

OKINAWA MARINE

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HQMC debuts Combat Fitness Test for Marines

Lance Cpl. Cristina Noelia Gil
DIVISION OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS

ARLINGTON, Va. — With the Corps' new combat fitness test nearing, Training and Education Command officials began a worldwide road show for Marines and media here Aug. 18-19.

In the next few months at installations around the globe, instructors from the Martial Arts Center of Excellence in Quantico, Va., will demonstrate how to conduct the CFT, which follows recent revisions to the Corps' physical fitness, body composition and military appearance programs. These revisions were signed by the commandant earlier this month in Marine Corps orders 6100.13 and 6110.13.

The roadshow is scheduled to be on Okinawa Sept. 15-18 with briefs and demonstrations at Camps Kinser, Foster, Hansen, Schwab, and Marine Corps Air Station Futenma.

The CFT is intended to keep Marines ready for the physical rigors of contemporary combat operations. Individual readiness will be measured by requiring Marines in battle dress uniform to sprint a timed 880 yards, lift a 30-pound ammunition can overhead from shoulder height repeatedly for two minutes, and perform a maneuver-under-fire event, which is a timed 300-yard shuttle run in which Marines are paired up by size and perform a series of combat-related tasks.

"The CFT shows that you have to train a whole lot more than just preparing for a three-mile run and 20 pull-ups," said Lance Cpl. James T. Hammons, a machinist serving with Weapons Training Battalion who ran a trial CFT at Marine Corps Base Quantico. "It is an evaluation that involves so much more."

An initial phase-in period, in which grading will be pass or fail, is in effect until Sept. 30, 2009. Results will be placed in unit diary reports and fitness reports, but will not count toward performance evaluation until the CFT is officially implemented Oct. 1, 2009, according to All-Marine Message 032/08.

"Our nation has high expectations of her Marines," said Gen. James T. Conway, commandant of the Marine Corps. "Accordingly, our high standards of professional and personal performance, to include our physical fitness and military appearance, must be maintained and adhered to by every Marine."

Several variations were tested on more than 2,500 Marines from 18 separate commands since the commandant made his objectives for the CFT clear in November 2007, said physical

SEE CFT PG 4

Full speed ahead



Coxswain Skills Course students Petty Officer Second Class Michael Huey, left, and Pfc. Alan Crawley ride the gunnel of a combat rubber reconnaissance craft Aug. 13 near White Beach Naval Facility. SEE STORY ON PAGES 6-7. Photo by Lance Cpl. Monty Buton

Register, request ballot for election '08

Lance Cpl. Stefanie C. Pupkiewicz
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP FOSTER — Department of Defense officials instituted Armed Forces Voting Week, taking place Monday - Sept. 6, as a time to raise voting awareness among all personnel eligible to vote and encourage them to participate in the general election Nov. 4.

Commandant of the Marine Corps Gen. James T. Conway recently weighed in on Armed Forces Voting Week in Marine Administrative Message 450/08.

The CMC directed all Marine commands throughout the operating forces to motivate the eligible voting population to register to vote and, if needed, acquire

an absentee ballot from their home states.

"I encourage all Marines, service members attached to a Marine command, all authorized family members and civilian Marines to exercise their right to vote in person or by absentee ballot," Conway wrote in the message. "Our goal is to contact 100 percent of our eligible voting population to provide absentee voting information and to assist them in registering to vote with their home state."

In compliance with the CMC's guidance, information booths on Okinawa will be set out in high traffic areas, such as commissary and exchange facilities, to inform as many people as possible of voting opportunities, said Maj. Todd A. Harding, the

senior installation voting assistance officer for Marine Corps Bases Japan.

To participate in the general election, service members must register and request an absentee ballot. There are two ways to accomplish this, said Harding.

A paper form can be obtained from any unit voting assistance officer and an electronic form can be filled out at www.fvab.gov, he said. The electronic form has to be printed and mailed to the address listed on the website.

All applications must be received 30 days prior to the election for the applicant to be eligible for the election, Harding said.

To register, or for more information on voting, personnel can contact their unit voting assistance officer.

INSIDE



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Marines and sailors plot their points and head out for water navigation.

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PMO looks for a few good Marines for special reaction team.

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Show respect to your fellow Marines

User's guide to keeping your foot out of mouth

Lance Cpl. Bobby J. Yarbrough

Marines strive to be the best they can each day. However, all Marines will eventually make mistakes, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Recently, I found myself in the first dilemma of my Marine Corps career. Another Marine and I had to work late, so we decided to grab some chow from the fast food line of the mess hall.

Because I had been served, I was standing by waiting on my comrade to get his food. I wasn't really paying attention until hearing a phrase I hadn't heard since leaving the gates of Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego nearly two years ago.

As my buddy was being served, he referred to the brown bagged chow as a "bag nasty." Within an instant, a fuming corporal came out from behind the

kitchen with an inquiry as to what my buddy had just said. To the dismay of the corporal, my buddy, without realizing the gravity of his comment, repeated his idiom.

With a loud voice, the corporal began to clarify exactly how offended she was by his remarks. She went on to explain how much dedication and pride she has in her job and how those simple words can be demeaning to any food service Marine. I objected at first, pleading for my buddy's case as an innocent mistake, until I realized that we had disrespected the contributions of fellow Marines. "Bag nasty" was definitely an inappropriate phrase.

The appropriate response from me would have been to apologize to that hard-working corporal right then and to thank her for the service her mess hall provided.

Whether it was a lapse of judgment or just being new to the Marine Corps

fleet, I made a mistake. Marines have military jargon to replace a lot of words, but that doesn't mean we should always use it. You wouldn't call your second lieutenant a "butter bar" to his or her face, would you? You wouldn't call a married Marine a "brown bagger." Similarly, going to the mess hall and asking for a

"bag nasty" is like eating at your mother's house and calling the food "slop."

As Marines, we are all responsible for the integrity of our organization, the actions of our peers, and our personal conduct. It is our duty to police the actions of others and hold ourselves to a higher standard of Marine Corps professionalism. If we don't, who will?

So to that corporal, I offer my heartfelt regrets – and a belated thanks for the service the Marines in your section, and many others like it, offer us here on Okinawa.

Yarbrough is the media clerk with the III Marine Expeditionary Force and Marine Corps Bases Japan Consolidated Public Affairs Office.



Sempertoons

Created by Gunnery Sgt. Charles Wolf

"HA HA!!! YOU CALL THIS HOT!!?... THIS IS PARADISE COMPARED TO YUMA OR 29 STUMPS!!!"



