

SIDELIGHTS

2022-2023



University of Colorado at Boulder Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps



NROTC University of Colorado

Vision Statement

To develop students morally, mentally, and physically to become professional officers in the Naval Service; to reinforce the enduring core values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment; and cultivate the necessary knowledge and skills to prepare them for service to our nation.

“If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.”

- John Quincy Adams

Commanding Officer

Thank you to all of our Midshipmen, OC, and MECEP students for an outstanding 2022-23 Academic Year at CU! A special congratulations to our newly commissioned Navy and Marine Corps Officers, you have set a high bar for all of our aspiring officers and your impact on our program will be felt for years to come. Good luck to all of you as you complete your initial training and serve your first tours in the fleet.

This academic year was significant in terms of change and growth in our program. Since August 2022, we successfully commissioned 28 Officers in the Navy and Marine Corps. Six of seven of our active-duty staff positions changed over to include myself and our Executive Officer, CDR Gary Pembleton. We both came to Boulder from Japan. Thank you to our departed staff members- Col Dodds, CDR Kaufman, LT Dziwulski, LT Wagner, Capt Murphy, and 1stSgt Matthews. Welcome LT Hinton, GySgt Keziah, 1stLt McVarish, and LT Cook! Along with LT Robbins and our incredible civilian staff- Jenn Kaaoush, Gary Lovato, Mark Staroscik, and Jerry Weymiller, we are fully dedicated to ensuring our students have the best possible NROTC experience and are ready to lead Marines and Sailors upon commissioning.

As I reflect on my first year in this unit, I can hardly imagine a better outcome. Our MIDN Bn performed magnificently in all areas. As a group, they are high achieving, motivated, physically fit, and capable of planning and executing complex tasks with very little oversight. Highlights included very successful General Military Training, Tri-Mil Field Meet victory, Sea Service Ball, Army vs Navy Flag Football victory, Fall & Spring Field Exercises, Leaders Reaction Course, Sea Trials, Service & Ship Selection, and Commissioning. Despite extremely busy academic, work, NROTC training, and social activities, our students also managed to volunteer numerous hours to our local communities supporting Color Guard details, ceremonial support, Toys for Tots, mentoring JROTC students, etc. I'm very proud of all of them!

Many of our returning students will be on Summer Cruise, Fleet Marine Force training, and Officer Candidate School between now and next Fall. Please be safe over the summer and be ready to get back to work when the Fall Semester begins. We are expecting one of the largest Freshman classes in our history to report in August and your leadership in our program will be critical to their success. To the families I thank you all very much for your continued support to your NROTC student and our program.



God Bless and Semper Fidelis!

Robert J. Bodisch,
Colonel USMC



Executive Officer

What a whirlwind these first nine months have been. While Boulder is certainly a major change from Japan, I cannot think of another place I would rather be. Colonel Bodisch and I continually run into graduates of CU NROTC who are just as enthusiastic now as when they were Midshipmen, which speaks volumes about how special this place is. Our Midshipmen are some of the smartest, fittest, and most motivated individuals I have ever come across, certainly more so than I was at their age.

This year was filled with a lot of great events, and our MIDN Bn blew them all out of the water. This is the first unit I have seen where the Midshipmen take complete ownership by planning and running nearly everything: NSO, LRC, FEX, Tri-Mil, the Sea Service Ball, Sea Trials, and a record-breaking Colorado Meet where our Buffs beat out 13 other schools to bring home the win. Other highlights include visits by VADM Fuller, LtGen Cavanaugh, MajGen Bowers, the SEAL Officer Selection team, USS Texas, and representatives from the Nuke, IWC, and EDO communities. Our Midshipmen even became involved with local JROTC units, spending their own time to provide mentorship and serve as positive role models for these enthusiastic young students.

