

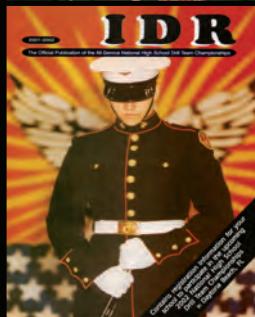
Drill NATION

"Where JROTC Excellence is Celebrated Every Year"

2020-2021 Edition

THROUGH THE YEARS

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IN-PERSON in Daytona Beach or VIRTUALLY!!!
See page 23 for details!



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Two, three, and four-year scholarships are available for qualified students at Senior Military Colleges (SMC) and Military Junior Colleges (MJC). Army ROTC Scholarships cover tuition and fees or room and board, a book allowance of \$600 per semester and a monthly stipend of \$420 per month to spend as you please

Graduates of a Senior Military College who desire to serve on active duty do not have to compete nationally. Active duty is based on the recommendation of the Professor of Military Science.

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DrillNATION

Official Publication of the Internationally Recognized
JROTC Drill & Ceremony Spectacular, the
National High School Drill Team Championships

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MAGAZINE DEDICATION

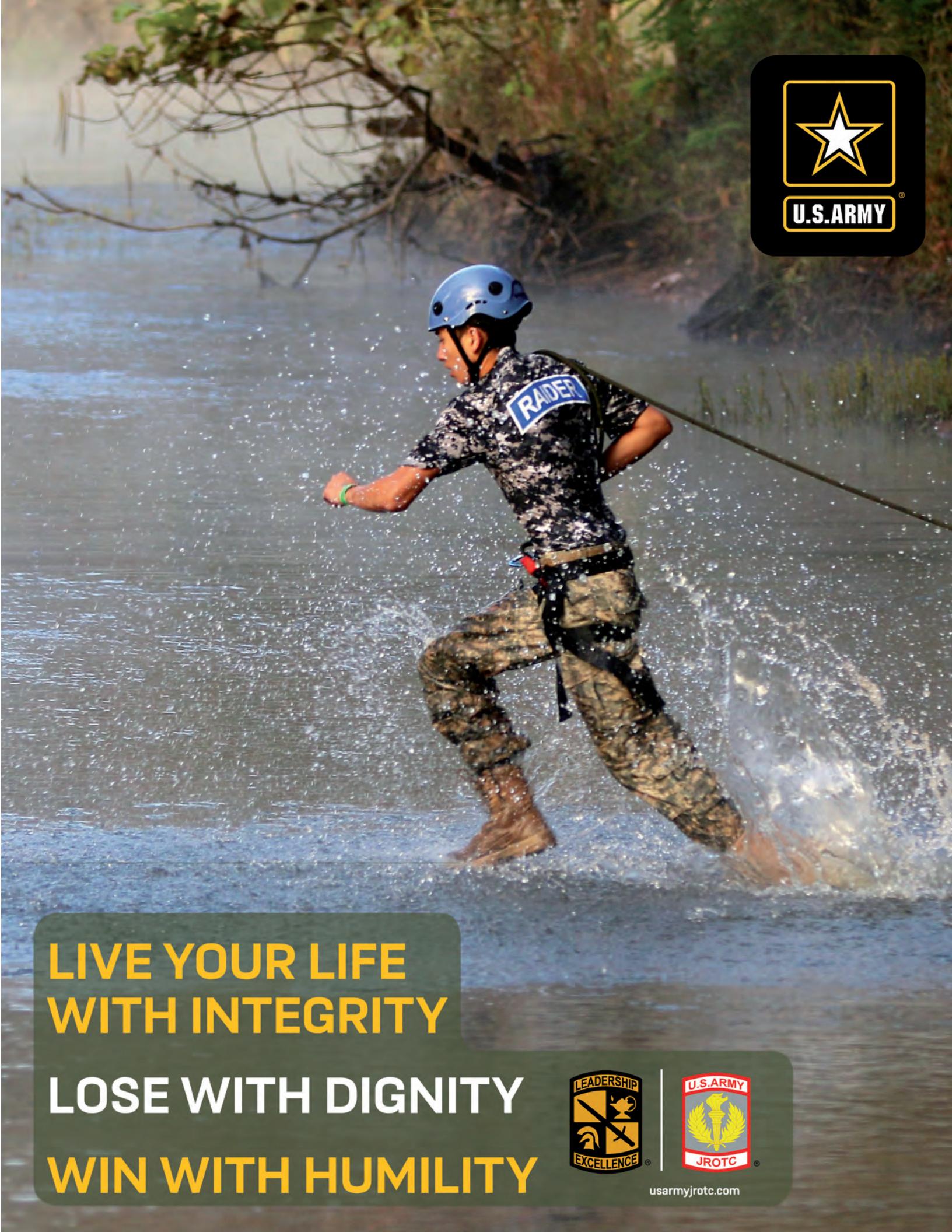
With troop deployments that stretch across the globe, the 2020-21 DrillNATION Magazine is dedicated to both the active duty and reserve components of our American Armed Forces, along with the National Guard. These brave and selfless individuals continue to provide the blanket of freedom that Americans enjoy every day. Thousands of cadets and instructors who have attended the Nationals in the past are currently serving around the globe in all branches of the armed forces, helping to protect the interests of the United States of America. SNI is honored by their commitment to duty and wish them all a safe and speedy return home when they complete their mission.

Sports Network International thanks the many exhibitors who annually support the Nationals and make it a special home for JROTC drill: A Tag 4 U, Air Force Honor Guard, Air Force Reserves, Air Force ROTC, Country Meats, Daisy Outdoor Products, FineDesigns Apparel, Georgia Military College, Glendale Parade Store, Marion Military Institute, New Guard America, Texas A&M University, US Army Cadet Command 1st Bde., US Merchant Marine Academy, University of North Georgia, University of the Potomac, and Virginia Tech Corps of Cadets. We look forward to welcoming these amazing vendors and more to the 2021 event.

DrillNATION is the official publication of the National High School Drill Team Championships. DrillNATION is produced by Sports Network International, Inc. (SNI), 388 Muddy Creek Lane, Ormond Beach, FL, 32174. For information regarding DrillNATION or Sports Network Int'l (SNI), please visit the SNI homepage at: <http://drill.thenationals.net> or contact SNI via email: drill@thenationals.net or call toll-free at 800/327-9311.



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Raider Nationals Cadets Prove That **RAIDERS** Just Lets Them Know They're Not **DEAD** Yet!

