

THE SHAMROCK

Newsletter of the Fightin' Irish Battalion April 2024

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All this and so much more!

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Team. Compete. Win. Growth.

CDTs, Midshipmen, and parents pose for a photo after a joint Physical Readiness Training



Flyin' Irish Basketball Tournament

By CDT Grace McKenna ('25)

On the weekend of February 2nd, Cadets and Midshipmen from their respective colleges met at the University of Notre Dame for the annual Flyin' Irish Basketball Tournament. Hosted each year by the University of Notre Dame's Air Force ROTC program, Detachment 225, the tournament brings together Cadets and Midshipmen from across the country to compete and share camaraderie with the military's future leaders. Beginning as a small event in 1985, now in its 38th year, the tournament hosted fifty teams—the largest ever in event history. Air Force CDT Garrett Conger '26 explains, *"The Flying Irish Invitational is a great tradition that brings together many ROTC programs and is one of Detachment 225's favorite events!"* However, though this event is run by the Notre Dame Air Force ROTC, the Fightin' Irish Battalion represented the Army well. Even after many University of Notre Dame Army Cadets completed a 12 mile road march earlier that morning, both the men's and women's team won their first three games with ease.

After conference play wrapped up, the women's team, led by team captain CDT Katie Sajer '24, placed number two, while the men's team held onto the third place position. Both were set up well to begin the next stage of the tournament: sudden death. The men's team beat both Northwestern University and Marquette University, and the women's team beat Marquette Army women's team. With these victories, both teams would take on school rival, Ohio State, in the semifinals. The Ohio State women's team proved its readiness, especially with its well-coached and impenetrable zone defense. In the last five minutes of play, the Irish went on a 14-2 run. Though the Cadets fought hard until the end, unfortunately, time would be their enemy and the game finished with the Irish losing by six points—a comeback that just came up short. Even in the loss, great memories and lessons sparked from the tournament as freshman CDT Kate Sear '27 remarks, *"My favorite part of the Flying Irish Basketball tournament was being able to build camaraderie within our program and with other programs. Overall it was very competitive and also a ton of fun."*

After a heartbreaking loss for the women, the men's team sought redemption. Star freshman point guard CDT Andrew Smith '27 dropped five three-pointers in the game and strongly commanded the court. He helped lead the men's team to a ten-point victory to earn their slot in the championship game. Facing the two-year defending champions Virginia Tech, the Notre Dame Army was ready to fight. However, unfortunately for the Irish, this would be the game where the shots could not find the net. Though so close to the chip, the men's epic run would yield a second-place victory—still a victory nonetheless. Team veteran, junior CDT Charlie Luke '25 explains, *"It was tough coming up just short for the second year in a row, but overall the tournament was a great experience and I can't wait to run it back next year."* In the end, all the Fightin' Irish Cadets that played in the tournament competed hard and did it as a team. Hopefully next year practice in the fall can begin early in order to encompass everything the Battalion stands for: Team, Compete, Win, and Growth.





CDT Andrew Smith '27 shoots a free throw



The Fightin' Irish women's team



The Fightin' Irish men's team



CDT Grace McKenna '25 dribbles the ball



Three MSIIIs are Studying Abroad this Semester!



CDT Garvey '26 is studying in Rome

"This experience has been so special because of the new opportunities it has presented, like meeting both Italian and study abroad students from other universities and getting to explore the many historical and cultural sites that Rome has to offer. Moreover, almost every weekend, I have been blessed to be able to travel to either different countries or cities around Italy. I would greatly encourage other cadets to study abroad because it gives you a very unique opportunity to grow in confidence, intercultural competency, and independence."

-CDT Lupe Gravey

"Every male in South Korea serves a minimum of two years in the military, so I've been warmly welcomed as an Army ROTC cadet on campus at Yonsei University in Seoul. After finishing Project GO last summer, I've been diligently maintaining my language skills through flashcards and videos, in preparation of studying abroad. Now fully immersed in Korean culture and classes, I can't recommend this experience highly enough! Thanks to having local relatives, learning to Land Nav the subway system, discovering great restaurants, and finding the best shopping deals, Korea has been a great time! Go Irish!"

