

the JRTC will not be based on its knowing certain secrets or conducting unusual training. The success will come from mastering the basics. The soldiers must be confident in their weapons and capable of hitting targets with them under all conditions. And when a unit makes contact, the soldiers must know what to do as members of a team. Their leaders must

also be confident and competent, trusted by their subordinates and superiors, and they must know the intent of the chain of command.

When a unit brings these principles together and is willing to take the battle to the enemy, it will succeed — at the Joint Readiness Training Center and on the battlefield.

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Captain Stanley Wilson commands Company A, 1st Battalion (Airborne), 509th Infantry, the opposing force at the Joint Readiness Training Center, where he had been a platoon observer-controller. He previously served in platoon and company assignments with the 1st Battalion, 38th Infantry, 2d Infantry Division in Korea and the 2d Battalion, 21st Infantry, 24th Infantry Division at Fort Stewart.

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# Leadership and PT

LIEUTENANT COLONEL HARRY D. STUMPF

Raising the level of *esprit de corps* in a group is an important leadership objective. Whether we call it morale, camaraderie, or team spirit, good units have it.

Small unit cohesion increases unit readiness and effectiveness in combat. Various studies have shown, in fact, that a soldier on the battlefield keeps fighting primarily because of his buddies, his squad, and his small unit leader. Cohesion, in fact, is the basis of the Army's Regimental System for units up to battalion size.

Countless techniques have been used to achieve cohesion. One that I have seen work consistently is a good, simple physical training, or PT, program. (I know that Field Manual 21-20, Physical Fitness Training, doesn't use the term PT any more, but it still fits the kind of activity I am talking about.) PT is important in its own right, of course, but many units, by paying attention to the way they conduct it, can also use it to significantly strengthen unit cohesion.

None of the aspects of the unit physical training in this technique are new. In fact, disciples of FM 21-20 would call them "traditional" or "conservative." Together, though, they form a perspective that strongly supports unit bonding.

Both personal conditioning and tradi-

tional physical training are important to combat readiness, and both should be part of a unit's emphasis. But each has its place, and today we seem to be leaning too far in the direction of personal conditioning at the expense of PT.

Personal conditioning is a life style that includes a balanced diet, proper rest, weight training, and lifetime sports (bowling, golf, tennis, swimming, sailing, and cycling). It also includes a knowledge of cardiovascular exercises and a conscious support of healthy habits. Medical and dental care are part of it, too, as are drug, tobacco, and alcohol awareness and sex education. It requires study because learning it does not come naturally.

## A UNIT ACTIVITY

On the other hand, physical training, as the term is used here, is a unit activity—soldiers exercising and running together in uniform, in formation, and to a cadence. This is where leadership works to build small unit cohesion, and many units can increase the worth of the time it spends doing PT by improving its cohesion at the same time.

Why is a unit's PT session so impor-

tant to cohesion? Because this is the one time in a day when a company can expect to have most of its soldiers doing something together as a unit.

In the field, the platoons separate during maneuvers. In combat units, companies and platoons are often cross-attached to different battalions and companies. Firing batteries usually have their sections in separate firing positions. During gunnery training, the company often breaks up between different firing ranges, guard details, and the rear detachment. Service units, usually separate companies, can spread to the four winds. And in garrison, because of a multitude of daily activities ranging from appointments and details to ceremonies and mandatory classes, a company rarely has everyone together engaged in a common task.

The traditional unit PT consists of calisthenics followed by a run in formation, usually in the early morning, led by the noncommissioned officers with the officers in the rear rank. Lately, though, I have noticed some disturbing variations to this type of PT. Company physical fitness sessions seem to have moved away from the regimented (disciplined) aspects of PT and toward individual workouts based on guidance from

the master fitness trainers in the company.

For example, the fitness trainers lead calisthenics too often, and instead of saying, "I'll count cadence and you count repetitions," they tend to say, "Now do a couple of minutes of stretching on your own" or "Now attempt to touch your right foot with your left hand (on your own) . . . now switch over," or "Do as many diamond push-ups as you can in the next 30 seconds."

This is personal conditioning, not PT. Worse, it deprives the leaders of an opportunity to practice leading their soldiers and the soldiers of an opportunity to practice following their leaders.