2020-21 Army JROTC National Raider Challenge Championships

Gerald Lawhorn Scouting Base
27-28 February 2021
Molena, Georgia

dirty cold
rainy dark
sweaty fun
soggy team
exhausting
exasperated

spent
teamwork
Foggy
unity
drenched
waterlogged

bushed
depleted
drained
tuckered
unrested
togetherness

exhausted
fatigued
lethargic
pooped
rundown
sleepy beat

damp dank
drenched
drizzling
slippery
push harder
excruciating

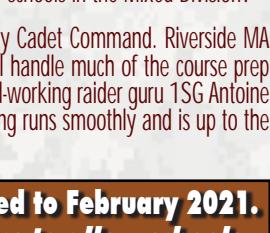
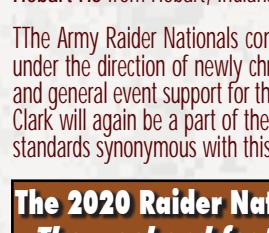
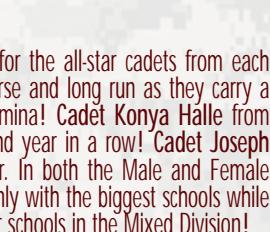
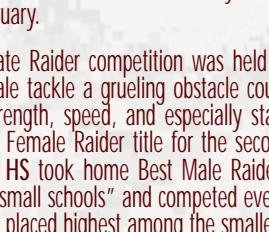
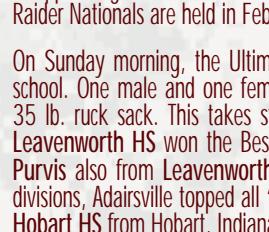
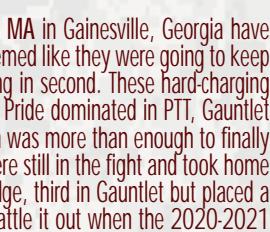
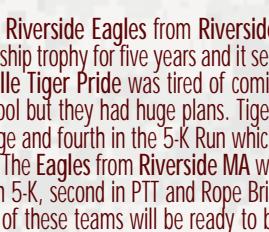
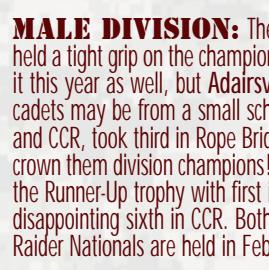
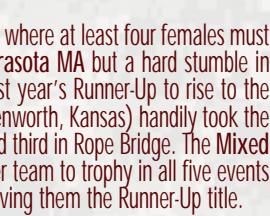
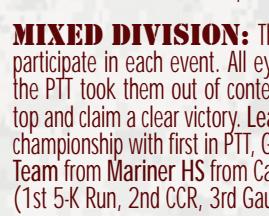
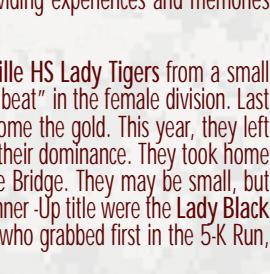
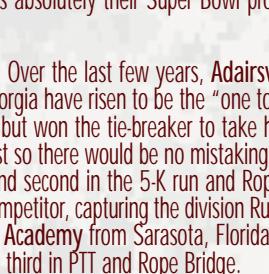
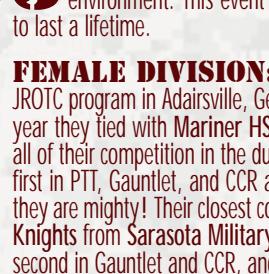
hot
dewy
foggy humid
push harder
soaked
wet

struggle
sprinkle
sweaty
splashing
water
sloppy
baked
misty
sting

gauntlet
soreness
initiative
tortuous
weary
exercise
drive
painful
strain
relay
rope bridge
bonding

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THE OFFICIAL U.S. ARMY JROTC RAIDER NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS



The 2020 Raider Nationals has been delayed to February 2021.
The weekend features TWO competitions to allow schools of ALL TALENT LEVELS from ALL SERVICES to attend!
 Contact SNI NOW to see if any competition spaces still remain open!
<http://raider.thenationals.net> email: raider@thenationals.net



All-Service Raider Challenge Championships

Molena, Georgia

Raider is growing in all services and this is the perfect laboratory!



The Raider Nationals weekend begins each year with the All-Service Challenge Championships on Friday setting the tone for the whole weekend. On Thursday afternoon excited cadets arrive, begin pitching tents, preparing camp, walking the course, and planning their strategies for the next day. They enjoy dinner around a campfire while trying to calm their nerves enough to get a good night's sleep before competition the next day. Waking up before dawn the cadets get their game-faces ready and report to their first event... And the event takes off.

MIXED DIVISION

The leaderboard for the top two stayed the same from 2018 as **Clarkrange HS Buffaloes** from Clarkrange, TN (USA) dominated the division again this year by grabbing first in PTT, 5-K Run, and Gauntlet and second in Rope Bridge. Close on their heels was last year's Runner-Up from Fairview, Tennessee.

For more information and top-to-bottom scoring visit the website:

www.thenationals.net/raider-main-challenge.htm

FEMALE DIVISION

As the recently added Female Division gets larger it is attracting more teams and more talent. This year the **Smith-Cotton HS Lady Tigers** (USA) from Sedalia, Missouri almost swept the division. They captured first in all events except PTT where they took home second.

The division Runner-Up, also from Missouri, **Lee's Summit West HS** (USAF) placed first in PTT, third in 5-K and Gauntlet, and fourth in Rope Bridge. These two teams led the pack but as the competition field gets larger, more teams may rise to the top in future years.

The **Co-ed Raiders** from **Fairview HS** (USA) kept their Runner-Up title by taking home first in Rope Bridge, second in 5-K and Gauntlet, and fourth in PTT.

The only other team taking home a top-five placement in all four events was **Junction City HS Black Team** (USA) from Junction City, Kansas (2nd-PTT, 4th-5K, Gauntlet, Rope Bridge).

MALE DIVISION

The **Riverside Military Academy Devils** from Gainesville, Georgia (USA) proved themselves unstoppable

yet again with a clean sweep of all four events. They were the only team out of 23 competing that trophied in all four events.

Last year's third-place overall finisher jumped a spot this year taking home the Male Division Runner-Up title. **The Owls** from **Ooltewah HS** in Ooltewah, Tennessee (USA) fought hard and captured second place in both Gauntlet and Rope Bridge and third place in PTT. They still placed high in the 5-K run though it was just out of the top five placements.

Coming in third place overall was **Lee's Summit West HS**. They only placed in two of the events but stayed consistent overall securing their top spot.

The event is typically held in November but due to so many schools dealing with restrictions from Covid-19, the 2020 Raider Nationals weekend has been delayed and will be held February 26-28, 2021. This delay will provide several additional months for teams to practice and be ready to compete in the early spring.





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SNI proudly puts forth the **NATIONALS VIDEO LIBRARY**. This on-line world features whole drill routines involving Inspection, Regulation, Color Guard and Exhibition Drill both Armed & Unarmed, Solo & Dual. It also features post high school drillers competing in the World Drill Championships. See ALL of the moves that give competition drill the diversity and excellence for which it has become known.



Stream and enjoy over 140 HOURS of competition footage on your computer, tablet or phone. Take the videos where you TRAIN! To the gym, the drill pad, to your competitions! You get a 2-day free trial just for registering on the site. Try before you buy and see how much your cadets enjoy learning from some of the best in the business.

If your program has cadets involved in SNI hosted events (Drill, Raider, Fitness, Camp) your entire program qualifies for the Nationals Video Library AT A STEEP DISCOUNT...

JUST \$59 PER YEAR!

The videos have been trimmed to show everything with minimal downtime. The footage shown on the Video Library focuses on the previous three years of competition footage in Masters & Challenge

level evens at the NHSDTC. These individual and team routines show some of the best and most unique performances from the history of the Nationals. There is no better way to learn, originate and train than by seeing what is the hottest and newest moves in the drill world than by having 24/7 access to these videos.

The thousands of videos within the Nationals Video Library are completely organized by year and also by event so Inspection, Regulation, Color Guard and Exhibition drill are maintained, clearly labeled between armed & unarmed divisions. Solo and dual exhibition cadets are featured as well.

For complete details on how your program can see many of the finest JROTC competition drill performances in the nation, go immediately to the home of the SNI video world to gain access and improve your drill universe. SNI stands ready to answer any questions - get the tools to develop your talent. You will be amazed at the progress your unit can make with the right information!

NATIONALS VIDEO LIBRARY
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U.S. Army Cadet Command JROTC National Drill Championships



A look back at the history of the Army Nationals

The early years of the National High School Drill Team Championships (1982-90) saw tremendous growth in drill team competitions and a dramatic increase in the skill level of many units throughout the country. It wasn't long before the US Army Cadet Command took notice and reached out to SNI with a concept for something special in the nation's



capital. Under the direction of Major General Wallace Arnold, the Army pushed to bring more notoriety to the inner city programs through their "Operation Capital" program and wanted a drill meet to highlight those programs. And with that, the National Capital Drill Classic was born.