One major focus of effort this year was building relationships. We are past the isolation imposed by COVID and can now connect (or re-connect) with the greater Colorado community. We have great bonds with local leaders who are devoted to supporting our Midshipmen. We established positive linkages with many great organizations such as the Center for Leadership, MOAA, the Navy League of CO, the USMC Memorial Foundation, and the USS Colorado association, who presented us with a flag from the recent underway. We are also working with the local NTAG and USMC Recruiters as well as local NJROTC and MCJROTC units, who came up to watch Colorado Meet. From the Deans of the colleges at CU to the Boulder Chamber, everyone has been extremely supportive of our program and are finding new ways to help. I am hard pressed to think of another location where I felt so welcomed and supported.

Looking forward, we are excited to welcome the largest incoming Freshman class in recent history. We are expecting about 60 new students, which will almost double the size of our unit overnight. Here is my opening description of Colorado NROTC to them.



“Here at CU NROTC, you will earn each and every one of the 1,370 days you are in our battalion. But on Commissioning Day, when you pin on your Gold bars to become an Ensign in the Navy, or 2nd Lieutenant in the Marine Corps, you can be sure you will be prepared to excel in the world’s finest fighting force.”

Our newly commissioned officers, embody this statement. They were already leaders at CU and in our unit, and I have no doubt they will fully embrace and excel at the challenges of Military service!

Enjoy your summer, I can’t wait to see everyone again in the fall.

Gary Pembleton
Commander, USN



Battalion Leadership

Staff Sergeant Snyder, Battalion Commanding Officer



Before anything else, I would like to thank my team and the company commanders for an excellent semester. Each company was tasked with creating a training plan ensuring all learning objectives were achieved by way of only two days per week. They were able to devise a successful scheme of maneuver which was executed by their subordinate leaders. I also appreciate the support of the Buff Battalion Staff for entrusting me to guide the MIDN Battalion with positive momentum into the summer break. This was the first time a MECEP was privileged to hold the position of MIDN Battalion Commander. The contributions and input provided by the student population enabled my team and I to have a successful tour with limited issues regarding training or individual action.

The Spring 2023 semester began with several snowy and cold mornings. We utilized previous courses of action in concerns of inclement weather and did not allow for a learning opportunity to slip through our hands. Some of the training was conducted via Zoom which allowed for maximum participation by MIDN, MECEP and battalion staff. Our highlight of the spring semester was created by the victory at the Colorado Meet. We saw a significant growth in participation from other NROTC units across the country, making the level of competition increase. The Buff Battalion faced adversity and achieved glory. Several teams won first place in their events to include the endurance team, drill team and rifle team. It was evident the MIDN population were motivated to succeed. A special thanks to the hardworking MECEPs, SSgt Appiah and Sgt Ferris for the extra effort put forth. These gentlemen sacrificed their time on weekends and early morning showtimes in order to set an example for others to emulate. All of this could not have happened, however, without the countless hours of planning done by MIDN Eddington and his team. As the event OIC, he demonstrated careful thought and constituted a plan of action proving to be the key for a well-organized event. Thank you for your dedication to mission accomplishment!

Alpha Company enjoyed an optimal training environment for the semi-annual FEX. It surely tested the human factors of each MIDN and staff member involved. They braved below freezing temperatures and several snow showers to complete a rigorous POI in Jack's Valley. While Alpha Company adapted and overcame, Bravo Company coordinated an above average training environment of their own. Back at the campus, Sea Trails were directed at accomplishing shipboard missions under stressful conditions. The scenarios proved to be challenging and mentally enduring. Both companies deserve recognition in their well-planned implementation of each respective training events.

The fall semester of 2023, our battalion will grow in size. We need to continue on the path of mission accomplishment and troop welfare. Our morale within the unit has never been higher. A great deal of this is because the student population understands what each other needs in order to become a commissioned officer. WE must continue to look out for our brothers and sisters to the left and to the right. Our movement into the future goes well beyond next semester. Focus on the goals in front of you and never stop raising the bar. Once again, thank you for the opportunity to develop myself as well as others. Stay ENGAGED and Stay MOTIVATED!

