

DP3 Armour Reconnaissance Troop Warrant Officer (ARTW) Course 0020

By Capt Duaine Fetzner

The DP3 ARTW serial 0020 ran from 3 October to 26 November 2013, with one troop of Distance Learning (DL) students joining the course on 15 October 2013. This was an exciting new venture for both students and staff alike as this was the first time that DL was used on a tactics course within the Royal Canadian Armoured Corps School (RCACS). As well, a fourth Primary Reserve (PRes) troop was included into the course which added a positive dynamic until their departure on 14 November 2013.

Upon the course's outset, 16 students, both Regular Force and Primary Reserve, arrived to the RCACS to participate in the residence portion of the course. Concurrently, 6 students conducted the pilot DL for the theory portion which was completed via both teleconference and desktop sharing software known as See and Share. This program enabled the Directing Staff (DS) to see the detailed map and courses of action (COA) development completed by students when conducting interactive battle procedure. As a result, the students were able to refresh and hone battle procedure skills prior to their arrival for the residency portion which ensured they were fully prepared for the practical application. Once the DL students arrived to the School, all candidates completed a written theory exam together and began practice traces in the Virtual Battle Space Simulator (VBS). While completing this portion, an emphasis was placed on Battle Procedure prior to a lengthy field deployment. During the field portion, students would be evaluated on their planning and preparation, execution and reaction to the tactical situation after receiving orders from the Course Officer. In addition, traces were to be progressive in accordance with a three block system, focusing on more complex scenarios during the end of the field portion.



2 Tp makes it's move to the line of departure to commence a zone recee.

On 22 October 2013, the course deployed to the Gagetown Training Area to begin the field portion of the course in order to be assessed as an Armour Recce Troop Leader. The first week of the deployment saw the candidates exposed to a demonstration trace which was conducted with increased execution and coaching from the DS at the block 3 standard. This was critical in establishing what was expected of students to achieve the overall standard for the course. After the demonstration traces, the course quickly moved into the assessed block 1 traces, which saw candidates receiving one contact within each troop. This allowed everyone to "find their feet" and begin to understand the complexity of not just fighting a patrol but being prepared to fight within a squadron context. The course then transitioned into the block 2 and 3 traces where the complexity increased. This was accomplished by an increased number of contacts and the introduction of transitional tasks requiring quick reaction to a fundamental change in the situation. This taught the candidates to react quickly and develop plans in a compressed timeframe. The stress level increased during block 3 as each candidate had to be effective on one trace in this block to be successful on the

course. Aside from the lessons taught in the Troop Leader turret, students were also mentored by their respective DS Troop Warrant's throughout. Aside from continuing to be mentored on the job of a Troop Leader, DS Troop Warrant's focused on the Troop Warrant's responsibilities, particularly when consolidating demands prior to moving through running replens, properly adopting hides, and harbours and enforcing routine, as well as constantly coordinating with the Squadron Sergeant-Major.



Front Row: Capt Delmonte (2 Tp DS), Capt McInnes (1 Tp DS), WO Harmer (Crse WO), MWO Tower (SSM), CWO Laughlin (RSM), LCol Andrews (Cmdt), Capt McCuish (A/OC), Capt Fetzner (Crse O), Capt Marshall (BC), Capt Fitzgerald (3 Tp DS), Lt Didiano (4 Tp DS);
Second Row: WO Buisson (1 Tp DS), WO Cobbett (2 Tp DS), Sgt Royer, Sgt Benoit, Sgt Bernard, Sgt Poulin, Sgt Richard, Sgt Thibault, Sgt Lucier, Sgt Troop, Sgt Burwell, Sgt Zubkowski, Sgt D'Entremont, Sgt Bishop, Sgt Phillips, Sgt Nickerson, WO Harding (4 Tp DS), WO Robichaud (3 Tp DS);
Third Row: 2Lt Haysom, Sgt Levis, Sgt Scheepers, Sgt Arsenaault, Sgt Harris, Sgt Craig, Sgt Barker, Sgt Koestlmaier

Overall, the course challenged all students, regardless of their prior experience, in different ways and marked an important milestone in their careers. Upon their promotion to the rank of Warrant Officer, successful students of the DP3 ARTW 0020 will have gained valuable insight to the expectations of their future troop leaders, and will be prepared to assume their responsibilities at a moments notice.



Sgt Nickerson receives the DP3 ARTW Top Candidate award from LCol Andrews, Cmdt (Right) and MWO Holland, DSM (Left).