Co. H shows improvement in final PFT

By Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Recruits of Company H, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, push themselves through the last stretch of their timed three-mile run during the final physical fitness test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 27. The PFT tests recruit’s strength and endurance and is a requirement for graduation.

Fraternization class prepares recruits for future fleet duties

By Cpl. Liz Gleason

Fraternization policies have existed in the military to maintain good order and discipline. However, not all recruits arrive at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego with an understanding of what that entails. Recruits of Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, attended a class on fraternization taught by their series commander, during recruit training Jan. 4.

“I heard about fraternization, but never really understood it,” said Recruit Samuel Rivera, Platoon 1010, Co. A, 1st RTBn. “Today we learned what fraternization is in depth, what it means in the Marine Corps and that it’s not allowed.”

Fraternization is when Marines of different ranks or positions engage in an improper personal, social or business relationship. Fraternization encompasses various mixed-grade activities to include: hanging out together off duty, dating or engaging in sexual activities, engaging in commercial transactions, except for one-time sales, betting or loaning money, showing favoritism or partiality in the workplace, sending inappropriate emails and using one’s authority over a subordinate for personal gain, according to Marine Corps Manual 1100.4.

During the class, recruits are not only taught from text but they hear examples of what constitutes fraternization to clarify the rules for a better understanding.

“Fraternization is bad because it undermines the chain of command,” said Recruit Christopher Hoblumen, Plt. 800B, Co. A, 1st RTBn. “For example, if there is a higher-ranking Marine showing favoritism to a lower-ranking Marine, it affects the workplace and other Marines.”

When fraternization exists, it adversely impacts good order and discipline and can threaten to disintegrate the unit and undermine the chain of command, according to Marine Corps Manual 1100.4.

Drill instructors watch for fraternization and correct it. Fraternization can be corrected with a strong use of authority and a firm command of the rules of the Marine Corps.

Fraternization, a concept taught in recruit training, is a concept that will carry through to their entire Marine Corps career.

Recruits learn MCMAP hand-to-hand combat

By Cpl. Walter D. Marino II

Like a vehicle assembly line, Recruits of Company C, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, worked smoothly in unison for a common goal. In one fluid motion recruits repeatedly kicked and punched at the air practicing Marine Corps Martial Arts Program techniques to get the various movements into muscle memory.

Drill instructors watched with a keen eye for discrepancies in their form. On-the-spot corrections were continuously made until it appeared all recruits could perform the kicks and counters properly.

MCMAP trains Marines in unarmed combat, weapons of opportunity, and rifle and bayonet techniques. The program also stresses mental and character development.
PFT • 1

tions and put you ahead of your peers.”

In the first phase of recruit training, recruits run an initial PFT. Depending on their performance, recruits are able to recognize and focus on their weaknesses. Co. H endured vigorous training that helped build them mentally and physically and prepared them for other annual events such as the combat fitness test and PFT. Before they ran their final PFT, recruits ran an inventory PFT, which allowed them to see where they stood physically, explained Jimenez.

“A lot of recruits noticed a difference in their performance from when they ran their first PFT,” said Jimenez. “This gives them a gauge to see how much more (effort) they need to put forth.”

The final PFT began with pull-ups. Each recruit mounted a bar and did as many pull-ups as they could. After each recruit recorded the amount done, they lined up at the starting line for the timed three-mile run. Each recruit’s run time was yelled out to them as they crossed the finish line. Once they cooled down, they performed as many crunches as they could for two minutes. Throughout the PFT, drill instructors encouraged their recruits to give 100 percent.

As recruits finished and recorded their scores, most of them were surprised by their improvement.

“I barely passed my initial PFT,” explained Pfc. Derek Lamiroult, Platoon 2171, Co. H, 2nd RTBN. “I only completed five pull-ups, 50 crunches and ran 24 minute-three-mile.”

Lamiroult’s motivation to improve was the desire to finish first and not be last in any event. He pushed himself through each event and began to see improvement in his physical abilities.

“Tm proud of my progress,” said Lamiroult. “I spent my time pushing myself and saw an improvement in all three categories, mainly my run time which was 21 minutes.”

The final PFT gives recruits a sense of their physical accomplishments as they reach the end of training.

“I’ve seen a big improvement in this series, from recruits doing less than seven pull-ups to them being able to complete 20. It really shows that they pushed themselves so they can improve,” said Jimenez.

