

PASS IN REVIEW

SPECIAL EDITION 2011



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Earning Your Spot

An in depth look at the four-month-long Silent Drill School, where Marines earn positions on the Silent Drill Platoon.

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Left: Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman learns to march with his M-1 Garand rifle while enrolled in Silent Drill School aboard Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, D.C. Above: Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman exchanges his wooden stock for a plastic stock during SDS. The students use the plastic stocks while learning to spin their rifles so they do not break the wooden stock.

EARNING YOUR SPOT: **ONE MARINE'S JOURNEY THROUGH SILENT DRILL SCHOOL**

PHOTOS AND STORY BY CPL. JEREMY WARE

For four months, Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman made sacrifices to become a member of the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon — hours of practice, a lot of sweat and a little blood.

Since November, Collman has been a student in the Silent Drill School. He has spent countless hours learning, practicing and performing drill movements. It hasn't been easy either. The Silent Drill School has one of the highest attrition rates of any Marine Corps school. In the beginning, there were 61 Marines vying for a spot in the platoon. Only 15 made the cut.

Collman spent the majority of his days repeating drill movements until he no longer had to think about the moves. The moves became muscle memory and his body could naturally react to the cadences. Among other exercises, students were required to learn slide drill, a form of drill unique to the SDP.

On the first day, most students had never heard of slide drill, but they were expected to learn at a fast pace.

"The hardest part of Silent Drill School is learning the new drill at the pace the instructors require," said

Pfc. Andrew Wingate, SDS student. "You either live up to expectations or get left behind."

Every day, Collman woke up not knowing how long his tenure in SDS would last. The drill master, Cpl. Michael Hintz, is responsible for critiquing the Marines and deciding who makes the cut. Throughout the evaluation process, Hintz looked 46 Marines in the eyes, shook their hands and bid them adieu. This harsh reality is not lost on the 15 remaining students.

"You begin every day not knowing if it will be your last," said Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman, SDS student. "That unknown factor forces you to be your best at all times."

After spending the first three months of SDS at Marine Barracks Washington, the remaining students traveled to Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., for the final month of school.

However, making the trip to Yuma does not guarantee the students a spot in the platoon. Once boots hit the ground in Yuma, training becomes more intense. SDS students begin their day marching to the parade



Above, Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman performs an off-the-shoulder rifle toss during challenge day at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 15. Below, Collman begins learning the Silent Drill Platoon drill sequence while a student in Silent Drill School at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling, D.C., Jan. 4.



Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman competes for a spot on the Silent Drill Platoon's "marching" at Marine Corps Air Station Yuma, Ariz., Feb. 15. Every year, SDP conducts Silent Drill School to select the best students in Yuma with challenge day, when every Marine marches as the drill master grades. The highest scores earn their place on the marching 24 and go on to perform in front of the Marine Barracks Washington and at numerous events across the U.S. and abroad.



deck just as the sun rises and do not finish until after the sun sets.

Once Hintz felt the students mastered slide drill, he conducted "challenge day." There was no forewarning for challenge day. The students woke up and prepared for another grueling day of SDS only to find out this day was unlike any other.

Collman, along with other SDS students and instructors, drew numbers from a hat to find out the order they would perform. Collman drew the number 17. After waiting patiently, Collman finally got his opportunity to showcase everything he learned in four grueling months.

Each individual Marine was graded by Hintz on their drill while the platoon guide, Cpl. Oscar Franquez Jr., graded the condition of the Marines' uniforms and rifles.

After Collman completed his drill sequence, the Drill Master provided him with critiques. Hintz then looked Collman in the eye, shook his hand and welcomed the newest member of the Silent Drill Platoon into the ranks. After receiving the command to fall out, the platoon commander, Capt. Brian Wilson, waited for each student to present them with a pair of leather gloves worn only by members of the Silent Drill Platoon.

"Four months of effort finally bore fruit," Collman said. "I



4" during challenge day at Marine Corps Air
newest members. This exacting school con-
s their performances. The 24 Marines with
undreds of thousands of spectators at



Above, Capt. Brian Wilson presents Lance Cpl. Patrick Collman with his first pair of leather gloves, sig-
nifying that Collman has made the Silent Drill Platoon. Below, At the annual challenge day banquet,
Collman received his certificate for graduating Silent Drill School from Staff Sgt. James Woolford.
Collman earned his spot on the SDP through four months of intensive training beginning at Washing-
ton, D.C., and culminating at Yuma, Ariz., with challenge day.

can't believe I made it. This is going to take a couple of days to sink in."