FACT CHECK

HAIRCUT

Q: I like to keep my hair shaved down to the scalp. Recently, I was told that this was not authorized. Since when are Marines not allowed to shave their heads?

A: Male Marines are allowed to shave their heads, as authorized in paragraph 1004.7a(1.) of Marine Corps Order P1020.34G. A few years ago, a proposal to prohibit Marines from shaving their heads was reviewed by the commandant. He disapproved the proposal, thereby reaffirming that male Marines could shave their heads.

Equal opportunity advisors, equal opportunity representatives get together for future planning



Brig. Gen. Ronald L. Bailey, III Marine Expeditionary Force deputy commanding general, speaks to Okinawa's equal opportunity advisors and equal opportunity representatives at a luncheon Aug. 19 at Tengan Castle. Photo by Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Flynn

Okinawa Marine Staff

CAMP COURTNEY — Equal Opportunity advisors and representatives gathered at Camp Courtney's Tengan Castle Aug. 19, to participate in a forum promoting fair and unbiased treatment of all III Marine Expeditionary Force personnel.

Brig. Gen. Ronald L. Bailey, III Marine Expeditionary Force deputy commanding general, led the discussion during the luncheon, sharing with the advisors and representatives his "FOCUS" approach to implementing the equal opportunity program in the MEF.

Bailey defined the acronym as:

"F - find your niche,"

"O - be observant,"

"C - choose to succeed,"

"U - understand the issues and,"

"S - don't forget we are providing a "service" to Country and Corps."

Another purpose for the luncheon was to get all the MEF equal opportunity representatives on Okinawa together to meet and greet each other since many are new to the equal opportunity program, according to Master Gunnery Sgt. Vincent J. Smith, III MEF equal opportunity advisor.

"This venue allows us to network with each other for different ideas," Smith said.

Equal opportunity advisors were pleased with the turnout and constructive nature of the luncheon and said similar training events will likely become quarterly to further enhance the equal opportunity program in the MEF.

Children take part in first Deployed Kids Wellness Camp

Lance Cpl. Michael A. Bianco

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP SCHWAB - Families of service members assigned to Marine Wing Support Group 17 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 172 took part in the first Deployed Kids Wellness Camp Aug. 20 - 21 at the boathouse here.

The event was designed to help children cope with the absence of their parents due to deployment.

As of Aug. 4, MWSG-17 and MWSS-172 had more than 500 Marines and sailors deployed to Operation Iraqi Freedom, leaving 372 family members living on Okinawa.

"The purpose of this event was to provide children with the tools to cope during deployments as well as teach them to take care of themselves by remaining physically fit by promoting exercise and healthy eating," said Amanda Daniels, the family readiness officer for MWSG-17. "There are a lot of events out there for spouses but not a lot for children."

On the first day of the camp, children took classes ranging from basic Marine Corps knowledge to transitioning during a permanent change of station.

On the second day, the children participated in a Marine Corps physical training session and other physical events.

One activity was a fitness challenge relay race, which included tasks such as throwing a ball through a hoop 10 times and completing a puzzle. The puzzle was the last portion of the relay.

The children concluded the camp by writing personal letters to their deployed parents.

The camp was the first of its kind on Okinawa and was very successful, Daniels said.



Children and Marines participate in a fitness challenge relay race Aug. 21 near the Schwab boathouse during the first Deployed Kids Wellness Camp for Marine Wing Support Group 17 and Marine Wing Support Squadron 172, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael A. Bianco

"It's a great way to incorporate the families into the unit, particularly when parents are deployed," said Col. Edward D. Banta, commanding officer of MWSG-17, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

Banta added the children also benefited from meeting and bonding with other chil-

dren facing the same challenges of having a deployed parent.

Most importantly, the camp was a learning experience giving the children an idea of what their parents do.

"It makes kids proud to be Marine Corps children," Daniels said.

BRIEFS


RANGE HIGH SCORES

Aug. 18-22

Rifle Detail 31 - Hansen

Staff Sgt. Tervo, D.D. 1stMAW 335

Rifle Detail 30 - Schwab

Sgt. Robinson, M.F. 1stMAW 326

CREDO WORKSHOP

CREDO Okinawa is sponsoring a Combat Veteran Marriage Enrichment Workshop on Sept. 12, from 8 a.m. - 4 p.m. It is designed to empower couples with tools to confront combat operational stress as a team in order to preserve and enhance love, commitment, and friendship. Space is limited and sign-ups must be received by Sept. 10.

This event will take place at the CREDO Building 442 on Camp Foster. For more information, please call 645-3041.

SOCCER REFEREE COURSE

The Ryukyu International Soccer Association (RISA), in cooperation with MCCS Semper Fit, is offering a free, three-day soccer referee course Sept. 12 - 14. For further details and to register, email ramon.arredondo@usmc.mil or phone at 080-1769-2040 or 637-2040/5.

9/11 REMEMBRANCE ON MCAS FUTENMA

On Sept. 11, the Marine Corps Air Station Futenma Aircraft Rescue and Firefighting Division will celebrate the heroic actions of those first responders who made the ultimate sacrifice during the terrorist attacks on 9/11.

At 7:15 a.m., members of ARFF, Marine Corps Bases Japan Fire Department and the MCB Provost Marshal's Office will depart in a mass formation from the road adjacent to Barracks 223. By 7:50 a.m., the march will be complete and all participants will muster on the Semper Fit field facing towards the Building 110 flag pole for a Morning Colors ceremony.

For more information, please contact MCBJ Fire Department Assistant Fire Chief (Training) J.D. Hartman at 645-2657

GO NAVY - BEAT ARMY

Navy MWR is looking for active duty Navy personnel to be members of the 2008 Navy Flag Football Team that will play against the Army team in the annual Army/Navy Game slated for early December.

Practice is held every Tuesday and Thursday at Camp Shields beginning at 6:30 p.m. For more information, contact the Camp Shields Fitness Center at 632-4013/4014 or via email to kevin.davis@fe.navy.mil or dave.littleton@fe.navy.mil.

EXPRESSWAY TRAFFIC DELAYS

Due to the repairing of an expressway bridge, traffic delays can be expected between the Kin (exit 8) and Ginoza (exit 9) exits through Dec. 26.

TO SUBMIT A BRIEF, send an e-mail to okinawamarine.mcbb.fct@usmc.mil, or fax your request to 645-3803. The deadline for submitting a brief is noon every Friday. The Okinawa Marine reserves the right to edit all submitted material.



