

THE SHAMROCK

Newsletter of the Fightin' Irish Battalion

August 2023

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ARMY STRONG.

Ranger Challenge Team pose together at Sandhurst competition



Sandhurst: Starting a Legacy for Notre Dame AROTC on The International Stage

By CDT Lindsay Michie ('23)



CDT Ellis completing weapons assembly of 240B

In November, the Fightin' Irish Battalion's Ranger Challenge team won 7th Brigade Ranger Challenge competition at Ft. Knox, qualifying the BN to send a team to the annual Sandhurst Military Skills Competition. While the competition is named after the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst in the UK, it has always been held annually at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, NY, since 1967. The competition began with the presentation of a British Officer's sword to West Point as a prize to promote military excellence and has evolved over the years to include more teams. This year the Irish faced off against 15 teams from West Point, 17 Army ROTC units across the US, 2 service academies, and 14 international military ally teams. Each team is composed of 11 CDTs, two of which must be female.



On April 22nd, after weeks of sacrificing personal time to train, the Fightin' Irish Sandhurst team departed with the goal of dominating this year's Sandhurst competition. The Irish started off the week strong by placing as the 1st ROTC team in the Order of March Relay and 13th overall. This early victory gave the team a crucial advantage in picking their starting location on day 1 of the competition. In the time between the Order of March Relay and the start of the competition, the team spent several days training on weapon systems, TCCC (Tactical Combat Casualty Care), Zodiac boats, and several other potential skills that may be required in the competition. Most importantly, the team also had the opportunity to explore West Point, familiarize themselves with the terrain, and make relationships with the other teams that we may one day share a battlefield with. The team also attended a conference by the Modern War Institute. The conference featured numerous panel members who were experts in interoperability, joint operations, and theory of future warfare. The conference closed with remarks from the Commander of the Ukrainian Ground Forces, Colonel General Oleksandr Syrskiy.

On Friday morning, the Fightin' Irish donned their face paint, rucked up, and prepared themselves to give it their all for what would be a grueling two-day of competition. The first day of competition involved 8 physical and skill based events, known as lanes, that were scored on points or time. Between each lane, the team had to conduct a timed movement where they would race against 5 other teams.

Each of these movements involved running approximately 1-2 miles over hilly terrain with a ruck and M4 rifle. The team's "Legs Feed the Wolf" motto paid off, as the team smoked the competition, winning 6 of 8 movements. The culminating event on Friday evening was a grueling 8.5 mile ruck as a team over terrain that rose thousands of feet in elevation. Once again, Notre Dame excelled, being the 1st ROTC team and 3rd overall team to complete the ruck. Saturday morning the team awoke to rain that would persist throughout the rest of the competition. Despite the weather conditions, the team flew through the obstacle course, successfully conducted the M4 qual, shot M17 pistols, called for fire, and masterfully executed the final physical event known as "The Crucible." The Fightin' Irish Sandhurst team's grit, tenacity, and comradery allowed them to place 16th out of 48 teams putting them in the top 1% of all Army ROTC programs. The determination, cohesiveness, and high morale demonstrated by the team was a testament to the qualities of the entire Fightin' Irish Team. This experience will pay dividends for a lifetime for the team, as they established a precedent for the Irish to continue attending and dominating Sandhurst.

Congratulations to the members of the Sandhurst 2023 team, you make us proud to be part of the Fighin' Irish!

Team: Will Barcena '23 (Ranger Co. Commander), Lindsey Michie '23 (Ranger Co. XO), Peter Herrmann '24 (Ranger Co. NCOIC), Tom Ellis '23, Ethan Barhydt '24, Ethan MacMillan '24, Sullivan O'Hara '24, Matthew Stewart '25, Sarah Mahoney '25, Sean O'Gara '25, Ryan Radtke '25.



CDT O'Gara competing in Order of March Relay

CDT O'Hara competing in the Crucible



CDTs gather together after completing the Crucible



Gettysburg Staff Ride

By CDT Lauren Crowe ('23)

Each year, the MSIV class goes on their Staff Ride to Gettysburg, PA. To prepare for the trip, Mr. Detoy, an ND AROTC alumni, came to MSIV class to share history related to the battle and the Civil War as a whole and describe what our role as cadets would be. Each cadet took on the persona of a key figure during the battle, researched them in depth, and prepared a biographical monologue. During staff ride, which took place the last weekend of March, we came upon the spot where one of those key figures were involved in a battle, the cadet would share their biographical monologue taking on the persona of their key figure. Each cadet got very into it, with many cadets dressing up and wearing beards. In the first two days that we were there, we covered the three days of the battle, walking the actual paths that the Union and Confederate armies took.

