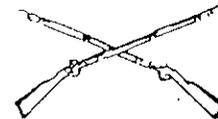




# Commandant's NOTE



MAJOR GENERAL SAM WETZEL

## PHYSICAL FITNESS — A LIFESTYLE

There has always been a well-known maxim in our Army: The Army is not a job; it is a way of life. And so it is with the Army's new physical fitness program. No longer does that program consist of a few repetitions of the "daily dozen" or a warm-up run. It has truly become a way of life, a lifestyle, if you will. One thing you can be certain of — physical fitness in the Army is here to stay!

In the past, the various physical fitness programs the Army used never really convinced its soldiers to stay in shape, even though individual physical readiness was recognized as being the prime ingredient of success in battle. Now, through the newly organized Army Physical Fitness Research Institute at Carlisle Barracks and the U.S. Army Soldier Support Center at Fort Benjamin Harrison have been charged with developing individual and unit programs, a core of qualified physical fitness trainers, a comprehensive nutrition program, weight control and health standards, and human behavior research programs that, collectively, will help insure a well-rounded, physically fit soldier and, if called upon, success in battle.

We at the Infantry School fully support this increased emphasis on physical fitness. In fact, the School long has had a vital interest in this subject because no other branch places the same physical demands on its members as does the Infantry. The Infantry School, therefore, insists that its resident course students commit themselves personally and professionally to the highest standards of physical fitness, and further insists that its graduates must be capable of immediately assuming leadership positions in even the most physically demanding infantry jobs.

All of the School's resident courses have specific physical fitness prerequisites. Thus, officer candidates and officers selected to attend the basic officer course must meet the standards established by the Army Physical Readiness Test (APRT) before they arrive at Fort Benning. Officers selected to attend the officer advanced course should arrive in good physical condition, because they will have to meet APRT standards before they graduate.

Enlisted men selected for either a primary, basic, or advanced noncommissioned officer course must have passed the APRT during the six-month period immediately preceding their reporting dates.

The Airborne and Ranger courses have higher physical fitness

standards than the other courses because their students must perform more and more varied and strenuous physical activity in a shorter period of time. Airborne students are tested during the first day of training in APRT events and are required to complete at least 45 pushups, 45 situps, and run 2 miles in 15:59 or less. In addition, Airborne students must be able to complete a minimum of 6 pullups and successfully finish the 2- to 5-mile runs that are conducted throughout the three weeks of training.

Ranger students, prior to their arrival at Fort Benning, should be certified by their unit commanders as having passed the APRT and a combat water survival swim test of 15 meters. During their first day of training, students are tested in APRT events and are required to meet the same standards as Airborne students, including doing 6 pullups. They are also given another combat water survival swim test. During the course, students must successfully complete 2- to 5-mile runs.

Officer candidate, basic, and advanced officer course students are tested against the APRT at least once during their courses, and they must pass the test before they can graduate. Advanced noncommissioned officer course students are also tested at least once and they, too, must pass the test.

Primary and basic noncommissioned officer course students do not take the APRT at Benning because of the length of their courses, but physical conditioning forms a definite part of their schooling.

We recognize that there are competing forces and priorities that must be made compatible with the overriding need for every Infantryman to be "fit to fight." But we must never put more faith in machines than we do in the soldiers who operate them. For war, after all, is a struggle in which the mind and the body must work in the utmost harmony. Accordingly, the physical aspects of soldiers must be as carefully nurtured as the technical ones of machines, if not moreso.

Physical fitness means physical readiness, and physical readiness is an important part of unit readiness. Without it, our Infantry units will not be able to carry out their primary mission — to go to war if called on, and to win that war, no matter when or where.

Practice combined arms!