-CDT Jack Radovich



CDT Radovich '26 is studying in Seoul



"Studying abroad has been the best experience of my life so far. I didn't know anyone coming into the program, but it was so easy to form friendships, especially with the support of the Notre Dame group. Traveling with small groups of people has been so much fun and has allowed me to grow closer to people I met only a few months ago. I believe it's so important to be open to new experiences and meeting new people in life, and study abroad certainly encourages that."

-CDT Amanda Shefler



CDT Shefler '26 is studying in Dublin

Army Ball 2024

By CDT Katherine O'Neal ('24)

Army Ball is a special tradition that allows cadets, cadre, and staff to let loose for an evening of dancing, music, and celebration. This year's ball took place at the Morris Inn on campus and represents months of planning and preparation. Every year, the MSIVs are granted extra tickets for parents and siblings to attend, in addition to a guest of their choosing. The MSIVs also enter the ball with a humorous introduction crafted by the MSIIIs while being escorted under the saber arch by their date or parents.



CDT O'Hara '24 presents GEN (Ret.) Votel a token of appreciation on behalf of the Battalion

CDT Jessica Bianco '24 emphasizes, *"As a senior, Army Ball is extra special because you get to commemorate the end of your four years of ROTC with your parents there. Every year it's fun because you get to show ROTC to your friends or significant other, but senior year, you get to give your family a glimpse into your experience, which makes it even more memorable."*

During the formal portion, guests enjoyed (a Lenten friendly) dinner while listening to speeches prepared by CDT Sully O'Hara, the Cadet Battalion Commander; LTC William Kobbe, the Battalion Professor of Military Science; and GEN (ret.) Joseph Votel, our distinguished guest speaker.

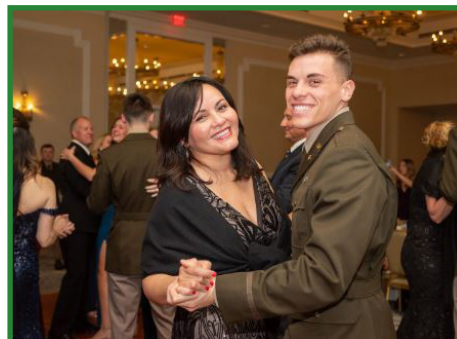


LTC Kobbe addressing the audience

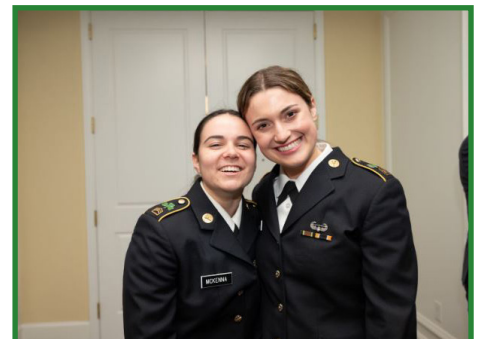
Following the retirement of the colors and the benediction offered by Father Peter Rocca, seniors danced with their parents while reminiscing on a series of baby photos. As is tradition, each class prepared a dance for the evening with judging offered by CPT Brown and CPT Henderson. Despite their best efforts, the younger cadets were bested by the graduating class of 2024. Maybe next year, MSIIIs!



CDT Kopp walks through the Saber Arch with his parents (Jeff & Denise Kopp)



CDT Barhydt '24 dances with his mom (Chenoa Barhydt)



CDTs McKenna '25 and Stinson '25 pose for a photo

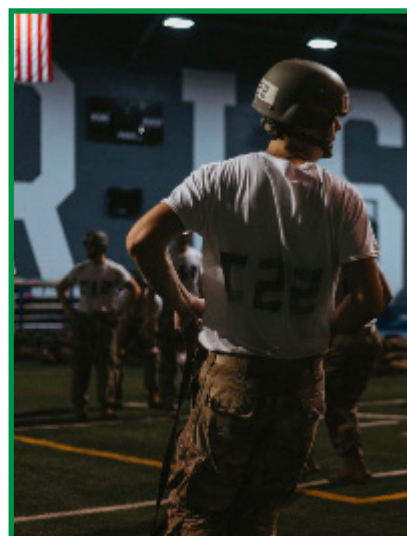


Summer Training Program

By CDT Sarah Mahoney ('25)

Each year, the Fightin' Irish Battalion conducts the Summer Training Program (STP), which consists of one week of challenging workouts and assessments to prepare cadets for the many summer training opportunities that the Army has to offer. This year, over 25 motivated MSI, MSII, and MSIII cadets completed the program under the guidance of 'black shirt' MSIVs that have previously graduated from various Army schools.

