

The Cambrian Patrol

After a respectable second place finish in the London-wide Guthrie Cup competition, Wilson's were offered a place in the prestigious Cadet Cambrian Patrol: a scaled down version of a military competition which is attended by teams from armed forces from around the world. Months of preparation, selection of a squad and long training walks had been leading up to this weekend.

The team formed of Regimental Sergeant Major Wakefield, Sergeants Rennie-Carter and Fletcher and Lance Corporals Flowers, Benjamin, Apio, Asokkumar and Tan (the first Wallington Girl to compete in the competition) departed on Friday. Upon arrival at the Sennybridge training area, our kit was checked and the section IC, the RSM, was given a set of orders for the next day.

It was an early start on Saturday with the section getting up at around 0430 for breakfast at 0500. We filled up as much as possible before being dropped off at our first checkpoint of 8 for the day. What followed was around 40 kilometres over the unforgiving Brecon Beacons in what was referred to as 'biblical' weather by the Sergeant Major in charge of the training team.

During the day at various checkpoints we were tested on a variety of military skills such as section attacks, observation, fire control orders, first aid and military knowledge. On completion on the patrol phase at around 1830 we were transported back to the farm where we were sleeping on the two nights. The RSM received his orders again, this time to be assessed on his ability to then give these orders in the correct way to his section. This was followed by a ration pack meal and a well-earned rest.

The final day consisted of another short patrol of around 2.5 km followed by shooting at targets from 100m at which the team excelled. On completion of this, the patrol ended and it was back to Farm 5 to prepare for the prize giving ceremony.

Waiting for the results was especially nerve-racking as we had to wait for all the other results to be read out before ours. When it did come to us, we found out that we had achieved a silver medal, matching the far more experienced team of two years ago and coming agonisingly close to gold.

As the Patrol IC I am extremely proud of my team and cannot wait to hear about the undoubted success of the team next year, having learnt a lot from our successes this year and hopefully pushing for gold.