Midshipman I/C Aycock, Battalion Executive Officer



As BN XO, I faced several struggles developing my own leadership style and being an in-between for the student battalion and the BNCO. I started the semester by helping streamline some of the normal operating procedures, many of my other classmates and the Top 4 assisted me in this effort. After these kinks were worked out, the student Battalion stepped up in a manner I had never witnessed before in my four years at CU. Despite hard classes, stress over service assignment, and less sleep than other college students; our midshipmen performed remarkably! Both the Alpha FEX (Marine weekend training) and Bravo Sea Trials (Navy all-day training) were executed perfectly. These events not only surprised us on the Top 4, but also the unit staff. I was very proud of our Midshipmen for executing these events with a clear training purpose and higher

gained training value than other past events. The Colorado Meet was also very impressive; especially because this Midshipmen-run event hosted many more colleges than in previous years. On a number of occasions I have been grateful to be surrounded by truly outstanding peers; a number that continues to increase each semester. I am inspired more than ever to become a Naval officer, knowing that the CU NROTC midshipmen and MECEPS will be my co-workers. I could not ask for a better group of people to spend my time with, keep up the good work all of you!

Midshipman I/C Kurzenhauser, Battalion Operations Officer



As the BN OPSO, I learned much about working with a leadership team to get stuff done. Thanks to the leadership of SSgt Snyder, the top 4 worked exceptionally well together while fostering unit cohesion and bolstering motivation. The unit accomplished all its goals this semester. Clear communication from the staff and company billet holders allowed us to effectively plan and conduct successful training this semester. I am incredibly grateful for the leadership opportunity the staff and this unit provided me this semester. Thank you to all the Midshipmen, Marines, and Sailors for your time, advice, and dedication this semester.

Midshipman 1/C Box, Battalion Command Master Chief



Acting as Sergeant Major for this exceptional Battalion was an enriching opportunity that brought with it many excellent lessons and memories to take forward. This semester saw both upper and lower classmen take on more demanding leader and mentorship roles through events like the Colorado meet, Spring FEX, and sea trials. It was extremely motivating to see my fellow Midshipmen, MECEPS, and OC working hard every day to better themselves and the Battalion. One of the most rewarding responsibilities of my billet was selecting the Student of the Month. My team and I found it difficult each month to choose between the many qualified nominees from the Battalion. Overall, I am proud of what was achieved this semester and would like to thank everyone for their dedication and hard work. Semper Fi and Sko Buffs!

Commissioning Graduates

Second Lieutenant Bryce Austin

Hometown: Virginia Beach, Virginia

Degree: Chemical Engineering

First Duty Station: The Basic School



Second Lieutenant Carson Beck

Hometown: Chandler, Arizona

Degree: Political Science and German Studies

First Duty Station: The Basic School

Second Lieutenant Rees Box

Hometown: Lexington, Kentucky

Degree: International Affairs

First Duty Station: The Basic School



Second Lieutenant Domonic Danos

Hometown: Lakewood, Colorado

Degree: International Affairs with a minor in Political Science and a certificate in Peace and Conflict Studies