Cadets pushed themselves to their physical and mental limits in numerous physical assessments. Cadets completed the Ranger Physical Assessment as well as the new RPA 2.0 to test both endurance and mental fortitude. Additionally, stair day is an iconic tradition of STP in which cadets complete five rounds of 18x down and up stairs in Purcell Pavilion with body weight exercises in between. The program ultimately culminated with a 12 mile ruck for time, as cadets raced along a campus route and accomplished this great feat before the sun rose. CDT Gawkins, an MSI that will represent Notre Dame at Air Assault this summer, reflected on the 12 mile ruck; *"It was a tough morning, but such a rewarding experience to complete it with close friends and strong competitors."* Over 50 CDTs participated in this final grueling ruck event, including all STP competitors, all MSIIIs, and our Ranger Team. After successful completion of all STP events, select cadets were allotted summer slots to the Army's Air Assault, Airborne, and Sapper schools to represent the Fightin' Irish Battalion. We are extremely proud of those cadets that gave their time and effort to better themselves by competing in this challenging program!



Clockwise top to bottom: CDTs Loney '27 and McKenna '25 participate in stair day; CDT O'Gara '25 smiles while rucking past the dome; CDT Brenninkmeyer '26 pulls a sled; CDTs begin their 5-mile run for the RPFT.



GEN Fenton PT

By CDT Lily Smith ('27)

On the morning of Friday, March 1st, the Tri-Mil ROTC cadets gathered early in Loftus for a special physical training session. It was a significant occasion as, for the second time this year, they were joined by GEN Bryan Fenton, the Commander of the U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM). GEN Fenton attended this PT session in two capacities, as an honored guest and as an MSIV parent. In anticipation of the annual Army Ball later that evening, MSIV parents were invited to participate in the training session alongside their cadets. Together, they worked through circuits focusing on agility, strength, and fostering camaraderie within the Tri-Mil community. In addition to GEN Fenton and the MSIV parents, GEN (Ret.) Joseph Votel, the former Commander of the U.S. Central Command (USCENTCOM) was in attendance before being honored at the Army Ball as the guest speaker. Grace McKenna, a junior in the Fightin' Irish Battalion, explained *"This PT was special as it brought together the Tri-Military programs at Notre Dame, GEN Fenton and GEN Votel, and the parents of the MSIVs to highlight how important family and community is in our program and the military alike"*. As the PT session concluded, Cadets Luke and Thornburg were recognized for their commitment to the Fightin' Irish Battalion. Both received a challenge coin from GEN Fenton, acknowledging their dedication and valor.

CG Visit

By CDT Ryan Oesterle ('27)

On January 23rd, the Fightin' Irish Battalion was joined by MG Munera and CSM Young of the US Army Cadet Command for morning PT. They participated in a series of ACFT-inspired exercises that tested each soldier in different ways. The Fightin' Irish Battalion greatly appreciates the two for getting at it early in the morning with us and epitomizing the mantra that "PT might not be the most important thing you do that day, but PT is the most important thing you do every day!" CDT Matthew Stewart '25, CDT Ryan Schmitt '25, CDT Katherine Sear '27, and CDT Michael Gawkins '27 were recognized by CG Munera with challenge coins for their hard work and dedication this semester.



GEN Fenton conducts box jumps during PRT



MG Munera squats with a sand-bag during PRT



Road to Sandhurst

By CDT Sadie Stinson ('25)



After their Bold Warrior Challenge victory last semester, the Ranger Challenge team has been working hard to represent the Irish well at the Sandhurst Military Skills Competition in April! The team's training this semester has included grueling rucks, team workouts & runs, and skills training. According to the team 1SGT, CDT Matthew Stewart '25, *"The ranger team has been putting in hours of training heading into this competition. The average week contains about 4 training events on top of their mandatory ROTC training including rigorous hill sprints, lifts, runs, rucks, and skills training. We know what we need to do to be successful and everyone on the team is determined to achieve each and every goal we have set for ourselves."*