Sgt. Danielle C.K. Holladay demonstrates the appropriate technique for the ammunition can lift event of the Combat Fitness Test, Aug. 18. Holladay, the chief instructor of the Combat Conditioning Program at the Martial Arts Center for Excellence, is part of Training and Education Command's Corps-wide CFT demonstration tour that kicked off Aug. 18. Photo by Sgt. Clinton Firstbrook

CFT FROM PG 1

readiness programs officer Col. Brian J. McGuire, Training and Education Command.

The commandant wanted something that would complement the physical fitness program and test a Marine's readiness in an operational environment, McGuire said. All of the events are linked to common combat tasks every Marine has been exposed to regardless of military occupation.

"These are the things all Marines should expect to do in combat," said Pfc. Ashley L. Pett, a supply clerk with Weapons Training Battalion who participated in CFT trials at Quantico. "We are all going to be out there just like the grunts, doing things they typically do."

Various groups, including veterans of Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, helped shape the CFT by describing their experiences in combat.

"We wanted the events to directly reflect the input of our combat vets," McGuire said.

While officials with Training and Education Command have determined a minimum and maximum grading scale, an appropriate point system, similar to the physical fitness test, has yet to be finalized.

The CFT will be a semi-annual requirement for active-duty Marines and an annual requirement for reserve Marines. However, a CFT and a PFT shall not be run on the same day. Each event will be scored and timed separately.

Male and female Marines will perform the same tasks, but will be graded on different scales.

By implementing the CFT, Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps Carlton Kent hopes Marines will become well-rounded in both areas instead of just training to the PFT.

"For those who tested it, from the 18-year-old to the 60-year-old Marine, all of them think this is a great thing to do," Kent said. "It's challenging, but I'm confident that every Marine will pass."

In addition to the CFT, body-fat standards will also change. Marines with a first-class score will no longer be afforded a four-percent leniency to body-fat composition as previously standardized.

"Tendencies toward increased weight have become a dangerous trend over the last decade in our American society," Conway said in ALMAR 033/08. Under the new order, a Marine's military appearance will be assessed by the individual's command. If a Marine is thought to have the appearance of an unbalanced body weight distribution, they

will be subject to an evaluation of their military appearance at the battalion or squadron level following a commander's assessment.

To assist Marines in complying with the new standards, a combat conditioning program will also be put in place. As part of the program, units will have combat-conditioning instructors, certified by the Martial Arts Center of Excellence, who will serve as command subject-matter experts.

"Throughout our 232-year history, the Marine Corps has fulfilled commitments to make Marines and win our nation's battles," said Conway. "Our fellow Americans recognize that long tradition and expect it to continue. As a fighting force, our ability to fulfill this commitment and accomplish the mission is dependent, in part, upon the fitness of our Marines."

A video of the CFT, layout diagrams and other materials can be found at www.tecom.usmc.mil.



Cpl. Kelli J. Parady, a Marine with the 22nd Marine Expeditionary Unit Command Element, totes Cpl. Jesse Everett in a fireman's carry while training for the new Combat Fitness Test aboard Camp Lejeune, N.C. Photo by Cpl. Peter R. Miller

PMO highlights 'stranger danger' during family night

Tengan Castle event highlights D.A.R.E., other safety programs

Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Flynn

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP COURTNEY, — Marines from the Marine Corps Base Provost Marshal's Office conducted a "stranger danger" program and K-9 military working dog demonstration for children at Camp Courtney's Tengan Castle Aug. 21.

The program and demonstration were held during a special "back-to-school" family night during which the underlying theme was "stranger danger" for preadolescent children.

The "stranger danger" program is designed to inform children about the threats presented by unknown adults.

Lance Cpl. Geoffrey Conley, a Drug Abuse Resistance Education officer with the MCB



Lance Cpl. Geoffrey Conley, Drug Abuse Resistance Education Officer with Camp Foster Provost Marshal's Office, hands out a D.A.R.E. flying disc to children during his presentation at the back to school social Aug. 21 at Tengan Castle. Photo by Lance Cpl. Daniel A. Flynn

Provost Marshal's Office on Camp Foster, and Pfc. Molly Bayer, an electrical equipment repair specialist with MCB Facility Engineers, served as role players to teach the children

about the dangers of talking to strangers.

The Marines used names to introduce themselves such as "Officer Friendly" and "Citizen Molly," and gave away prizes, such as D.A.R.E. t-shirts and flying disc to encourage the children to participate.

Every week, the club tries to do something different on family night to keep the children entertained, said Gina Howell, Tengan Castle's operations assistant. The family night also has games, face painting, and a buffet for children. With school starting, the event also served up some education.

After the presentation, military working dog handlers put on a demonstration for the children and parents to show off the dog's capabilities.

Lance Cpl. Sky Bryson, a K-9 handler with Foster PMO, showed the children and parents some of the equipment used to train the working dogs.

The K-9 finale was a big hit with the children who enjoyed watching mock suspects flee in oversized padded suits before being taken down by the dog.

Special Operations Command holds tryouts

Pfc. Antwain J. Graham

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP HANSEN — Recruiters with Marine Special Operations Command held a physical screening at the 50 meter pool here Aug. 22 in search of Marines and corpsmen who were qualified to join the elite Camp Lejeune-based unit.

The screening commenced after a series of briefs held Aug. 18 - Aug. 21 at various locations on Okinawa. Marines and corpsmen from various units met at the pool where they were required to perform a physical fitness and water qualification test.

During the swim portion of the screening, applicants had to swim a full 50 meters across the pool. After the swim, they immediately paired into two-man teams and exercised buddy drags. One team member swam 25 meters out at a time, while the other team member hauled two Modular Lightweight Load Carrying Equipment packs. Then, they had to tread water for 30 minutes without sinking.

Six applicants passed the screening. For some, the swim qualification was no easy feat.

"The buddy drag was the hardest part for me," said Lance Cpl. Daniel J. Wiechmann, an infantry team leader, with Company I, 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marine Regiment, 3rd Marine Division. "The whole screening really pushes you physically and mentally," he said.

In order to qualify for MARSOC, service members must have a physical fitness test score of 225 or higher, regardless of age or rank.

A score of 250 or higher is preferred because it increases a candidate's chances of selection for MARSOC in the competitive process, said Gunnery Sgt. Oscar A. Trujillo, recruiting staff non-commissioned officer in charge for the MARSOC recruiting and screening team.

MARSOC hopefuls are also required to have a general technical score of 105 or better

on the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery test.

Test scores are waiverable down to a score of 100 with a command recommendation testifying to the Marine or corpsman's ability to quickly comprehend basic knowledge, Trujillo said.

