

TOW Trainer Course

LIEUTENANT MICHAEL T. ZARYCZNY

Because of the proliferation of reactive armor throughout the world, not to mention the overwhelming numbers and technological improvements in armored vehicles, our current antiarmor weapons would be challenged to the fullest in any war in the near future.

Since the fielding of the kinetic energy missile (KEM) and the advanced missile system-heavy (AMS-H) has been delayed, and since the fiber optic guided missile (FOG-M) has officially become a part of the Air Defense Artillery's inventory, the infantryman's primary heavy antiarmor weapon system is and will continue to be the M220A2 TOW 2 system.

Our TOW crews, to be effective in engaging enemy vehicles equipped with reactive armor with the TOW 2 (with TOW 2A and 2B missiles), must receive a high level of technical and tactical training.

The U.S. Army Infantry School's TOW Trainer Course (formerly the ITV Trainer Course) at Fort Benning, provides selected officers and NCO leaders with the knowledge they need to conduct training on the TOW and to employ it effectively. The course, the Army's only formal program of instruction on the subject, also gives the students an opportunity to improve their personal mechanical skills.

The four-week TOW Trainer Course (162.5 hours) is divided into three instructional areas that cover 11H Skill Level 1 through 4 tasks. The three areas consist of performance-oriented training, tactical training, and maintenance.

During the first two weeks of the course, battle drills and technical tasks

are taught and then reinforced by performance-oriented tests and written examinations. The students receive hands-on training on the TOW weapon systems—the basic TOW and the TOW 2—and their carriers—the M966 HMMWV (high mobility multipurpose wheeled vehicle) and the M901A1 ITV (Improved TOW Vehicle).

Other subjects taught during the first two weeks include the family of TOW missiles, opposing force armor and antiarmor capabilities, training management, training aids and equipment, troubleshooting MILES (multiple integrated laser engagement system) equipment, and advanced antiarmor concepts.

FUNDAMENTALS

Another critical part of the course is a discussion of the fundamentals of the tactical employment of an antiarmor platoon and company. This three-day block of instruction emphasizes the organization of the antiarmor company, selecting firing positions, and conducting offensive and defensive operations. The tactics instruction includes classes on the AirLand Battle, troop leading procedures, and antiarmor range card preparation.

During the third week of the course, the students receive instruction on maintenance and troubleshooting procedures on the organic TOW carriers. Students are required to perform quarterly and semiannual preventive maintenance checks and services (PMCSs) on both the M901A1 and the M966 and to prepare a battle damage assessment on the vehicles' weapon

systems. Additional periods of instruction during this block include vehicle identification, a live-fire exercise, and planning for airmobile operations.

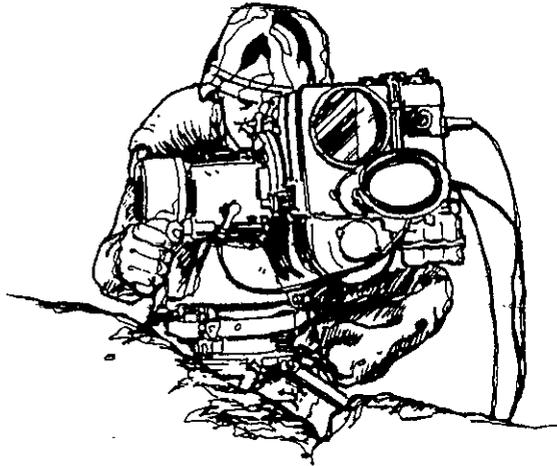
This is not a gunner course but a leader course, in which a student must meet certain standards to graduate. A student must receive "GOs" on all the performance-oriented tests and 70 percent on the 50-question written examination administered at the end of the course.

In addition, the TOW Trainer Course includes several classified periods of instruction that require a Secret clearance, and students must attend these classes to graduate.

Recent TOW Trainer Course classes have averaged 24 students, which is significantly lower than the maximum capacity of 44 students. Armor officers and students awaiting Infantry Officer Basic Course class dates have constituted most of the class population. Although there is no problem with this composition, the course is designed for infantry soldiers who will use their new skills and knowledge in field units. The TOW Trainer Course attempts to tailor its instruction to meet changes in threat technology and to accommodate the needs of commanders and trainers.

Commissioned officers, NCOs, and enlisted soldiers (specialists or corporals in MOS 11H) who are members of the Active Army, the Army National Guard, or the Army Reserve are eligible to attend the course, if they are on orders for assignment to duty positions that require a detailed knowledge of the TOW system.

It is imperative that commanders permit only those soldiers to attend the



course who will use this training to improve their professional knowledge and to contribute to the unit's antiarmor training effectiveness. The soldiers must be retainable within the unit and should be in leadership positions.

Students report to Building 17, Wilkins Hall, Stairwell H-16 in the main post area of Fort Benning between the hours of 1500 and 1700 on the day before the course begins. After inprocessing, each student is issued his TA-50 equipment for use during the course.

Each soldier, when he reports, must have with him at least the following items:

- Five copies of orders.
- Valid Secret clearance (noted on orders.)
- Valid identification card.
- Identification tags with chain.
- One U.S. Army PT uniform.
- Four sets of BDUs.
- Two pairs of boots.
- One pair of black gloves with inserts (seasonal).

- One field jacket (seasonal).
- Two pairs of fitted ear plugs with case.
- Two black ink pens.
- Note pad.

It is advisable for soldiers attending on a temporary duty (TDY) and return basis to receive a partial payment from their units before they leave for the course. The Fort Benning Finance and Accounting Division will not issue checks until one week after a course begins.

Any additional questions pertaining to inprocessing should be addressed to Commander, HHC, 1st Battalion, 29th Infantry, ATTN: Student Operations, AUTOVON 784-3747 or commercial 404-545-3747/1768.

Commanders and trainers who need more information about the course itself are encouraged to write to Commandant, U.S. Army Infantry School, ATTN: Company B, 2d Battalion, 29th Infantry, Fort Benning, GA 31905-5595; or to call AUTOVON 784-6474, commercial 404-544-6474.

The TOW Trainer Course gives antiarmor leaders the technical knowledge they need to supervise TOW antiarmor platoons. There is no doubt that its graduates have improved the quality of TOW training in their respective units.

Lieutenant Michael T. Zaryczny, when he prepared this article, was assigned to the 2d Battalion, 29th Infantry, at Fort Benning.

Ranger Orientation Program

CAPTAIN CHARLES T. SNIFFIN
SERGEANT FIRST CLASS MALLORY L. SUMP

For more than 200 years, Rangers have played an important role in the proud heritage of the United States Army. Serving in Ranger units and

throughout the Army in war and peace, the Ranger's most significant contribution has always been the ability to lead soldiers. And developing leaders has

been the primary mission of the Army's formal Ranger training since its inception in October 1951.

Each year thousands of soldiers, non-