Welcome Back to Auburn!

The fall semester of 2010 has already hit the ground running. This year the companies have integrated and already linked up to complete such events such as the September 11th Ceremony, the Motorcycle Ride for our Veterans, Freshmen Orientation, Medal of Honor Gala, and freshmen flags. We are excited to welcome all the new Midshipmen, Officer Candidates, and Marine Enlisted Commissioning Program participants! The Helm staff would like to wish everyone a safe and wonderful year! War Eagle!
Coming Together
By MIDN 3/C Nette

The Navy ROTC intramurals team is looking pretty good so far, with a 4-0 record for the football team. This year our intramurals team is looking very promising says MIDN Ben Evans (Captain and Quarterback). Ben says that the flag football team is “much improved from last year.” He also believes that the addition of several freshmen gives the team “more depth” to work with.

MIDN Evans claims that many team members have “natural football instincts” and know how to get into open space and play good defense. On the team’s defense, MIDN Jacob Turk “is a beast” according to Evans. Jacob Turk had two picks and a touchdown in the team’s first game. Evans’ only concern is that the team should keep MIDN Cornelius from “throwing his glove so much this year.”

The football team has a pretty good chance at moving ahead to the playoffs this year. In the IM league the team needs to win just a few more games to make the playoffs. The team’s main focus, however, is the Commander’s Cup, which occurs in October. The team this year is geared towards defeating the Air Force and Army in the Commander’s Cup. If the team keeps playing the way they have been thus far in the season, they should be able to win this year’s Commander’s Cup.

The softball team has just begun playing this season, but Evans thinks that if the team keeps “playing solid defense and keep hitting hard ground balls”, then they could have a chance at the playoffs.

Schedule:

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<td>SUN 03 OCT</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>IM PLAYOFFS</td>
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<td>MON 18 OCT</td>
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<td>WED 20 OCT</td>
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PICTURES
ABOVE LEFT: The Navy/Marine flag football team
RIGHT: MIDN Evans scrambles for a first
Freshmen Orientation Goes On-Line
By MIDN 3/C Williams

On August 10, 2010 the Auburn NROTC hosted the annual Freshmen Orientation. Unlike past orientations, this event was held at a displaced location: Fort Benning, Ga. Not only would this experience be new to our incoming Tigers, it would also host the Golden Tigers for the very first orientation in the history of Tuskegee University NROTC. The five day evolution was a huge test and served as a stepping stone for the incoming freshman.

Countless hours were spent organizing and synchronizing movements for each day of the event. Under the command of OC Harley Harp, the unit and student-based staff successfully completed Freshman Orientation beyond command expectations. The professionalism and commitment shown by the staff resulted in 100% completion of all major events, 100% of able-bodied fourth class midshipmen rappel tower complete, and approximately 90% earned a third class swim qualification.

Tuskegee Shines: You Know!
By MIDN 3/C Williams

As we are all aware, the 2010 Freshman Orientation was an evolution that marked the first for many midshipmen, new and old. Besides the new location and staff, it would be the first time for the midshipmen of Tuskegee University to take part in this event. With that in mind, the 44 midshipmen at TU were ready for war and turned in an outstanding performance, including one of their own earning the coveted Honor Graduate Award. Midshipman Third Class Shauvez Bennett served as the Guidon Bearer for Alpha Company, which was also selected as the winner of the “Golden Boot” given to the best overall company after competing in the areas of academics, athletics and drill. Following his victory, the Helm wanted to know what was in Midshipmen Bennett’s head and how he led his company to greatness.

Helm: Why do you think that you were chosen as Honor Graduate?

Midshipmen 3/C Bennett: To tell you the truth, I was surprised when they told me I was even being considered as the Honor Graduate. All I heard all week was what a terrible job I was doing and how I was obviously inadequate and the wrong person to do my job! However, in spite of all that and in the midst of a very confusing week, I had to keep a cool head to lead my platoon. As the leader they were depending on me to keep them motivated and strong as a whole. That was my main goal and I believe it was accomplished.