Challenge day concluded with the annual challenge day banquet, at the staff non-commissioned officer's club in Yuma. During the banquet, Collman and the 14 other SDS graduates received their certificates and a coin recognizing them as an official member of the Silent Drill Platoon.

After congratulating the newest members of the platoon, Hintz announced the "marching 24," the 24 Marines who perform during ceremonies. This year, six students made the cut, Collman, however became a supernumerary. He will be required to learn several spots and be prepared to step in at a moment's notice if any member of the marching 24 is unable to perform.

The work required to graduate SDS was just the beginning. The SDP must now prepare for the Battle Color Detachment's annual National Installations Tour and the parade season in Washington.

"These guys have worked hard to get where they are today," Hintz said. "But now the real work begins."



THE MARINE CORPS STANDARD



STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL. JEREMY WARE

When military units march into battle, they carry their “colors.” These colors identify for whom the unit fights and where their allegiances lie. The Marine Corps is no different.

During its first 150 years, however, Marines marched under a variety of flags. It was not until Jan. 18, 1939, that the Corps adopted a standard color. That design was the foundation of today’s Corps’ standard.

The official battle color of the Marine Corps is decorated with 54 streamers and silver bands representing over 400 battles and conflicts the Marine Corps has participated in throughout its proud history.

The care of the battle color is entrusted to the color sergeant of the Marine Corps and is kept at Marine Barracks Washington.

Every year the Barracks sends the Battle Color Detachment on a tour of installations





across the Corps, to afford Marines the opportunity to see the colors that represent everything the Corps has done to preserve democracy and to protect our nation.

“The battle color is our history, and what we do is go out and show our history and discipline through our drill, and showcase our colors at the same time,” said Sgt. Eric Humer, 34th color sergeant of the Marine Corps.

The Marine Corps Color Guard sends the “parade four,” the four Marines that march in the BCD ceremony, Friday Evening and Tuesday Sunset Parades, to Yuma, Ariz., every winter to practice drill and prepare for the National Installations Tour along with the parade season.

“We come to Yuma to work together and fine-tune the bits and pieces of the color guard that makes us the parade four,” said Cpl. Joseph Kinard, organizational color bearer with the color guard. “We want to be perfect. When people see the battle color they know that the Marine Corps is on deck. We represent ourselves to the highest standard.”

Even after countless hours of drill and numerous ceremonies, the battle color must remain in perfect condition. While the color sergeant is ultimately responsible for the condition of the colors, Kinard is in charge of day-to-day maintenance.

“Every day I steam out the colors to make sure they’re not wrinkled, I make sure they are stored properly, and I make sure the rings are polished and have no scratches,” Kinard said. “I also make sure the rings aren’t spaced out or moving, making sure they are tight and on there secure. If they become damaged, we take them in for service and get the silver bands cleaned up.”

The long hours of drill and maintenance these Marines put into their job is paid back ten-fold. The honor of carrying the official battle color keeps these Marines going.

“When you look at (the color), it represents day one to present day, you’re looking at our lineage,” Humer said. “Being able to stand right next to it, it’s the commandant of the Marine Corps’ colors. I can’t even put into words how special it is.”



Above, Cpl. Joseph Kinard polishes the 54 silver rings attached to the Official Battle Color of the Marine Corps in preparation for a Battle Color Detachment Ceremony at Marine Corps Logistics Base in Albany, Ga. Right, The color guard’s “parade four” march pass in review during a BCD ceremony at the School of Infantry West in Camp Pendelton, Calif., March 11.







The Consummate Professional

Story and Photos by Cpl. Jeremy Ware



For the last decade, Gunnery Sgt. Keith Martinez, assistant drum major for the United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, has embarked on the National Installations Tour with the Battle Color Detachment.

Martinez departs Washington with the BCD each year to focus solely on preparing “the Commandant’s Own” for the tens of thousands of spectators that will see them perform.

The D&B travels to Yuma, Ariz., yearly to train for the National Installations Tour and upcoming parade season in Washington. This year marks Martinez’s eleventh tour. The annual trip to Yuma is preceded by months of preparation at Marine



Gunnery Sgt. Keith Martinez, Marine Drum and Bugle Corps assistant drum major, speaks with Gila Ridge High School marching band students about the D&B. Each year, the unit travels to Yuma, Ariz., and visits local schools about the many musical opportunities available in the Marine Corps.



