

K SQUADRON GOON SQUAD SURVIVORS:

Jim Carlson (*I never went, but it seemed to me at the time, that whenever anyone was sent to Goon Squad, they hardly ever returned. One of my Basic roommates, Tom Metzroth, was sent there during first BCT – my other roommate, Tom Cronin, and I were absolutely terrified because Metzroth was a big guy (hockey player from Fargo, ND) and was the perfect s__ _screen for us two squatty-bodies! When Metzroth eventually came back, he crawled into the room, looked like Death warmed-over, said only a few words in a pained, damaged sort of way, and scared us even more about Goon Squad. It was the worst thing I could imagine, and the thought of being sent there was an ever-present threat during BCT in the cadet area and later in Jack's Valley. I knew I'd never live through it.)*

Dink Yurko (*I remember being in the shower [the evening of BCT Change of Command when the M80 exploded], and a number of us were saying things like, "Do you believe this horsesh__t!" and "What a bunch of a__holes!" and – well, you get my drift. An upperclassman came in and told us to shut up, and everyone in the shower shouted out "Yes, Sir!" I was not liking it one bit, so as he walked away, and when I thought he was gone, I said in what I thought was a very low voice "F__ you, Sir." Well, not low enough apparently, and he came back and asked, "Who said that?" I wasn't about to volunteer that it was me, until all those sets of eyeballs looked right at me. Earned me 3 days of Goon Squad.)*

Larry Bryant (*Once -- for not coming to attention in ranks when my element leader whispered to me from behind.)*

Ralph Paul (*For telling upperclassmen to go F__ themselves during a run.)*

Phil Saenger (*In Jack's Valley, Goon Squad was called "Uncle Jimmy's Garden Party" for the 1-degree who ran it.)*

Bud Calloway (*I got religion real quick on that deal. I remember being forced by Dave Lutz ('73) to run in full fatigues up and down those sloping hills down by the parade field until I thought I was going to hurl.)*

Don Snelgrove (*Yes, I did "enjoy" Goon Squad one time. I will never forget it . . . My problem was that I had been given a '74 Contrails about a month before BCT. So I sat and memorized much of the stuff in it before flying out to USAFA: Schofield's address, four verses of Star Spangled Banner, you name it. So I'm feelin' pretty cocky by the second week of BCT whenever we do the Contrails check-off drills. But I just couldn't keep it to myself . . . The attitude showed through. My element leader decided that I needed some remedial attitude training and sent me to goon squad for the afternoon. I didn't really know what that meant. But after 4 hours of push ups, running back and forth on the parade field with two upperclassmen rattling heavy chains behind my head to keep up my speed as I sprinted, holding my rifle over my head forever, I became Mr. Humble Pie. I think there were four of us from our class at Goon Squad that day. Two guys went to the hospital for dehydration. I can't remember who the other guy was, but after that I became Mr. Low Profile and never volunteered any more information again. Another life lesson learned!)*

Jim Burling (*I went to Goon Squad one afternoon with my squadron-mate, Hugh Foy. This was after a full day of early morning run, PT, intramurals, etc. They put us thru about 30-45 minutes of hard calisthenics, sprints, low crawl, bear crawl, squat thrusts, etc. I was kind of pacing myself, expecting it to get tougher, but Hugh was giving it his all and he was hurting. He hung in there all the way, not letting the Cadre get the best of him. Then the next day we find out that Hugh went thru the whole day and tough Goon Squad with a broken foot! I think some of the Cadre got in trouble for that one! He was shipped off to K Squadron for the rest of Beast and has some great stories from that experience.*)

Hugh Foy (*I remember Jim Burling and someone else carried me up the Bring Me Men Ramp, after which I collapsed like a steaming heap of dung. I can still see the meatball sandwich/Hawaiian punch/gastric contents in the trashcan in the squadron office -- "Hurl" is too mild a term. I was so delirious, all I could say when they asked me if I wanted to go to the hospital was, "Sir, I just want to go to Map Reading" . . . over and over, perseverating* and making no sense at all. I spent that night in the hospital with an IV in my arm. Must have been some wild combination of dehydration, food poisoning and heat exhaustion, but the lab tests just showed "hyperventilation". I think the broken foot came the next week after a rousing Speedball game. I was a little skeptical when the doc had to look up the fracture in the book. When he wrote, "Transfer to K Squadron" on the disposition form, my heart sank to my socks. I begged and pleaded for him not to send me -- as we were headed out to the valley the next day -- but his empathy and options were as limited, as his orthopedic knowledge. "Kangaroo squadron! We love to be leaped on!" The Firsties in Kangaroo were great, actually. They shared the privilege of counseling in their room. The treat? -- listening to "Black Sabbath", a point of no return. Sure had plenty of time to perfect my spit shine and Contrails memorization -- political capital that served us well during Fall Quarter, eh Jimmy B.? Eleven years later, one of the guys who picked me up at the dispensary and took me to my new home in "K-town", showed up as a medical student on my surgery service when I was a chief resident: Carl Stanberry, '72 [now an Anesthesiology Resident at Vanderbilt University Hosp in Nashville]. Small world.) **

[Perseverating: uncontrollable repetition of a particular response, such as a word, phrase, or gesture, usually caused by brain injury]

