

Making a Cavalry Scout

by CPT John D. Grounds, CPT Jonathan K. Goodman and SSG Jason P. McMullen

The 5th Squadron, 15th Cavalry Regiment, transforms volunteers into Soldiers through 19D Cavalry scout one-station unit training. OSUT prepares Soldiers to be tactically and technically competent Cavalry scouts who embrace Army Values and the Warrior Ethos. Training encompasses a range of tasks and abilities, including physical fitness, individual weapon qualifications, land navigation, communication and the use of basic chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear equipment. Soldiers also receive valuable training on the operation and maintenance of the M3A3 Bradley, the M1025 humvee and the M1127 Reconnaissance Variant Stryker Combat Vehicle.

Upon graduation, these Soldiers are ready to take their place in a values-based organization. They are capable of contributing from the first day they report to their final units as a member of a combined-arms team operating in a full-spectrum environment.

The 19D OSUT course trains both active Army and Reserve Component Soldiers to perform basic Soldier tasks and to function as Skill Level 10 cavalry scouts. The course scope includes basic combat training and military-occupation specialty-specific skill sets. The 16-week course incorporates 864 academic hours with more than 270 hours in challenging field-training exercises. Soldiers also spend 114 hours in basic and advanced rifle marksmanship and an additional 86 hours on a variety of U.S. weapon systems, including the M240B, M2 .50-caliber machinegun, MK19 40mm grenade launcher and AT-4 anti-tank rocket launcher.

Throughout the course, each BCT and 19D advanced individual training objective reflects the seven core Army Values of loyalty, duty, respect, selfless service, honor, integrity and personal courage. Every lesson and training event throughout the 16-week course emphasizes and discusses these values, engraining them into the new Soldiers.

'Dime drills'

A hallmark of 19D OSUT is the weapons-immersion program. Each Soldier-in-training is issued his personal weapon, a M4 carbine, during Week One. He is then responsible for the weapon and accountable for its 10-level maintenance through completion of the course. WIP's natural progression leads directly to one of the largest training events Soldiers go through: basic rifle marksmanship.

Each Soldier goes through a structured process, taking him through a series of steps leading to final qualification. This process begins with Soldiers learning the basics of firing their weapons and conducting dry-fire drills such as "dime drills," where Soldiers place a coin or washer on the front sight-post of the weapon and practice the basic principles of firing the weapon to ensure a smooth trigger pull. When a Soldier pulls the trigger and the dime falls off, the Soldier knows he didn't pull the trigger smoothly.

Soldiers then get a preview of what it will be like to fire the weapon at the Engagement Skills Trainer. This is where Soldiers get the chance to fire in a virtual environment to understand what they will fire with live rounds when they reach the range. These Soldiers then group, zero and qualify on the M4-series rifle.

Weapons familiarization and training is extensive. Each Soldier will be familiar with the M203 grenade launcher, M249 Squad Automatic Weapon, M136 AT4 Launcher, .50-caliber M2 heavy-barrel machinegun, MK19 40mm machinegun, 7.62mm M240B machinegun, various hand grenades and the Javelin Weapon System. In addition to instruction on operations under usual conditions, each Soldier receives training in fundamental engagement techniques and judgment-based skills training in the escalation of force.

Physical strengthening

Soldiers also participate in the Army's physical-readiness training beginning on the first day. Soldiers are initially assessed by the 1-1-1 Diagnostic Physical Fitness Test, which records the number of repetitions of correctly performed push-ups and sit-ups, along with the time it takes each Soldier to run one mile. This initial assessment allows cadre to tailor physical-training sessions to Soldiers' needs through the PRT program, which focuses on strength, endurance and mobility.

Soldiers need strength to march under load, enter and clear a building or trench line, repeatedly load heavy rounds, lift equipment and transport wounded Soldiers to the casualty collection point. The PRT program seeks to provide a well-designed strength-training program that improves performance and controls injuries. Endurance training enhances both the ability to sustain high-intensity activity of short duration (anaerobic) and low-intensity activity of long duration (aerobic). It uses sprints, individual-movement techniques, obstacles, continuous running, foot marches and cross-country movement to improve the endurance of individual Soldiers.

The component of mobility functionally applies strength and endurance to enhance performance of physical tasks. PRT mobility exercises consist of eight qualitative performance factors: agility, balance, coordination, posture, stability, flexibility, speed and power. The PRT program's overall goal in the 19D OSUT environment is to physically prepare Soldiers to successfully complete the Army Physical Fitness Test prior to graduation.