In addition, applicants must have a class two swim qualification and complete a command screening checklist which consists of a permanent record and background check for any criminal and other behavioral infractions. For applicants who may have these types of offenses, it can also be waived with command recommendation depending on circumstances, Trujillo said.

After a physical screening, the applicants proven to be qualified go to an assessment and selection tryout, a three-week event in Camp LeJeune, N.C., to be selected for MARSOC.

Marine Special Operations Command is a service component of the U.S. Special Operations Command whose mission is to deploy worldwide in support of USSOCOM commanders.

For those who did not participate and for information on applying to MARSOC, contact the recruiting team via email at marsoc_recruiting@usmc.mil or by phone.

Their contact information is also on their website at www.marsoc.usmc.mil.



2nd Lt. Evan Johnson, intelligence officer with 4th Marines, Headquarters and Service Company, 3rd Marine Division, treads across the 50-meter pool on Camp Hansen, during a physical screening for Marine Special Operations Command Aug. 22. Photo by Pfc. Antwain J. Graham



Coxswain Skills Course students prepare to depart for their first navigation track Aug. 13 at White Beach Naval Facility.

Path of the Zodiac



Students participating in the Coxswain Skills Course maneuver a Zodiac boat through shallow water.

Students learn skills in coxswain course

Lance Cpl. Monty Burton
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

After a week of classes covering navigation, boating procedures, maintenance and various other skills needed to be a coxswain, the Marines stood ready for anything that could occur in the water.

The Marines were participants in the Coxswain Skills Course, taught by instructors with the III Marine Expeditionary Force's Special Operations Training Group.

The course started Aug. 4 and concludes today.

A coxswain is an individual who guides and operates a boat, in this case a combat rubber reconnaissance craft, or Zodiac as it is often called, and is responsible for the safety of his boat and equipment. The Zodiacs are often employed as part of a boat team which is headed by a chief coxswain. The boat teams work very much like infantry units on the ground.

"It's like a squad, the coxswain is like the point man in the squad," said Cpl. Justin Cook, a former reconnaissance Marine looking to be-

come a coxswain. "Together all the boats work like a formation. We have wedges and formations, just like on land."

The reconnaissance crafts can usually hold up to 10 Marines and travel up to 50-60 nautical miles on a tank of gas. The average speed of the water craft is about 24 nautical miles-per-hour.

During one portion of the course, students were assigned to a boat as a navigator. The job of the navigator was to plot all the points so that the team could effectively travel to each of them in open water, explained Sgt. David Stiehler, the SOTG chief instructor of the course.

The students set out for their evolution at 3 p.m. when the sun was high in the sky. They would not return until well after sunset.

"Since this is their first (navigation mission), they have to come within a half-mile of the points," Stiehler said. "(Navigation) is a lot harder in the water because you don't have any landmarks to tell you if you're there, you just have to trust your equipment."

Through it all, the students exceeded their instructor's expectations and found all their points without hassle, Stiehler said.

Stiehler also said the hardest part of the course is the boat handling portion.

"During boat handling, the Marines have to be very precise while going very slow. It is easy to control the boat while going fast, but when you are going very slow, every single mistake could be costly to the mission," he said.

Stiehler said that because the classes are comprised of a mix of different Marines and sailors with different backgrounds, it takes students longer to catch on to many of the concepts introduced in the course, but this class caught on quicker than most.

Most of the Marines were training to attain the military occupational specialty of combat rubber reconnaissance craft coxswain, while two, Cook and Cpl. Clay George, an infantry rifleman, were going through the course to become coxswain-instructors themselves. The Coxswain course is offered three times each year and usually consists of about 20 students.

For more information regarding the course, individuals or units can contact SOTG at 623-7320.



over through shallow water Aug. 13 near White Beach Naval Facility during the navigation track of the course. *Photos by Lance Cpl. Monty Burton*



Course student Lance Cpl. Poli Saufoi signals for the boat team to get into a wedge formation during the navigation track of the Coxswain Skills Course Aug. 13 near White Beach Naval Facility.

Real award lies within

Winning the Bronze

Lance Cpl. Aaron D. Hostutler
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Master Gunnery Sgt. Timothy P. Mecca, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of Explosive Ordnance Disposal, Marine Corps Base, received the Bronze Star medal Aug. 20, at the EOD headquarters here.

The Base commanding general, Maj. Gen. Mary Ann Krusa-Dossin, presented Mecca with the award for his exceptional meritorious service while in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Among other accomplishments, Mecca manually investigated, accessed and disassembled over 30 explosive-formed projectiles, improvised directional mines and various improvised explosive devices during his later tour in Iraq.

But for Mecca, the award had very little to do with numbers and accolades. He struggled a bit with all the attention as he tried to put things in perspective.

"The medal doesn't really mean much...well it means a lot," said Mecca. "It's kind of nice getting it, but what's more important is the people that showed up for it. Honestly, I would rather have seen someone else receive it."

Prior to the ceremony, Mecca had planned to put out only six to 10 chairs, thinking it would be plenty for the few guests he expected at the ceremony. But



Maj. Gen. Mary Ann Krusa-Dossin, the commanding general of Marine Corps Base, congratulates Master Gunnery Sgt. Timothy P. Mecca, the staff non-commissioned officer in charge of the Marine Corps Base Explosive Ordnance Disposal, after presenting him the Bronze Star medal Aug. 20. Photo by Lance Cpl. Aaron D. Hostutler

that was hardly the case when more than 30 arrived to witness the presentation.

Master Gunnery Sgt. Michael C. Sharp, the EOD staff NCOIC for 9th Engineer Support Battalion, 3rd Marine Logistic Group, was one of the Marines who attended the ceremony who said Mecca made an impact on his career.

"I first met Mecca when he picked me up from the airport back in January of (19)92. I could tell he was a good guy, the kind of guy that would give you the shirt off his back," said Sharp.

While Mecca didn't give Sharp the shirt off of his back, he gave him something that proved to be more beneficial.

"When I first arrived (in Okinawa) it was Staff Sgt. Mecca and Staff Sgt. Sharp," Sharp said. "I was a new-join and he was a resident with the platoon. He took me under his wing. He showed me the ropes."

Mecca's career started in 1976 and it was in 1989 that he joined EOD. Since then, Mecca's love for his job motivated him to the top of the field.

