranda Fees
Kyle Hanratty
James Hasson
Stephen Hoar
Geraldyn Janke
Ryan McDermott
Landon Miller
Lindsay Miller
Christopher Pfarr
Colin Raymond
Jay Rowley
Louisa White



Combined FTX

By JOSHUA SANDLER

The CFTX (Combined Field Training Exercise) served as a great opportunity for the MSIIIs of the Fightin' Irish Battalion to test their skills with their peers from other schools. The University of Michigan, Michigan State, Central Michigan University, Western Michigan University, Eastern Michigan, and Notre Dame all participate in a style of training that is the best preparation possible for the looming month of evaluations at LDAC (Leadership Development Assessment Course), which will largely determine the Army branch of MSIII cadets.

Day and night land navigation and squad-level tactical exercises (STX) dominated the CFTX. Cadet Griffin Bonnema explained, "It helped me to see what I do well relative to others outside the battalion and also what I need to work on." Overall, cadets from the Fightin' Irish Battalion performed very strongly, with seven of nineteen receiving "Excellent" evaluations.

In the Area of Operations led by our own seniors and cadre, Cadet Ryan Jenks served as both Platoon Sergeant and Platoon Leader. He maintained accountability of cadets and equipment, kept morale high, and communicated up the chain of command. Cadet Jenks also impressed all with his nifty, authoritative marching. Cadets Lott, Leahy, Bourque, and Sandler served as Squad Leaders under Jenks. Among them, they quickly had the entire platoon affectionately calling him "Jenksycat," his nickname within the Fightin' Irish Battalion.

As LDAC approaches, Bonnema will remember what he learned in STX, Jenks will look back to his valuable garrison leadership position, and all of the MSIIIs of the battalion will be that much more confident due to their positive experiences at the CFTX.



Notre Dame FTX: Time for the Underclassmen to Shine

By GARRETT QUICK

The NDFTX promised to be a weekend of training, leadership development, bonding, good weather, and paintball action. The MSIs and MSIIIs, led by Cadet Williams, loaded up their rucks with gear and MREs and headed out to Culver Military Academy in Indiana. The weekend started out on Friday with daytime land navigation on Culver's drift course. Equipped with a compass and a lane sheet describing the distance and direction to the eight points, the cadets traversed far and wide for the white and orange points. Upon completion, their land navigation knowledge was again challenged with a written test. After the sun set on Friday night, the cadets again set out to find more land navigation points, this time challenged by the darkness and the limited brightness of their red lens flashlights. The day concluded with cadets crawling into their sleeping bags under the starlit sky.

Some cadets awoke Saturday morning with shivers from the cool morning air, others awoke with an excitement for the lessons to be learned during the STX lanes and for the great stories that always result. Each chalk conducted four STX lanes including movement to contact, knocking out a bunker, ambush, and squad attack. For the MSIs, this was their first experience as team leaders. For the MSIIIs, this was their first experience as squad leaders. The MSIVs, attacking as OPFOR for these lanes, were typically the scapegoats of many stories, as the cadets would light them up lane after lane. But occasionally, the OPFOR got the upper hand and wrecked havoc on a disorganized chalk. Stories of miscommunications, lessons learned, and sleeping OPFOR were numerous. Following the STX lanes, the MSIs and IIs received helpful training on setting up a claymore, crossing linear danger areas, and patrolling.

In the evening, all the participants on the FTX came together for a hot meal, a nice change after three MREs. The cadre served up delicious hot dogs and hamburgers that were enjoyed by all. Later, the cadets returned to the drift course to conduct another night land navigation course. Almost all cadets showed significant improvement the second time around. By 2330, all the cadets were eagerly crawling into the sleeping bags for some shut-eye.

Waking up on the second morning proved to be more of challenge but many found motivation in the thought that the FTX was almost over. "I just have to get through patrolling" was on the minds of many. The force-on-force patrolling, however, was the most exciting part of the weekend. The opportunity to splatter paint on fellow cadets resulted in a lot of smack talk heading into the mission between the two patrols. Each patrol was positive that they had a strong strategy. During the paintball, the embodiment of the Army Ethos became apparent. In true Army fashion, some cadets, despite being hit, were unwilling to give up. The "winning" patrol received many accusations of such unfair play. But, by the time "end exercise" was called, both patrols had ample opportunity to unload on their classmates.