There are other problems as well: The units form into ability groups—slow, medium, and fast—for runs; often the officers will do their own separate workout instead of exercising as part of the unit; and the variety of uniforms in the same formation emphasizes the individual, not the unit. All of these work against unit integrity.

A company commander can take several steps that will help him make the most of his PT sessions in terms of leadership as well as fitness:

- Ensure maximum participation.
- Use the master fitness trainers properly. The concept of having master fitness trainers in each unit is a good one, and they have a number of impor-

tant functions in planning physical fitness training and educating the soldiers in various aspects of health and physical conditioning. A master fitness trainer's role in conducting PT, however, should be to teach the NCOs and junior officers how to lead it and then let them do it. He should prepare and rehearse the leaders for several days before they lead the company.

- Rotate the leaders. All new NCOs (and old NCOs, too) need practice physically leading their soldiers, as they will have to do in battle.

- Allow the soldiers to stretch as a warm-up before calisthenics, but see that the exercises are more formal and that they include those that are performed to a cadence. The leader doesn't have to be a martinet, but he has to know the exercises, perform them correctly, control the formation, and generally be in charge.

- Enforce a strict uniform policy, aside from shoes, of course. The PT uniform may not have much to do with physical fitness, but it has a lot to do with mental conditioning. It is associated with the same reasoning that has us in the same uniform for the rest of the day—it gets everyone on the same team. And it is another measure of quality leadership and quality training.

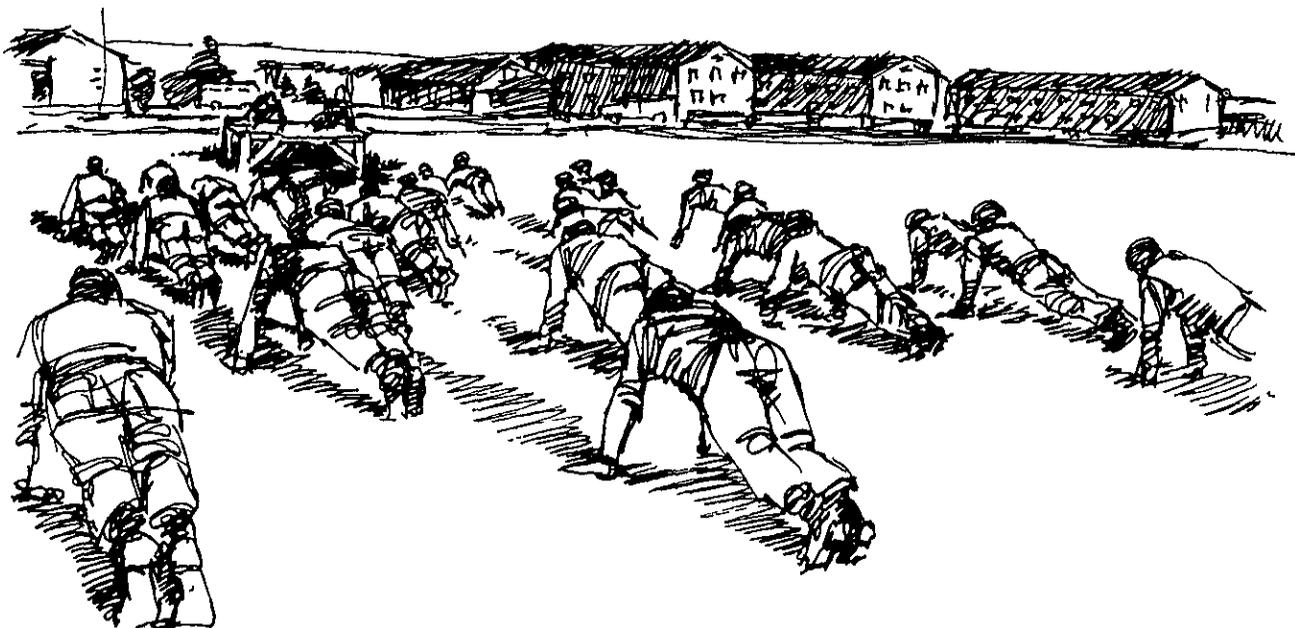
- Have the officers participate in the

unit PT. It's all right for the NCOs to run the show while the officers stay in the rear rank, but the officers should at least be there. It makes a difference to the soldiers and to the NCOs.