The third day, we spent some time reflecting on our experience and what lessons we can take with us as we look to commission as 2LTs this May. Lastly, we walked the Gettysburg Cemetery where President Lincoln gave the Gettysburg Address and visited the museum.

Overall, the Gettysburg Staff Ride was a memorable and moving experience for the MSIV class to learn from history, reflect on leadership, mentally prepare for becoming second lieutenants, and take one last trip as a class together. We are extremely grateful to Mr. Detoy for being a great and knowledgeable tour guide both in preparation and while walking the battles, and to the ND Club of Gettysburg who were very hospitable in hosting us for lunch!



CDT Julie Botterini ('23) taking on the character Dan Sickles and sharing his biography



CDT Tom Ellis ('23P) posing next to the statue of BG George Greene, the character he played, on top of Culp's Hill



The graduating class of 2023 with Mr. Detoy in front of the Father Corby statue at Gettysburg, where he gave a blessing to the Irish Brigade before battle



The Holy Half Marathon

By CDT Jack Wilde ('26)

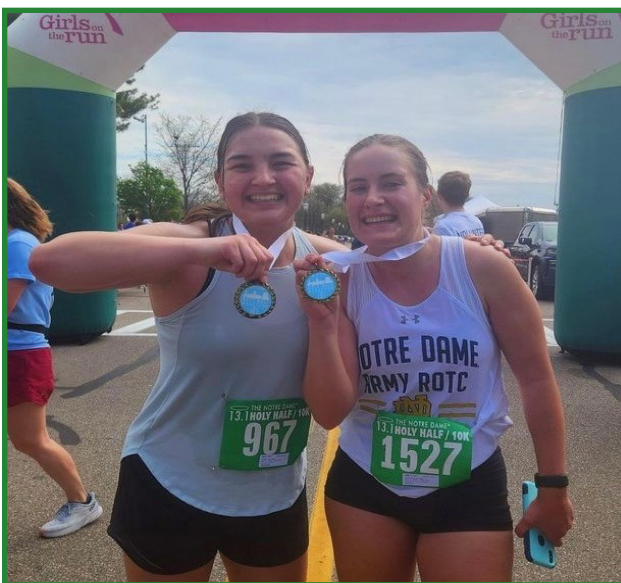
On April 15th 2023, tons of Notre Dame faithful thronged to the north end of campus to compete in the Holy Half Marathon. Among those Notre Dame faithful were not the CDTs of the Fightin' Irish Battalion... Just kidding. Wherever there's a chance to win, the Battalion is there. As a preliminary test for the Army Ten Miler next fall, the AROTC Running Club trained long and hard for this race over the last few months in order to prove themselves. The runners fought and excelled the entire race with all CDTs who entered completing the race and many beating personal bests and goals. A great way to show off the aerobic capacity of the battalion to those who thought we just lifted weights and threw grenades all day. Overall the CDTs had a blast and completed a great milestone, whether that was personally or on the road to the army ten miler!



The Army ROTC Running Club prior to the start of the Holy Half Marathon



Members of Army ROTC ATLAS service club working a water station



CDT Lanz and CDT Severson holding their medals after completing the half marathon



Field Training Exercise: An experience that built character

By CDT Jack Wilde ('26)

Every year, the Fightin' Irish Battalion conducts a Field Training Exercise (FTX) in order to provide valuable leadership experience to MSIIIs preparing to go to advanced camp and give all of the other CDTs a taste of what the military drills they have been conducting all year will look like out in the field. This year the FTX was conducted in a joint fashion with the Army ROTC unit at Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo.

Although the CDTs were greeted with a heavy downpour and lots of lightning mere seconds after stepping off the bus, the first day spirit was not dampened. CDTs participated in three information sessions including SINCGAR radio usage, M240 and M249 disassembly and reassembly, and Claymore emplacement. Day 1 wrapped up with an extended land navigation session where all CDTs excelled (especially from the MSIs first attempts at NCO...)

Day 2 was the most traditional FTX day. The battalion conducted lanes, or in other words, missions in a sequence as compared to just one stand-alone drill. Despite getting soaked early on by rain, the CDTs all pushed through the day to the end! All the CDTs were glad for the experience but there was common jubilation when the boots came off after a long day of tactical operations.

Day 3 consisted of just one lane and then FTX wrapped up for all of the CDTs. Overall, the battalion got stronger together, especially through the mixing of Alpha and Bravo companies during the weekend, allowing for great new friendships to be made and through interaction with the Western Michigan CDTs. Time to hang up the waffle knit undershirt and polypro until next year!