The first home for the National Capital Drill Classic was the DC National Guard Armory, a huge building next to RFK Stadium that was built in 1943. It had a massive wooden floor with seats ringing the upper deck. The mid-March event was often held in freezing temperatures with the occasional snow flurry and was just before their beautiful cherry blossom season. Because of its location in Washington, DC the event hosted many dignitaries over the years. The 1992 NCDC was SNI's first foray into the world of producing contracted drill meets for a Junior ROTC HQ and the Army-only nature of the event taught us a great deal about how to both improve drill meets and train Army judges.

In 2002 the event moved to the much newer Prince George's Sports & Learning Complex in Maryland, due to a scheduling conflict with the armory. Interest in the event was growing beyond the original DC, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia schools. Units throughout the northeast were anxious to join in the competition. Soon the NCDC would take a huge step forward onto the national stage.

In 2005, Cadet Command decided to satisfy the need for a national level Army-only event and turned the

NCDC into the Army National Drill Championships, which expanded the competition field to a broader audience and was held in both Maryland and Texas. The two events allowed as many schools to participate as possible. The eastern event stayed in Maryland for a year before moving to Macon, Georgia for several years. The western event spent several years in College Station at Texas A&M, as well as in San Antonio in a few



locations including the Alamodome before wrapping up one truly western year in Phoenix, Arizona!

The NCDC had begun with 25 schools but the expansion to a national level, eastern and western division event allowed 81 schools to participate in the first year. The Eastern Division first crowned Francis Lewis HS as Armed champion and Forestville MA as Unarmed champion. The Western Division had Winston Churchill HS grab the Armed title with Theodore Roosevelt HS taking the Unarmed victory.

This explosive growth went on for many years before Cadet Command



determined that one true championship would allow all of the best Army units in the nation to go head-to-head. Louisville, Kentucky, a stone's throw from Fort Knox and the Army JROTC headquarters, was chosen as the home for the new event. Several facilities in Louisville ended up hosting the event over the years, from the Kentucky State Fairgrounds Expo Center & Broadbent Arena and the spacious Kentucky International Convention Center in downtown Louisville.

Through the next several years the event grew to 72 schools and 98 teams under one roof, the largest single-service drill event held in the US. Following expansion plans at the Louisville facilities, the event needed to find a new home and in 2019 were graciously welcomed to Richmond, Virginia where the Greater Richmond Convention Center saw the largest event in Army Championships history - 83 schools and 102 teams spanning 25 states! Over 2200 cadets and instructors filled the floor for a competition that began at 0745 and didn't finish the awards ceremony until 2100.

The 2019 event crowned Marmion Academy as Armed Champion and North Miami Beach HS as Unarmed Champion. The excellence on display through the decades has certainly made the Army proud!

The Covid-19 pandemic shut down the 2020 Army Nationals literally 10 days before the event was scheduled to take place. It was a fast, crushing

dose of reality for Cadet Command, schools, instructors, cadets and even event managers to realize how much the year 2020 would never be forgotten, in all the ways none of us could have imagined.

It has been this unprecedented year that has brought us to an even deeper understanding of the benefits that students gain with their participation in Junior ROTC. Distance learning, interacting with a computer program or zoom lessons will never compare to the intrinsic value of hands on, involved participation, which is what sets Junior ROTC apart. In the earliest days of SNI's involvement with drill, it was some of our conversations with people like Cal Foster (shown here with Justin Gates, Competition Director of SNI) that gave us that



sense of a deeper calling. Foster's involvement with Cadet Command started at the beginning, overseeing the Cadet Creed, and the formation of the principles that are lived every day in every Army JROTC unit. Without individuals like him supporting and guiding events like this, Army units would never have had the chance to attain such

amazing heights, excelling in all areas of Junior ROTC.

We at SNI are grateful to have played our part in the promotion of Army excellence and are honored to continue in that role. The turbulence of 2020 is leveling off and we are enthusiastic about the coming event season.

The 2021 U.S. Army Cadet Command National Drill Championships will once again be held in Richmond, Virginia and while the roster of schools may be affected by the disruptions to their typical training seasons, we are confident that the spirit of competition is alive and well in countless units throughout America. Taking those first steps back into the camaraderie of drill, the focused teamwork and unflagging effort is the best foot forward these cadets can take.

**2021
U.S. ARMY
CADET COMMAND
NATIONAL DRILL
CHAMPIONSHIPS**

**GREATER RICHMOND
CONVENTION CENTER
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA**

**SATURDAY,
MARCH 27, 2021**

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Daytona Beach, Florida

NHSDTC

On-Line Armed Solo Exhibition Competition

When schools were closed and the entire country went into lockdown in March, all in-person drill events were canceled including the National High School Drill Team Championships in Daytona Beach. With the overriding disappointment of all cadets that had worked so hard to perfect their performances, Sports Network wanted to find some way to still allow as many cadets as possible to compete against their peers while still abiding by all lockdown requirements. The only possibility would be to hold an online Armed Solo Exhibition competition.

The response was amazing as 61 male cadets and 7 female cadets submitted videos filmed by parents or siblings in their driveways, back yards, nearby parks, and in one case a garage. The video submissions came from 19 states across the nation as well as Taiwan and Germany. With so many male entries they were split into two groups with the top six competitors in both groups being judged again by all of the judges from both groups. The females were judged and awarded separately.

Although judging routines on video has its own set of challenges with varying lighting, sound, picture quality and camera steadiness, the judges were determined to cope with any difficulties with the single purpose of finding the best of the best among these devoted cadets. The results of both the male and female divisions are listed below.

We are expecting (and hoping) the drill world will go back to normal and everyone will enjoy the excitement of in-person events in the spring of 2021 and we are looking forward to seeing these cadets and their teams in Daytona Beach next May.

Katie Allmond
Ringgold High School



Female Division - Armed Solo Exhibition

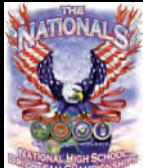
- 1st Place: Katie Allmond – Ringgold High School, Ringgold, Georgia
- 2nd Place: Taylor Trotter – Cape Coral High School, Cape Coral, Florida
- 3rd Place: Elena Sevier – Sparkman High School, Harvest, Alabama



Male Division - Armed Solo Exhibition

- 1st Place: Christian Fuentes – Waukegan High School, Waukegan, Illinois
- 2nd Place: Gabriel Williamson – East Paulding High School, Dallas, Georgia
- 3rd Place: Austin R. Ackerman – North Magnet High School, Omaha, Nebraska
- 4th Place: Trey Davidson – Mount Vernon High School, Mount Vernon, Ohio
- 5th Place: Isaac Aragon – Cibola High School, Albuquerque, New Mexico

Christian Fuentes
Waukegan High School



NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DRILL TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS
DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA ~ APRIL 30 - MAY 2, 2021



Aiming HIGHER AT THE 2021 Air Force Open Nationals!

The Nutter Center in Dayton, Ohio is excited to "Kick the Tires and light the Fires" in person next year!

Oh it seems like only...100 years ago...but really just 7 months ago! Tension was high nationally as an unknown virus coming from China was causing a panic largely on the West Coast of the USA. Late in the day we got a call from one school in very late February of 2020 saying their school board was recinding travel for all school trips. This was just the beginning of a Steven King sized nightmare for many.

Sports Network International has been a special event manager hosting over 200 large-scale events nationally during the roughly 40 years in existence. In what we call the "modern era" (with computers and cell phones) many things have changed about the company, the events and the world.

For the past 25 years, SNI has worked closely in conjunction with the Center for Disease Control to ensure all of our military and non-military events strike that quality balance between being personable, professional and safe for all of our attendees. 2020 tested this ethos in ways unlike any other.