- Have the soldiers run in formation to a cadence, maintaining squad, platoon, and company integrity. This is more of the stuff small unit cohesion comes from. The soldiers can see who falls out and who hangs in there. The pace should be slow enough for the slow runners to keep up. Although it may be easier said than done, everyone should start together, run together, and finish together. (An occasional brigade run is also in order—with the commander leading and the flags and guidons fluttering.)

It is true that some fit young soldiers may receive little or no physical training effect from the slower pace of a unit run, and that ability group runs can compensate for these different levels of fitness, but they should not be used in place of PT. Those soldiers who want to run harder or farther can run after the company has finished or after duty hours.

In a PT session, developing spirit and leadership can be an even greater benefit than the exercise. The object of a unit run, therefore, should be to keep each soldier part of the unit more than to tax him physically. His leaders can tax him on the APFT or in sports competitions.



Better yet, they can see that he is taught about personal conditioning so he can tax himself.

PT sessions are not the only way to ensure unit physical fitness. Variety is important too. Company teams for such sports as basketball, flag football, softball, and volleyball is another important esprit builder. Leaders might take the company to a 10-kilometer run in a local community, to the local swimming pool, or to a nearby beach. They should also have the unit practice to win battalion sports day competitions. An infinite variety of options are available, with master fitness trainers and FM 21-20 to help.

Soldiers, especially those who have not had an opportunity at home or in school, need to learn about the complete spectrum of physical conditioning and health, and leaders must make sure that they do. And they need it early, because

it's easier to develop good habits than to break bad ones later.

Once soldiers are aware of the principles of overload and progression, they can incorporate these principles into their personal workouts. The leaders need to set the example by their own performance in PT formations and by their behavior the rest of the time. Outside the PT formation, leaders can also teach personal conditioning and health by their example. (What is a soldier to think about a leader who is a heavy smoker or drinker, or otherwise abuses his body?)

But when it comes to PT, it should be done by the numbers, as a unit, in uniform, with the leaders giving commands and leading by example, and with the guidon out in front.

On a future battlefield characterized by high volumes of fire and a lack of

distinct FEBA or FLOT trace, many small units and task forces may find themselves either bypassed or encircled. Small units—if they are to cope with the extended fronts, violence, confusion, lethality, and dynamics of this kind of battlefield—will have to be more cohesive than ever before.

And the leadership and cohesion of PT is important in building that kind of unit cohesion. Combat is, after all, a team sport.

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**Lieutenant Colonel Harry D. Stumpf** is with the Inspector General's Office, Headquarters, U.S. Army Forces Command. He is a 1972 graduate of the United States Military Academy and holds a master's degree from Long Island University. He has served with infantry battalions in the 82d Airborne Division, the 3d Infantry Division, and the 3d Armored Division.

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# Commander's Fitness Program

CAPTAIN SAMUEL J. PADGETT, JR.

Physical fitness is a primary concern for all commanders. To succeed in combat, they must get their soldiers to the right place at the right time with the right weapon. This means the soldiers must be able to footmarch, carry loads, and move equipment.

A commander's responsibilities in regard to fitness are to assess his unit's fitness levels; establish realistic goals; develop unit training programs that prepare his soldiers for combat; conduct well-planned, innovative, physical training; and lead by example.

To assess his unit's fitness levels, a

commander systematically averages the scores that his soldiers earned on each event of the company's Army Physical Fitness Test (APFT). He then plots the point averages of each event on a graph. This should permit him to see his unit's strengths and weaknesses and to set his goals accordingly.

For example, if the company's average on push-ups is 74 points, the commander can establish goals of 80-84-86 and higher for all soldiers as the company progresses. Although some of the soldiers may not reach the 80+ points on push-ups or sit-ups, the commander must

set a standard that fits his mission and then program remedial physical training for those who fail to meet it.

The first thing a commander should do in planning a unit fitness program that will achieve his goals is to become familiar with the exercise principles in Field Manual 21-20, Physical Fitness Training. Those principles are regularity, progression, overload, balance, specificity, variety, and recovery.

After a commander establishes his goals, he should focus on what he wants to accomplish and how he wants to go about it. A sample program is shown in