Recruits train body for Marine Corps way of life

by Lance Cpl. Benjamin E. Woodle
Chevron staff

Physical fitness is a big part of the Marine Corps. It is so important that a Marine's physical ability is measured each year through a fitness test which results in a score that is applied toward their promotion. During recruit training, a vast amount of time is spent preparing recruits for not only the fitness test, but the Marine Corps way of life.

Recruits of Company L, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, conducted various physical training events aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 25 to help achieve a high level of fitness.

The purpose of the PT session was to prepare recruits for their upcoming final Physical Fitness Test.

For recruits, the score they receive on their final PFT will be the first that goes on their permanent record. Therefore, all preparation and training leading up to it is crucial.

"This final PFT is really important to me and holds a lot of weight toward my future promotions," said Recruit Craig M. (see PFT 2).

Introducing warrior ethos

by Lance Cpl. Pedro Cardenas
Chevron staff

Recruit training encompasses preparing body and mind to become a basically-trained Marine. Some of these areas of training include close-order drill, core values classes, physical training and basic combat-related martial arts.

The Marine Corps Martial Arts Program requires recruits to learn the basics of hand-to-hand combat and is a fundamental step in becoming Marine Corps warriors. During MCMAP training, recruits learn various techniques under the guidance of MCMAP instructors. Recruits of Company H, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, learned basic chokes, counters and knife techniques aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 25.

The purpose of MCMAP is for recruits to learn hand-to-hand combat and develop confidence, leadership and basic warrior ethos. These skills are necessary to learn in order to graduate recruit training.

"MCMAP lets recruits see the basics of hand-to-hand combat." (see MCMAP 2)

Corps history is major training element

by Cpl. Liz Gleason
Chevron staff

The recruits of Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, read along in their text books during a history class aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 28. Recruits are taught Marine Corps History early in recruit training to instill a esprit de corps.

Recruits of Company H, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, practice a rear choke during Marine Corps Martial Arts Program training aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 25. MCMAP is a training requirement recruits must learn in order to graduate.

Recruits of Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, perform crunches to prepare for an upcoming fitness test aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 25. Recruits were corrected by drill instructors if they were not using proper form.

Recruits from Company A, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, read along in their text books during a history class aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 28. Recruits are taught Marine Corps History early in recruit training to instill a esprit de corps.

The importance of teaching the recruits history early on is like the old adage, if you don't know where you came from then you don't know where you're going," said Sgt. Michael Pelayez, academic instructor, Instructional Training Company, Recruit Training Regiment. "It's our history, our tradition, our foundation, the Marine Corps has a rich tradition and it's important to indoctrinate the recruits before they become Marines."

There are six phases of Marine Corps History classes which encompass everything from the birth...
Reece, Platoon 3242, Co. L, 3rd RTBn. "I have been preparing for this through healthy eating, carbohydrate loading, and doing extra pull-ups whenever I can."

There were four events recruits conducted during their PT session. After completing their warm-up exercises, recruits made their way over to the pull-up bars to complete two maximum sets of pull-ups. Following the pull-ups, recruits completed a maximum set of push-ups, and then did as many crunches as they could in two minutes. The last event consisted of four half-mile sprints. "This PT event is designed to help condition the recruits’ bodies for the PFT coming up," said Staff Sgt. Ray J. Rozane, drill instructor, Plt. 3241, Co. L, 3rd RTBn. "In the third phase of recruit training we don’t have as many PT events, so this is really important for the recruits." The training offered recruits similar challenges to those they would face in the final PFT. "Maintaining the endurance on the sprint was probably the toughest part," said Reece, who played football for Indiana State University as a running back. "I’m used to doing short dash sprints so it is really an adjustment for me."

"The constant physical training and high Marine Corps standards keeps Marines ready to answer the call of duty at a moment’s notice. Being ready for any challenge is a necessity in this line of work. "Physical fitness is imperative for Marines," said Rozane. "It keeps them in shape and helps them be combat ready."

**BRIEFS**

**Volunteer Recognition**

MCRDSD hosts its annual Volunteer Recognition Ceremony at the Recreation Center, Building 590, on April 22 at 10:30 a.m. The event recognizes and celebrates the efforts of those who have supported their communities by volunteering time, effort and expertise. They are active duty members, retirees, civilian Marine Corps family, and civilians.