The team also had the opportunity to practice their marksmanship skills at Ft. Custer, Michigan earlier this semester, where they shot M17 pistols and M4 rifles. While there, they also received practice on the grenade assault course and the obstacle course. Ranger team member CDT Sarah Mahoney '25 stated that *"Sandhurst is one of the highlights of the year, and I'm so beyond excited to watch our team crush it! Range day solidified that our skill preparation is moving in the right direction, and I'm so ready for our team's hard work to pay off at the competition!"*

Most recently, the Ranger team also competed in a friendly competition against the NDROTC Marine Midshipmen, which resulted in a Ranger victory. CDT Sullivan O'Hara '24, the team XO, said that *"The relationship we've built with the Marine ROTC program is great and has definitely helped to make both programs better. The team is on track to absolutely crush it at West Point."*

Sandhurst Competition team: CDT Peter Herrmann '24 (CO), CDT Sullivan O'Hara '24 (XO), CDT Matthew Stewart '25 (1SG), CDT Ethan Barhydt '24, CDT Ethan MacMillan '24, CDT Conall Nugent '24, CDT Sarah Mahoney '25, CDT Sean O'Gara '25, CDT Ryan Radtke '25, CDT Estela Ralston '25, CDT Collin Thornburg '27

WE WISH OUR RANGER TEAM
THE BEST OF LUCK AT THE
SANDHURST COMPETITION ON
APRIL 26-27



From top to bottom: CDTs MacMillan, Herrmann, and Stewart carry a litter; the Ranger team poses for a photo in front of the dome; CDTs Thornburg, O'Hara and Nugent flip a tire; CDT Barhydt carries a sandbag while CDT O'Hara carries a water can



Combat Water Survival Training

By CDT Sian Lis ('25)

Each year, the Fightin' Irish Battalion conducts the Combat Water Survival Test (CWST), in which Cadets push their physical and mental boundaries during multiple swim tests. This sequence of tasks includes swimming laps for ten minutes without touching the pool's sides or bottom. Following a five-minute break, they must tread water for an additional five minutes without touching the pool's bottom or sides. Following this are the three required events to pass CWST which are:

Event 1: 15-Meter Swim

Cadets must be able to swim 15 meters without touching the sides or bottom of the pool while wearing a FLC and carrying a M-4.

Event 2: Equipment Ditch

Cadets wear an FLC and hold an M-4. From the side of the pool, they must step backward into the water. They must be completely submerged underwater as they drop the rifle and remove the FLC.

Event 3: 3-Meter Drop

Cadets are required to walk off a 3-meter-high diving board while carrying an M-4. They must hold onto the M-4 at all times and swim to the side of the pool.

Cadets demonstrate competence in both basic and advanced water survival techniques, including swimming in uniform and gear, underwater breath-holding, and completing simulated rescue scenarios. The CWST evaluates a cadet's physical fitness, mental resilience, and ability to perform under pressure in aquatic environments, ensuring they possess the necessary skills to operate effectively in challenging military situations involving water. CDT Karina Savidge '25, who organized the CWST training, stated that *"All cadets undergo CWST to develop essential water survival skills necessary for military readiness and operations. CWST is always so much fun because it pushes cadets out of their comfort zones, fosters camaraderie, and allows each of us to challenge ourselves."* Completing the CWST is a crucial requirement for advancement in the Army ROTC program.



CDTs Schroder, Cannata, and Loney pose for a photo on the pool deck



CDTs Valli '27, McKenna '25, and Mahoney '25 smile for a photo in the pool



Notre Dame Army ROTC Spring Merch Store



With graduation season right around the corner, this is a great time to get your Notre Dame Army ROTC gear!



There are items for everyone, parents, grandparents, 2024 graduates, and anyone who supports the Fightin' Irish Battalion.



Click the link below to start shopping, but keep in mind the store is only open for a limited time! Get your orders in by April 16th. Items will ship after the online store closes and should take 3 weeks after the close date to reach your door.



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



MSI, MSII, MSIII & MSIV Classes dancing at Army Ball

In the next Shamrock... MSIV profiles, a Sandhurst recap, and more! Stay tuned!

