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Ranger Challenge Takes Top Honors

January 29, 2013



This past weekend, the Georgia Southern Eagle Battalion won First Place in the 6th Brigade 2013 Ranger Challenge Competition held at Camp Blanding in Starke, FL. This competition is a two day event that tests the limits of each 9-person team through physical endurance and mental agility. The Army ROTC Department at Georgia Southern University fielded two teams this year—one comprised of Georgia Southern University Students (Eagle Battalion) and one comprised of students

from the Savannah Schools (Coastal Battalion), namely, Armstrong Atlantic State University, Savannah State University, and the Savannah College of Art and Design. Our two teams have been training extremely hard for the past five months for this competition—beginning their daily workouts at 5 a.m., which consisted of 5-10 mile ruck marches, long runs, upper-body development and swimming endurance training. During the competition the two teams were leap-frogging from station to station constantly pushing each other. In the end, the Eagle Battalion Cadets prevailed with the fastest overall time in the competition—completing the 13+ mile route and all of the included events in just over 3 hours. The Coastal Battalion was not far behind, taking 6th place overall.

There were 38 teams that competed in the competition from the Southeast US and Puerto Rico. This is the first time that Georgia Southern ROTC has taken First Place in this competition and is the first time that any School from Georgia has won it in more than 10 years. As a result of this victory, the Eagle Battalion Cadets will represent Georgia Southern University and the 6th ROTC Brigade at the International Sandhurst Competition at the United States Military Academy at West Point on April 19-20.

The Sandhurst Military Skills Competition began in 1967 at West Point and is a two-day competition comprised of obstacle courses, rifle marksmanship, swimming, rappelling, and mountaineering. The Eagle Battalion Cadets will compete against cadets from across the US and around the world. There are at least 12 international teams competing this year from such countries as the United Kingdom, Australia, and Canada, to name a few.

Master Sergeant (MSG) Timothy Parks, Sergeant First Class (SFC) Eric Linn, and SFC Eric Crow were the team coaches and did a tremendous job preparing the cadets. These warriors and patriots have served in Army for the past 13-15 years and in some cases were on deployments together and in some of the toughest missions. The cadets are truly fortunate to have such dedicated and capable professionals guiding and developing them. The coaches are allowing the cadets to recover from this weekend for today, but will begin

to prepare for Sandhurst on Wednesday morning, dark and early. In the words of MSG Parks –“we’re not just going to compete—we’re going to win!”

The entire Georgia Southern community should be extremely proud of these cadets and future officers, this was a monumental accomplishment... and it’s not over yet.

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