Drill sergeants from Troop B, 5-15 Cavalry, conduct Army physical-readiness training. (Photo by CPT Steven K. Morelli)



SSG Anthony D. Bordano, a senior drill sergeant, makes an adjustment for a Soldier at the MK19 Grenade Launcher Range. (Photo by CPT Steven K. Morelli)

tion. No Soldier earns the title of Cavalry scout or ships to his first duty assignment without passing the APFT – according to Army standards, this requires a minimum score of 60 points in each event.

As an enhancement to the PRT program, each Soldier receives instruction in the fundamentals of hand-to-hand combat, which enhance the Soldier's willingness to close with, engage and destroy the enemy. Soldiers learn simple techniques of hand-to-hand fighting, both on the ground and while standing. Combatives build the Soldier's confidence and instill a spirit of aggressiveness, which complements the Soldier's skills with individual- and crew-served weapon systems.

Scout gunnery

As Soldiers progress through the first three phases of OSUT – which are equivalent to Army BCT – to the last two phases – which equate to other MOS' AIT phases – they begin to focus on skills specific to the 19D Cavalry scout MOS. This training must remain relevant with the technological advances available in the operational force and the current manning requirements new Soldiers will be filling.

The squadron maintains contact with units in the field and Army technical proponents to ensure training and equipment currency. One example is the recent collaboration with the product manager for Forward-Looking Infrared. PM-FLIR provided a virtual-environment trainer for the Long-Range Advance Scout Surveillance System, providing critical hands-on experience to both cadre and trainees. This critical training is increasingly important as most Cavalry scouts are now serving on lighter armored platforms equipped with the system.

Light scout gunnery and the end-of-cycle field-training exercise are the capstone training events all future Cavalry scouts are challenged with before being certified as 19D Cavalry scouts and graduating the course. In early 2012, the deputy commanding general for initial military training at U.S. Army Training and Doctrine Command approved elimination of M3 Bradley gunnery from the 19D program of instruction.

Introducing light scout gunnery in place of the M3 gunnery will allow 19D trainees to become familiar with actual gunnery techniques such as target acquisition, target engagement, threat discrimination and fire commands. These techniques are immediately ready for use in U.S. Army Forces Command units while saving the Army more than \$5 million annually. Also, the time saved from Bradley gunnery is now available to familiarize all 19D trainees on the M1127 Reconnaissance Variant Stryker Combat Vehicle, further enhancing the Army-wide emergence of SBCTs.

A humvee platform is used for light scout gunnery training. Training on these unstable, direct-fire platforms incorporate machinegun engagement techniques such as target detection and threat discrimination using the detect, identify, decide, engage and assess process.

The EoC FTX evaluates these future scouts in a field environment under conditions of stress. The EoC FTX is the most challenging five days these Soldiers have yet experienced. Trainees are required to perform virtually all the individual skills they have learned during the course under the umbrella of collective tasks and missions in a tactical environment. The troop conducts this

FTX under a collective, multi-echelon framework that will also provide training to the cadre of the troop as squad, section and platoon leaders to hone their warfighting skills. Soldiers face challenges with both mounted and dismounted reconnaissance patrols, patrol-base operations and military operations in urban terrain scenarios. The EoC FTX concludes with a 20-kilometer road march.

Training concludes with a rites-of-passage ceremony, where successful Soldiers are welcomed into the ranks of Cavalry Soldiers. Each ceremony is unique and designed to instill pride and panache into the U.S. Army's newest 19D Cavalry scouts while reflecting on the proud and distinguished history of the U.S. Cavalry.

Gaining-unit commanders should expect Cavalry scout graduates to be familiar with the reconnaissance and scout platoon's multifaceted role in supporting a reconnaissance troop and squadron in the development of situation awareness and understanding. Each new Cavalry scout will be able to pass an APFT, comply with the Army height and weight standards, and have discipline. They will have the ability to incorporate themselves into the gaining unit's operations with minimal adjustment. Commanders can appreciate gaining new scouts who are familiar with the unit's weapon systems, who know how to conduct themselves on ranges and who are accustomed to challenging FTXs.



