

# CALL THE BALL

The Newsletter of the 130th Composite Flight

<http://www.mnwg.cap.gov/farmington>

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## Minnesota Encampment:

Just a reminder that to avoid the late fee you must sign up now! Do it over the web at <http://www.mnwg.cap.gov/encampment/>. Remember application to encampment does not mean automatic acceptance. **There are only 75 Basic Cadet slots. Please note the 14 June 2001 postmark/submit deadline. Applications submitted after 14 June will be assessed a \$15.00 late fee and will be slotted after all on-time applications.**



sure exactly what he talked about...

Too late for that now, it's time to give the corrected movement a try. S/SSgt Smith calls you to attention, gives you a right face to move the flight from line into column formation and gives the command **Forward, MARCH.**

Oh no! You remember now that C/SSgt Smith has an odd way of calling his commands. You listen closely, but between the rhythm of the boots and his voice, you have no idea what preparatory command you hear. When you hear the command of execution **MARCH** you try to just go with the flow, but it's no use - you (and three or four others with a similar predicament) end up destroying the movement.

## Stadium seating is that way for a reason!

The drill manual requires that a flight be 'sized' after falling in. While this is obviously not practical for squadron formations where it is important to be in your assigned element, it should be done prior to a drill period.

Sizing the flight the taller people furthest away from the flight sergeant and the shortest people closest. There are several good reasons to size the flight:

- It gives everyone a better view of the flight sergeant, so that they can see and hear what he is doing. This is especially important during instruction.
- It gives the flight sergeant a better view of his people, especially when on the march. It also allows him to easily see the people farthest away from him. While this may not be important in a small formation, it can become critical when there are thirty or more flight members!
- Sizing the flight and placing the taller people up front puts the people who take bigger steps toward the front while marching. This helps keep the flight from compressing as taller people in the back run up the heels of the shorter people in front of them.

Of course, element leaders should always march at the head of the column, regardless of their height.

## How'd that go?

Sizing a flight is easy: use the "taller-tap" method.

Place the flight in column formation and have anyone who is taller than the man in front of them - except the element leaders - tap the shoulder of the man in front of him and takes his place.

The flight commander then turns the flight to the right into inverted line formation and has the taller people tap and replace the people in front of them. In this case, the element leaders should also move. This will put the shortest element leader in the first element with the tallest in the last element.

The flight commander should continue this process until the flight is correctly sized.

## How do I take charge of a unit?

*Does this sound familiar?* The flight sergeant has to go indoors to help a new Cadet get his gear from supply. He calls Cadet Staff Sergeant Smith front and center. Smith reports and the flight sergeant tells him to take charge and conduct drill practice. The flight sergeant leaves. C/SSgt Smith turns to face the flight and says, "Flight, **BY MY COMMAND, ATTENTION.**"

## What the heck is "BY MY COMMAND"?

Cadets often use the phrase **BY MY COMMAND** when assuming command of a drill unit. The goal is to make sure that the Cadets know who is giving the drill commands and who they should listen to for commands.

But, there is no such phrase as **BY MY COMMAND** in the drill manual. The phrase seems to be confusion with the training tool *Mass Commands*, where the command **AT MY COMMAND** is used to end the use of mass commands by the flight.

It is assumed that the unit understands who's command they are under and when that command is transferred. There is no requirement that this phrase be used.

## What's The Right Way?

Simple enough: after taking charge from the flight sergeant C/SSgt Smith turns to his flight and says, "Flight, **ATTENTION.**"

## How do I size the flight?

**Size does matter...** You are happy, well-adjusted member of the fourth element in your flight. It's another meeting night, inspection is complete and it's time for the drill period. That's fine with you, you like drill.

Cadet staff sergeant Smith is leading drill tonight. He's just come back from wing NCO school and he's found a couple problems in the squadron's drill that he's determined to fix. He takes command of the flight from the flight commander, puts the flight at ease and begins to explain and demonstrate the correct manner of performing a drill movement.

**Problem!** C/SSgt Smith is your height and, while you aren't the shortest member of the flight, you sure aren't the tallest. There are plenty of people taller than you are and it seems like most of them are between you and Smith! You try to lean around the guys in front of you but it's hard - C/SSgt Smith is moving around while he's demonstrating. When he's done, you really aren't

This symbol indicates more information. Point with the mouse for a drill manual reference, click for the entire section.

## How do I align the flight?

### Dressed to Kill

Cadet Staff Sergeant Smith is leading drill practice after the squadron inspection. You're pretty new to the squadron, but you think you're starting to get the hang of this "drill" thing. After a particularly heinous attempt at a column movement, the flight is pretty much a mess. Interval and distance are completely shot. C/SSgt Smith sighs - the way he always does when something so obvious and simple as a column movement proves to be beyond the comprehension of your primitive brains - and say "Dress Right, DRESS."

Since the flight is in column formation, with the element leaders at the head, you end up using the third element as the base of the movement. You ended up too far from the guy to your right and when he puts up his left arm he doesn't feel your shoulder. This inspires him to look at you and begin waving his arm around so you'll get the message to cover over to him.

Meanwhile, in the file in front of you one Cadet has ended with the guy on his left far too close. When he puts his arm up he places his palm on the guy's shoulder and pushes him to the left until he's at an arms distance.

In a few seconds all the gesturing and shoving is over and the flight is in some semblance of a formation. C/SSgt Smith has achieved a zen-like state of disgust and you're ready to try the column movement again.

### Dress Wrong

First, it is incorrect to use the command 'Dress Right, DRESS' in column formation. A flight may only 'Dress Right' when in line formation, with the element leaders on the right. If the flight is in 'inverted line' formation, with the element leaders on the left, the appropriate command is 'Dress Left, DRESS'. In column formation (element leaders at the head) and reverse column (element leaders at the rear), the proper command to 'dress' the flight is 'COVER'.

Sticking with the command 'Cover' for a moment: there is no arm raising and heads are not turned. Instead, position is determined visually and adjustment is made with a series of 'short, choppy steps'; sort of a shuffle. This is also the method for aligning the flight in reverse column formation.

Back to Dress Right...

### Dress Right!

On the command 'Dress Right, DRESS', everyone except the last man in each element raises their left arms straight out from the shoulder, parallel to the ground. The fingers should be flat and extended and the thumb along the forefinger. If the man to the left is too close, the arm is placed behind his shoulder. As the arm is lifted, everyone except the element leaders turns their head and eyes to the right. Position is adjusted by using short, choppy steps (as in 'Cover').

### What Should Have Happened?

Everyone reading this has been on the wrong end of a disastrous column movement and probably most of us have been faced with a flight sergeant who straightened the flight out by commanding "Fix Yourselves" or "Dress Right, DRESS". In these situations, the only command to align the flight is 'COVER'.

When in line formation, which is how a flight must fall in and fall out, the command to align the flight 'Dress Right, DRESS', which should not be followed by shoving, looking left and hand waving to encourage proper interval. Instead, flight members should immediately assume the 'Dress Right' position (left arm parallel to the ground, head and eyes right) and adjust their position using 'small, choppy steps'.