First Duty Station: The Basic School

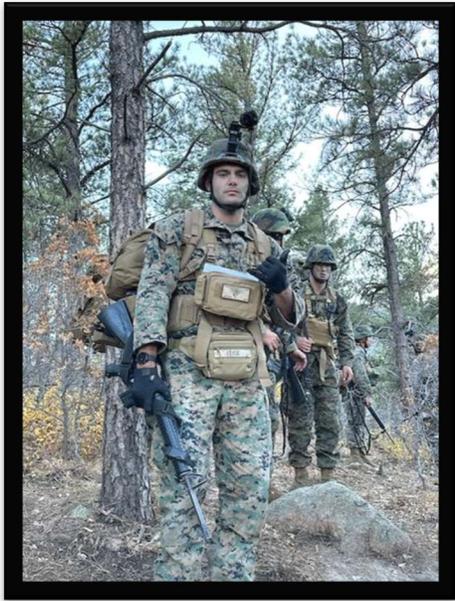
Second Lieutenant Shinice Davenport

Hometown: Little Rock, Arkansas

Degree: Psychology with minors in Ethnic Studies and Sociology

First Duty Station: The Basic School





Second Lieutenant Dustin Feise

Hometown: Coconut Creek, Florida

Degree: Political Science

First Duty Station: The Basic School

Second Lieutenant Lillie McMullen

Hometown: Tomah, Wisconsin

**Degree: Ecology and Evolutionary Biology and
Geography with a minor in Leadership**

First Duty Station: The Basic School



Second Lieutenant Patrick Ramos

Hometown: San Diego, California

Degree: International Affairs

First Duty Station: The Basic School

Second Lieutenant Daylen Riley

Hometown: Argyle, Texas

Degree: Economics with a minor in Leadership

First Duty Station: The Basic School



Ensign Alexander Aspel

Hometown: Sharon, Massachusetts

Degree: Integrated Physiology

First Duty Station: Pensacola, Florida

Ensign Annelene Belknap

Hometown: Seattle, Washington

Degree: Mathematics

First Duty Station: Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on DDG 70 USS Hopper





Ensign Keith Bliss

Hometown: Denver, Colorado

**Degree: Aerospace Engineering with minors in
Computer Science and Leadership Studies**

First Duty Station: Pensacola, Florida

Ensign Hannah Carlsen

Hometown: Lexington Park, Maryland

Degree: Mathematics with a minor in Arabic

**First Duty Station: San Diego, California on USS
Abraham Lincoln**



Ensign Christian Dean

Hometown: Aurora, Colorado

**Degree: International Affairs with a minor in
Leadership Studies**

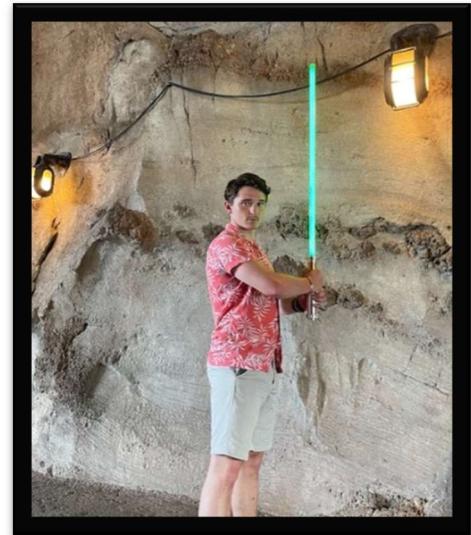
**First Duty Station: Yokosuka, Japan on DDG 65
USS Benfold**

Ensign Erik Hrudka

Hometown: Jacksonville, North Carolina

Degree: History with minors in Russian Studies and Leadership Studies

First Duty Station: Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam on DDG 108 Wayne E. Meyer



Ensign Alec Johnston

Hometown: Birmingham, Alabama

Degree: Economics

First Duty Station: Pensacola, Florida

Ensign Anna Stoltz

Hometown: Greeley, Colorado

Degree: Chemistry with a minor in Biochemistry

First Duty Station: Pensacola, Florida





Ensign Owen Vandersmith

Hometown: Castle Rock, Colorado

Degree: Mechanical Engineering

**First Duty Station: Navy Nuclear Power School,
Charleston, South Carolina**

Ensign Mark Walvoord

Hometown: Denver, Colorado

Degree: Aerospace Engineering

**First Duty Station: Navy Nuclear Power School,
Charleston, South Carolina**



Congratulations
Commissionees!!!