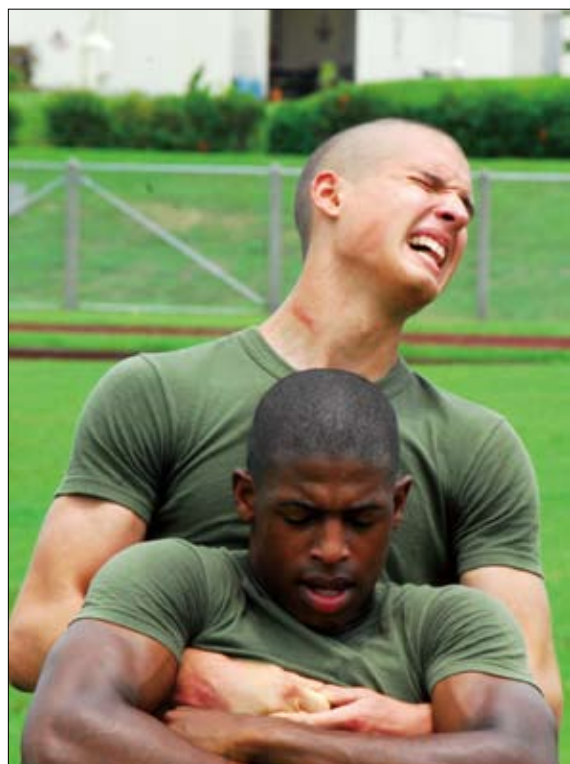
"EOD is the best job in the Marine Corps," Mecca said. "I am fascinated by ordnance."

For Mecca's fascinations, he is never one to be careless, Sharp said

"While we were in (Camp) Fuji, Mecca was our team leader. He was very smart and put safety first," Sharp said. "There were times when the Marines would get stressed out and want to do things different than how they were usually done, but Mecca made sure they were done by the book to keep everyone safe."

Mecca said he hopes his experience and knowledge as a Marine who has spent nearly 20 years with EOD will prove to be beneficial to new, inexperienced EOD technicians.

"All of us old farts are leaving and there is a great big gap between the old guys and the new guys. While they receive really good training in school, there are still some things that need to be passed on from those who are more experienced."



Pfc. Cody Walker drags Lance Cpl. Trey James during the FBI physical fitness test as part of the SRT indoctrination Aug. 13. Walker and James are military policemen with Marine Corps Base Provost Marshal's Office. Photo by Lance Cpl. Monty Burton

Special Reaction Team holds indoctrination for new members

Lance Cpl. Monty Burton
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

The Special Reaction Team with the Marine Corps Base Provost Marshal's Office held an indoctrination course recently for Marines hoping to join the team.

The course was designed to test the Marines physically and mentally over a 26-hour period to see how well they perform in stressful situations.

SRT is similar to a civilian SWAT unit. It is comprised of military police personnel specially trained to handle missions beyond the scope of basically trained military police, such as hostage situations or building take-downs.

Pfc. Madison Kubat, Pfc. Cody Walker, and Lance Cpl. Trey James were chosen for the Special Reaction Team from 11 PMO Marines who tried out.

The indoctrination began with a fitness test to gauge the physical condition of the

Marines. The Marines then attended several classes to learn basic knowledge and SRT tactics to be tested at the end of the indoctrination.

The candidates also had to complete an FBI physical fitness training test.

"The FBI course was definitely the hardest because we were already tired," said Kubat.

The last event of the evolution was a special mission during which the candidates faced many different obstacles in a "close-quarters" environment while being evaluated on their performance.

The indoctrination's training portion was designed to ensure candidates would be ready to join the team if chosen.

The Marines did well on the difficult course, said Cpl. David Ramos, an SRT marksman observer.

"We had some motivators. They just kept going and going. We also had some that struggled, but the other Marines helped motivate them to keep going," he said.



Military aircraft like the CH-53 Sea Stallion helicopter were on display for military members and local citizens during the Futenma Flightline Fair held Saturday and Sunday. Photos by Pfc. Antwain J. Graham

Futenma opens gates for Flightline Fair

Pfc. Antwain J. Graham

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

Service members and Okinawans were invited to see and explore the aircrafts and vehicles on display at the Futenma Flightline Fair hosted by Marine Corps Community Services here Saturday and Sunday.

The fair was free and open to the general public and gave visitors the chance to get close to military aircraft and vehicles to include a CH-46E Sea Knight helicopter, F/A-18D Hornet jet, and one of the Marine Corps newest vehicles, the Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicle.

The event culminated on Sunday with an explosion of fireworks choreographed to patriotic music.

"I think it's a privilege that local nationals have an opportunity to visit and enjoy the things we active duty personnel take for granted on a day-to-day basis," said Petty Officer 3rd Class Luis Medinareyes, a corpsman with Marine Tactical Air Command Squadron 18, Marine Air Control Group 18, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.

During the fair, visitors were treated to games, food, musical entertainment, a martial arts demonstration, dog shows and, arguably the most popular event of the fair, the hotdog eating contest.

The fair offered an array of American, Japanese, and Thai food, and included American carnival favorites.



A fireworks display set to American patriotic music closed the Futenma Flightline Fair Sunday.

"I do a lot of cooking, so it's (good to see other) types of food," said Ashi Satoo, an Okinawan citizen who attended the fair.

The live performances from a local Eisa dance group and various local bands kept the audience entertained throughout the weekend with American rhythm and blues, traditional Okinawan music and dance and Japanese pop music.

"This was great experience for me. I loved the music, the food and the chance to meet the Japanese people," said Seaman Apprentice Alvin Prasad, a corpsman with MTACS-18, MACG-18.



Konami Sakihara, 10, dawns a Kevlar helmet before mounting a military tactical vehicle on display at the Futenma Flightline Fair Sunday.

North **VS.** South

Tug of War showdown in Uruma City

Lance Cpl. Stefanie Pupkiewicz

OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

The Agena intersection is normally mobbed with traffic but it was shut down and blocked off by giant inflatable animals Aug. 17, for Uruma City's giant tug-of-war.

It was the first tug-of-war Uruma City had hosted in 34 years.

Marines from Courtney and Schwab were among the thousands who turned out for the event.

During the event, Okinawans and Marines were treated to the performances of the III Marine Expeditionary Force Band, eisa and dragon dancing.

The return of the tug-of-war to Uruma City was the idea of Agena-Midori Machi Rebirth Committee, said Ichiro Umehara, community relations specialist for Courtney. They organized it to bring attention to the city center.

The committee made sure to include the Marines because they view Courtney as part of their community, Umehara said.

The residents of Uruma City were surprised the III MEF Band came out to play at the event, Umehara said. "They really appreciated (it)."

The band was the opening show for the giant tug-of-war. They played to the growing crowd that lined the sidewalks and cross walks around them. With sweat dripping down their faces, the Marines performed a variety of American and Japanese songs.

