

What a week!

The highlight being our introduction to basic field craft skills at Strensall Camp, which was a roaring success on Saturday.

Cadets were thoroughly engaged in adventure and new skills from the moment we arrived.

Thrown in at the deep end, we were competing with 35 students from Ormiston Maritime Academy, Grimsby, who had the edge on drill and marching, but it was useful for cadets to see how its application enables team work and discipline. Our very own LCpl Lewis Newton led the way and cadets quickly adapted to a change in pace, direction and formal commands.

Tasks included a **climbing wall**, which defeated Mrs Hewitt despite a galliant effort. Monkeys among us include Cdt Dylan Wilkinson and Cdt Liam Fox, who were up and down the climbing wall like ferrets. We moved on to handling weapons and were able to take aim with the **cadet rifle**, and even a heavy, **fully automatic sniper rifle** with extended barrel, necessary for increased accuracy over longer distances.





We tasted the all-new-and-not-so-humble **ration pack**: a calorific box of nutritious freeze-dried food and drink that can keep one soldier going for 24 hours in the field (3000 calories, so no good for slimming world). We were shown the contents of a soldiers' survival kit, including **basher**, (shelter), clothing, cooking facilities and orienteering gear, all of which (130lb in weight) can be silently crammed into the **bergen** (rucksack) in the pitch black of night should a soldier need to up sticks and flee undetected. Our intrepid explorers then got to install the basher (a single plastic sheet) in the woods, to protect against prevailing winds and rain, and invading bears...





**Archery** next, and our very own Robin Hood (**Fletcher Elliott** - has to be with that name!) was a storm at the bow, defeating even the instructor in a competitive elimination round. Finally, we were engaged in a **command task** where cadets were able to flex their leadership muscles. Armed with two tyres, two scaffold boards, and a rope, we had to rescue injured (blindfolded) casualties across a narrow mountain path, (marked section of ground). We were almost unanimously and utterly hopeless but it was a valiant effort made by most teams. We met **Major Crawford**'s two cocker spaniels, who were obviously itching to get stuck in and show us how it was done. One of the dogs was almost smuggled onto the coach but sadly Miss Blanchard didn't quite get away with it.









A fantastic day was had by all. The Academy was commended for selecting recruits with impeccable behaviour and keen to collaborate with rival schools, and a few rising stars demonstrated their emerging leadership talents: Fletcher Elliot, Lewis Newton and Liam Fox.





Last week we began our mammoth journey in mastering the art of drill and by the end of tonight's Parade Evening, we had accomplished our first recognisable **march** - no mean feat given the physical demands of inch perfect precision and the stamina required in maintaining a position of full attention, while remaining in line with moving cadets all around!

Several jobs are now ticked off our to-do list:

- All serving cadets have been measured up for their uniforms and boots
- Planning permission for our storage container is now fully approved
- Plans for Parade Evenings throughout the Spring term are taking shape
- 25 places on the prestigious Summer Cadet Camp are now reserved for our best cadets, which will take place from the 23rd June next year. Military exercises will include a mock forest-based attack mission.

Coming up...

Next week we will continue to conquer drill and hopefully manage a stampede-free turn.

We will also cover further field craft, including hand signals for covert communication.

We eagerly await the arrival of our 25m range to enable us to practice on site at Sirius.

In the remaining weeks of this term it is hoped our cadets will fully demonstrate their ability to take instruction; show expected etiquette required in the presence of ranked officers, lead in command tasks, and increase their tolerance of the plunging temperatures after dark. Layers and waterproofs required!

On the 12th December, our final Parade Evening of the year, we will visit a Royal Logistics Corps base, and explore various infantry support and tactical vehicles.

If cadets can prove themselves, they can look forward to receiving their full uniform in the New Year, and once their Passing Out Parade is successfully completed, be awarded their cap badge in recognition for their commitment, reliability and knowledge.

Special thanks to B Hewitt, K Faulkner, Mr. McNiff, Miss Blanchard and Miss Wong.