The Air Force Open Nationals was to be the first of many Spring 2020 events hosted by SNI. AFJROTC units were stoked and primed for a great day with a full 39 school competition field registered and ready. Washington State had a cluster of nursing home deaths among the first Americans to die from this dreaded virus and suddenly within days, more and more schools began calling, forced to cancel. And literally as we were contacting the venue to tell them we were going to invoke the Force Majeure (act of God) cancellation clause in our agreement, the decision was made for us. We learned through a source that on 10 March, Ohio Governor Mike DeWine was going to impose a ban on any large gatherings over 100 people, and that day, the event was canceled.

But things have changed and the Spring of 2021 is a half year away and the outlook seems far better for hosting the in-person event! More is known about the virus. Deaths are down as better therapeutics and treatments are available. A Covid vaccine will likely see widespread innoculations beginning in very late 2020. And the nation as a whole seems to better understand and accept that protecting

those relatively few most vulnerable people appears to be a more viable and less destructive solution than "locking-down" huge swaths of the national freedoms, travel and economies.

Dayton, Ohio as a city is certainly ready! The Nutter Center as the annual home of the AF Open Nationals since its inception and with 6 months to plan, we feel confident the world will look vastly different in six months than it does today. Currently, all of the hotels and restaurants in and around the venue are open for business. The amazing National Museum of the U.S. Air Force is open and Wright State University



holding classes on campus. Masks indoors as well as social distancing requirements are in place everywhere and will be adhered to during all areas of the event and your stay. These requirements may be around long after the most severe threats from the virus have ended.

So many people in Dayton support this event and JROTC and none more than the Greene County Convention & Visitors Bureau. At the top is our account Rep Lisa Willis who stated, "We are very eager for our groups and events to return and are cautiously optimistic that 2021 will bring a renewed sense of enthusiasm and confidence for our travelers. All precautions have been implemented by our hotels, restaurants and attractions making our area equipped with safety protocols in place. We are looking forward to hosting powerful and meaningful events for young people such as USAF JROTC Open Drill Nationals."

Of course, should the unforeseen happen, registration fees paid to attend the competition will be fully refunded. And as always, those schools who may have been planning to attend the Air Force Open event would receive priority acceptance into the all-service Nationals in Daytona Beach in early May if this better cleared any scheduling hurdles. This would allow them to compete for not only the overall Air Force National Championship, but with other nationally ranked schools from all services from across the USA.

The 2021 Air Force Open Nationals are open to any Air Force JROTC unit and will be held in Dayton, Ohio on March 21st. Register and hold your spot TODAY on the event website. We hope to see you there!

For past scoring results, photos & all event info: <http://af.thenationals.net>

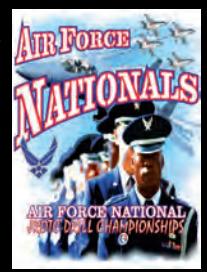
2021 Air Force JROTC Open Drill Nationals

Nutter Center Arena
Dayton, Ohio
Saturday, 20 March 2021

The Air Force JROTC Open Drill Nationals remains the annual home to many of the finest AFJROTC programs. Most commonly referred to as the "Air Force Nationals", the event maintains the widest geographic spread of Air Force JROTC schools of any Air Force only competition. The event continues to provide a valuable experience for all AFJROTC cadets looking to be a part of a one-of-a-kind, Air Force-only JROTC drill competition wrapped in a first-class setting. Those that have competed in this event previously will attest to the awesome nature and standing this competition has within the world of competition drill & ceremony. This event is supported by the U.S. Air Force JROTC HQ and attended by teams across the United States.

The Air Force Nationals are proud to offer Solo & Dual Armed, Dual Unarmed, and both Armed & Unarmed Knockout competitions! Top finishers in both divisions receive priority entry status in the all-service Nationals in Daytona Beach, Florida should they wish to attend.

All entry/event details, rules, score sheets and other event specs are listed on the Air Force Nationals website. Support your AF Nationals by making this event an annual part of your JROTC drill calendar. Your team will have an amazing time to remember forever!



kaleidoscope

Miscellaneous thoughts from across the drill world

Randolph-Macon Academy Air Force Junior ROTC instructor TSgt Tina M. Laing, USAF, Retired, has sought to instill strong values into all of her students, but most especially in her two-time state champion drill team. The team worked hard this year to return to Nationals, where last year they finished eighth overall and their dual exhibition team took first place, while at the same time they had the ultimate goal of defending their state championship title.



The COVID-19 pandemic took it all away. With Air Force Nationals less than two weeks away, TSgt Laing made the call that they would not be attending the event, as several members of the team suffered from asthma, type 1 diabetes, and other conditions that put them in the high risk category. Two days later, on March 12th, the R-MA administration made the decision to stop on-campus classes and transition to online classes through April 9th.

TSgt Laing galvanized her drill team into action. With only one day left on campus, she decided that her students would create videos of their performances and submit them to the Sports Network International Team (SNI), the organization that puts on the National Competition in Daytona Beach. If for no other reason than to record it and put it online, she felt her cadets had worked hard and they were going to finish what they had started. It wasn't easy. The sudden announcement had stunned the students, who quickly realized that this could be the end of their school year, and for some, the end of their high school careers. Tears were flowing and several cadets couldn't concentrate. "I've been here since sixth grade," one student said to TSgt Laing, "and this is how it ends?" Another senior who had also been at R-MA since sixth grade said, "I'm not ready. They just stole two months of my life. I'm supposed to be an adult now?" "That was why I was pushing them to record those performances," TSgt Laing later explained. "It was not about the competition. It was about finishing what they started. I was not going to let them walk away without closure. This was a culmination of their R-MA tenure."

Then the R-MA family began to come together. Faculty and staff members came into the gym and consoled students. Parents arrived and began to record the performances, while offering words of encouragement and support. Throughout the afternoon and into the evening, through a total of seven hours of practice and recording, the cadets worked their magic and delivered their performances. "It was pure grit and determination," said TSgt Laing. "It showed the true spirit of who we are. That's what makes drill so special to them and to me."

The team departed campus the next day still holding out hope for the opportunity to defend their state championship, and that the Nationals competition would be held virtually, but the sweeping pandemic caused both events to be cancelled completely. They could not even be held virtually, as many schools had closed for the year and the drill teams could not come back together to record their performances.

Schools across the U.S. have closed or taken their classes online as R-MA has done, but unlike the students who somberly packed their belongings and headed home, the members of the VA-091 AFJROTC Drill Team did not go quietly. Like a runner who is tripped before the finish line and drags herself across, the R-MA Drill Team refused to quit; instead, they pulled together in their darkest hour, and finished what they began. They demonstrated true determination, the deepest grit, relentless perseverance, absolute courage, incredible heart...there are many words to describe what they achieved, but at R-MA it is known as...The Power of Rise.

I reflect upon the blessings that drill team activity has brought into my life: family, so many wonderful and lifelong friends, values and beliefs held at my core, experiences that grew me into the person I am today for better and for worse, the list goes on. I've been humbled to coach and consult with the same groups whose photos once adorned the walls of my childhood bedroom. We've been blessed to see timid freshmen grow into confident young adults and begin their lives. We've watched with bemused smiles and tears in our eyes as middle school children who had never ventured beyond their city block run at break-neck speeds into the cool morning waters of Daytona Beach. This activity of drill is very unique.

On its surface, it teaches the value of teamwork and links the results and consequences of ones work, ethic (or lack thereof) to real, tangible outcomes. But having spent over a decade working with groups from around the world, there is something far more powerful. When wielded to its fullest potential, this activity teaches young people about love - love of craft, love of self, and love of others. It bridges racial, socioeconomic, and geographic barriers and brings all of its participants into contact with others we may not look, sound, or even march like one another but for whom excellence is a universal language. It gives a home to those who may be homeless - physically or metaphorically. And it helps us learn to work through our "drama" (though we prefer to think of it as "unresolved conflict") to find the best in those around us despite a world that seeks to divide us daily.