New Student Orientation

2022 New Student Orientation is an introductory event for the upcoming 4/C and leadership exercise for the upperclassmen acting as instructors. NSO lasts five days and is the initial training event that every incoming midshipman at CU must go through. This training exemplifies the Midshipmen who truly want to become a part of this battalion and lays out the expectations of this unit to each and every incoming freshman. During this event, the 4/C MIDN are taught military bearing, basic military gouge, drill, and put through extensive physical training. The 4/C MIDN will also go through swim qualifications and physical readiness qualifications in these five days.

The training culminates to a final endurance course where these Midshipmen use the knowledge they've gained the last 4 days and work as teams to complete the course. More than anything, this training will allow the new midshipmen to get used to acting in high stress environments and learn to work as one team. Bravo Zulu to the new Midshipmen and Bravo Zulu to the Midshipman instructors for facilitating another successful NSO.



MIDN Riley, OIC

Tri-Mil



Each year the different ROTC branches get together and engage in the Tri-Military event. This year's Tri-Mil included multiple different team building and physically challenging segments such as a litter carry, water jug carry/sled drag relay, tug of war tournament, and pugil stick match. These events help to raise unit morale and help instill friendly competition between each of the branches. During this time many midshipmen experience their first interactions with the Army/Air

Force ROTCs and get to make their first impressions. The number one goal of Tri-Mil is to promote unity and camaraderie, an essential part of training for any member hoping to join the armed services. This year our unit was challenged by a low number of female participants, the majority being unavailable because of class or injuries, yet our unit still managed to organize a team and participate despite the prearranged constraints. Many of the female midshipman agreed they were enthusiastic for next year's Tri-Mil, and ready to return for redemption. This competition proved our midshipmen are prepared to overcome any challenge standing between them and their goals.

MIDN Carl, OIC



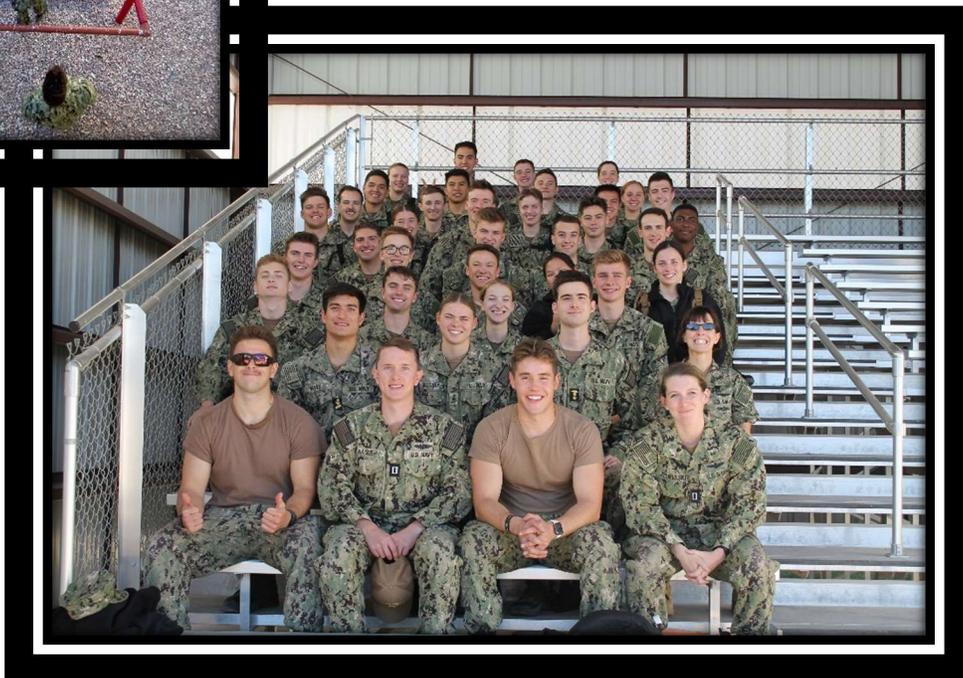
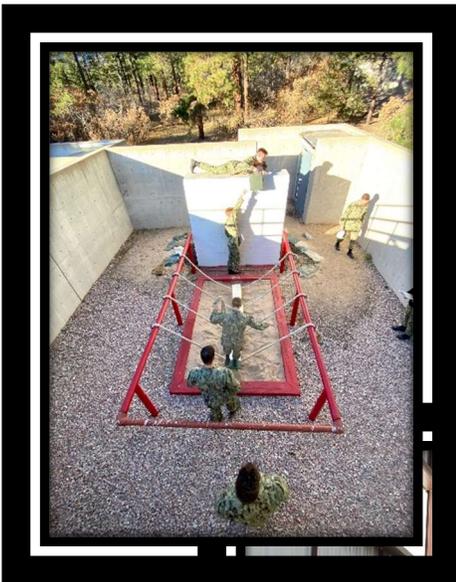
LRC