After the final set of music, the band filed off with their chairs in tow as brightly dressed eisa dancers moved into the intersection. The youngest member of the eisa group was too scared to perform for the crowd and hid in his mother's arms. The older members tried to coax him into the dance as they moved to the rhythmic sound and beat their shimedake drums in the distinctly Okinawan dance.

"You don't see this in LA or New York," said Sgt. Robert Walker, a vehicle recovery operator with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division.

During the eisa performance, a blue and green shisa dog trotted along the perimeter of the crowd playfully snapping his jaws at onlookers.

The dancers, drummers and shisa bowed to the crowd at the end of their performance leaving the intersection open for a long dragon to wind its way through.

The dragon was supported by poles several men moved as they danced to the sporadic rhythm of the popping firecrackers.

Many of the Marines in the crowd disappeared during the dragon performance only to return minutes later with a massive rope hoisted high on their shoulders and heads.

Some of the Marines came to the tug-of-war with the Single Marine Program, other Marines came on their own, but all came with similar ambitions of enjoying a unique cultural event or simply exercising their competitive nature.

Walker brought most of his shop out to the event.

"Once we found out about it we decided to come out," Walker said. "Motor-T can tug-of-war anyone and we came out here to prove it."

The rope was laid on the road followed by remarks from Uruma's mayor and the committee president.

The crowd pushed close to the rope as the speeches continued. Some grabbed the rope to join in the tug-of-war while others joked with the participants.

Both sides of the intersection were given a cardinal direction of North or South as a team name. The Marines were on the North team.

Each side of the rope was about 100 meters long. The



Marines with Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, toss the rope into the air in victory as North defeats South side during Uruma City's Tug-of-War. Photos by Lance Cpl. Eric Arndt



A musician with the III Marine Expeditionary Force Band plays to the crowd.



Pfc. Jeffrey Dennis from Headquarters Battalion, 3rd Marine Division, helps carry the rope through the Agena intersection to drop it in a field where it will be picked at for souvenirs



Eisa dancer and drummer Mika Soken performs during the first tug-of-war Uruma City has hosted in 34 years.

North and South side were connected in the middle by a knot placed at the heart of the intersection.

As the competition finally got underway, faces contorted in an effort to pull the rope to the cadence of the team leaders. The rope shifted little at first as both sides showed no sign of giving in.

Then, steadily, the center of the rope inched toward the North side and the Marines.

The intersection exploded in sound and celebration as the red flag waved frantically signifying the end of the competition. The North side had won the day.

IN THEATERS AUG 29- SEPT 4

Movie schedule is subject to change without notice. Call in advance to confirm show times. For a complete listing, visit <http://www.aafes.com>.

FOSTER 645-3465

TODAY Star Wars: The Clone Wars (PG), 7 p.m.; Wanted (R) 10 p.m.

SATURDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 1 p.m.; Kung Fu Panda (PG) 4 p.m.; Swing Vote (PG13), 7 p.m.; Wanted (R), 10 p.m.

SUNDAY Kung Fu Panda (PG), 1 p.m.; The House Bunny (PG13), 4 and 7 p.m.

MONDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 1 p.m.; Kung Fu Panda (PG), 4 p.m.; Wanted (R), 7 p.m.

TUESDAY The Love Guru (PG13), 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY The Incredible Hulk (PG13), 7 p.m.

THURSDAY The House Bunny (PG13), 7 p.m.

FUTENMA 636-3890

TODAY The Incredible Hulk (PG13), 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY The House Bunny (PG13), 4 and 7 p.m.

SUNDAY The Love Guru (PG13), 4 p.m.; The Incredible Hulk (PG13), 7 p.m.

MONDAY The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (PG13), 6:30 p.m.

TUESDAY Closed

WEDNESDAY Closed

THURSDAY Closed

HANSEN 623-4564

TODAY The Happening (R), 9 p.m.; You Don't Mess with the Zohan (PG13), 6 p.m.

SATURDAY Wanted (R), 6 p.m.; The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (PG13), 9 p.m.

SUNDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 2 p.m.; Wanted (PG13), 5:30 p.m.

MONDAY The House Bunny (PG13), 7 p.m.

TUESDAY The House Bunny (PG13), 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY Wanted (R), 7 p.m.

THURSDAY You Don't Mess with the Zohan (PG13), 7 p.m.

SCHWAB 625-2333

FRIDAY The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (PG13), 7 p.m.

SATURDAY The Incredible Hulk (PG13), 5 p.m.

SUNDAY The Love Guru (PG13), 5 p.m.

MONDAY-THURSDAY Closed

KADENA 634-1869

TODAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 6 p.m.; Wanted (R), 9 p.m.

SATURDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), noon; Star Wars: The Clone Wars (PG), 3 and 6 p.m.; Wanted (R), 9 p.m.

SUNDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 1 p.m.; Star Wars: The Clone Wars (PG), 4 p.m.; Wanted (R), 7 p.m.

MONDAY Star Wars: The Clone Wars (PG), 1 p.m.; Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 4 p.m.; Star Wars: The Clone Wars (PG), 7 p.m.

TUESDAY The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (PG13), 7 p.m.

WEDNESDAY Wanted (R), 7 p.m.

THURSDAY The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (PG13), 7 p.m.

COURTNEY 622-9616

TODAY The House Bunny (PG13), 6:30 p.m.; The House Bunny (PG13), 9:30 p.m.

SATURDAY Kung Fu Panda (PG), 2 p.m.; The Love Guru (PG13), 7 p.m.

SUNDAY The Mummy: Tomb of the Dragon Emperor (PG13), 7 p.m.

MONDAY The Love Guru (PG13), 7 p.m.

TUESDAY Closed

WEDNESDAY The Incredible Hulk (PG13), 7 p.m.

THURSDAY Closed

KINSER 637-2177

TODAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 3 p.m.; Wanted (R), 6:30 p.m.

SATURDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 3 p.m.; Wanted (R), 6:30 p.m.

SUNDAY Kit Kittredge: An American Girl (G), 3 p.m.; Wanted (R), 6:30 p.m.

MONDAY Closed

TUESDAY Closed

WEDNESDAY The House Bunny (PG13), 3 and 6:30 p.m.

THURSDAY Closed

USO MOVIE NIGHTS

The USO hosts movie nights at the locations below.

For schedules and start times, call:

CAMP SCHWAB 625-3834

MCAS FUTENMA 636-2113

CAMP HANSEN 623-5011

KADENA AIR BASE 632-8781



For more information or to sign up, contact the Single Marine Program Office at 645-3681.