Overall, the NDFTX was a great success. No one could complain about the seventy-degree weather on Saturday or, even better, the eighty-degree weather on Sunday. Many memories were made over the forty-eight hours. More importantly, every cadet walked away with numerous learning experiences.





ATLAS: Alliance to Lead and Serve

By MIHAI IANCU

The Army ROTC's service program, ATLAS (Alliance to Lead and Serve) conducted a successful term of service during the Spring 2011 Semester at Notre Dame. The club continued to serve the surrounding South Bend and Mishawaka community while helping foster leadership in its future officers. Cadets exemplified the key leadership attribute of selfless service while making the Notre Dame presence of generosity felt in the surrounding communities.

The club kicked off the season by visiting the St. Joseph's Humane Society. A valuable organization which cares for and fosters the adoption of stray, abandoned, or neglected animals, the Humane Society provides a vital service to the county. ATLAS members helped staff organize and sort donations over the course of a day in preparation for a garage sale whose proceeds would benefit the Society, while simultaneously freeing other staff for more critical tasks. Reaching out to the community near Notre Dame's campus, ATLAS also sponsored a Fun-Friday at the Robinson Community Learning Center. Younger children were able to interact and have fun around Army cadets by participating in a miniature confidence course and trying on military equipment and gear. Older students interested in higher education were also informed about benefits of ROTC and pursuing a college education in general.

To end a successful term, ATLAS is heading the Tri-Military Blood Drive at Legends and commuting to an Alzheimer's treatment facility in order to provide conversation and company to the patrons there. ATLAS will be back in full swing next year to continue its tradition of outstanding service through the University of Notre Dame.



See more photos and updates from the Fightin' Irish Battalion...



as Notre Dame Army ROTC



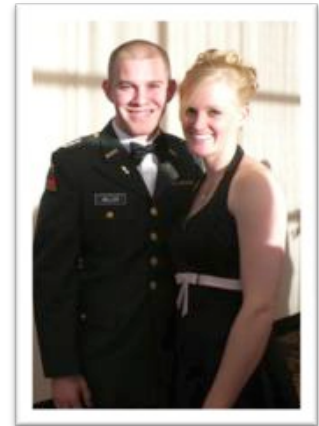
The Fightin' Irish Battalion Army Ball

By ANDREW SIMMS

Cadets and Cadre joined together for a night of dinner, dancing, and a speech from our distinguished speaker, Major General Brown, the Commanding General of the U.S. Army Maneuver School of Excellence. The annual Army Ball took place on the 25th of February at the Hilton Garden Inn at Saint Mary's. Male cadets dressed in their Class A's with classy bow ties. Female cadets had the option of Class A's or a dress, with every female opting for the dress.

The evening began with a reception line where Cadre and cadets mingled and took pictures. After the receiving line was over, the MSIV's entered with their dates underneath a saber arch formed by the underclassmen as an thank you to the seniors. The color guard posted the colors followed by the invocation. The next order of business was the presentation of the fallen soldiers' table that honors those who were lost serving their country. Everyone then enjoyed a break from dining hall food and instead enjoyed their choice of steak, chicken, or pasta. Major General Brown gave a presentation on his time in the Army and his role at the U.S. Army Maneuver Center of Excellence. Cadets ended the night with dancing to music of their choice provided by a DJ.

Overall, the members of the Fighting Irish Battalion enjoyed the night of socialization and Fightin' Irish esprit de corps.



A Look Inside Leadership Labs at White Field...



Summer Training Program

A “Charlie’s” Perspective

By ROBERT MCKENNA

For the first few weeks of this semester, a handful of cadets went through one of the most grueling gauntlets the Fightin’ Irish Battalion has to offer—the Summer Training Program (STP). Our determined group (mostly freshmen) endured intense physical and mental training from 0530 to 0730, Monday through Friday, for three long weeks, and we came out stronger than ever. The workouts included intense calisthenics, ruck marching, rope climbing, aerobic and anaerobic cardio, and team competitions. All the while, the “Blackhats” (our instructors) regularly quizzed us on a body of knowledge related to the Airborne, Air Assault, and Mountain Warfare schools. Two MSII “Charlies” were fortunate enough to earn spots at Airborne School and Mountain Warfare School, and we are extremely proud to have trained with them.

