

Cadets learn flight skills at innovative course

STEM skills are becoming increasingly important in the military.

Recently, five Meriden cadets undertook the Drone Racing Course to enhance their skills and meet other like-minded cadets. CDT Shion Nam, CPL Cindy Shen and CPL Wenwen Zheng shared their experience of a memorable weekend.

--

On the last weekend in May, we attended the Drone Racing Course after completing a series of online training sessions. The course was designed for all levels, including those interested in drones and robotics but also for those interested in trying something new.

We had five Meriden cadets attend the course:

- SGT Sofianna Han
- CDT Shion Nam
- CDT Vicky Qian
- CPL Cindy Shen
- CPL Wenwen Zheng.

Leading up to the event, we practised our flying skills using drone racing simulator VelociDrone. The program taught us throttle control, manoeuvring through gates and turning. These online sessions gave us a taster for flying actual drones.

Once at the course, we began with theory, learning the science behind drone flying and important safety guidelines. We then had many opportunities to practise flying microdrones with goggles, which show the FPV (first-person view) from the drone. It was quite difficult at first to control the drones, but we improved quickly.

On Sunday afternoon, we competed in a championship which involved racing our drones through an obstacle course. This round helped to develop our problem-solving skills in timed pressure scenarios, and winners obtained challenge coins.

At the end of the day, CDT Vicky Qian was voted best female pilot!

A major highlight was the opportunity to meet cadets from different units. We enjoyed talking and bonding with them, even trading our patches and badges. Our instructors were knowledgeable and friendly, as were the students themselves, which allowed us to interact with them more easily.

Overall, this experience was extremely exciting and valuable as we got to learn many new things about drones. We are eager to participate in the next drone course in Adelaide in 2026.



Flying microdrones in first-person view



Vicky Qian, Best Female Pilot

CDT Shion Nam
CPL Cindy Shen
CPL Wenwen Zheng