Following a show at Twentynine Palms, Calif., Gunnery Sgt. Keith Martinez is interviewed about the Drum and Bugle Corps' performance. The interview allows the D&B to market future shows and spread esprit de corps to fellow Marines.

Barracks Washington.

The Marines spend weeks learning and perfecting the new music selected for the upcoming parade season. Drill movements are then added to complete the show. One step at a time, the Marines slowly master the drill sequence.

The Marines also get used to holding their instruments in the proper positions for the entire performance. Martinez's instrument is the drum major's mace. The mace dates back to 18th and 19th century military musicians and is the drum major's means of communicating with the musicians. Martinez, who marches in front of the company, moves the mace to direct the formation.

Martinez skillfully leads the D&B performance as spectators applaud and express their appreciation with standing ovations. Yet, the impact of the D&B's drill sequence on spectators was not fully understood by Martinez until the decision was made to allow spectators to come on the parade deck after performances for a "meet and greet."

"In recent years, we began mingling with the crowd after the show," Martinez said. "Once we got that opportunity, we got to hear from spectators and retired Marines about the pride we bring

to them. That opened up my eyes to how much we touch people."

When in Yuma, Martinez is also responsible for going to local high schools and speaking with band students about joining the D&B. Martinez stands alone in front of approximately 50 young musical minds answering any questions the students can challenge him with. A smile is always on his face as he answers each question, from audition requirements for the D&B to how much his mace costs. Before he leaves, Martinez lets the students know about upcoming performances and bids the class farewell.

Martinez approaches every day as a consummate professional. Every opportunity to talk to high school students or Marine veterans brings genuine joy to him, which in turn is transferred to the people he touches.

"Gunnery Sgt. Martinez sets the right example as a senior staff (non-commissioned officer). He is the first sergeant of the company, and the assistant drum major, his hand is in everything," said Master Gunnery Sgt. Kevin Buckles, D&B drum major. "He also does an outstanding job leading the Marines, both junior and senior to him."



THIS IS MY RIFLE

STORY AND PHOTOS BY CPL JEREMY WARE



For the past three years, Lance Cpl. Michael Madulka, a marcher with the Silent Drill Platoon, has labored to bring his ten-and-a-half pound M-1 Garand rifle to Marine Barracks Washington standards.

After arriving at the barracks, Madulka was issued his rifle and entrusted with its care. It wasn't until he joined the SDP that he was shown how to properly prepare his rifle for the platoon's unique drill movements. Three years later, Madulka, a member of the SDP's inspection team, still shapes the stock of his rifle the same way he did on day one.

Before the stocks are issued to the SDP, they are taken to the woodwork shop at Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling where they are shaved down. Madulka doesn't like the feel of the stocks, so he has extra wood removed for a more customized feel.

"When the stocks come back, they are thick, because you can always take off more wood but you can't add any back," Madulka said. "My hands aren't as big as some of the other Marines, so I prefer a thinner stock."

Customizing the stock improves the Marines handling of the rifle during performances.

After his stock is issued to him, Madulka begins an intricate and time consuming process of wet sanding, boning and polishing his stock, guaranteeing its readiness for upcoming performances.

With a small piece of 600-grit sandpaper, Madulka wet sands every inch of the stock. After running the sandpaper under warm water, Madulka begins at the base of the stock and sands until the entire stock is ready for boning.

Boning is the process by which a Marine compresses the surface of the rifle to give the wood a bone like appearance before the finish is added. Madulka uses a glass mug to apply pressure to the stock. The end result is a smoother surface that adds durability as a faint shine becomes noticeable.

The stock is now ready for finish to be applied. Madulka distributes the finish evenly with the grain over the entire stock. After the finish has

dried, he applies several more coats until the stock is the correct color. Each coat protects the wood from damage and makes the stock stronger.

“Lance Cpl. Madulka takes a lot of pride in his rifle, and it shows in the final product,” said Cpl. Oscar Franquez Jr., second rifle inspector for the SDP.

After hours of painstaking preparation, Madulka’s stock is ready for the practice field. Being on the inspection team, his rifle is used to perform complicated spins in which it is thrown through the air and caught during the inspection sequence of the performance.