The friendships forged in these hardships during those three weeks are now some of my tightest friendships. STP has become a defining part of my ROTC experience at Notre Dame thus far. Until I completed the 12-mile ruck march to graduate STP, I didn’t really feel like much of a Soldier. Gradually, I changed in those three weeks; overcoming the long, difficult workouts, operating on little sleep, and relying on the people around me as much as on myself gave me a glimpse of what it means to be a Soldier and a leader of Soldiers. Since then, my enthusiasm and motivation to serve in the Army has only grown.

Although I did not earn a spot for additional summer training, the STP experience was worth suffering through. Because of the Blackhats and their tough love, many of my fellow Charlies and I are stronger in body, mind, and soul. We are more prepared to face the challenges, and take advantage of the great opportunities, the Army has to offer. Even if I knew I wasn’t going to get a slot, despite the gallons (literally) of sweat lost, I might just do STP again.

Summer Training Program

Amusing Insights into the Mind of a “Blackhat”

By RYAN SLANEY

The Summer Training Program (STP) is a three week test of strength, motivation, and intelligence. Potential Airborne, Air Assault, and Mountain Warfare school students, known as “Charlies,” are worked out for two hours, five days a week, by the “fearsome Blackhats.” At the end, the Charlies are evaluated and ranked to determine who will be have the chance to earn the coveted Airborne or Air Assault wings, or attend other Army training.

Even before it started, I knew that this year's STP season was going to be interesting. While planning and coordinating workouts with the other Blackhats over winter break, I made the suggestion that Cadet Hanratty be Air Assault *Sergeant*, since this would only be his first year helping to lead the program and he didn't deserve the higher status of Air Assault *Sir*. He countered that since I was a “Sir Airborne” last year, I had used up my “Sir” eligibility and would be demoted to “Sgt.” Hanratty being a very formidable debater, I was forced to accept the demotion.

The Blackhats, Cadets Bennett, Degnan, Hanratty, Raymond, Schmal and myself, were physical and moral paragons in the eyes of the young Charlies. In our black watch caps and black t-shirts, we were even more intimidating than even Sergeant First Class Boardman on a mean day. We led brutal, yet character-building training; when Charlie 21 (Cadet Dieckman) expressed his displeasure at the amount of push-ups we had them doing, I knew that we were on the right course.

As it became well known throughout the course of the program, Hanratty and Raymond were Baltimore Ravens fans, Bennett and Degnan were NY Jets fans, and I was the lone Steelers fan. After the Steelers crushed both of those teams on their road to the Super Bowl, I got a little cocky and made a wager with Bennett that if the Steelers lost, I would don my old Charlie shirt and join their ranks for a day. About 30 seconds after the Steelers' defeat, I received a text from Bennett saying: “Charlie, Prepare yourself.” Raymond was a little more sympathetic, telling me that, “the floor is yours tomorrow” as I was allowed to vent my frustration on the Charlies during 1000 push-up day (let it be noted that Raymond and I *also* performed 1000 push-ups that morning). However, the next day a mysterious Charlie 16 appeared and joined the class for the first hour of the workout before magically transforming into a very confused Sgt. Airborne.

This wasn't the only confusing time for me. Charlies 33 and 34 looked exactly the same to me, and for the life of me I could not distinguish between the two in civilian attire (I can now, no worries, Wagner and Lillie, respectively). This became a philosophical dilemma with which I struggled to find a solution – was this happening because all Charlies look the same to a Blackhat, or because all first year cadets look the same in the eyes of an fifth year cadet? This raging, mental battle was not made any easier by the presence of the Jozwiak triplets.

At the end of the program, an informal survey of questions has traditionally been issued to the Charlies, as well as a superlative ranking of the Blackhats. By popular decision, the most intimidating of the Blackhats was Bennett, followed closely by Raymond. Although Raymond was fierce and in the second best shape of all the Blackhats after yours truly, Bennett took the prize due to his short stature and vicious disposition – possibly modeled after a certain cadre member. It was no surprise that I was voted the favorite Blackhat, as my charm, charisma and good looks won over the class. However, I was enraged to discover that I was also voted the least intimidating Blackhat by that class of ingrates! Unfortunately, this test was administered at the end of the program, and I was unable to punish them for their misconception that “favorite” does not necessarily equate to “unintimidating.”