CPT John Grounds is an assistant operations officer for 5-15 Cavalry, 194th Armor Brigade, Fort Benning, GA. Previous assignments include assistant operations officer, platoon leader and executive officer, Troop B, 1-13 Cavalry, 3rd IBC, 1st Armor Division, Fort Bliss, TX; section sergeant, 5-14 Cavalry, 2nd SBCT, 25th Infantry Division, Schofield Barracks, HI; and team leader, Troop A, 5-14 Cavalry, 2nd SBCT, 25th Infantry Division. CPT Grounds' military education includes Mid-Grade Learning Continuum 2015 Captain's Career Course, Army Reconnaissance Course, Armor Officer Basic Course, Basic Officer Leader Course II, Officer Candidate School, Warrior

Leader Course, Stryker Reconnaissance Vehicle Crewman Course and 19D OSUT. He holds a bachelor's degree in kinesiology from Texas Lutheran University and a master's of education degree in instructional-specialist kinesiology from the University of El Paso.

CPT Jonathan Goodman is the assistant S-3 of 5-15 Cavalry. He previously served as executive officer and platoon leader for Troop C, and platoon leader for Troop B, both of 2-14 Cavalry, Schofield Barracks, HI. He deployed in support of operations Iraqi Freedom and New Dawn. His military education includes Maneuver Captain's Career Course and Armor Basic Officer Leader's Course, Fort Benning. CPT Goodman holds a bachelor's degree in general studies degree from Southeast Missouri State University.

SSG Jason McMullen is the master gunner for 5-15 Cavalry. Previous assignments include staff operations and training noncommissioned officer, also for 5-15 Cavalry; and squadron master gunner, section leader and squad leader for 4-9 Cavalry, 2nd BCT, 1st Cavalry Division, Fort Hood, TX. His military education includes Bradley Infantry Fighting Vehicle System Master Gunner School, Fort Benning; 19D Cavalry Scout Advanced Leaders Course (commandant's list), Fort Knox, KY; and Warrior Leader Course, Fort McCoy, WI. SSG Mc-

Mullen holds a bachelor's degree in public-safety management from Franklin University, graduating cum laude.

ACRONYM QUICK-SCAN

AIT – advanced individual training
APFT – Army Physical Fitness Test
BCT – basic combat training
BCT – brigade combat team
EoC FTX – end-of-cycle field-training exercise
IBCT – infantry brigade combat team
MFR – memorandum for record
MOS – military-occupation specialty
OSUT – one-station unit training
PM-FLIR – product manager, Forward-Looking Infrared
PoI – program of instruction
PRT – physical-readiness training/test
SBCT – Stryker brigade combat team
WIP – weapons-immersion program

Cadre certification

The process of turning fresh volunteers into qualified 19D Cavalry scouts involves a strict certification process for all instructors and leaders. The squadron's purpose is to ensure quality of training; it is therefore imperative that the squadron maintains qualified and highly trained instructors. This is achieved through the squadron's certification program. The program's purpose is to prepare all instructors to be professional trainers so they can provide relevant tactical training to the squadron's students.

Instructor certification is a vital part of the unit's in-processing procedures. This program ensures the squadron's instructors are technically and tactically proficient. Also, instructors are trained in the treatment of Soldiers undergoing initial-entry training, and they receive certification to conduct 19D10 OSUT training.

The squadron commander is the course manager for 19D Cavalry scout OSUT. He is responsible and accountable for the overall execution, administration and quality control of training the squadron conducts. No subordinate commander has the authority to alter the training standard without the squadron commander's approval.

"Training to the standard" means that only certified instructors will teach the objectives contained in the approved PoI using the prescribed student-to-instructor ratios, equipment, facilities, training aids, devices and ammunition. Instructors and drill sergeants who have not met the qualification re-

quirements for certification are not eligible to be primary instructors. They may be assistant instructors with no adverse action if approved by the troop commander.

The chief instructor is responsible for managing and supervising the squadron's instructor-certification program. He has overall responsibility for the instructor-certification process within the squadron. He initiates the instructor-certification package of records and maintains records of certification for each instructor or drill sergeant. The chief instructor inspects the program to ensure administration of training according to the squadron commander's training guidance. He serves as the primary point of contact with brigades on all squadron instructor-certification matters.

Once a chief instructor certifies an instructor or drill sergeant, a memorandum for record is submitted to the squadron commander requesting that the instructor be approved to instruct all required lessons in the PoIs within the squadron. The MFR goes in the instructor's or drill sergeant's certification packet as a permanent document with the instructor's record, then is transferred to the instructor's assigned troop for maintenance from that point on.

To maintain certification, instructors and drill sergeants must have no adverse actions, pass all required evaluations in the program and receive quarterly evaluations in conjunction with quarterly counseling. Each evaluation is conducted on a lesson plan the instructor has not been evaluated on, with the goal of eventually having each instructor or drill sergeant evaluated on all lesson plans he teaches.