

DRIVER'S SEAT

*CSM Ronnie W. Davis
Command Sergeant Major
U.S. Army Armor Center*



BNCOC: A “Pit Stop” on the Road of Success

Sergeant Konrath has been selected to attend his First Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) course, the Basic Noncommissioned Officers Course (BNCOC). He knows that with successful completion of BNCOC comes more responsibility and an increased chance for promotion. His equipment's ready but he wants to know more about the course; after all, it's his first “big” MOS course. He walks into your office and asks if you could tell him more.

This article gives a general understanding of how Career Management Field (CMF) 19 Armor BNCOC prepares junior-level noncommissioned officers for mid-level responsibilities, part three of a continuing series of articles highlighting the institutional training provided at the Armor Center and Noncommissioned Officers Academies.

FM 25-101, *Battle Focused Training*, states “NCOs also have responsibility to train sections, squads, teams, and crews.” This statement accurately describes the capabilities of today's BNCOC graduate. His diploma is a testimonial to his demonstrated competence at training soldiers in a myriad of skills with an emphasis on warfighting.

BNCOC is an eight-week, intense CMF 19 course that is conducted in a combat simulated, tank or cavalry scout (depending on your MOS), environment using the Small Group Instructional (SGI) Model. Some of the common instruction shared by NCOs in both MOSs includes mine warfare; tactical movements; nuclear, biological, and chemical operations; maintenance

procedures; safety procedures; gunnery, field training exercises; common leader and common military training. The course also provides in-depth instruction on topics that are either tank or scout specific, for example, demolition, patrolling and reconnaissance (intelligence gathering) operations for scouts, and tank weapon systems employment for tankers. The following is a discussion of some of the ways the two MOSs differ in the instruction received, beginning with the 19K armor sergeant.

The tactics portion of instruction sometimes is considered the most challenging for students. It exposes the student to the army warfighting doctrine. Here, the armor sergeant learns skills necessary to become a functional team member of a tank platoon, thereby increasing its killing capability.

Using terrain boards and local training areas, the armor sergeant is taught vehicle tactical movements, how to occupy tank fighting positions, tank battle drills, tank platoon displacements, preparing range cards, installing and removing hasty minefields, and how to prepare and send logistics reports. The student is tested on his proficiency and knowledge by the use of graded scenarios.

The armor sergeant's technical knowledge is also increased by detailed training on how to install and boresight the Multiple Integrated Laser Engagement System (MILES) on the M1A1 tank. Then he moves on to a thorough training phase on the maintenance, in-

stallation, and boresighting of all tank weapon systems.

The armor sergeant then gets the opportunity to spend 16 hours in the Conduct of Fire Trainer (COFT) where he is required to negotiate the Advanced Matrix, Group I. This is in preparation for his eventual firing of a modified Tank Table VIIA and Tank Table IVA modified Tank Crew Proficiency Course (TCPC) on a stationary and moving tank range. He also takes a Tank Crew Gunnery Skills Test (TCGST).

Using terrain boards and local training areas, the cavalry scout is taught subjects such as adjusting indirect fires, evaluating and classifying bridges and vehicles, preparing and sending logistical reports, resupplying the section and platoon, how to conduct mounted and dismounted patrols, supervising security convoy operations, how to conduct reconnaissance and security missions, and how to conduct quartering party activities. Once taught, the student is tested on his proficiency by the use of graded scenarios.

Additionally, the cavalry scout is taught non-war subjects that might be employed during peacekeeping missions, such as how to establish and supervise a roadblock or checkpoint and how to perform a stand-up search or a frisk on a person or vehicle.

The cavalry scout receives additional training on weapons, MILES, and

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demolitions; i.e., calculating and designating placement of timber and steel cutting charges and calculating and designating the placement of cratering and breaching charges.

The climax of the tank and scout experience in BNCOC is a three-day Field Training Exercise (FTX), designed to test the student's ability to perform the skills learned under stressful field conditions. It incorporates the gamut of collective tasks, from con-

ducting a tactical road march to recon-solidation and reorganization on the objective. The FTX instills pride and confidence in the sergeant's newly acquired skills.

The BNCOC graduate is a highly motivated, skilled — but as yet untested — warrior. It's up to his chain of command to afford him the opportunity to demonstrate his capabilities and show his mettle. The most important test the graduate will face is one that

cannot be measured within an institution. It is the one that will test his ability to inspire his subordinates, and provide leadership that allows them to build confidence in their own abilities. This type of leadership brings recognition from both subordinates and superiors.

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— FM 25-101