With a new sense of accomplishment and confidence in their physical fitness, Co. H endured their final challenge: a 54-hour field training exercise, the Crucible. They received their Eagle, Globe and Anchor on top of the Reaper at Edison Range aboard Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., Jan. 3.

MCMAp • 1

Over the course of recruit training, recruits are taught the basics of MCMAp and tested near the end of recruit training for certification of the MCMAp tan belt – the lowest belt attainable through the program.

Recruits of Co. C practiced lower body strikes Jan. 4, in order to work toward earning their tan belts. Approximately 27.5 hours of training and 47 moves are required to earn the tan belt. The hours and techniques are broken down into multiple sessions that focus on different categories.

There are similarities between MCMAp and other martial arts, but to think they are one and the same would be a mistake, according to Staff Sgt. Antonio J. Curry, drill instructor, Instructional Training Company, Support Bu.

“Everything we do in MCMAp is not for sport, it’s for combat-based scenarios,” said Curry, a brown belt MCMAp instructor. “A lot of people confuse MCMAp with sports fighting. Here we are learning to (fully) the enemy.”

Whether coming into recruit training never having been in a fight or as experienced as an amateur boxer, it appeared all recruits, no matter what level of fighting experience they had, grasped the value of hand-to-hand combat skills.

“I like being able to protect myself in any situation. I’ve seen fights where people didn’t know what they were doing and got beat up pretty bad,” said Recruit Michael R. Massagli, Platoon 1031, Co. C, 1st RTBN. “I think knowing MCMAp in a combat zone can determine life or death. I think in a combat zone anything can happen and you have to be prepared for that.”

While most recruits only mentioned the immediate impact MCMAp would have in a combat scenario, some recruits realized different situations in which MCMAp would help, which hit closer to home.

“There could be a situation in Afghanistan where I run out of ammunition,” said Recruit Jorge J. Perez, Pvt. 3217, Co. C, 1st RTBN. “But MCMAp could also help if someone was trying to hurt my family.”

The recruits finished their session with another round of lower body strikes that included knee strikes and front kicks. While this was only a piece of tan belt training, it was a step in sharpening hand-to-hand combat skills.

Recruits of Company C, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, are given an example of Marine Corps Martial Arts techniques by their drill instructors aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Jan. 7. Recruits were then required to practice the various techniques displayed.

Lance Cpl. Bridget M. Keane

Parking lot closure

The following parking lots will be closed for striping on the dates cited. All vehicles should be removed.

• Between buildings 13 and 14 - Jan. 9 (Family Service Center/Philips Hall Fitness Center)
• Bowling Alley - Jan. 14 (Building 590 Recreation Center/Bowling/Locker Room)
• South street side of building 12 - Jan. 16 (Legal Services)

For information, call Robert Halvorson at (619) 524-5653.

Tickets and Tours

For all skiing enthusiasts, the MCGS/MCRD San Diego Tickets and Tours Office on the Main Exchange Mall now has information and lift tickets available for Mammoth Mountain and Big Bear Mountain Ski Areas. The Mammoth Mountain lift tickets are sold for weekday and weekend use, and are priced in accordance with the age of the skier. The tickets are valid from Monday until April 21 (with some blackout dates).

The Big Bear Mountain tickets are more restrictive but are available through Feb. 18.

For dates, prices, restrictions, etc., visit the Ticket and Tours Office, call (619) 725-6364, or see http://www.mccsmdc.com/TT.

Postal hours changed

The Military Post Office new hours of operation. Beginning immediately, the new hours of operation will be from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m., Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday. Wednesday hours are 7:30 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Civilian post office hours have not changed.

For more information, contact Postal at (619) 524-5775.

Lifelong Learning Education Center

Those interested in earning academic credit, getting a better job, improving their military or career advancement and a more successful future should come to the Lifelong Learning Education Center, building 111, on Jan. 16, for a presentation by the representative of the United Services Military Apprentice Program.

The presentation from 8 to 9 a.m., is being held in Classroom Alpha. For additional information or to reserve a seat call (619) 524-8518 or 1275. Information is also available at http://www.mccsmdc.com/.