“I remember dropping my rifle and watching the stock break during practice one day,” Madulka said. “There is no worse feeling than knowing that all the work you put in making that stock perfect, all those hours, are wasted in a split second.”

This feeling is shared by the entire platoon. Every platoon member goes through the same labored process preparing their rifles for performances. Since 1948, when the SDP first performed at the Sunset Parades, the M-1 Garand has always been at the platoon’s side.

“There’s no greater honor than knowing the rifle I care for is the same make and model that the first Silent Drill Platoon used, and every platoon since,” Madulka said. “This rifle is special to us, and all the hours I put in are worth it, because every member of the platoon goes through the same process to make sure we look as professional as possible for everyone who sees us perform.”



Lance Cpl. Michael Madulka applies a finish to his rifle stock in preparation for an upcoming performance aboard Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, S.C., March 19.

M-1 GARAND



OPERATION

SEMI-AUTOMATIC, GAS OPERATED

CALIBER

.30

LENGTH

43.6 INCHES

WEIGHT UNLOADED

9 LBS 8 OZ

BARREL

24 INCHES, 4 GROOVES, RIGHT HAND TWIST

MAGAZINE

8 ROUND INTERNAL BOX

MUZZLE VELOCITY

2,800 FEET PER SECOND

EFFECTIVE RANGE

440 YARDS

CLASSIFICATION

"STANDARD" FROM 1936 UNTIL M-14 WAS ADOPTED IN 1957

TOTAL PRODUCTION

APPROX 4,040,000





Staying Close To Home

Story and Photos by Cpl. Jeremy Ware

The Marines of the United States Marine Corps Battle Color Detachment travel thousands of miles annually in support of military ceremonies throughout the world.

With the Marines constantly on the road, technology is making it easier than ever for them to remain connected to their friends and family. Social media sites such as Facebook and MySpace have provided Marines with the ability to remain in touch with significant others while being away from home.

These sites allow Marines to upload photos and post videos of their trips, send messages to loved ones, and even play games against their friends back home. For Marines,

these sites are invaluable for remaining socially connected.

With technology advancing daily, Marines aren't solely reliable on computers to remain connected. Marines can even download social media applications on their cell phones for instant connection to their loved ones.

For Cpl. Michael Hintz and his wife Molly, social media has become a staple in their relationship. With Michael constantly on the road and Molly currently completing her student teaching in Michigan, social media has provided an indispensable outlet for the two to stay connected.

"It's nice to be able to stay in communica

tion with my wife while across the country,” said Hintz, the 63rd drill master of the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon. “When ever I get a minute, while on tour, I like to let her know I’m thinking about her by sending her a message or posting a comment on her wall.”

In recent years, Voice-Over-Internet Protocol (VOIP) sites such as Skype, has allowed Marines to have a face-to-face conversation with loved ones. Lance Cpl. James West, a marcher with the U.S. Marine Corps Color Guard, stays close with his girlfriend, Misty, through text messages and phone calls through Skype.

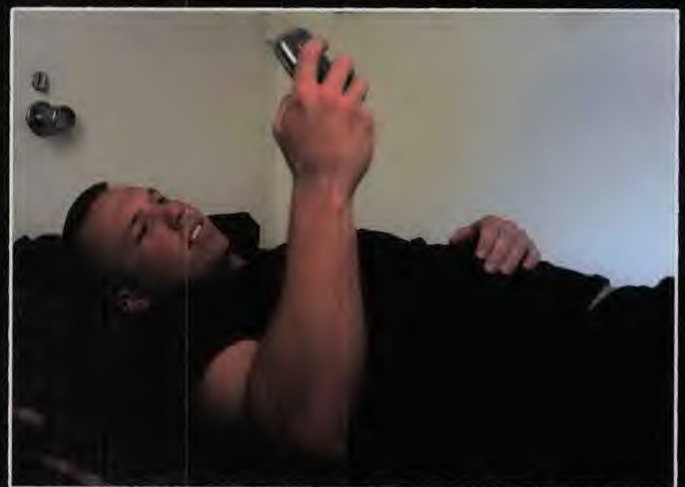
“After working all day, it’s nice to unwind by getting Misty on Skype to hear her voice and see her face,” West said. “I’m the type of person that needs contact for my relationship to work the way a healthy relationship should. Skype allows me to see her and let her know I’m thinking about her. It helps our relationship a lot.”

