Leadership course instils lifelong skills

LEADERSHIP is more than just an honours badge or a reward; for 53 young men from The Armidale School last weekend, it also involved problem solving, public speaking navigation, communication and learning how to take responsibility for others.

Held at New England University Company Depot (Army Reserve) and in the field at Jeogla Station east of Armidale over five days, the course was run by the TAS Cadet Unit for boys who volunteered to gain important leadership skills.

Operating concurrently, the courses - for junior leaders, senior leaders and cadet under officers (CUOs) - were conducted by instructors from TAS and the Australian Army and involved boys from Years 9-11.

Both the junior leaders course (for those interested in leading a section of nine cadets) and the senior course (cadets wanting to lead at platoon level as a sergeant) involved introductory and advanced levels of training in leadership, navigation and communication, including navigation at day and night in different weather conditions, using map and compass.

The CUOs course, for senior boys wanting appointments as platoon commanders and company commanders, revised leadership and navigation training and then focussed primarily on communications skills, including grounding in prepared and impromptu public speaking, and briefing others.

Scenarios were designed to be realistic in order to test their logic, leadership and resourcefulness. In one of the junior scenarios cadets had to boil a billy in a swamp, by first building a platform and keeping their fuel. Another mock scenario had them working out how to retrieve a bogged ute from a toxic swamp.

“For the first two days we brushed up on our drills, perfected our navigation skills and learned about radio telecom procedures. Then we camped out in the bush and put it all into practice,” said Year 9 student Charles Uren, from Congi Station, Woolbrook. “The course built confidence in our abilities to take on leadership roles when we take charge of the junior cadets later in the year. I now am more confident to give instructions to other people which will transfer into other areas of everyday life.”

TAS Headmaster Mr Murray Guest said while leadership was valued and celebrated at every level of education, the deliberate development of leadership skills is less common.

“What makes our cadet leadership training so special is that it is linked to real responsibility for the activities and wellbeing of others,” he said.

ENDS
Photos:
**CLC Tyres 2**: James Murphy, Callan Mofatt, Jim Orr, Saxon Hughes, David Wu (obscured) and Harry Mackenzie ahead of some heavy work in the field at the TAS cadet leadership course last weekend.
**CLC Wright**: Tom Wright is all smiles leading his group home after a navigation and trekking exercise.
**CLC Uren 1**: Charles Uren enjoys some rest time during the camp…
**CLC Uren 2**: … and at the conclusion of the camp is congratulated by TAS Cadet Unit Commanding Officer Maj Trevor Thatcher on completing the leadership course.

For more information on this release contact Tim Hughes on 0409 662 420.