Golf outing

MCRD and Semper Fit is hosting a Golf Tournament Jan. 23 at 10:30 a.m. The tourney is in a Scramble format with four-person teams. Cost is $45 per person and includes 18 holes of golf, cart and food after tournament. To register, stop by the Semper Fit Division, building 5w (2nd Deck) (Cash/check the day of). For more information, check out the event on Facebook: http://on.fb.me/L9Up6h or at http://www.mccsmdc.com/semperfit/2013_golf_outing/index.

Send briefs to:

rdcl_pao@usmc.mil. The Chevron staff reserves the right to publish only those briefs that comply with Department of Defense regulations and the standards of the U.S. Government.
This week the Chevron asks: “What are your thoughts regarding the recent changes to the female PFT?”

“A drill instructor from Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego instructs players of the Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl East Coast Team of what he expects from them during the players’ first practice on Dec. 31, 2012 at Fullerton College in Fullerton, Calif. The Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl is the second annual event of its kind and serves as a tool for Marines to pass on the core values to the nation’s top high school football athletes.”

“A commitment to leadership and community does not go without recognition. Major Gen. Joseph L. Osterman, former commanding general for Marine Corps Recruiting Command, presented two All-Americans with Excellence in Leadership awards during the Semper Fidelis Bowl banquet Jan. 3. Coaches nominated players from each team who demonstrated leadership in their daily lives and embodied the Corps’ values of honor, courage and commitment.

This year, Marine officials selected San Diego native Darren Carrington and Miami resident Ahmad Thomas. “These two young men really stood out,” said Osterman. “I’m proud to see this caliber of athlete out here.” Their journey to the bowl has been one of strenuous practices, community building and team bonding.

“Selflessness is the key ingredient and that’s the one thing these kids have got thrown in their faces this week,” said Evans. "Selflessness and the lack of the ‘I focus.’”

The bowl provided an opportunity for Marines to connect on a personal level with the players and their influencers. In doing so, they reinforced how the Marines’ core values of honor, courage and commitment relate to success on and off the field.

“Your legacy will be determined on a personal level with the players and their influencers.”

“Your legacy will be determined by your success not only as a football player,” he said, “but by your character as a role model in the community.”

A drill instructor from Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego instructs players of the Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl East Coast Team of what he expects from them during the players’ first practice on Dec. 31, 2012 at Fullerton College in Fullerton, Calif. The Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl is the second annual event of its kind and serves as a tool for Marines to pass on the core values to the nation’s top high school football athletes. The Semper Fidelis All-American Bowl was nationally televised live on the NFL Network from the Home Depot Center in Carson, Calif.
Recruit training is a place where recruits come to challenge themselves both mentally and physically, and the obstacle course aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego has put many of them to the test.

Recruits of Company C, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, went through the obstacle course for their second time aboard MCRD San Diego Jan. 3.

Recruits complete an obstacle course, known as the o-course, in each phase of recruit training. The course focuses on building upper-body strength and using different techniques to maneuver through it. Recruits climb over a series of elevated walls, logs and bars and are forced to use their last bit of strength to climb a rope at the end.

“Most recruits are excited about a new challenge when they are introduced to the o-course,” said Sgt. Nicholas DelSimone, drill instructor, Platoon 1049, Co. C, 1st RTBN. “It might not be too intimidating to look at, but sometimes it’s harder for some recruits than they think.”

Through the o-course, recruits learn their physical strengths and weaknesses as well as how to push themselves mentally through exhaustion.

“They already know what to expect from the first time they went through. This time they should be able to know where to put forth more effort,” explained DelSimone.

Recruits ran in place at the beginning, waiting their turn to challenge the course and watched as others attempted to overcome the first obstacle.

“Recruits are exhaust themselves over logs and pulled themselves over bars, drill instructors made sure to tell recruits to keep a low profile as they climbed over obstacles,” said Recruit Erik Joaquin, Plt. 1049, Co. C, 1st RTBN. “This is probably where recruits struggle the most. By this time, they’re so worn out from the course it makes it difficult to climb the ropes,” said DelSimone.

They use all their strength trying to finish as fast as they can, this is when they have to use their mental strength to continue.” As they reach the top of the rope, recruits yell out their name, platoon number and senior drill instructor’s name before they slowly slide back down to the wood chip-covered surface.

Although they’re exhausted, the recruits can feel satisfied that they learned a little more about their bodies and their limits.