Helm: If you were not chosen as the Honor Graduate, who do you think would have been the best choice?
Midshipmen 3/C Bennett: In Alpha Company, there were times where even though I was the leader I had the opportunity to sit back and let others do things amongst themselves. People would come to me with ideas on what they wanted to do during our free time and I would reply, "Yo, if you want to do this, by all means, you put it together and make it happen. If you need my help to get it started you know where I am." We had a lot of people who took the initiative on things and when it came to things such as that I was more interested in watching them get it together and get it done than sitting there micromanaging them and or doing it myself. Who was I to stand in the way of obvious progress and leadership; the freshmen really surprised me in this regard. It was unfortunate that this was the behind the scenes leadership that no one gets credit for. To me those were the people that deserved honor Graduate as much as anyone.

Helm: Why do you think that Alpha Company won the Golden Boot over Bravo Company?

Midshipmen 3/C Bennett: I never got a chance to sit down and observe Bravo Company personally; however I can say from my experience in Alpha Company that we became a team. Together everyone achieves more. We started off as individuals whose only thoughts were do it right, do it fast, don't get yelled at, and if the guy beside me doesn't hurry up he's in trouble. We had to learn to drop the "ME" for "WE." If one person looks bad, we all look bad. If I look good but my partner looks bad then everyone is in trouble. Once we got into the groove of things we did very well together. I'm very proud of Alpha platoon and what we did. I think that's what the instructors saw and what made their overall decision swing our way.

Helm: Before Freshmen Orientation, what did you expect it would be like? Considering that you are already a 2nd year student in the program.

Midshipmen 3/C Bennett: I thought Freshman O was going to be a cake walk. I was expecting to just stay behind the scenes and help out with what I saw wrong and work to change it. I was going to be an element of the platoon but let the freshmen, to whom the training was geared toward, do all of the work. Obviously, that was not the case for me at all.
After a quality six week period at Officer Candidates School this summer, I am technically qualified to be commissioned as a leader of Marines, but what does that mean? That's a good question audience, what did I do at OCS that qualifies me to become a Second Lieutenant in the United States Marine Corps? While I could bore you with my many accomplishments as a midshipman, I'm afraid they mean nothing when I do finally reach the goal that we all hope to attain at some point.

The Marine Corps is a people business, you must be able to work with anyone on anything at any time. At OCS, I had the privilege to work with the best of the best ranging from motivated prior enlisted men and women who thought they were back at boot camp, to motivated midshipmen that couldn’t quite master the art of dressing themselves. I learned that a person, though apparently lacking in skill, can help in just about any situation, restoring one’s faith in humanity.

Motivation is key in absolutely everything, to include physical training, drilling, hydrating, folding socks, eating cake, counting to 48, and sleeping at the position of attention. If I hadn’t been motivated, I might not have been able to make it through multiple days of training with fluid in the lungs, no sleep, and no extra fruit (not even a crappy orange!). With a couple of tactically received letters, the occasional pound bag of Reese’s peanut butter cups, and the inability of a fellow candidate to spell candidate (pretty sure it’s not “canideight”) it’s easy to keep motivation high at OCS; you just have to keep your goal of graduation in mind at all times.

Initiative: seizing any opportunity to lead others and learn by doing. At OCS this means cleaning the urinal before being told to do so, yelling at your buddy about how jacked up his shower shoes are to save the sergeant instructors some time out of their busy schedule, or being the sacrificial lamb by asking the stupid question of the First Sergeant and taking the brunt of his fury. If you have a thought, whether it be mediocre to semi-stupid, you should act on it at OCS.

Having gone through three years of motivated classes and training at the NROTC unit at Auburn, I was more than prepared for OCS. The magical land of Quantico certainly reveals the true character of all who attend, showing who can and can’t operate under pressure. It wasn’t the largest challenge, and it wasn’t a walk through the park by any means (because you don’t walk on the grass, ever). I now join a select few that understand what OCS is all about, and I can only encourage those yet to go to stay motivated and to learn as much as possible in your time in college, because time does fly when you’re having fun.
Summer Cruise: USS Santa Fe (SSN 763)
By MIDN 1/C Guffey

For my 1st class Summer Cruise, I requested a submarine cruise in the Pacific and was fortunate enough to be assigned to USS Santa Fe (SSN 763) on a transit from Pearl Harbor to San Diego. I landed in Hawaii on a Thursday afternoon, and we didn’t leave port until early the next Tuesday morning. So we got to enjoy 5 days in Honolulu, and it gave us Midshipmen plenty of time to explore the beaches around the island and do some fun sight-seeing. We had an awesome time there, and I really would love to be stationed there someday.

