

A Final Salute to the Capital Classic

The last year of the venerable National Capital Drill Classic competition showed the best and the brightest that Army JROTC units in the 1st Region, 4th Brigade had to offer.

The final year of the 1st Region, 4th Brigade Championship was a fitting sendoff for this innovative and historic competition. With 2004 bringing to the Nation's Capital the Army National JROTC Eastern Region Championship (see adjacent page), the 2003 NCDC was a fitting end to a fantastic decade-plus of Army Brigade Championship excellence in the greater Washington, DC area.

A heightened national threat level kept a few schools from attending, but over 700 Army JROTC cadets from Virginia, West Virginia, Delaware, Maryland and the District of Columbia were on-hand for an exciting day of competition drill. Cadets seemed to relish the ability to forget about the tensions in the world and display what months of practice and teamwork could yield in a first-class, indoor facility like the Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex.

ARMED DIVISION

One of the most overpowering displays of excellence in the history of the NCDC was put forth this year as long time top finisher and 2002 Runner-up **Liberty HS** from **Beaeton, Virginia** crushed the Brigade competition to capture the Overall Armed Division Title. The **Eagles** drill team brought home 1st place trophies in Inspection, Color Guard and Exhibition to power their way to the title. The tough cadets had their game on from the start taking the lead early in the day and never looking back!

Finishing as the Armed Division Runner-Up, **Thomas Stone HS** from **Waldorf, Maryland** put together their annual run at the title but came up just a bit short. The **Cougars Blue** trophied in all four team events (1st-Regulation, 3rd-Inspection/Color Guard, 5th-Exhibition) but needed a few higher placements in the eyes of the judges to challenge for the overall top spot. You can always be sure that Thomas Stone comes prepared to win and the 2003 unit that attended the NCDC did another exceptional job.

Many other schools within the Armed Division put forth very solid, noteworthy drill performances. These included last minute event addition **New York MA** (2nd-Inspection, 3rd-Regulation, 4th-Exhibition); **Forestville MA** (2nd-Color Guard, 3rd-Exhibition); **McDonough HS** (2nd-Regulation, 4th-Color Guard); **Fairmont Heights HS** (2nd-Exhibition, 4th-Inspection) and **Preston HS** (4th-Regulation).

UNARMED DIVISION

A very strong and evenly matched competition field butted heads with tight top scores in every event. When the sheets were coming in and being totaled throughout the day, it was obvious that Unarmed Division schools would have no idea who the overall champion would be until the champion's name was read at the Awards Ceremony as no single team trophied in every team event! This lack of knowing made for an electrically-charged awards ceremony with cadets literally sitting on the edge of their seats!

2002 Unarmed Champions **Forestville M.A.** from **Forestville, Maryland** had just enough in their tanks to take home another Unarmed Division Championship in 2003! Paced by a 1st place finish in Inspection, the **Silver Knights** drill team also gained a strong 2nd place in Exhibition and a 3rd place in Regulation to secure the victory. Forestville M.A. once again proved that they are a force to be reckoned with on the drill floor!

Just missing their bid for the Unarmed Division title, **St. John's College H.S.** from **Washington, DC** put together a tremendous effort in gaining the Overall Runner-up title. With a 2nd place finish in Inspection and two, 4th place finishes in Color Guard and Exhibition, the **McGovern Brothers** drill team just missed their chance. Knowing the leadership at St. John's, they will be back stronger than ever in 2004!

Other top finishes in the Unarmed Division included: **Howard HS** (1st-Color Guard); **Forest Park HS** (1st-Exhibition); **West Potomac HS** (1st-Regulation); **McDonough HS** (2nd-Regulation, 3rd-Color Guard); **Thomas Stone HS** (2nd-Color Guard) and **Parkdale HS** (3rd-Exhibition).