The Leadership Reaction Course (LRC) is a physically and mentally challenging test for Navy option Midshipmen and OCs. The LRC began with a morning PT and included a variety of difficult puzzles in which midshipmen/OCs must think outside of the box and use teamwork to solve. The stations had different obstacles, objectives, and materials available which meant that there were plenty of leadership opportunities and experiences. Each station was timed and



graded which added extra pressure to the participants. The LRC is a prime opportunity for midshipmen to learn more about themselves and their leadership styles. Overall, this year's LRC was a massive success as MIDN practiced leading, briefing, and creating new plans under stressful circumstances.

MIDN Mosichuk, OIC



Sea Service Ball



The Sea Service Ball was held on Friday, October 28, 2022, at the Denver Aquarium, in which CU NROTC celebrated the 247th birthday of the United States Marine Corps and Navy. Members and guests of the Naval ROTC battalion watched and participated in the birthday ceremony which was enacted in accordance with Naval tradition and had guest of honor, Colonel Matt Zummo give an inspirational and motivating speech. Following the ceremony, the battalion enjoyed an exquisite meal prepared and served by the Denver Aquarium's staff. The Midshipmen, MECEPS, staff, and guests were allowed to dance and explore the aquarium's exhibits after both the ceremony and eating had ended. The 247th birthday ball celebration was a great success and allowed the battalion to

commemorate the history of the Marine Corps and Navy while also providing the opportunity to pass on the traditions to our future military officers and leaders. This event is an important reminder of the sacrifices that have been made by our services and the honor and respect we have for those who have served. A huge thanks goes out to all the personnel who were involved in the successful operation of the sea service ball. Without their dedicated time and devotion, our unit would not have been able to partake in the annual celebration of the Marine Corps and Navy. Here's to another year of dedication and service!

MIDN Hayes, OIC



Colorado Meet

This year's Colorado Meet was the largest meet yet. Several schools from across the nation came to compete in a multitude of different events. This included squad and platoon drill, color guard, pistol and rifle shooting, knowledge competition and the infamous Endurance Race. These events helped to develop a friendly competition between each of the schools and allowed fellow midshipmen to integrate with each other.

The Colorado Meet is an all-hands event that required the hard work and dedication of every member in the unit. This year's Meet was especially difficult because of the large number of schools that participated. Furthermore, to increase relations within the community and the outreach of the NROTC program we invited the Denver PLC and a neighboring JNROTC unit. While our unit had never held a Colorado Meet to this size or caliber, we stepped up to the challenge and embraced it's difficulty.

A huge thank you goes out to everyone who helped make this year's Meet run smoothly, whether that be as a competitor, an OIC/AOIC, a volunteer, or as a staff member. The Meet could not have happened without you. And another thanks goes out to each of the schools that competed this year. We appreciate your participation and the open minds and attitudes you had when things did not go according to plan. We hope that you join us again for next year's Meet!