While drill, in a military context, is designed to strip away ones individuality, competitive drill does the opposite: it shines a light on uniqueness and diversity. It helps us understand national and global issues on a scale we can understand and digest. It helps us learn to love others with whom we have nothing in common and without drill, we may never have bothered to know. It helps us appreciate culture and develops keenly and visually, as represented by the numerous styles of drill, a sense of place that connects generations.

THE LAST PERFORMANCE
By: LTC John Wargo, Hubbard High School

*With a cry and a command we step onto the floor,
What we have done so many times, we must do once more
And when we march off, either to laughter or cheers,
No matter what happens my eyes fill with tears.*

*This is the last time I march on the floor
With cadets I have worked with a million hours or more
I think of the times when we first began
Hours of practice, the Colonel screaming, "Do it Again!"*

*Preparation, speculation, grumbles and groans,
Each cadet giving as much as they own.
Hours of sleep lost prepping your uniform
Cleaning rifles realizing the dirt is a rusty bore.*

*Naps on the bus, the scramble, the stress
The ever present cry, "Lou, Where the hell is my brass?"
Jose, Lou, Jess, Evelyn, Chris and all the rest,
All poised and ready to perform at their best.*

*All this I remember, all this and much more
Competition day arrives so close to the shore
The step off, the salute, the routine, the prayers,
Pride in excellence or self-anger at errors.*

*The tension of waiting, this too I have known
Of hoping and dreaming to make first place your own
The despair of losing and the joy of winning
Always knowing your team on you is depending
The ride home, the silent contemplation you wouldn't trade
Of the shining moments or the mistakes that you made.*

*Unloading, unpacking, squaring things away
knowing it all begins again zero six on Monday
Excitement still permeates the entire cadet corps
Knowing next time the championship could be yours.*

*The hopes, the fears, the laughter, the tears
All this I remember and will for all my years
But the single most important thing in the end
Is I found 40 strangers and I now call them friends.*

Drill excellence runs in the family! Drill Hall of Fame inductee SMSgt(ret) Antonio Ruiz is an instructor at multiple national championship school, John Jay HS. His daughter, Josefa Ruiz, has followed in his footsteps and is now coaching the AFJROTC drill team at Earl Warren HS in San Antonio, Texas. With her guidance, the EWHS drill team went to the Nationals and competed in the Challenge Level and placed in every category!





NAVY NATIONALS

ACADEMIC, ATHLETIC & DRILL CHAMPIONSHIP



National lockdowns caused a change in the structure of the 2020 Navy Nationals and we take a look back at some of the more memorable moments from past years.

The 2020 Navy Nationals were strongly impacted by the Covid-19 epidemic. Out of caution, the event was moved to an online format early as the NJROTC Headquarters saw the danger but defiantly declared, "Damn the Influenza, Full Speed Ahead!" Their gung ho spirit allowed the use of regional results to be compared along with other items and a more loosely structured but high profile "event" was pieced together. This allowed everyone to observe the lockdown but still gave the youngsters who worked so hard much recognition and also event rewards they richly deserved.

The following top five teams are recognized for their regional scores in the push-up, curl-up and the 16x100 relay events.

1. Richard C. Spoto High School
2. J. W. Mitchell High School
3. Gaither High School
4. Nease High School
5. Patrick Henry High School

The following top five teams are recognized for their regional scores in the push-up and curl-up events.

1. Colts Neck High School
2. Northmont Senior High School
3. Chambersburg Area Senior High School
4. Marine Academy of Science and Technology (MAST)
5. Zion-Benton Township High School

While COVID was easily the largest and most high profile and impactful malady faced by the modern Navy Nationals over the 20+ years Sports Network International has hosted the event, the competition has seen its share of issues producing notable (and sometimes laughable) memories. Some of these were major, some were minor; some have been kept private and some were public, but all were true and a fun retrospective as the event looks forward to a better tomorrow.

The modern era of the Navy Nationals was originally held in Great Lakes, Illinois back in 1999 in a HUGE hall where Navy graduations are held. Yes, ALL of the events including athletics were held inside! It was amazing for many reasons, not the least of which was the sheer size of this massive building, but even more were the reactions of the cadets from the powerhouse schools in Florida and Southern California getting off their buses and vans and seeing snow in person for the first time! More than one snow angel was created during that weekend (including one by

an SNI staff member seeing snow for the first time) along with one "mass snow angel" created by Oviedo HS, from Oviedo, Florida.

With one huge snow storm near miss the next year, the decision was made to bring the event to the sunny shores of Florida and NAS Pensacola. This allowed the drill events to remain inside for consistency but the popular athletic events, weather permitting were moved outside. The event has maintained many changes over the years that are both interesting and telling.

The first year, the athletic events were all held at the confidence course, even using a few of the apparatus on site.

However, it was quickly and thankfully reverted to the track and the parade field for all following years. While many athletic events have had notable events occur, nothing was as sad and funny as an incident that happened a decade ago. A team was running their oval relay and completed the course and time was stopped and recorded when a judge radioed that one team had failed to complete the route with their baton! The baton was still lying on the inside of the track but the time had been recorded. Upon being informed this was a "subjective penalty situation" according to the rules, the Area Manager in charge simply said, "my watch is still running and until that last person crosses the finish line WITH the baton, it will keep running – that is my subjective penalty". A single cadet burst from the pack of people nearby, retrieved the baton and completed the race. This is why the Area Managers receive the big bucks!



Color Guard winners Princess Anne HS cadets march on a snowy day at the Recruit Training Center in Great Lakes, Illinois, April 2000

For several years early on the team academic exam was held in the massive and beautiful Atrium in Chevalier Hall NATC Building (the one of the largest buildings East of the Mississippi) used for the entire event. Four hundred desk/chair combos were brought into the open area Friday evening and meticulously arranged to ensure privacy. Teams filed in and one test was given to ensure test integrity was best maintained. However the manpower and efforts to set-up and then immediately tear down this massive exam area was more easily eliminated simply by hosting the event in two time slots in existing classrooms for future years.

The academic exam has seen its share of characters (pun intended). One cadet who upon seating simply opened his test and began while 199 other cadets sat upright and listened to instructions. When asked afterwards WHY he tried to start his test on entry, he said he had no idea – he just "zoned out." That he was prepping for the test for several hours and wanted to start, "before he forgot things."

We had another memorable cadet a decade ago who had felt poorly all day and asked what would happen if he had to leave to throw up. When he learned that the rules dictate he would not be allowed to return, he was noticeably concerned. But an SNI staff member arranged for him to sit at the very back of the rows and found a garbage can to place next to his seat, just in case. Fortunately the cadet made it through without any unfortunate moments.

The Team Pictures used to be held on Friday right after the team's color guard event. But feedback from schools gave the idea to move the photos to Saturday as schools faced a time crush to get in lunch and athletics before their academic exam. They also gave us the idea to use the now famous American Flag photo backdrop we had only previously used at the all-service National High School Drill Team Championships in Daytona Beach, Florida. Suspending that 100lb canvas behemoth has undergone many gyrations of pull-ties, sandbags and prayers most years, but so far this formidable battle has been won by the photographer...mostly!

Several years back, the Scantron grading machines underwent some kind of an EMP or other electronic issue where the main machine and the backup BOTH died the night we needed to start grading 360 of the 100-question Scantron bubble tests! So SNI stayed up late into the night grading Scantrons bubble sheets by hand, then most of the next day as well. Bleary-eyed staff stepped up and were able to handle all scoring of the test and drill events but might have passed out immediately after the Navy awards ceremony later that night.