This event is an opportunity to say “thank you” to the many people who have positively impacted the quality of life for our personnel. For information call Tracy Genica, Marine Corps Family Team Building, at (619) 524-8030.

**DI of the Year Awards**

The depot’s Museum Historical Society hosts its Quarterly Breakfast and will present the Drill Instructor of the Year award on April 23 at 7 a.m., in Duncan Hall.

The guest speaker will be Maj. Gen. Steven W. Budny, commanding general, 3rd Marine AW.

The breakfast is open to all depot military members and civilians. For information contact Capt. Terries at (619) 524-8753 or Col. (ret.) Stuart at (619) 524-4426.

**Scholarship time**

The Col. Max H. Shapleigh Memorial Scholarship Program will award three $1,000 scholarships in July. All active duty enlisted aboard the Depot and within the Western Recruiting Region, and dependents who are high school graduates and currently enrolled in an undergraduate or graduate program, are eligible to apply.

For the application and further information see the website at www.mcridms.org, or call (619) 524-4426.

**Laser Tag**

Join Single Marine Program members in Laser Tag at the Ultron. Cost for the event is $10 for three games and gear rental. Sign up by April 17. Space is limited.

For information contact Josh Davis at davisi@usmc.mcrd.org, or via telephone at (619) 524-9240. Check out the event on Facebook at http://on.fb.me/Zrv3R7.

**CG Cup Ping Pong Tourney**

Channel your inner Forest Gump and show off your ping-pong skills at the 2013 CG Cup Ping Pong tournament!

This one-day tournament will be held at the MCRD Fieldhouse on April 23. Start time and tournament format depends on the number of entrants.

A registration meeting will be held April 15 from 11 a.m. to noon at the Fitness center training room. The tournament is open only to MCRD active duty and depot DOD/Nafi employees. Fenwich participants earn extra CG Cup entry points.

Ping Pong table and practice equipment are available. The table will be available daily, after 1300, through April 22. Players may check out balls, paddles and the court key from the Fitness Center (619) 524-4427.

For information contact Athletics at (619) 524-0548 or e-mail Rachel Dickinson (dickinson@usmc.mcrd.org).

**Send briefs to:**

rdsl_pao@usmc.mil. The Chevron state reserves the right to publish only those briefs that comply with Department of Defense regulations and the standards of the U.S. Government.
Cultural Show

Richard Parker (left) and Richard Orvedal (right), both of the Omaha tribe, a Native American tribe out of Nebraska, dance traditional northern dances during Cultural Heritage Day aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego April 4. Parker and Orvedal were wearing traditional Native American outfits made from American bald eagle feathers and porcupine quills.

Amphibious Raid

Marines of Company F, 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division provide security while waiting for other members of their assault force to arrive during an amphibious raid aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego April 2. The assault was carried out by 105 Marines utilizing Combat Rubber Raiding Crafts.
Recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, perform inclined sit ups during the Circuit Course aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, April 2. The Circuit Course helps recruits build strength, endurance and agility.

Variety in physical fitness makes well-rounded Marines

By Cpl. Liz Gleason

The recruits of Company G, 2nd Recruit Training Battalion, challenged their physical fitness and endurance while learning different exercises during the Circuit Course event aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, April 2.

“We reveal and stress the importance of physical fitness to the recruits from the beginning of training because it’s more than just what we do, it’s our way of life,” said Staff Sgt. Ricky Broadway, Platoon 2142, Co. G, 2nd RTBn. “It’s important to build a strong physical foundation because physical fitness helps maintain a strong mind and a strong spirit.”

The recruits formed up for physical training and the chief drill instructor led them in a brief warm-up and stretches. After stretching, the recruits divided into teams and took a lap around the football field before starting at one of the start circuit stations.

During the sprint portion of the event, recruits rotated through various stations focusing on strength, agility and endurance. Some of the stations included sprinting, planks and ammunition can presses.

“Before joining the Marine Corps, I played almost every sport. I also worked out five days a week, so I consider myself to be in good shape,” said Recruit Morgan Chestnut, Plt. 2142, Co. G, 2nd RTBn. “The physical training we do here is different, it’s very endurance based and I’m not used to the continuous rigor of the physical training in the Marine Corps, but I am beginning to adapt to it.”

When each team finished all the stations the recruits formed up and ran to the next field where they faced another section of the Circuit Course. The second part focused on strength and included stations such as pull-ups, inclined sit-ups and standing basketballDunks among others.