Marty Stytz (*My 2 trips to goon squad were on the last Thursday and Friday of 1st BCT. My element leader told me Wednesday evening that for any error (bad marching, any question I answered incorrectly -- like Checkpoints, cadets, all that stuff -- poor uniform, failure to recite the Star Spangled Banner backwards, whatever), I would get goon squad. His rationale was, as he told me to my face, that being a non-pilot I did not belong in "his academy". Having gotten rid of 2 of my 3 roommates the same way, I guess he figured he could get rid of me before 1st BCT ended. I had been in the room by myself for 8 days by then. Anyway, I made it to Thursday lunch without a screw-up. I made some mistake at lunch, SO, OFF I WENT TO GOON SQUAD in the afternoon. As I recall, there were three from my flight down there that day; we did all the running, team-pushups, squat-thrusts, more running, that seemed to be the usual experience. At some point coming up the ramp, I passed out and woke up in my room some time later. The rest of the afternoon is kind of a blur -- I do remember that I screwed up again at dinner, which led to an after dinner "SI" and loads of fun in the hall at the shower formation, along with lots of prodding to quit by the element leader. The next day was a repeat of the Thursday deal, maybe*

not quite so bad since I did not pass out at the end. Justice came the following morning during the SAMI. The Commandant did a walk through with the AOC and happened to drop into my room. He had one question, how long had I been by myself in the room. He left, and the reaming began just down the hall, in an ever-increasing volume from the Commandant. Apparently, 24 HOURS was the max for any Basic to be alone -- maybe 48 on the outside. I had two guys starting to move in before the parade, John Leonnelli and Felix Grieder; they later did a RTB.)

Duane Lodrige (During BCT, we were given a 3 x 5 card to write down our home town and interests in an effort to pair us up with one of the local officers. I put down USAFA Colorado Springs, CO as my home town -- which garnered me a personal visit from the Wing Staff plus a tour with Goon Squad.)

Dean Cox (I was ordered to go to Goon Squad during our BCT, but that afternoon I had remedial swimming and thus escaped the visit. The 3-degree (74'er) who sent me to Goon Squad did so because he didn't like my southern accent. A firstie (72'er), the next day, had the 3-degree apologize to me, and everyone within earshot of the dining table, for his anti-southern bias. Incidentally, I was on Aptitude Probation a few semesters my junior and senior years, for the same reason, according to the write-up ranking me in the bottom of the class.)

Ric Lewallen (My roomie Kevin Blatnick (a Prep Schooler who punted in the Fall) and I were shining or shoes or something during First Beast. Our Element Leader (who became Group/Wing Commander in Second Beast) banged open our door and said to us (now standing at attention), "Bill Looney thought your room looked pretty good." I guess I must have had a "shoot me" question mark on my face, so our Element Leader asked, "Lewallen, do you know who Bill Looney is?" "No Sir," was my only honest response. "Blatnick, do you know who Bill Looney is?" "Yes Sir." Our Element Leader shuts the door, Blatnick turns to me and says, "He's the Cadet Wing Commander!". I didn't even have a chance to wallow in the misery of my stupidity when the door bangs open again against the stops and our Element Leader says, "LEWALLEN, YOU ARE ON GOON SQUAD MISTER!!! AND YOU ARE GOING TO STAY ON GOON SQUAD UNTIL YOU CAN RECITE THE CHAIN OF COMMAND BACKWARDS AND FORWARDS FROM THE PRESIDENT DOWN TO YOU! Memorizing was not my strong suit, and I was under the blanket after taps with my contrails praying I could learn everyone until about midnight. Yes, Goon Squad was like the others described it . . . rifles at high-port, running wind sprints on the parade ground until you collapsed, and being yanked up by an upperclassman and running again. For me, I had the honor of reciting the chain of command backward and forward when I had breath to talk. Interestingly, I wound up being out there only one day. Our Element Leader came by that evening, did not slam door, came in and said I did "a good job" out there on Goon Squad. I was grateful because I did not feel I could do it again.)

Ed Zerambo (No -- I was a Preppie, knew better to avoid such nonsense.)

Paul Desisto (2x)

Kochevar

Craig Naas *(When I arrived at the Academy to start BCT, I was wearing a cast for a broken leg sustained skiing while attending the USAFA Prep School. Imagine my surprise when I was informed I would be unable to begin BCT! After several hours of negotiations, I was approved to start BCT with the class of '75 wearing a cast on my left leg. I was assigned to Guts Squadron, and took my belongings to my assigned room on my crutches. The next morning, I was greeted by upperclassmen and told to get my stuff, because I was being reassigned to K squadron. Thus, I became the inaugural member of K squadron for our class, and spent my second night at the Academy in a room alone and completely separated from the rest of the class. I had about 10 or so K Squadron cadre all to myself. As BCT went on, I had many different roommates who passed through K squadron for many different reasons. Since I could not participate in any running, I was provided my own personal trainer for leg lifts, pushups, sit-ups, and squat thrusts on one leg until everyone else returned from 2nd BCT. I remained in K squadron, receiving the personalized attention they were so famous for, as the First and Last member of our class in K squadron.)*