We had a near governmental shut-down that forced all of the Marine judges from Rhode Island and all but the few local



NJROTC Area Managers to return to their home locations so they would not be stuck at NAS Pensacola should the shut-down leave them stranded. Contingency planning was ironed out throughout the day on FRIDAY and it was late that evening when the television announced news reports that an emergency extension was voted on and passed by Congress averting the shut-down. Local Marines from NAS Pensacola were used for judging and the event continued without issue.

Marines from the Recruit Training Center, Rhode Island judging the drill events in Chevalier Hall at NAS Pensacola in 2015

Another year found us facing a very real government shutdown and the event was held in a virtual format where teams submitted videos and they were graded by exceptional judges located all over the world. Teams had an impartial observer to ensure the video submitted was their one performance, no "do-overs". So it was not surprising when an exceptional routine was filmed and submitted with a bouncing soccer ball bisected the regulation routine (with the cadets never flinching!) I still believe judges gave them bonus points for bearing!

But easily the most memorable and humorous issue had to be our near miss of horrible weather several years ago that seemed to have the "Hand of God" involved. On Thursday the day prior to the start of the Navy Nationals, it was noted that the weather forecast was for terrible thunderstorms and "deadly lightning" (as opposed to any other kind) the following afternoon in Pensacola. This is the day we are slated to have our outdoor athletic competition. We looked at gyrating the schedule and moving events, days and/or times and the call was made that we would try to sneak it all in outside before the weather hit. The running joke was that NJROTC Program Director at the time, Dr. J.D. Smith was in charge of the weather and he would have to work some magic. Dr. Smith smiled and winked at everyone and we all left for the evening. The athletic field was set early. The day was gorgeous and teams began competing on arrival a little early. Dr. Smith was very proud of "his" efforts at that point! But as the day wore on, the skies in the distance from the direction of the storms began to darken. Weather radar was showing the storm bending north a bit but still coming through our event. Dr. Smith would have none of it. Literally evoking thoughts of Moses parting the seas, the giant, angry and dangerous storm stayed roughly 20 miles north of NAS Pensacola and moved harmlessly allowing the event to continue unimpeded. To this day, those who were heavily involved still credit Dr. Smith for controlling the weather and saving the event with a hearty laugh.

The memories of great cadets and amazing programs, hugely supportive and proud parents, and chiseled judges grilling cadets are the big picture take away from the event annually. And it is our hope that April 2021 will right the Navy Nationals ship and put us on course for another filled with all kinds of memories both behind the scenes and on proud display.

REGISTER NOW TO BRING YOUR CADETS TO THE....

NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL DRILL TEAMS

For over three decades, THE Premier All-Service
Challenge Event, 30 April - May 2018

Join the over 300,000 cadets, parents and instructors who

THE NATIONALS - what makes this the greatest event in drill history?

- ★ Premier All-Service National Drill Championship Event, in its 39th year.
- ★ Sponsored by U.S. Army Cadet Command and supported by all service headquarters
- ★ Schools can attend with full teams in Masters or Challenge Levels (or both!)
- ★ Schools can attend with stand alone Color Guards and/or individual exhibition cadets
- ★ Produced by SNI, with experience in managing over 200 competitions in the past 38 years
- ★ Nationals Judging Corps brings together professional judges from active duty military training facilities across the nation; with extensive pre-event/on-site training, this gives the event the finest judging available in the world of competition drill
- ★ Schools register online, as well as submit and track all paperwork & payments online
- ★ SNI works with all services to ensure payments and receipts are done in strict accordance with all military requirements
- ★ Fully open competition draws, select events and awards ceremony on-line streaming all weekend!
- ★ Daytona Beach Ocean Center Arena & Conference Center is a state-of-the-art facility, including elevated fixed seating for over 6,000, complete concessions, ample parking, extensive indoor and outdoor practice areas, and private meeting rooms
- ★ Beachfront location of hotels and venue, nearby theme parks, Kennedy Space Center and college tours make a trip to the Nationals awesome on and off the drill floor

EVENT REGISTRATION - register by 4 December for automatic acceptance

- ★ Masters Level registration-\$300 per school / Challenge Level registration-\$200 per school
- ★ Open Level Color Guard & Stand Alone Solo/Dual registration - \$50 per team
- ★ All fees paid are fully refundable prior to 4 December
- ★ All schools who register by the 4 December deadline have a guaranteed entry slot!
- ★ Contact SNI for registration fee details if you are entering both Masters & Challenge teams
- ★ See the custom MySchool website where all schools register at: <http://myschool.thenationals.net>

PACKAGE PLAN - what will your cadets & instructors receive

- ★ All participants are required to attend through the Package Plan to cover all event costs
- ★ Discounted billeting in standard through luxury oceanfront hotels in the Daytona Beach area
- ★ NHSUTC attendees receive a bronze medallion on a chest ribbon, NHSUTC collared sport shirt for adults and t-shirt for cadets (ordered to size), NHSUTC swiss-embroidered 4" event patch, 8" x 10" color team photograph taken during the event

The price of the three day/ two night Package Plan (based on four people in a room) starts at only \$121 per person for Challenge levels schools and \$139 for the four day/three night package. Three, two & one-to-a-room prices are slightly higher, used primarily for instructors & other adult supporters (all prices shown online). Parents may stay through this package with the school, but this is optional. Schools interested in the Hilton HQ package (located directly across the street) or other upgraded accommodations should check the website for those rates.



The Ocean Center Arena & Conference Center

Go to the Facebook
for photos, via
<https://www.facebook.com/nationalsdrillteam>

TEAM CHAMPIONSHIPS

Service National Championship Drill Event

Blasters Event, 1-2 May 2021

to have made "The Nationals" a part of their unit's history!

CHALLENGE LEVEL EVENTS - Armed & Unarmed Divisions

Friday, April 30, 2021

- ★ UNIT INSPECTION (12 cadets + Commander)
- ★ PLATOON/FLIGHT REGULATION (12 cadets + Commander)
- ★ COLOR GUARD (2 rifles + 2 flags only)
- ★ TEAM EXHIBITION (9 cadets & over)

Also featured on Friday is the OPEN LEVEL COLOR GUARD

MASTERS LEVEL EVENTS - Demilitarized, Unarmed & Mixed Divisions

Saturday & Sunday, May 1st & 2nd, 2021

- ★ UNIT INSPECTION (12 cadets + Commander)
- ★ PLATOON/FLIGHT REGULATION (12 cadets + Commander)
- ★ COLOR GUARD (2 rifles + 2 flags only)
- ★ SQUAD/ELEMENT EXHIBITION (8 cadets + Commander) (Masters only)
- ★ PLATOON/FLIGHT EXHIBITION (9 cadets & over) (Masters only)

Also featured on Sunday & Monday:

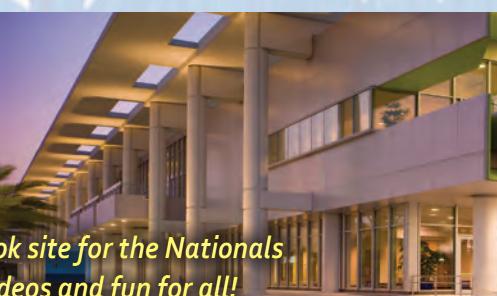
- ★ SOLO EXHIBITION (Demilitarized & Mixed Divisions)
- ★ DUAL EXHIBITION (Demilitarized, Mixed & Unarmed Divisions)
- ★ WORLD DRILL CHAMPIONSHIPS (Post High School Drillers - see website for details)

AWARDS, TROPHIES & ACCOLADES

- ★ The finest event trophies and cadet competition awards presented anywhere!
- ★ National Championship trophy stands over six-foot and truly means something
- ★ 1st-5th awarded in all events due to the amazing depth of talent & sheer number of schools
- ★ Schools attending are featured within the DrillNATION Magazine, Service Headquarters websites, as well as many schools included within the Best of the Nationals Video Library

With over 35 years of experience and history, "The Nationals" remains without parallel in the 3,500 program JROTC and non-affiliated drill community. The Nationals provide the finest all-service drill & ceremony competition available anywhere! Your program's fundraising dollars and quest for excellence are precious, so make sure to invest in the best and most trusted experience possible for your cadets by attending the only national drill competition with a proven track record for excellence.