All bus pick-up points will be at Semper Fit gyms or the Foster Fieldhouse.

SINGLE MARINE PROGRAM EVENTS

MONDAY | NORTHERN CAMPS DISCOVER SCUBA

- Learn basic dive safety, signaling techniques and jump in the water for a gear trial at the Camp Hansen 50-meter pool.

TUESDAY | NORTHERN CAMPS DISCOVER GOLF

- Free class at Awase Golf Course teaches you about setting up a tee time, cart and club rental, club types, swing techniques and putting styles.

SEPT. 13 | NORTHERN CAMPS EXPO PARK TOUR

- Come and see the Churaumi Aquarium, the second largest aquarium in the world, with its beautiful and magnificent flora unique to tropical and sub-tropical climates.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

- The Marine Thrift Shop on Camp Foster requests two volunteers on a weekly basis from Camps Kinser, Foster, Courtney, Hansen and Schwab and MCAS Futenma. Contact your SMP representative for more information.
- Volunteer opportunities at the Ai No Mura Nursing Home are the fourth Friday of each month. Call 636-3092 for more information.

CHAPEL SCHEDULE

CAMP FOSTER | 645-7486/7487

- **Catholic:** Mon.-Fri., 11:45 a.m.; Sat., 5 p.m.; Sun., 10 a.m.
- **Christian Science:** Sun., 11 a.m., Bldg. 442
- **Eastern Orthodox:** Sun., 9:30 a.m.
- **Gospel:** Sun., 11:30 a.m.
- **Hindu:** Sat., 3:30 p.m., Bldg. 455
- **Jewish:** Fri., Traditional, 6:00 p.m.; Informal (first and third Friday), 6:30 p.m.
- **Muslim:** Fri., Prayer, 12:45 p.m.
- **Protestant:** Sun., 8:30 a.m.

MCAS FUTENMA | 636-3058

- **Catholic:** Sun., noon
- **Contemporary:** Sun., 9 a.m.

CAMP HANSEN | 623-4694

- **Catholic:** Sun., 10 a.m., E. Chapel
- **Latter Day Saints:** Sun., 1 p.m., W. Chapel
- **Protestant:** Sun., 11 a.m., W. Chapel

CAMP SCHWAB | 625-2644/2866

- **Catholic:** Sun., 5:30 p.m.
- **Protestant:** Sun., 11:30 a.m.

CAMP SHIELDS | 632-4192

- **Protestant:** Sun., 6 p.m.

CAMP McTUREOUS | 622-7505

- **Gospel:** Sun., 12:30 p.m.
- **Lutheran:** Sun., 9:30 a.m.

KADENA AIR BASE | 634-1288

- **Buddhist:** Sat., 10 a.m., Bldg. 856
- **Catholic:** Sun., 8:30 a.m., Mass, Chapel 1 Sun., 11:30 a.m., Reconciliation, Chapel 1 Sun., 12:30 p.m., Mass, Chapel 1 Sun., 5 p.m., Mass, Chapel 1 Sun., 10:30 a.m., CCD, Amelia Earhart School Daily Mass, Mon.-Thurs., noon, Chapel 2
- **Protestant:** Sun., 10:30 a.m., Contemp., Chapel 1 Sun., 8:30 a.m., Inspirational, Chapel 2 Sun., 10:30 a.m., Traditional, Chapel 2 Sun., 10:30 a.m., Gospel, Chapel 3 Sunday School, 8:45 a.m., Bldg. 856
- **Wiccan/Pagan:** Fri., 7 p.m., Chapel 1 Sat., 6 p.m., Bldg. 856

CAMP COURTNEY | 622-9350

- **Catholic:** Sun., 8 and 11:15 a.m.; Mon.-Fri., 11:45 a.m.
- **Protestant:** Sun., 9:30 a.m.
- **Episcopal:** Sun., 6:30 p.m.

CAMP KINSER | 637-1148

- **Catholic:** Sun., 11 a.m.
- **Gospel:** Sun., 8 a.m.
- **Protestant:** Sun., 9:30 a.m.

CAMP LESTER | 643-7248

- **Catholic:** Sun., 8 a.m., Lester Chapel
- **Protestant:** Sun., 9 a.m., Hospital Chapel Sun., 10 a.m., Lester Chapel Tue., noon, Hospital Chapel (Eucharist)