Cadets pose together during FTX activities



CDT Ralston and CDT McKenna are all smiles during an STX lane

CDTs briefing an OPORD

CDT Wilde and CDT Johnston preparing their gear prior to heading into the field

(Background photo) CDTs Garvey and Tennes bonding at FTX



Tri-Mil Sports Commanders Cup

By CDT Jack Wilde ('26)

After a huge football victory in the fall, the Fightin' Irish Battalion had its sights set for a continued winning streak in the spring semester. With both basketball and soccer games on the horizon, intense tryouts were held over a two week period to put together a solid team. The basketball team, led by senior Jack Shictel took a tough first loss to Navy in its first game. However, the team readily bounced back when they beat Air Force in the second game by over 35 points securing their spot for the long awaited championship. Though it was the same week as midterms and the ACFT, not to mention two extra days of waking up on a non-PT day, nothing could stop the Fightin' Irish Battalion. After losing to Navy by only one basket in the first playoff game, the plan to shut down the midshipmen's key three point shooter and get the ball down low as much as possible commenced.

The first five minutes of the game were a clear foreshadow that the Navy never stood a chance. Jack Shictel mentioned, *"taking lessons learned from our first game against navy, we owned the paint and ran the score up to 48-30 and the championship was rightfully won."*

On the soccer field, the team, led by senior Lauren Crowe, proved equally ready to fight. Though each game brought new adverse conditions—a rain and ice storm, a blackout on Ricci Fields, and losing players left and right to practice for the upcoming Pass In Review ceremony—Army ROTC remained strong willed and team committed. Though both games ended in losses, the score did not highlight the amount of grit and integrity each member of the team held.

In the end, not only due to soccer's hungry spirit, but also victories from football and basketball games allowed Army ROTC to be presented with the Tri-Military Cup. Already in the trophy case, the Tri-Military Cup means more than just winning a championship, but the three aspects that Army ROTC is built upon—Team, Commitment, Love. And of course, Winning Matters.



Fighting Irish Battalion Basketball Team



Commissioning Ceremony

By LTC William Kobbe, Professor
of Military Science



Cadets Affirm the Oath of Commissioned Officers

On 21 May 2023, the Fighting Irish Battalion participated in the University of Notre Dame's Tri-Military ROTC Commissioning Ceremony culminating with 14 Army Cadets affirming the Oath of the Commissioned Officer and officially achieving the rank of 2nd Lieutenant in the United States Army.

The event took place in the DeBartolo Performing Arts Center with over 400 family members and friends in attendance to share in the moment with the graduating class. Major General Austin E. Renforth served as the Distinguished Guest Speaker and administered the Oath of Commissioned Officers.

The 14 new 2nd Lieutenants will assume a diverse array of assignments and military occupational specialties. 8 of the 14 will proceed into the Active Army representing Army Aviation, Armor, Infantry, Transportation, and Engineer Corps. 2 of the 14 will continue with their education to become Army Doctors. 3 will serve the Army National Guard as Medical Service, Aviation, or Explosive Ordnance Disposal Officers. Rounding out the talented cohort is a Reserve Officer specializing in Chemical Operations.

This collective team has accomplished many feats over the past four years. They graduate with a cumulative GPA of 3.59, led Notre Dame's Irish Rangers to its FIRST EVER Ranger Challenge Victory (beating out 37 other schools), persevered through the COVID Pandemic, achieved the number 1 overall program rank at Cadet Summer Training, but most importantly, continued the incredible culture of family and competition within the University of Notre Dame's Army ROTC Program. Their immense impact will be felt for years to come. They truly embodied the motto "Lead Like a Champion Today!"



The 14x Graduating Army Cadets Lead the Way to the Commissioning Ceremony



The Army's 14 Newest 2LT Lieutenants with Major General Austin E. Renforth



Army ROTC Online Store

Our online store is still open for anyone interested in purchasing Notre Dame Army ROTC merchandise. This store will be open for a **limited time only** so be sure to place your orders by **August 31st**.

You can find our online store at the link below:

<https://bsnteamsports.com/shop/WdGVFSuAC4>

We are hoping to have a more permanent store option in the future so stay tuned for updates and be sure to check your emails for the next edition of The Shamrock!

Coming soon in the next Shamrock...



Cadets smile together before departing for FT Custer to participate in New Cadet Orientation. More on that story in our next edition!

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Thank you for your continued support of Notre Dame's Fightin' Irish Battalion!