Finally, I'd like to offer my congratulations to Cadet Iancu, who served as the Class Leader during this time, a job to which I can personally attest adds anxiety and stress to the STP program. Additional congratulations belong to Cadet Courtney, who will be attending Mountain Warfare School, and Cadet Dieckman, who will be heading to Airborne school this summer. They are the future of this fine program and I know that they will represent Notre Dame well at their respective summer schools and carry on the legacy that we Blackhats have paved. This STP season was fun to run; I would absolutely repeat the experience and urge all cadets without ‘bling’ on their chest to join the program and give it their best.

The Irish Marauders: Color Guard and Drill Team

By GRIFFIN BONNEMA

The Irish Marauder Drill Team and Color Guard Club, as usual, had a very busy year recruiting and training new members, providing color guard services for Notre Dame sporting events and military functions, and putting on concession stands to raise money for the club. The Marauder crew was bolstered this year with the addition of new freshmen and sophomores, and a few juniors who decided to get involved this year. Training for new and returning members was led by cadet co-NCOICs (Noncommissioned officers in charge) Griffin Bonnema and Jane McNaughton, and supervised by Officer In Charge, senior Kyle Hanratty.

Cadets learn how to march and maneuver with colors (which is military-speak for “flag”), in addition to learning how to drill with rifles. A fun staple of fall semester for the Marauders is providing a color guard for home football games. At the game versus Purdue, the cadets got an up-close view of visiting pop/country star Taylor Swift. Though she did not directly tell us that we looked very handsome and professional, we knew she was thinking it. On the field, the color guard team marches out to America the Beautiful and presents arms during the National Anthem. It’s always a rush marching out there in front of 80,000 cheering fans and these slots are highly sought after.

The Marauders also had the exciting opportunity to travel to New York City and present the colors during the Notre Dame vs. Army football game in a combined operation with cadets from the U.S. Army Military Academy at West Point. The veteran members of the club drove out to NYC with cadre members LTC Crist, LTC Salazar and MSG Tripp, and had an opportunity to enjoy the sights of the city before reporting to Yankee Stadium before the game. After performing a flawless color guard on the field (and getting a momentary spot on national television), the Marauders retired to their box seats (provided by Yankee Stadium) alongside the U.S. Army Special Forces Black Daggers Parachute Team, where they watched Notre Dame annihilate Army in an exciting match in the longstanding traditional rivalry.

The Sorin Rifle Team

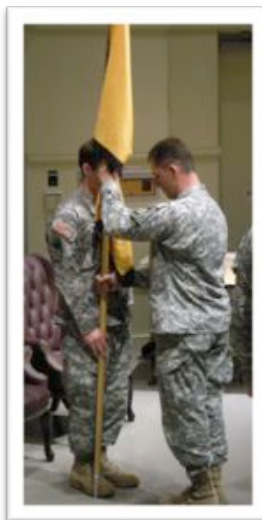
By KEVIN PLUDE

The rifle team has progressed well this year, as we grew from a small club with a handful of participating members to a unified team. Practices on Fridays consist of target and positioning practice with pellet rifles. These practices focus on how to properly align your body when firing a rifle and how to maintain sight picture and proper breathing. Fundamentals and consistency are stressed.

The pellet rifles themselves are by no means accurate, so practicing accuracy is out of the question. For that, we venture to the range. Twice this semester, the team has awakened early on Sunday to hop in the van with Captain Carter and venture over to Midwest Gun and Range in Elkhart. Once there, the .22 target rifles were assigned to each cadet and sighted for each.

We have begun taking records of who is the best shot. So far, Steins-Berkemeier and Gleason have established themselves at the head of the pack with our beloved Officer in Charge, Cadet Plude embarrassing himself intentionally to increase team morale. This year’s efforts will culminate in a competition against Purdue’s team.

Coming to campus for
football this fall?
Visit the AROTC Tailgate!
Contact army@nd.edu for
more information.