Social media has helped many relationships survive extended absences. The ability to stay in contact allows significant others to know that their Marine is thinking of them.

“I would much rather talk to Molly if I can, but by leaving her a message, it’s nice to let her know I’m thinking about her,” Hintz said. “Without the ability to stay in constant contact, all the travel would take its toll a lot more than it does. Social media definitely makes my relationship stronger while on the road and I am glad we have this technology at our disposal.”



Cpl. Michael Hintz uses his smartphone’s social media application to stay in touch with his wife while away from home on the National Installations Tour. The program allows Hintz to give his wife updates on his day-to-day activities as well as stay up to date on her life.



Cpl. Michael Hintz relies on multiple mediums of technology to remain close to his friends and family while traveling, especially with his wife completing her student teaching in Michigan. The ability to stay in contact raises his morale and helps strengthen his relationship during long periods apart. Social media sites, such as Facebook and MySpace, support more than 500 million users from around the world.

From Coa

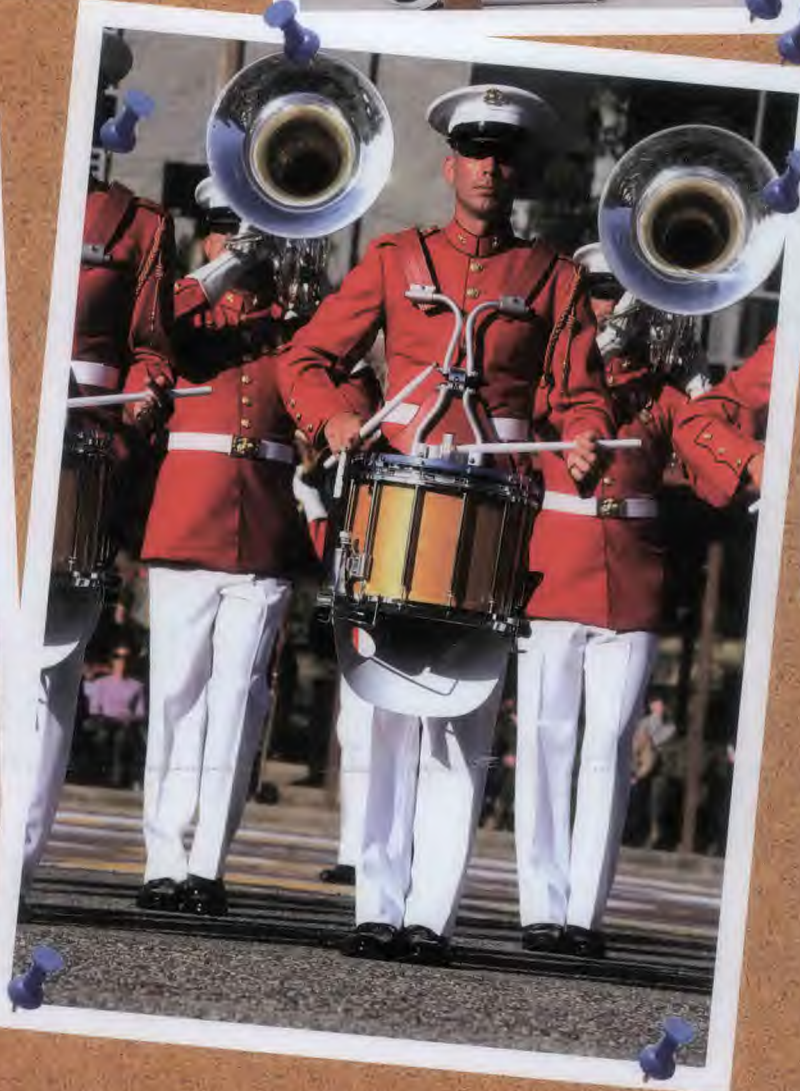
Photos by Cpl. Jeremy Ware



st to Coast



Around the Country



Around the Country





CPL. MICHAEL HINTZ AND LANCE CPL. JOSHUA PAUL W
BASE ALBANY, GA. HINTZ THROWS HIS M-1 GARAND RIFLE
CONCLUDES THE SINGLE INSPECTION DURING T

ARM UP BEFORE A SHOW AT MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS
OVER HIS SHOULDER TO PAUL. THIS DRILL MOVEMENT
THE SILENT DRILL PLATOON'S DRILL SEQUENCE.



PHOTO BY CPL. JEREMY WARE

