

Marine Corps Warfighting Lab

# Combat Squad Leader Course Overview

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# Mission

- To experiment and improve squad leader training in order to enable the infantry Squad Leader to operate on the battlefield of the 21st century.
- To examine expanded billet requirements for squad leaders
- To increase tactical decision-making experiences for the infantry Squad Leader

# Schedule

- 5-16 March 1998
- Camp Pendleton  
1st Battalion, 5th Marines
- In preparation for 1/5 Urban Warrior
- DRAFT Course Curriculum [Handout]

# End State

- **A Squad Leader who believes:**  
**“I’m the most important leader on the battlefield. I have the tools and the know-how. My team fights well.”**
  - Displays aggressive self-confidence
  - Fights as part of combined arms team
  - Knows tactics and fire support two levels up
  - Trains himself, trains his men
  - **Issues a 3-sentence order, in 30 seconds, while under fire**

# Course Overview

Combines:

- Current Training
  - Weapons
  - Patrolling
  - Tactics
  - Land Nav
- New Emphasis
  - **Tactical Fundamentals**
  - **Platoon and Company Tactics**
  - **How To Train**
- **Decision Skills Training**
  - **Combat Orders**
  - **Tactical Decisionmaking Range**

# Why? What is New?

- Course IS:
  - An Experiment
  - Developmental:
    - Results to SOI
    - Results to X-File
  - Based on perceived gaps in SL training
  - Focused on: **SL Command in Combat**
- Course IS NOT:
  - Urban-specific
  - Weapons / Patrolling
  - FMFM 6-5
  - Equivalent to SOI Course

# Tactics Module: Objectives

- Tactical Fundamentals
  - Marine Corps Doctrine for Squad Leaders
  - Combined Arms Language
    - Understand the combined arms battlefield
    - How to interact with higher & supporting commanders
- Platoon and Company Tactics
  - “What is the Company Commander trying to do?”
  - Potential to execute independent operations as well as fighting as part of a larger force

# How To Train Module: Objectives

- Increase Squad Leaders' Responsibility
  - The Squad Leader's role as trainer
  - “The Squad Leader Makes the Difference”
- Increase Squad Leaders' Knowledge
  - How to Train
  - Marine Corps training guidelines
  - “How to Train Your Squad” Handbook
  - Hands-on Squad Training Practical Application



# Decision Skills Module: Objectives

- How to Develop Decision Skills
  - How Does an Expert Learn?
  - Coaching and Mentoring
  - Techniques for Decisionmakers
- Combat Orders
  - Techniques for Verbal Orders
- **Main Effort:** Every Man, Every Day makes an Estimate, a Decision, and issues an Order

# Tactical Decision-making Range

- Fight every Day!
  - Individual, Evaluated Fight under pressure.
  - **Video Simulations**, TDGs, Sand Tables, TEWTs
  - 20 Battlefields ~ **100 Tactical Decisions**
- Learn every Day!
  - Feedback by Facilitators, Instructors & Peers
- Issue Orders every Day!

# Technology Inserts

- GPS: Every Squad Leader equipped with Garmin GPS
- Comm: Every Squad Leader equipped with Motorola individual radio
- Simulator: Tactical Decisionmaking Simulator

# Instructors

- Capt B.B. McBreen: Course Developer
  - (2) MCWL SNCOs: SSgt K. Kirk
- Gary Klein: Decisionmaking Concepts
  - (4) Klein Associates Partners
- Bing West: Decisionmaking Simulation
  - (2) GAMA Corporation Tech Supporters
- MajGen O.K. Steele, USMC Retired: Mentor

# References

- *Combat Squad Leader Course Book*
  - Combat Squad Leader Course Schedule
- *Urban Warrior Concept for Distributed Operations*
  - Proposed Squad Leader Billet Description
- POC: Capt B.B. McBreen, MCWL, 703-784-1355