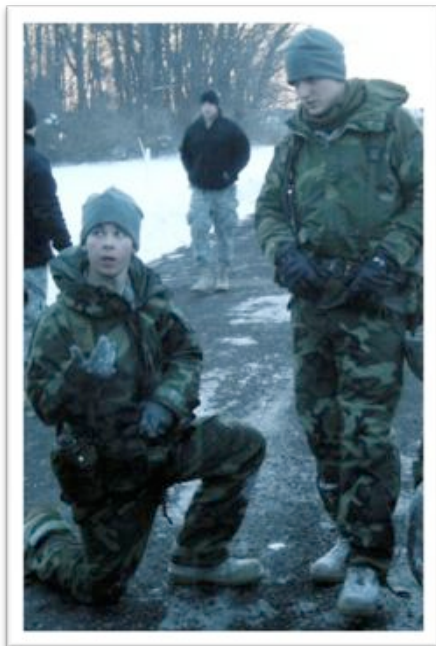
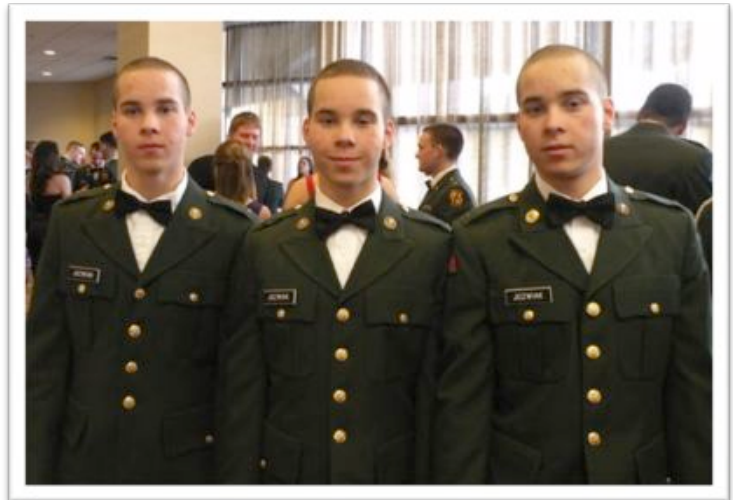


*Passing the guidon
and casing the Cadet
BN colors, May 2011*

Special Feature: Cadet Life x3 – Triplets in the Battalion

Coming back from summer training at LDAC, MSIV seniors are sometimes a little reluctant to be back in the swing of things at Freshman Orientation. Finding a set of identical triplets in the incoming freshman class this past year was a little more than our brains could handle—I mean, it's already hard enough to tell new freshman apart when they are all dressed in identical uniforms with similar haircuts, that's what name tags on Army uniforms are for! But the Jozwiak Triplets put our ability to match names to faces to the test. In honor of all the times we've mixed up these highly-motivated MSIs, we sat down and probed them for the best and worst parts of being triplets in an ROTC BN.

-The Editors



“Our relationship as triplets, always looking out for each other and pushing each other on to achieve even more, reflects the Army way of life.”

Top 12 Benefits of Being a Triplet in ROTC

By RANDY, ALLEN, AND MATTHEW JOZWIAK

Pros

1. Reinforce each other's pride in the Fightin' Irish Battalion
2. Never have to be the only freshman at Holy Cross College wearing a military uniform
3. Guaranteed study group for all Military Science class tests and quizzes
4. Information at the beginning of ROTC comes fast and each of us would inevitably miss some of it, but by combining what we picked up, we always have a brother to ask
5. Can practice Drill and Ceremony as our own mini-Squad
6. If one of us is missing a canteen for Lab, there's a good chance another brother has an extra
7. Sibling rivalry is great for extra motivation on Army Physical Fitness Tests!
8. If one of us does something good, it reflects well on all of us
9. Can completely confuse other Cadets and Cadre
10. 2 extra alarms to prevent lateness to early morning PT
11. Practice field techniques at home during holidays

Cons

1. If one of us messes up, it reflects negatively on all of us
2. Still answering the question, “What's your first name, again?” in June

Verdict?

Being a sibling in ROTC is great we highly recommend it!