“I feel that through the o-course, you can learn how to move fluidly through obstacles,” explained Joaquin. “If you don’t focus, you’ll end up rushing through, looking clumsy and probably end up falling.”

While they learn certain techniques, each recruit also gains confidence as they overcome their own personal challenges throughout the course.

“Since I’m shorter, I had difficulty getting over the tallest log,” said Joaquin. “But I kept telling myself to push through and finish.”

Whatever obstacles Co. C faced and mastered on the o-course, they walked away with more knowledge and confidence in their abilities, which is an important trait instilled in as they get closer to becoming Marines.

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Drill Instructor fulfills purpose in Corps

BY LANCE CPL. PEDRO CARDENAS

Chevron Staff

Drill instructors have the responsibility to ensure recruits are physically and mentally trained to bear the title “Marine.” This is a daily routine for drill instructors aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, from the early-morning down to late-night sunset. For drill instructors, this cycle lasts 12 weeks at a time.

One of the many Marines responsible for molding civilians into Marines is Sgt.Luckner L. Desma, drill instructor, Platoon 2169, Company H, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion.

Desma recalls his experience as a recruit when he first stood on the famous yellow foot prints eight years ago. His lifestyle changed when the barber shaved his head as is customary for all male recruits. He remembers marching to the sound of his own drill instructor’s cadence from one place to another. For the Port-au-Prince, Haiti native, these memories aren’t just moments he reminisces about, but are moments he re-lives daily—this time as a drill instructor.

“I hated drill in recruit training,” said Desma. “Now I’m teaching it.”

Desma’s day starts quick and early from the moment reveille is sounded. “It’s harder than teaching a baby how to walk,” said Desma. “You can’t teach them something once. Half of the platoon gets it and the other doesn’t.”

The secret to teaching recruits is repetition, according to Desma. His methods are paying off with dividends.

During his three years as a drill instructor, Desma’s platoons have won several competitions including Final Drill, rifle range and the Combat Fitness Test. One of his teams also received the Band of Brothers Award which is given to the team of drill instructors who worked best collectively.

Working as a team allowed Desma and other drill instructors within their platoons to win the Band of Brother award, said Sgt. Jeffrey R. Neely, drill instructor, Plt. 2169, Co. H, 2nd RTBn.

“All of us collectively working together with the recruits helped and made sure they performed when it was time to perform,” said Neely.

Neely explained Desma is a perfectionist and that his push for perfection is another reason why his platoons are so successful.

“Sgt. Desma expects success from them and explains how to (achieve) that success,” said Neely. “He constantly puts pressure on the recruits and doesn’t stop.”

Neely explained Desma has taught his fellow drill instructors the importance of one very important skill for the job.

“I have learned more time management,” said Neely. “We will pass on the knowledge from one drill instructor to another.”

After completing six successful cycles as a drill instructor, Desma will be hanging up his campaign cover after Plt. 2169, his last cycle, graduates recruit training today.

“I would say becoming a drill instructor kind of gave me a purpose as a Marine,” said Desma. “For me it’s a major accomplishment. It’s like the peak of a mountain.”

CLASSROOM 4-1

5 degrade the status or positions the senior Marine holds. Fraternization is not tolerated in the Marine Corps and there are clear consequences. Marines found guilty of fraternization can face dismissal, forfeiture of pay and confinement.

Marine Corps Manual 1100.4 sets rules for Marines in order to maintain good order, promote relationships of mutual respect and confidence between juniors and senior Marines, and preserve the integrity of the chain of command. Recruits are taught guidelines to recognize, determine and deal with fraternization.

If we were to see a Marine fraternizing, I would first approach the Marine, and if that didn’t work I would take it up with my chain of command,” said Hoblemen, using his newly-gained knowledge.

Recruits arrive at the depot with a different understanding of what to expect, but through the Marine recruit training curriculum they are given the tools to graduate, succeed and become good Marines, according to Hoblemen.

“Before coming to recruit training I heard about the classes from other Marines, but I still thought it was going to be more physical than informative,” said Hoblemen. “Now I see that the Marine Corps is trying to make recruits into well-rounded Marines. It’s important to be physically and mentally strong.”

Maj. Gen. Steven W. Busby

Parade Reviewing Officer

Major General Steven W. Busby assumed the duties of Commanding General, Third Marine Aircraft Wing on August 10, 2012. Busby enlisted into the Marine Corps in 1979 and was commissioned through the Enlisted Commissioning Program in 1980.