Become a partner in the history and excellence of the Nationals. See, be seen and become part of the brother and sisterhood that only comes from competing with the best schools & the best instructors. Over a dozen colleges on-site along with many national drill supporters. For full competition details, see the complete NHSDTC invitation online at: <http://www.thenationals.net/dt-invite.pdf>



Look site for the Nationals
ideos and fun for all!
www.thenationals.net

For additional information:
Event Manager
Sports Network International, Inc.
388 Muddy Creek Lane
Ormond Beach, Florida 32174
800/327-9311 **386/274-1919**
website: <http://drill.thenationals.net>
email: drill@thenationals.net

Sunny Daytona Beach, Florida

Where do PT/Fitness teams, Raider teams and other JROTC Athletic teams want to end their year?

2021 NATIONAL JROTC FITNESS CHALLENGE CHAMPIONSHIPS



FOR THE ANNUAL FITNESS CHALLENGE THE SWEAT WILL FLOW IN THE ULTIMATE FITNESS BATTLE ON THE SHORES OF THE WORLD'S MOST FAMOUS BEACH!

Imagine your cadets competing on the shores of the World's Most Famous Beach in the most exciting and fun fitness competition ever hosted! This one-day, all-service JROTC-only competition held in Daytona Beach, Florida during the National H.S. Drill Team Championships will provide your cadets the ability to pull together an entire year of work into one stellar weekend!



The Fitness Championships will be hosted at the Daytona Beach Plaza Resort & Spa. This ocean front resort hotel is located in the heart of Daytona Beach just 4 blocks north of the Ocean Center, the home of the NHSDTC. The hotel has a massive pool deck, over 300 rooms, countless amenities and miles of traffic-free beach to host this event.

Divisions for the Fitness Championships include **MALE**, **MIXED** (for those teams with three or more females competing), and **FEMALE** Divisions. Events for the National Fitness Challenge include:

- 3K TEAM RUN -
- PULL UPS /FLEXED ARM HANG -
- STANDING LONG JUMP -
- WEIGHTED BALL TOSS -
- BEACH OBSTACLE COURSE -



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See the FACEBOOK PAGE
for all of the latest details:
<https://www.facebook.com/JROTCFitnessNationals/>



GOTO THE OFFICIAL WEBSITE FOR THE EVENT:
[HTTP://FITNESS.THENATIONALS.NET](http://FITNESS.THENATIONALS.NET)

NATIONALS DRILL CAMP



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- ✧ Leadership skills
- ✧ Fun and new friends



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email: drillcamp@thenationals.net ★ website: <http://drillcamp.thenationals.net> ★ toll-free: 800/327-9311

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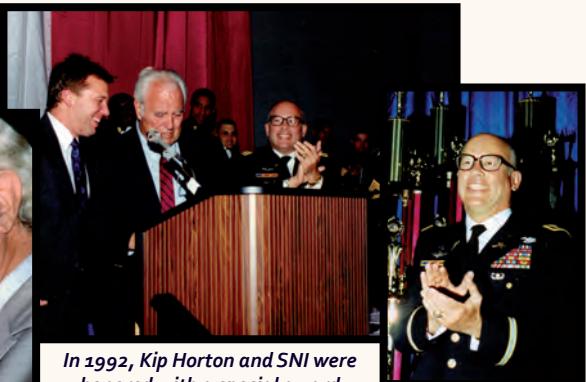
A look back at



The first ever Nationals was held in Orlando Florida at Sea World's Atlantis Amphitheater. The emcee was Kip Horton, co-founder of Sports Network International.



The National Guard Armory in Daytona Beach was home to the Nationals for two years while the Ocean Center was being built. Here you see two female cadets being judged in knockout drill, sharp Marine Corps cadets in armed regulation, an Army unit performing a classic ripple line, and a unit performing an elevated movement (cadet standing on a rifle) which was an amazingly flashy stunt whose risk was quickly assessed and the SOP updated to eliminate such elevated moves in future years.



In 1992, Kip Horton and SNI were honored with a special award presented by US Army Cadet Command Chief of Staff COL Tom Faley (right). This award left Kip nearly speechless but with a tear in his eye, he took the mic to express his gratitude at the recognition and to say how much the JROTC community and the Nationals meant to him.

The Nationals were forged in the fires of competitive excellence from its inception. La Salle Military Academy was the greatest program in the country and dominated in the early years, securing their place in drill history and giving every other program someone to keep in their sights.



Cadet Commander Blake Jackson of Rahway HS receives the 1st Place Solo Exhibition trophy in 2000. He went on to the United States Marine Corps and is currently a Major who has returned to the Nationals as a judge several years.

In the early years at the Ocean Center the awards ceremony was held in the ballroom but as the event grew it was moved into the main arena. This is the first year in the arena with a decidedly smaller stage than is currently utilized.



Fern Creek High School Cadet Commander Mark Hood made his march to the stage with every medal he earned in his 4 years of JROTC. The sound of the medals clinking against each other turned every head in the audience.

the Nationals...



In 1994 The King's Guard from Honolulu, Hawaii under the direction of Paul Naki competed at the Nationals during the briefly held Military Exhibition Drill World Championships. They stunned those in attendance by winning the event against powerhouse teams from Texas A&M, The Citadel, the Air Force Academy and others. Beyond their expected dominance in Exhibition, the Guards also dominated in Inspection.



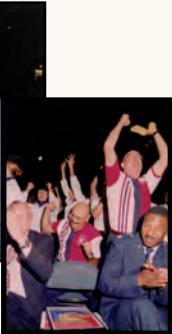
Previously known primarily in Hawaii with their nightly performances in King's Village, they quickly became famous within the drill community with their commands called only in Hawaiian and their incredibly fast and precise spinning. Without their appearance at the Nationals, they may never have received their wide-spread popularity and Mr. Naki said that he felt indebted to SNI for this. The King's Guard came to Daytona Beach and performed many times at the Nationals and even chose the Nationals Masters Level Awards Ceremony stage for their very last mainland performance on May 8, 2014 before they retired the Guards forever.



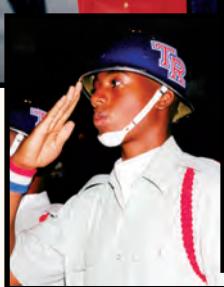
The incomparable SGM Johnny Snodgrass (USA ret) led the Enterprise HS Belles of the Blue Knights to one of the earlier dynasties in drill.



The 2000's were dominated by Flour Bluff HS's Navy JROTC unit which captured a legendary number of both Demilitarized Arms and Unarmed division championships, led by the remarkable CDR Armando Solis. He mixed an infectious enthusiasm with a deadly competitive fire that would erupt in celebration as their victory was



The Nationals has been honored to have JROTC service representatives in attendance for decades. Pictured here in the 90's are (l to r) Carol Hetler, Cal Foster and Donna Rice from US Army Cadet Command, Hans Kruke from US Navy JROTC HQ, Les Wood from US Marine Corps JROTC HQ and Jimmy Varnado from US Air Force JROTC HQ. The service heads have even chosen the Daytona Nationals weekend to hold their annual Tri-Service meeting while they were here.



In the 1990's the San Juan Guard "rose" to the top (under the direction of COL James Rose) alongside their Riderette sisters from Theodore Roosevelt HS in San Antonio, Texas. Both teams enjoyed a dynasty of excellence. The Riderettes wore a one-of-a-kind distinctive blazer and cowboy hat while they dominated the Unarmed division for eight years. Their brothers took the Demilitarized Arms championship for four years.