CLASSIFIED ADS

'95 TOYOTA CELICA

JCI Jun 10, \$1,800
OBO, 633-1593

'95 TOYOTA MARK II

JCI Jun 10, \$1,800
OBO, 633-1593

'96 NISSAN CEDRIC

JCI Aug 10, \$2,000
633-1593

'97 DAIHATSU TERIOS

JCI Jun 10, \$3,500 OBO,
(090) 9784-6521

'95 MITSUBISHI DELICA

JCI May 09, \$3,500
OBO, (090) 5483-0303

'99 DAIHATSU MIRA

Yellow 'A' Plate, \$2,500
(090) 8294-4217

'96 NISSAN CEDRIC

JCI Aug. 10, \$4,000
OBO, 645-7012

'96 HONDA DOMANI

JCI Sep. 09, \$2,200
OBO, 646-6337

'95 TOYOTA WINDOM

JCI Dec. 08, \$1,500
OBO, (090) 6861-7577

'93 TOYOTA ESTIMA LUCIDA

JCI Oct. 08, \$800 OBO,
(090) 6861-7577

'95 TOYOTA ARISTO

JCI April 10, \$4,200
OBO, (090) 1947-5463

'95 TOYOTA CELICA

JCI Aug. 09, \$1,500
OBO, (090) 6861-7659

'93 TOYOTA HILUX SURF

JCI Nov. 09, \$1,900
OBO, 622-8554

'94 NISSAN PULSAR

JCI Sep. 09, \$600 OBO,
646-9309

'94 TOYOTA MARK II

JCI Sep. 09, \$2,800
OBO, 646-2724

'96 MITSUBISHI DELICA VAN

JCI May 09, \$3,500
OBO, (080) 3544-8285

'97 HONDA SMX

JCI Nov. 09, \$2,700
OBO, (090) 6859-5377

'97 MAZDA DEMIO

JCI Jan. 10, \$2,500
OBO, 623-9111

'96 NISSAN CEDRIC

JCI Aug. 10, \$3,000
OBO, (090) 6861-5353

'93 NISSAN SKYLINE

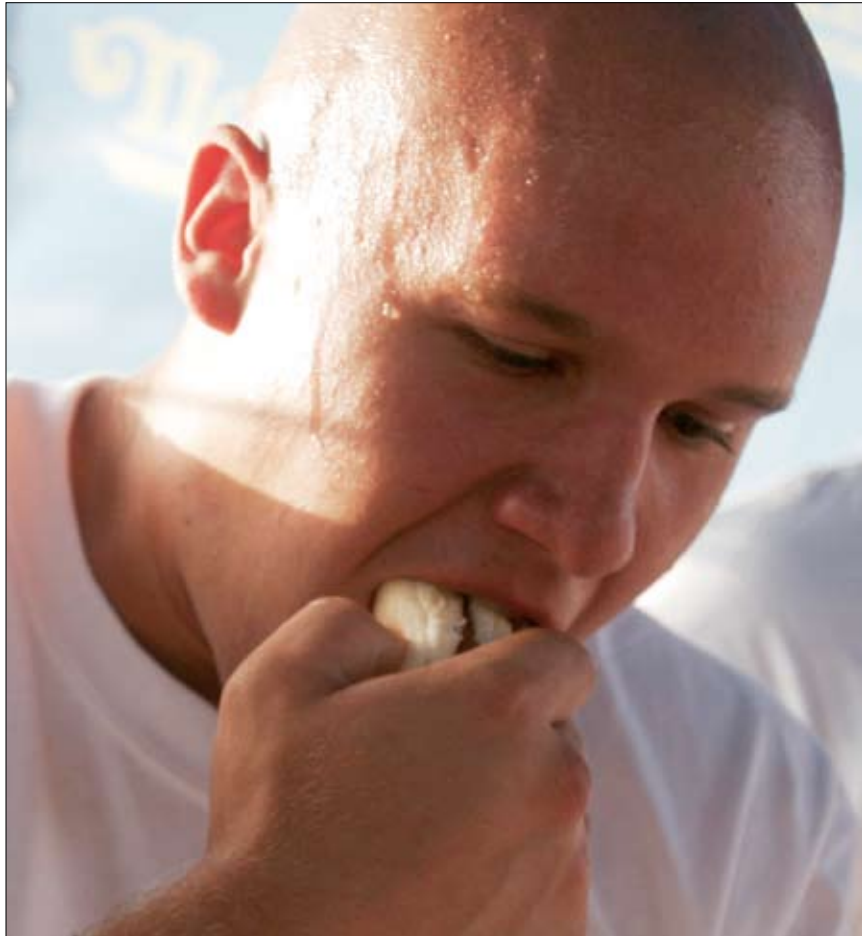
JCI Sept. 10, \$4,500
(090) 5483-0303

MISCELLANEOUS

- Cobra two-person motorcycle, \$40;
- kayak, comes with seats and paddles, \$800, 646-8325
- Two twin beds with soccer-themed headboards, mattresses included, \$120 each or \$200 for both, (098) 926-2732
- Remote control car speakers, \$30, 633-1593
- Doorway rain cover, new in box, \$75 OBO, 646-8325
- Six-drawer girls' dresser with mirror, four-drawer girls' dresser, \$100, 646-5405

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Marine relishes victory in hotdog eating contest



Nicholas G. Hansen scarfs down a hotdog on his way to victory Sunday during the Futenma Flightline Fair's Nathan Hot Dog Eating Contest. Photo by Lance Cpl. Michael A. Bianco

Staff Sgt. Leo A. Salinas
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

MARINE CORPS AIR STATION FUTENMA — Nicholas G. Hansen needed a total of 12 to win the championship.

Not twelve points.

Not twelve goals.

He needed 12 hotdogs.

Hansen devoured the competition by cramming and swallowing 12 hotdogs in 12 minutes Sunday to win the Nathan's Hot Dog Eating Contest held at the Futenma Flightline Fair.

The victory did not come with a mustard colored belt, but two round trip tickets to the United States.

Hansen's training regiment was a little unorthodox but served him well to beat a field of 13 contestants, some much larger than him.

"No training," said Hansen, a comptroller with Combat Logistics Regiment 37, 3rd Marine Logistics Group. "My buddy signed me up one night and didn't even tell me about it."

The crowd was raucous, as

sections cheered for their contestants.

Halfway through the event, the first disqualification occurred. No prohibited substances or illegal videotaping were involved; the contestant just couldn't keep her hotdogs down.

"I feel like crap," said Maria Rodriguez, the only female contestant. "It wasn't gross when I was eating, but I ate them too fast. I think I was on my sixth (hotdog) before I got sick."

Rodriguez's job as a food service specialist with Headquarters and Headquarters Squadron, Marine Corps Air Station Futenma, did not give her an advantage over her competitors.

"I tried to hold it in, but I blew chunks everywhere. However, it was a lot of fun and I would definitely do it again," she said.

This wasn't a problem for the champ.

"One time I ate seven hamburgers so I thought I could do it, but it was harder than I thought," said Hansen. "When I was eating (the hotdogs) fast, I thought I was going to throw up."

Club Red closes up Yellow Box 29-18 in softball tourney

Pfc. Jeffrey Cordero
OKINAWA MARINE STAFF

CAMP COURTNEY — Club Red shot down Yellow Box 29-18 in the championship game of the Courtney Athletics Open Softball tournament here Aug. 23.

Club Red started racking up points early in the game scoring 12 runs in the second inning.

The team continued its rampage at the plate in the third inning when Tom Yust blasted a homerun over the center field fence. Kevin Petty followed up with a double and both Todd Harding and John Smith continued the domination, each knocking two-run homers.

In the top of the fourth, Kevin Petty hit a homerun to left scoring two and Club Red first baseman Greg Bass pounded his second homerun of the night.

In the top of the fifth, Andy Ball pumped up the crowd with a solo homerun, though the inning was quickly ended by good Yellow Box defense.

In the seventh inning, Brian Denman ripped one to center field past Yellowbox defenders for an RBI triple. Adding insult to injury, Petty and Bass both pounded homeruns in the inning, Bass making it three on the night.

"The whole team came to life, I was just trying to keep up with everyone else," said Bass.

In a failed last-ditch effort, Yellow Box scored three in the seventh assuring the victory for Club Red.

The tournament marked the first time Club Red has played together as a team in two months.

As the results showed, it did

not prove to be a challenge for the team, said Club Red coach Larry Borum.

"Coming back after two

months, we did a phenomenal job," Borum said. "There were no rough spots. Everyone played pretty well."



Todd Harding crushes one to deep center field during the championship game of the Courtney Athletics Open Softball tournament Aug. 23. Photo by Pfc. Jeffrey Cordero



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