Multiple, exciting Knockout Drills were held while the team event scores were given their final double-check. This preceded a boisterous and cathartic NCDC Awards Ceremony. The towering presence of **BG Gratton O. Sealock, II**, Deputy Commanding General, U.S. Army Cadet Command delivered a wonderful message to the assembled mass that helped to set the tone for a special evening.

Sports Network International wishes to thank everyone who, over the years, has helped to give over 10,000 Army JROTC cadets special lifetime memories from competing at the National Capital Drill Classic. As the event moves to an Army Region Championship next year, we hope that the finest teams from the old NCDC competition will continue to enter and dazzle the crowd within the new 2004 Army JROTC National Drill Team Championships - Eastern Region.



Parkdale H.S. Cadet Adesola Adepegba from **Parkdale, Maryland** stands tall during the tough Armed Division Inspection event.



ARMY NATIONALS



The Dawn of a New Era in Drill Excellence

Army JROTC National Drill Championships

Western Region Army Nationals

Saturday, March 13th, 2004

College Station, Texas

Texas A&M University's Reed Arena

Eastern Region Army Nationals

Saturday, March 20th, 2004

Landover, Maryland

Prince George's City Sports & Learning Complex

A massive reorganization of U.S. Army Cadet Command, command and control of Brigades, Senior Units and Junior Programs is underway. In combination with this effort, the United States Army Cadet Command is announcing the dawn of another new & exciting era on the JROTC drill floor!

Beginning in 2004, Army Junior ROTC units around the world will have the ability to compete within the first Army JROTC-only National Championship drill competition! Sponsored by U.S. Army Cadet Command, the Army JROTC National Drill Championships (already earning the moniker "Army Nationals") looks to provide Army units with a platform to display their years of training amongst their peers.

"We want these events to be as special to the cadets as the Nationals in Daytona Beach," stated COL Carlos Glover, Director, Army JROTC. "Having an Army JROTC competition of this caliber will give all of our cadets something to be proud of."

While the two events are over a thousand miles apart, both will be very similar. Held indoors in first-class, multi-thousand seat arenas to allow plenty of seating, parking and security, both events will maintain Armed and Unarmed Divisions. Competition events will be: Inspection, Regulation, Color Guard and Exhibition; with these scores determining the Championship title.

Because of the solid financial support of U.S. Army Cadet Command, the costs to attend this premier drill competition are kept very low. Just a \$100 School Registration fee and a \$10 per cadet fee are required. For this, each cadet will receive a competition t-shirt, uniform medal and 8" x 10" color team photograph, along with all facets of the competition.

Due to space limitations, each event will be limited to roughly 50 teams. Each accepted school will be allowed to enter either an Armed or Unarmed team, or both. However, schools choosing to enter both Armed & Unarmed units must maintain two completely different groups of cadets for their two teams.

All Army JROTC units in good standing are eligible and encouraged to apply for a competition space within their designated Region Championship (Eastern or Western). For best consideration, schools should ensure their School Registration Form and Registration Fee is received by Event Manager Sports Network Int'l. NO LATER than **Friday, December 5th, 2003**. Entry decisions will be based on recent history of overall drill finishes and other related drill accomplishments, with an emphasis on maintaining a broad geographic competition field that best represents the caliber of drill excellence throughout the Region.

On the Registration Form, schools should make their best case why their unit belongs within this elite field of drill teams. With so many programs in each Army Region, demand for the competition spaces should far outnumber supply. These qualifications will be the primary factor in selecting the competition field.

For complete details on entry matters, event regulations, scoresheets, as well as the ability to download, review and submit the official Army Nationals Invitation and Army Registration Form, go to the official home of the Army Nationals at: <http://drill.thenationals.net> and click on the "Army Nationals" weblink.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

As an extra incentive, the Overall Champion and Overall Runner-Up from each division of the two Region Championships will have their transportation and team package expenses paid by U.S. Army Cadet Command to attend and represent Army JROTC at the National High School Drill Team Championships in sunny Daytona Beach, Florida. See the website for complete details on the Army's support for these champions!