“The PT we do at recruit training helps make better more well-rounded Marines,” said Chestnut. “Marines are the first on the fight so we need to be ready for any type of situation. If we are physically fit in recruit training it will help us be prepared for whatever we may face, whether it’s deploying to Afghanistan or anywhere else we may be sent.”

The Circuit Course is part of a strict physical training regimen geared toward training recruits to meet the Marine Corps’ physical standards. Since recruits arrive at recruit training at various fitness levels, the intensity of their workouts gradually increases the further they get through training. It also teaches them different techniques, ways to work out and how to maintain their fitness once they leave the depot.

Another important purpose of events like the Circuit Course is that it allows recruits to gauge their current physical fitness levels and learn their weaknesses and strengths so they can continue improving, said Broadway.

Once they finished the second circuit course, the recruits formed up to run back to the football field. The event concluded with a cool down followed by stretching. Recruit training PT sessions always begin and end with stretching to help prevent injury.

While this was the first time the recruits completed the Circuit Course event, it’s not the last time. Throughout recruit training they will complete the course six times.
Marine learns life lessons through adversity

By Cpl. Liz Gleason

The phrase “adapt and overcome” is often used by the Marine Corps to describe the long legacy of Marines who were faced with extenuating circumstances, yet refused to let the challenge defeat them. It’s a trait that many Marines work hard for and strive to obtain.

For Pvt. Jeremiah Owens, Platoon 3242, Company L, 3rd Recruit Training Battalion, this trait wasn’t something new; it has been his way of life since he was young.

“When I was in middle school, we moved from shelter to shelter, trying to go to school as much as we could,” said Owens, a 20-year-old St. Louis native. “We were poor and always struggling to pay bills and keep a home. There were times when we had no food, all we’d have to eat was ketchup packets and we’d have to drink out of syrup bottles. There were months that we’d live off of candles for light because there was no money to pay the electric bills.”

His mother’s struggle with drug addiction made it difficult for her to provide for her family. However, when Owens reached high school things took a turn for the better.

“When I was about 14 years old we stayed at a shelter with a drug rehabilitation program,” said Owens. “Once my mom completed treatment, our life started to get better. We were finally able to pay the bills and I was able to go to school and play sports. I played football, ran track and wrestled.”

Owens started on his high school varsity football team as a freshman and participated in wrestling. His hard work and dedication resulted in sports scholarships to two colleges.

“Things were finally starting to look up when his life took another unexpected turn,” said Sgt. Brandon Cobb, drill instructor, Plt. 3242, Co. L, 3rd RTBn. “My junior year I started dating a girl,” said Owens. “She told me she was pregnant. I had to quit playing sports so that I could go to school and find a job to support my new family.”

He sacrificed his dreams and scholarships to do what he believed was right, however after some time passed he decided it was time to chase his dream of becoming a Marine. “I wanted to become a Marine to better myself and our future,” said Owens.

Not long after, Owens found himself on the yellow footprints aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

“Owens stood out from the beginning of recruit training. He was one of our most motivated recruits,” said Sgt. Brandon Cobb, drill instructor, Plt. 3242, Co. L, 3rd RTBn. “He’s always eager to help with tasks and get things done, he assists the scribes with administrative work and when they’re gone he steps up and takes their place.”

Instead of allowing his circumstances derail or defeat him, Owens used it as inspiration and fuel to propel him through recruit training.

“He’s always putting out, he’s never had a day he hasn’t given 100 percent,” said Cobb. “His good work ethic, personal drive, unselfishness and the fact that he overcame a hard upbringing and wants to better himself says a lot about Owens. I think he’ll do great things in the Marine Corps.”

His excitement and passion for becoming a Marine was transparent as Owens talked about getting so close to his dream.

“I feel like I can taste graduation,” said Owens with a grin. “Nothing is going to stop me.”

Col. Michael A. Biszak

Parade Reviewing Officer

Col. Michael A. Biszak is the commanding officer, 12th Marine Corps District.

Biszak was commissioned a second lieutenant in the Marine Corps in December 1986, after completing his undergraduate education in Physical Education at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville.