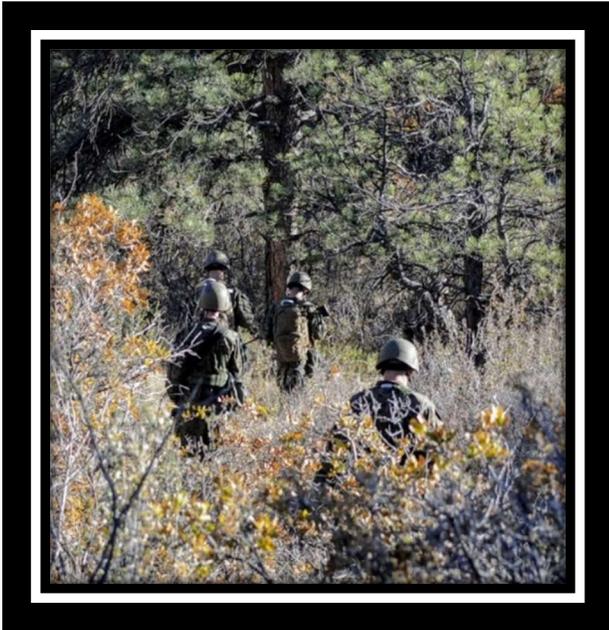


Competition Event Team Captains

Color Guard – MIDN Fritsch
Drill Team – MIDN Kirschenbaum
Knowledge Team – MIDN Pizanti
Rifle/Pistol Team – MIDN Sturckow
Endurance Team – MIDN Taylor

MIDN Eddington, OIC

FEX



For Marine Corps students in NROTC at CU the FEX (Field Exercise) is the culminating event of the semester that challenges every individual more than most other trainings throughout the year. The FEX, which took place in Jack's Valley at USAFA, began on a Friday afternoon and ran until midday on Sunday. This year's FEX contained a range of weather conditions from below freezing and snowing to 65 degrees and sunny, allowing Midshipmen and MECEPS the chance to experience all types of weather in the field.

The purpose of the FEX is for students to get an opportunity to apply training they have done on campus throughout the semester in a more realistic military setting with different terrain and

obstacles. The exercise includes land navigation, planning and briefing different orders, and other tactical maneuvers. It is the culmination of the year's training as the company is split into two platoon sized elements for the ultimate force-on-force exercise.

While underclassmen focus on fundamental skills, the upperclassmen apply their skills to lead at some of the highest levels, helping accomplish various goals of the platoon.

Upon completion of the FEX, an after-action review is done which encompasses a compilation of feedback, evaluation of results, and discussion of what happened throughout the exercise. It resulted in the development of strategies for improving overall performance and future exercises.

MIDN Beck, OIC



Sea Trials

Sea Trials is the culminating training exercise for all of the Navy Midshipmen. Throughout the year we have physical training, professional development, bridge operations, and damage control training to help all of the Navy options prepare for the event. This year it was a 12-hour training exercise beginning at 0500 and ending at 1700. It began and ended with a long physical portion testing endurance and teamwork amongst squads. Following this was a 6 hour ship evolution integrating CIC, bridge and damage control operations. Midshipmen used the unit ship simulator to simulate ship navigation while casualties–fires and flooding– were simulated on board the ship.



Sea trials is meant to create a stressful environment and test Midshipmen’s leadership, followership, and quick thinking. These are all skills that must be exercised and will be very valuable in the fleet. Additionally, there was a very large emphasis on communication skills. Similar to a real ship, there was a chain of command that midshipmen were required to follow. Other important skills our training emphasizes at CU are damage control and bridge operations. Damage control is very important in the Navy as all sailors must be ready to help fight fires and flooding casualties on board. The bridge is responsible for navigating the ship and any midshipmen who go surface warfare in the future will be required to be qualified in this area.



Seeing all of the training for the year come together at sea trials revealed how much the Navy midshipmen have learned. The upperclassmen showed excellent leadership and communication. All of the underclassmen stepped up with their knowledge of damage control and proved themselves in a stressful situation. The time everyone has invested into this unit and their training was seen throughout this exercise. I look forward to seeing all of the Midshipmen continue to grow in their time at CU NROTC.

MIDN Nay, OIC