The transit itself lasted a week, and overall it was a great experience. The crew was really willing to answer questions about what they liked and disliked about submarines, Pearl Harbor, leadership qualities in officers, and etc. I also really enjoyed the relaxed atmosphere on the boat, which is a pretty common characteristic of submarines in the Pacific Fleet.

Some of the other highlights were getting to observe the drills and hearing about the CO’s previous tour in Afghanistan. Usually every morning, I would observe a JO standing watch during engineering or tactical drills and get a better perspective on how things are on a sub for a JO. Regarding Afghanistan, the CO (CDR David Adams) spent 2007 in command of Joint Provincial Reconstruction Team Khost, Afghanistan. So he was able to give us some neat insight on the current culture and state of affairs in Afghanistan with Operation Enduring Freedom. They also gave us a few briefings about the submarine force’s work in the Pacific, which were pretty neat to see.

Like all summer cruises, there was a good bit of downtime. So we also watched a lot of movies and played a lot of cribbage. But overall the cruise was about as good as it gets, both from what we learned aboard the sub and the time we spent in Hawaii.

Summer Cruise: USS Hopper (DDG 70)
By MIDN 1/C Allsup

I was on the USS Hopper (DDG 70) for my first class summer cruise. It is a destroyer based out of Pearl Harbor. It was a great learning experience because there were many new ensigns on board who were learning how to stand different watches and trying to complete their PQS. I was able to shadow them while they learned; this helped me to see the challenges a junior officer faces when he or she is sent out to the fleet for the first time. I feel like I know a little bit more about what to expect when I get on my first ship. If you want to get the most out of your summer cruise, make sure you take every opportunity possible to accompany your running mate. Ask questions about the ship’s capabilities, life as a junior officer, watch standing, equipment, etc. Also, ask if you can help out with anything. Jumping in and doing something is the best way to learn.
Freshman Spotlight: MIDN 4/C O’Neill
By MIDN 4/C Cole

Midshipman O’Neill is a freshman from Brookeville, Maryland; a small town close to Washington D.C. O’Neill is a Marine option and is very passionate about his dream of being a Marine officer. Growing up in a family that has a history of Marines, he has always had a strong sense of patriotism and love for his country. He believes that there’s no better way to serve this country than by leading Marines. O’Neill wants to become either an infantry officer, or go ground intelligence. He likes to, “work out, chill with friends, play video games; the usual.” The thing he likes most about ROTC is camaraderie. During our interview O’Neill said, “It’s like its own fraternity; you’ve got all your brothers and buddies and everyone is like family. You can’t go 5 minutes without hearing someone laugh their butt off. Or if you have a question, someone is always there to answer it. Everyone helps each other and we all learn from each other.” His favorite thing about college in general is the freedom. He takes advantage of the freedom he has to make his own rhythm and the responsibility that comes with it. “You want to do something, then it’s on you. No more mumsy and popsy.‘ to hold your hand anymore.”

Congratulations!

On September 17, 2010 members of the unit won 1st place at the 2010 Farmhouse Rodeo!

Chandler Minton-Bull Riding
Lee Drumheller-Bronco Riding
Troy Peck-Calf Wrestling
Matt Mckenly-Calf Wrestling
John King-Mustang Wrestling
Alex Sherrod-Mustang Wrestling
Donovan Holloway-Mustang Wrestling

Thank You!!

ROTC sends a Special “Thank You” to the Mariners! The 2010-2011 Mariners have already shown their support at every event that we have conducted this year. Thank you for your continued dedication and cheerful attitudes!
The Road So Far...