Royal Warrior Battalion
Roll Call—November 2011

Royal Warriors Take Part in 27th Annual Army Ten Miler in Washington D.C.
By MS IV Cadets Sidney Jaques & Jenna Caserta

Last spring, MSIV Cadet Andrew Wycheck organized a group of cadets to compete in the 27th Annual Army Ten-Miler in Washington D.C. in October 2011. The invitation was put out to the Battalion and an eager group of Cadets signed up. At the beginning of this year, late August 2011, the team assembled after the PT session to discuss a training plan. It was from there that our Tuesday morning practices began.

From August through early October, the team met between the hours of 0500 and 0600 to practice. We started with a group six-mile run, and worked our way to buddy team eleven-mile runs. These grueling practices tested every one of us, even CDT Dan Patti, a seasoned cross country veteran.

“Running around the lake for training as many times as we did would have been a lot more boring if I didn’t have such good company to talk to.”

Up and down the steep hills we ran, and around Lake Scranton we trained. Certain bends, slopes and tree stumps became a natural recognition after so many laps.

Finally, it was the weekend of the race. On Friday 07 October, the 14 - strong team piled into a 15- seat van and began our trek to D.C. The team consisted of Cadets Andrew Wycheck (team captain), Jenna Caserta (team co-captain), Sidney Jaques, Tina Bayard, Sean Kulaga, Ian Poshka, Christian Burne, Sean McKee, Dan Patti, and Alex Flynn. The cadre who trained and competed with us were LTC Ryan D. Remley, CPT Erin Leach, and MSG Alexander Ortega.

Through generous donations the team was able to spend three days in the nation’s capital. After arriving Friday, the team rested before a day of sight-seeing on Saturday. After a team dinner Saturday night, we retreated to our hotel rooms to prepare for the big day. At 0630 Sunday we met in the hotel lobby. We put our nerves aside and confidently walked the mile-long stroll to the starting line. With our matching team shirts and unrivaled motivation, the Battalion team stood out among the 37,000 participating runners.

At 0830, the race began, and the team split into four groups to wind through the streets of Washington, D.C., past memorials and the motivating crowds.

The entire race was lined with enthusiastic fans. We raced with families of fallen soldiers, Wounded Warriors, parents and children, Military race teams from across the world. In less than two hours later every runner of the team successfully completed the race.

The first place finishing male for the team was Cadet Dan Patti, for the females it was Cadet Tina Bayard, and Master Sergeant Alexander Ortega placed first for the Cadre.

Our adventure was over but all agreed competing in the Army Ten-Miler was a great experience, but being a part of that team was an even better one. Next year, the Battalion hopes to be represented with a team once again.
(Above) SFC Wilkerson, along with 2nd ROTC BDE Commander Colonel Mathis, University of Scranton men’s basketball coach Greg Griffith, Major General Mark McDonald, Commander U.S. Army Cadet Command and Tashika Griffith, director of the University of Scranton Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs, take part in the annual Thurgood Marshall Dinner held in New York City on Monday, 24 October.

(Above) Cadets Christina Bayard and Ian Poshka congratulate each other after successfully completing the Army Ten-Miler in Washington, D.C.

(Center—left) MS III Cadet Michael LaPorta of King’s College crosses the one-rope bridge during the Ranger Challenge competition held at Camp Smith, New York, 21-23 October.

(Bottom - left) members of the Royal Warrior Battalion Army Ten-Miler Team enjoy the sites of Washington, D.C., on Saturday, 08 October. Pictured (L to R) are Cadets Sidney Jaques, Alex Flynn, Ian Poshka, Christian Burne, Jenna Caserta, Sean McKee and Daniel Pati
At the beginning of each Fall Semester, The Royal Warrior Battalion begins its preparations for the 2nd Brigade Ranger Challenge Competition. Ranger Challenge is the varsity sport of ROTC. The program allows Cadets the opportunity to compete against other schools in the 2nd “Freedom” ROTC Brigade in a vigorous 48-hour skills competition. This year, the Royal Warriors had Cadet Evan Dimakas as the Team Captain to represent the “wolfpack.” The history behind the team name “the wolfpack” originates from Iggy the wolf, the University of Scranton mascot.

Training began this year one week before the school semester started. The week included double session physical training events, with military skills training at the end of each day. Once the school year started, the team allowed all members of the Royal Warrior Battalion a chance to compete for a slot on the Ranger Challenge Competition Team. A normal practice session starts off with a 0530 wake up. Formation for physical training is normally at 0600 but on some days as early as 0500! Workouts range from 5 to 8 mile runs, skills training, cross-fit based exercise, and much more.

During the first week in October, members bega the final tryouts to be one of the 10 elite selected for the team. Tryouts included an Army Physical Fitness Test, 10k Road March, and overall military skills assessment. The team consists of 10 warriors: one female and one representative from each class, freshman through seniors. The Ranger Challenge competition has two parts. The Phase I is a full skills day, including one-rope bridge, urban assault course, hand grenade assault course, electronic simulator trainer, improvised explosive device lane, evaluating a casualty in a combat environment, land navigation, leader’s reaction course, written examination, physical fitness test and a surprise commander’s challenge.

The second phase consists of a 10-kilometer rucksack run, where teams march up to the top of a mountain with 35 pound packs and race back down for the fastest time. At the end of the competition, the winner is announced, and the school that wins represents the 2nd BDE at the Sandhurst Competition held by USMA (United States Military Academy) at West Point. The event is more than a grueling competition, as CDT Dimakas states, “Ranger Challenge is the best leadership development program within ROTC. It allows Cadets the opportunity to push their physical and mental toughness. The greatest lesson learned during training and competition is the importance of how well you can work as a team.”

This year’s Ranger Challenge Team successfully completed the competition with no injuries and was consistently regarded as the most motivated and motivating team by cadets and cadre alike. But none of those remarks came as a surprise to the members of the team. After all, “the wolfpack” lives by the motto that there is no challenge so tough that cannot be completed when working as a team.