Following The Basic School and the Infantry Officer Course, Biszak was assigned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, at Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton, Calif., in August 1987. During this tour he served as a platoon commander and company executive officer for Company B, 1st Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment, Calif., he participated in various exercises and deployed with the 11th Marine Expeditionary Unit in 1988 and the 15th MEU in 1990 to the Western Pacific.

In August 1990, Biszak was transferred to Recruiting Station Oklahoma City, 8th Marine Corps District, where he served as the operations officer and executive officer. He subsequently reported to Fort Benning, Ga., in August 1994, where he attended Infantry Officers Advance Course and Airborne School.

Ordered to Camp Pendleton, Calif., in February 1994, Biszak reported to 3rd Battalion, 5th Marine Regiment where he served as the assistant battalion operations officer, Company K commander and the battalion operations officer. During this tour, he deployed twice with the 31st MEU and conducted numerous exercises in the Western Pacific.

In 1996, he was assigned as the commanding officer of Recruiting Station Chicago, 9th Marine Corps District, where he served until reporting to Marine Corps Command and Staff College, Quantico, Va., in August 1999.

In July 2000, the colonel reported to Recruiters School, Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego, Calif., where he served as the director. In July 2003, Biszak was reassigned to Headquarters Battalion, 1st Marine Division, where he served as the battalion executive officer and subsequently as the battalion commander. During that tour, he deployed twice to Iraq in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

In June 2005, Biszak was reassigned to the U.S. Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, Carlisle, Pa., where he received a master’s degree in National Security and Strategic Studies.

In July 2006, Biszak reported to NORAD - U.S. NORTHERN Command, Colorado Springs, Colo., where he served as the deputy division chief, Theater Security Cooperation Division, Directorate of Plans, Policy and Strategy until May 2008.

In May 2008, the colonel reported to Marine Corps Recruit Depot/Western Recruiting Region San Diego, Calif., to serve as the assistant chief of staff, recruiting, until March 2010 when he assumed his current duties.

The colonel’s personal decorations include the Bronze Star Medal, the Defense Meritorious Service Medal, the Meritorious Service Medal (2nd award) and the Navy-Marine Corps Commendation Medal (2nd award).
To be a U.S. Marine, one must go through a tough initiation process known as Marine Corps recruit training. Recruits strive to complete this training to earn the title and respect of being in an elite fighting force. Being able to wear the Marine Corps uniform during recruit training gives recruits a taste of what they are working toward.

Recruits of Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, went through their final uniform fitting aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 29. The final fitting is to ensure the uniforms have been altered to fit properly.

The history of Marine Corps uniforms date back to the founding of this nation. During that time, traditions developed and have left a lasting impression on the Corps. Among those traditions is the nickname ‘leatherneck’ that has stuck around today, though the protective leather neck collar garment hasn’t been worn since 1872.

A lot of careful planning and slight adjustments due to changing battlefield technology, have made the Marine Corps uniform what it is today. “There is a lot of attention to detail,” said Sgt. Justin E. Barnes, drill instructor, Platoon 1025, Co. B, 1st RTBn. “The uniforms are very distinct and have a unique look.”

During uniform fitting, recruits get to put on the Marine Corps dress and service uniforms to check for proper fit. This is one of the few times in recruit training that they are allowed to wear their uniform, and for most, their first. Recruits finally get to see and feel what they’ve been working hard for during their last few weeks of training.


Recruits aren’t the only ones that get a sense of pride when they are trying on the uniforms. Drill instructors who have dedicated themselves to recruits over the entire recruit training cycle, feel it as well. “I feel a lot of pride seeing recruits put on the uniforms because that’s my product there,” said Barnes, who is about to complete his second cycle as a drill instructor. “The recruits know how precious it is and it’s as big of a deal to us as it is to them.”

The tradition, honor, pride, and legacy of the Marine Corps uniform continues one recruit cycle at a time. They continue to be a selling point for those interested in joining. “The uniforms were a part of what drew me in,” said Lee. “I liked how people looked in them. They look very professional, tight, and very neat.”

The recruits have learned about something that they will take pride in throughout the rest of their Marine Corps career. The drill instructors have made sure of it. “We instill great pride in them,” said Barnes. “That way they will go out to the fleet and continue to maintain and carry the honor and tradition with them.”

Recruits of Company B, 1st Recruit Training Battalion, turn in their camouflage utilities to have their name tapes sewn onto them aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego March 29. The uniform fitting is also held to ensure recruits are correctly sized for their dress uniforms.