



Fort Polk Guardian

Vol. 38, No. 28

Published for the community of Fort Polk, La.

July 15, 2011



JENNIFER DORVAL / GUARDIAN

Arrrrgh! Pull!

1st Sgt. Nathaniel Campbell, 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, leads his men as they heave-ho with all their might to win the tug of war tournament July 6 during the Viper Stakes competition.

Campbell and his team won battles against Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment and 258th Military Police Company, but fell to Viper Stake's Commander's Cup winners, 209th Military Police Company. For story and more photos see pages 8A and 9A.

Weekend weather



Today



Saturday



Sunday

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209th MP Co strikes competition to win Viper Stakes

By JENNIFER DORVAL

Guardian staff writer

FORT POLK, La. — Athletes have the Olympics, movie stars have the Oscars and Fort Polk's 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, has the Viper Stakes. Each year, the four companies and two detachments of the battalion go head-to-head for the right to claim the coveted Commander's Cup.

The two-day challenge takes the best of the best from each company and puts their minds and bodies to the test, having them complete a series of formidable challenges. Whoever gets the most points or wins the most challenges is ultimately the winner of Viper Stakes and the Commander's Cup.

Lt. Col. David Detz, 519th MP Bn commander, said this year's Viper Stakes was a magnificent event that culminated at Alligator Lake, where Soldiers had fun and brought their Families to the battalion's organizational day Viper Stakes award ceremony.

"The individual events vary from year to year, but we typically conduct the competition in conjunction with the Military Police Corps anniversary in September and the cup is awarded as part of the Military Police ball," Detz said. "This year, we moved it forward so the warriors of 209th Military Police Company could compete before their deployment to Afghanistan."

The competition began in the early morning hours of July 6 with the Viper challenge on the

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Sgt. Stephen Hueg (center), 209th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, celebrates with his teammates after defeating the 258th Military Police Company in the final round of the tug-of-war competition July 6 on Viper Field. The company eventually took home the Commander's Cup, winning six of nine events and finishing no lower than third place.



Sgt. Cory Moore, 204th Military Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, climbs a section of the "tough one" during the Viper Stakes obstacle course challenge. Soldiers are required to climb a rope on the lowest end of the obstacle, go over logs at the top of the rope, move across a log walkway, climb a ladder to the high end, then climb down a cargo net to the ground.



Left: Spc. Matt Jackson, Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, completes sit ups July 6 on Fort Polk's Viper Field during the Viper Stakes Competition.



Bottom left: Soldiers from 258th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, run with Pfc. Justin Cortes (center), during the road march portion of the Viper Stakes competition July 6. Teams were required to wear interceptor body armor and an M240B machine gun during a half-mile march.



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Above left: Spc. Daniel Lindzy and Spc. Corey Zimmerman, 209th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, use their bodies and strength to snake through the "Weaver," during the Viper Stakes obstacle course July 6. The Soldiers move from one end of the obstacle to the other by weaving their bodies under one bar and over the next. Each team had to complete nine air assault obstacles together as quickly as possible.

Above: Sgt. Brandon Smith, 204th Military Police Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, performs overhand pull-ups July 6 during the Viper Stakes competition. The best of the best from 519th MP Bn's companies forged teams to win the Commander's Cup. Teams had to complete overhand pull-ups non-stop for three minutes.

Left: Sgt. Cory Moore, 204th Military Company, 519th Military Police Battalion, 1st Maneuver Enhancement Brigade, low crawls through mud and dirt July 6 during the Viper Stakes obstacle course challenge.

Stakes

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519th MP Bn's Viper Field.

Companies were split into teams of four and tasked with accomplishing a series of five challenges — the tire toss, sit ups, pull-ups, box jumps and a road march.

During each challenge, teams had to complete challenges with each member contributing to the task.

The first event was the tire toss, where teams flipped a large tire from one end of Viper Field to the other. Once they reach their designated point, the team had to move on to sit ups, with each team completing five minutes of non-stop sit ups.

Once the five minutes were up, the next challenge was pull-ups. At the pull-up bars, teams had to complete overhand pull ups for three minutes without stopping.

That was followed by the box jump, where members had to jump on a large tire nonstop for five minutes. The last task of the challenge had team members completing a half-mile road march wearing interceptor body armor while holding an M240B machine gun.

After the Viper Challenge, the next event had teams tackling the air assault obstacle course. Teams of four were tasked to complete nine obstacles in the shortest amount of time.

Like the Viper Challenge, teams had to complete each task together. They couldn't move on until the last man finished.

To end the day's event, teams returned to Viper Field to participate in the tug-of-war tournament.

During the double elimination competition, teams of 10 put their muscles to the test, heaving

with all of their might to out pull the opposing team.

During the next day's task, teams participated in a softball and basketball tournament at Alligator Lake during the battalion's Organizational Day. There, the Soldiers and Family members of the 519th witnessed the final battle for the Commander's Cup.

"In the end the Warriors from the 209th MP Company proved too much as they won six of nine events and finished no lower than third place in any event," Detz said.

Sgt. Stephen Hueg, 209th MP Co, said it felt good to win the competition and contributed the win to teamwork.

"In the end, it was my teammates who motivated me," he said. "It's what made me try harder."