



April 2024

Edited by: MIDN Nicholas De Fina and MIDN Ty Majam

Spring Ball

By: MIDN Tran and MIDN De Fina

A toast to the Trojan Battalion! As the sun set on April 5th, 2024, our midshipmen, guests, and staff gathered at the Bonaventure Hotel in Downtown Los Angeles for our annual Dining Out. It was a night to remember as an evening filled with laughter, camaraderie, and a heartfelt farewell to our retiring Commanding Officer, Colonel Juarez.

As we raised our glasses, we honored the rich traditions of the Dining-Out ceremony. BNCO Matt Merone, our President of the Mess, began the night with a speech before welcoming in the parade of the beef. Once he excruciatingly scoffed down his cut and proclaimed it fit for human consumption, the mess looked on as our Vice President of the Mess, MIDN Shea O'Brien, concocted the grog for the fines and roasts to ensue.



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Many jokes were shared across the patio and many more laughs were had. Stunning revelations and well placed gags assured no face went without a smile when truly no midshipman was safe. Those who faltered in their delivery, unable to defend themselves, or found guilty of their crimes faced the charge of drinking from the grog amongst other light-hearted punishments.

As the evening drew to a close, our hearts swelled with pride and gratitude from the inspiring words shared by Colonel Juarez. His poignant speech reignited the flames of purpose within each of us, reminding us of our unwavering commitment to service and duty. Not only did his words resonate deeply with those in attendance, but they also stirred a newfound sense of dedication among our midshipmen's guests, inspiring them to do more for our country. With each toast, we not only honored the legacy of the Trojan Battalion but also embraced the profound impact of leadership and camaraderie that binds us together. As we bid farewell to Colonel Juarez, we raise our glasses high, not only to commemorate the memories we've shared but also to reaffirm our pledge to uphold the values of honor, courage, and commitment. *To that we **Fight On!***



Benner Trophy

By: MIDN Giorgetta

On April 20th, the Trojan Battalion ventured to our cross-town rival and LA Consortium brother-in-arms to compete for the Benner Memorial Trophy. UCLA's Bruin Battalion put up a good fight but was no match for USC's tenacity and grit. The competition weighed the battalions holistically, comparing them in different facets of physical fitness, mental strength, and something in between. While prior measurements were incorporated such as average midshipman GPAs and CFT scores, the competition came down to the events of 20 April, each testing us on skills we developed in our weekly Professional Labs. USC was victorious in both drill competitions, weapons handling with our small arms simulator, Jeopardy with Naval knowledge, and tug-of-war. However, the Bruin Battalion did best us in the first aid stretcher-bearing race and dodgeball. The final event of the day was the Blood Madness Basketball Game. While both battalions put up a fight, it was apparent early on that the Trojans would once again take the win. MVPs MIDN 1/C Piper and MIDN 4/C Baylon led us to a sweeping victory, contributing to USC taking home the Benner Trophy.





Friday, 12APR24, 1800. The Marine Option midshipmen and joining navy midshipmen fell in outside the steps of the PED preparing to depart for Camp Pendleton. Eager and excited was the mood.

Upon arrival on base, our midshipmen and MECEPS joined their UCLA counterparts, took accountability, prepared the barracks, and chowed down to prepare for the next day. Here, we were split into our three squads, two of which played the Marines, and the other, consisting of MECEPs and 1/C midshipmen, an insurgent squad of Montana Resistance AAA.

At 0600 the following morning, our midshipmen arrived at the AA in anticipation of a days long FEX ahead of them, including squad-sized SULEs, land navigation, and night land navigation. Truly exemplary work boasted by all our pre and post-OCS midshipmen.

As a 4/C experiencing my second ever FEX, I was honored to be delegated a Fireteam and hold the opportunity of learning from the upper class midshipmen. As displayed in MIDN 2/C Salva's SULE, our squad moved at a high crawl height for over a half a mile to approach our location. Over those one-and-a-half hours, it allowed for complete stealth to approach our objective and take the enemy by surprise. It was truly a valuable experience learning new ways to execute a SULE, attack a position, and delegate leadership roles within one's very own squad.

MARINE FEX

By: MIDN De Fina

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Then came land navigation, and for many in attendance, their first chance to try their hand at this skill. For many, it proved a successful display of their training, for others, a good chance to catch up on chow.

Finally, after one final SULE for each squad, the sun began to set and rain clouds rolled in, ushering the platoon to the last event of the day, night land navigation. For an hour and a half our midshipmen and MECEPS worked diligently as they trudged through the mud and tallgrass to find their points scattered throughout the course. Once the time was up, our midshipmen and MECEPS marched back to debrief and step off towards the barracks.

The next morning we arose well-rested after a long day's work and ready to head home. We diligently cleaned the barracks, loaded the vans, and set off North back to our respective campuses. Yet, to our surprise, we found ourselves arriving at a local paintball park to continue our training and enact what we trained while under fire.

At the end of the day, the Midshipman and MECEPS returned to their respective campuses reminiscing on a successful weekend in their Field Exercise.

Midshipman of the Year

By: MIDN Nicholas De Fina

Few can say they contend with our soon-to-be Second Lieutenant, James Cook, and even fewer can say they earned the distinction of being the Battalion's Midshipmen of the Year. MIDN 1/C Cook is in a caliber of his own, excelling in every facet of his life, and is the clear choice to claim this coveted title.

Hailing from Reno, Nevada, MIDN Cook arrived on campus four years ago eager to study Industrial/Systems Engineering and exceed expectations as a Midshipman. Working within the Battalion as a Marine Student Liaison, a Command Sergeant Major, a Platoon Athletics Officer, as well as his OCS class Platoon Commander, Cook looks forward to his next step along the journey at The Basic School in Quantico, Virginia.

As MIDN Cook sets his sights on his next endeavor, he asks to share these parting words with the Battalion....

2023-2024 MIDN JAMES COOK



A Message For the Battalion

Trojan Battalion,

It is a tremendous honor to be selected as the Midshipman of the Year. These last four years have been a period of significant growth personally and professionally that can only be attributed to the Naval ROTC program here at USC. I would not be in this position if not for the active-duty staff that has remained dedicated to our development and provided continual guidance and support. The commitment to excellence and high standards established in the unit facilitated our collective success and taught valuable (sometimes painful) lessons that will carry for years into our careers.

The value of NROTC would also be diminished without the talented and hardworking group of individuals enrolled in the program. We are very fortunate to be able to work with such high-quality people every day. I wish all my peers in the 1/C class the best of luck as they begin their careers.

The Trojan Battalion's long and proud tradition of producing successful Navy and Marine Corps officers is a testament to its value. During my time at the unit, I learned how important it is to make the most of the short amount of time spent here. I hope that those remaining with the unit take advantage of every opportunity provided by this program and find as much value in it as I have.

Semper Fidelis and Fight on.

MIDN 1/C James Cook



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