

# Summer Camp '08 - Bangor Company

By Adam Haythorn

The company met at the student union on the 21st of June waiting to be transported to Swynnerton training area and the adventures that it entailed. After a little mishap we arrived and got straight into the training.

First we were put into our platoons which was followed by safety & fire briefs. The day also included a short lesson on weapon handling which was a quick refresh for some people. In the evening we had a traditional OTC party with a fancy dress theme of 'The Olympics'; during which we saw some very interesting costumes and some not so but it was still a good night.

The second day would prove to be a more challenging day than the first. This was due to the CFT and weapons handling test that had to be completed. The weapons handling test didn't prove to be a problem with every one passing. The CFT didn't however with a few people failing but in all it was still a good day.

These next five days would prove to be the exciting days in our greens as it was our five day rotation of special to arms days.

The Engineers day was teaching us about the dangers of mines and how to identify and attempt to detect them. The day was split into two: teaching us how to deal and identify them and in the second half there was a test in how you dealt with different situations when faced by mines. In the evening we took part in a pub quiz event that led to an enjoyable night.

The REME day took us through simple leadership challenges which included getting everyone over a wall, rescuing vehicles which had broken down, driving a 4 tonner and a Landrover, and then finally some old fashioned patrolling skills. This was finished by building battery run vehicles. The evening activity was debating in which we watched a film on different types of leadership and discussed the pros & cons.

The Range day consisted of three things: zeroing our rifles, a medic stand and a march and shoot in the afternoon. The march and shoot was over two miles carrying 15kg after which we would sprint 300m followed by shooting at falling targets which would disappear after a certain time. The evening activity was war games, with us taking command of an army on 'Rome Total War'. After hours of fighting we were victorious.

The Signals day started early so that we could complete the many tasks involved from contact drills to how to survive while on the run and fighting in wooded areas. In the evening we were taught how to gut fish and how to kill and pluck live chickens. These were most welcome additions to the ration packs.

The final day was Artillery which would be the most physical day of the week due to the 3 mile run carrying a 90 pound shell and other equipment which was followed immediately by an assault course. After this we had an easier task physically but mentally harder as it involved maths and co-ordinating artillery support. The afternoon consisted of four small stands in which we were shown the anti air capability of the artillery to moving a gun by hand. The day was finished off by a quick orienteering exercise.

Our training in greens was now over and from here it was on to fun stuff with adventure training (AT). Over the weekend we had a sports competition which we saw Bangor perform well for its company's size with us winning the football and doing well in the rugby. We also had a day out during which we went to Alton Towers and was enjoyed by all.

The final week consisted of some AT and going to the National Arboretum. We had two days of AT and had a choice of climbing, caving, mountain biking, walking and white water rafting. These trips were enjoyed by every one who went on them with people getting very wet to some just challenging themselves or doing something new like caving.

The National Arboretum proved to be a very good day as it provided people with a more in depth look into conflict and the moral consequences. The first part of the day involved walking around the grounds looking at the gardens which were created to commemorate people who had died from the different parts of the armed forces to civilian groups as well. This led onto the major part of the site: the wall with the name of every one who has died since 1945 while serving in conflict. This gave a stark realisation to people about what can happen. The second half of the day was spent listening to lectures from people who have recently returned from tours in Afghanistan and Iraq. These allowed people to understand what the British army is actually doing in these countries and what they are trying to achieve there.

With only two days left people were now de-kitting and others getting ready to go home. However we first of all had a regimental parade which we practiced for before the commanding officer appeared. On this parade prizes were awarded and positions for next year were read out. With this completed we had a regimental photo and were then dismissed to help pack up various area of camp and would continue into the next day. After this it was onto the Regimental Dinner and

the highlight of camp. This as always was a good event with plenty of wine and intercompany banter and dancing.

The final day in camp was the final cleaning of camp and packing before going home. In the evening we had the skits night where we see each company producing their own skits about what had happened over the duration of camp with some of the staff not coming out too well!

All in all, a great camp!