Busby was designated a naval aviator in 1983. He was assigned to Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University by the College Degree Program in 1985 and graduated with a Bachelor of Business Administration Degree in 1987. Subsequent assignments include: quality assurance officer and assistant aircraft maintenance officer, H&HMS-32; operations officer and aircraft maintenance officer, Marine Aerial Refueler Transport Squadron (VMGR) -152; executive officer, VMGR-252; assistant operations officer and air officer, 26th Marine Expeditionary Unit; and assistant chief of staff operations, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

Busby commanded VMGR-352, Marine Aircraft Group 36 and Special Purpose Marine Air Ground Task Force United Assistance in support of South Asia Tsunami Humanitarian Assistance Operations. He served as the senior advisor for Joint Experimentation and Marine Corps matters in the office of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for Resources and Plans, as the Commandant’s Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations in New York City, as the Executive Assistant for the Deputy Commander for Aviation, and as the Director of the Joint Capabilities Assessment and Integration Division.

As a general officer, Busby has served as the deputy director, Force Management, Application and Support, Joint Staff J-8.

Busby is a graduate of the Industrial College of the Armed Forces. He was presented the Alfred A. Cunningham Award as the Marine Corps’ Aviator of the Year in 2001.

“Marines, I join all of your fellow Marines and families in offering my congratulations on earning the title, “United States Marine.” You have tackled a challenge that few attempt and you have succeeded; and in the process you have already made a difference to your nation and to our Corps. I ask that you never forget the legacy of honor, courage and commitment left for you by your fellow Marines of years past and present, and that you attack each and every mission with the dedication and determination that is signified by the title “Marine.” It is my great honor to serve with each of you. Please take care of yourself and each other. Semper Fidelis and congratulations Marines!”

Image credits: Lance Cpl. Pedro Cardenas

Sgt. Luckner L. Desma, drill instructor, Platoon 2169, Company H, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion looks on beside the Drill Instructor statue aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Dec. 27. Desma’s tour as a drill instructor will end once recruits of Co. H graduate recruit training, making them his last cycle.
Sixty-feet may seem high to some recruits, but it’s still 60 feet recruits are required to rappel and fast rope down from, regardless of their fears.

Recruits of Company M, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, learned how to rappel and fast rope down a 60-foot tower aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego Jan. 7.

Rappelling is bounding off the side of a wall using a harness and fast roping is sliding straight down without one. Fast roping is a technique utilized in helicopters.

After recruits received a safety brief and were inspected for proper wear of equipment, recruits lined up the steps to the top of the Marine tower. Mixed faces showered the line, some recruits looked scared and some appeared excited.

“It’s a bit scary to look at,” said Recruit DeForrest B. Key, Platoon 3271, Co. M. 3rd RTBN. “I’m a little nervous; the anticipation is hard. There’s no coming back down though, you have to trust in yourself and each other.”

Recruits wore helmets, gloves and were attached to a rope harness. The floor surrounding the tower is composed of shredded rubber and Marine drill instructors, who stood below and atop the tower to guide recruits and ensure their safety.

Still despite all the safety precautions and knowledge given to recruits, one thing remained the same, the wall was still 60-feet tall which appeared much taller for recruits afraid of heights.

There are always a few recruits who are terrified of the exercise but there is never a recruit who comes back down the stairs, explained Staff Sgt. Michael A. Miranda, drill instructor, Instructional Training Company, Support Bn.

“I’ve never had a recruit walk back down and not (rappel),” said Miranda, a static rope sustainment trainer. “It has to do with walking them through the steps. No way, shape or form are we yelling on top of the tower. It’s already stressful as is, we talk to them and let them know it’s alright.”

One by one recruits rappelled down and fast roped down the tower. Although some recruits struggled at times, no recruits quit the exercise.

The instructor’s knowledge and guidance helped put recruits minds at ease, explained Recruit Wes Laughlin, Plt. 3271, Co. M. 3rd RTBN.

“I’ve done rock climbing, but it’s nothing like rappelling,” said Laughlin. “I’m still a little nervous though because I haven’t done it before.”

Approximately 217 recruits learned two different ways to scale down a 60-foot tower. Should the situation arise for either fast roping or rappelling, these recruits now have a foundation to work upon.