Led by the incomparable Major James Mikesell (USA ret) Winston Churchill HS's Black Watch dominated the demilitarized arms division in '96, '98, '99, and 2000. They were one of the reasons San Antonio, Texas became the high visibility hot-bed for JROTC drill. Their very unique exhibition style was copied by other drill teams for years after their reign. Churchill's Cadet Commander Michael Moad also was the first recipient of the annual Jean Weil Scholarship awarded at the Nationals to the two top graduating seniors. He went on to graduate from West Point 13th in his class and is currently a Major in the US Army.

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FINALLY, SOMETHING GREAT COMES OUT OF 2020!

Welcome to the National High School Drill Team Championships On-Line Virtual Division Competition

For many years, a solid number of drill schools from more distant locales have bemoaned their inability to get to the Nationals and compete. To compare their skills with many of the most widely recognized power-house programs in the drill world. They do well locally and would love to have not only the direct, head-to-head review of scores to see how their performances would compare, but also the prestige and memory of competing in the largest, finest and most well-respected drill & ceremony competition held anywhere in the world. *Well now you finally get something you wished for!*

The 2021 On-Line Drill Nationals will begin a new era of worldwide schools competing like never before. This event promises to be very special. Schools from Germany, Hawaii and other more distant lands have already sought to make their attendance happen to put their program on the map on the biggest stage in JROTC drill.

The On-Line Division of the Nationals will have both an ARMED & UNARMED division of competition. Events will include Regulation (Basic), Color Guard, and Team Exhibition. Schools may compete in just one event, two or all three thereby competing for an overall title in either or both divisions. And unlike at the on-site Nationals competition, your cadets MAY "cross over" and compete on both Armed & Unarmed teams but on-site schools will not be allowed to also participate

virtually. All events are basically "one and done" meaning schools get one shot to video record and submit (therefore you cannot simply keep filming over and over until you get your best).

While nothing can match the thrill of a live competition on the shores of Daytona Beach, the ability to have your school reviewed and judged by the same group who completed scoring the Masters Level events at the NSHSDTC in Daytona Beach will allow you a great comparison of how your scores would have placed against some of the most talented &

famous teams in the nation. With time pressures less stringent, judges will have more time to write more detailed notes for future improvement.

"The "On-Line Nationals" will give even the most distant programs the ability to be a special part of the National Drill Championship experience without ever stepping on a bus."

- Justin Gates, Competition Director, SNI

The cost to enter will be \$50 per event (Regulation, Color Guard, Team Exhibition, Solo/Dual). Therefore a school looking to enter both an Armed & Unarmed team in all four events would be \$400. Hundreds of other details, as well as floor diagrams, sequences, the event SOP and a detailed FAQ for the competition are found on the site listed below.

Schools may register on the NSHSDTC website at the same location as the on-site Nationals. Competition spaces are EXTREMELY limited as the judge's time is at a premium during the NSHSDTC. We expect to take no more than 25 schools into both categories of competition. *We hope to see your school on-line competing in this inaugural event!*

To learn more, go to the web home of the On-Line Nationals at: <https://thenationals.net/nhsdtc.htm>



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SNI Hosted Event



THE NATIONALS

DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA

MAY 3-5, 2019



**Full Roster of competing cadets
available to print on the back**

**Customizable
on-site
while you wait**



HEART

Written by: Justin Gates



The year 2020 has been one we will all remember forever. For members of Sports Network International and many others, it was a time filled with many wasted days, unfulfilled dreams and cancelled events. It left us with the feeling that young people and their families who worked hard were cheated out of lifetime memories; experiences many of their older peers talked

about with pride and laughter. This made it often hard for us here to focus and stay busy when the work slowed down, especially for me. The thought of the teams and the cadets building their efforts drives us here and pushes us to make deadlines and go that extra mile - because we know the teams are as well!

I have worked at Sports Network International just about 32 years. Obviously I have never seen anything like this year. Oh sure we have lived through the H1N1 virus, noro virus and other serious maladies, but this Covid virus was unique. It scarred a national conscience. Then when things were hard to get worse, I got the virus with a vengeance. I can say at 57 healthy years old with no other preexisting conditions, it was still no picnic for just one week. And in late July after the symptoms had gone, I was struck with an urge. Almost a calling.

As I was watching the media stories and seeing quite a dichotomy of actions calling into question the future of the Republic, my heart was heavy. I realized what I needed was a trip to and through the "Heartland of America" to truly heal. A roaming chance to meet and see touchstones and people who make America great. Not a plane flight to somewhere with a flyover of the greatness, but a long, cathartic motorcycle ride with stops everywhere to remind myself of exactly how blessed I am to be an American and more importantly, how blessed we all are to have this part of our great nation. To see for myself the spacious skies, the amber waves of grain, the purple mountains majesty and the fruited plains. To see and feel what makes the Heartland different. Lord knows we had TIME TO TAKE, so the plan went into action.



I decide a 2,200 mile motorcycle ride to Sturgis, South Dakota for a large bike rally and beyond is exactly what I need (hey, go big or go home). Thirteen days away. See Devil's Tower, Mt. Rushmore, the St. Louis Arch and dozens of other parts of Americana on the way there and back. But mostly force myself to take scores of hours to reflect on the blessings I and we have as a nation, as a company, and as an American despite any issues we may face moving forward.



I pack with my cleared negative Covid test paperwork and ready the two saddle bags and a tall Harley bike case with clothes, snacks & drinks, a hammock, a sleeping bag, and an emergency light. I leave before daybreak on a crisp (for Florida) Sunday morning and head out. Four days to get to the target. The math is daunting, the ride is moreso!

Didn't factor in how everyone wants to talk with you when you are on a Harley. They want to tell you about THEIR motorcycles past and present, and their stories and stories of friends who rode. Also, the farther you get from Florida, the more that license plate is like a neon magnet for people to approach and ask, "are you REALLY from Florida?", "Where are you going?", "Why did you come here?" When I told them I came here to see them and get a feel for life in the Heartland of America, every single person smiled with pride - every single one!

Despite the elongated days, all this chatting did was give me more and more of what I was seeking when I left the Sunshine State. But nothing could have prepared me for the adventure that was about to unfold on my black & chrome 2011 Harley Road King Classic.

Taking the backroads of Florida, I saw the pace of life slow with every mile traveled through the panhandle. Lots of waves from people the farther you get into the farmland almost like your arrival requires an official hello from most every person. Crossing into Georgia and then Northern Alabama, Missouri, the Heartland of Kansas, Nebraska, South Dakota, and Minnesota roll up on you. You realize quickly you are in



LAND



the bread basket of the world. Crops of all kinds are endless, only broken by a small town every 20-30 minutes or so. Farm animals and tractors, massive watering & grain storage systems, and smaller buildings even



lessly. They don't live on top of each other – they have space to breathe. They are real. They make no apologies for their down home nature. And they take much less for granted. Wanderlust runs

seem more friendly! Life and the people themselves magically transform into something softer. Smiles come easier to everyone. People look you in the eye as they walk by and say hello. And even during a pandemic, people want to shake your hand. It is hard to explain for an outsider but people who live here or who have spent extended time here understand.

And as I ride from state to state on the highway, the JROTC world begins to pop up one sign after another. I see the highway and byway signs of the cities hosting the big-named JROTC programs from huge SNI events. Their national reputations outshine their population size. **Smith-Cotton HS** in Sedalia, Missouri, **Missouri Military Academy** in Mexico, Missouri, **Bellevue West HS** from Bellevue, Nebraska, **Topeka HS** in Topeka, Kansas, **Ozark HS** in Ozark, Missouri and **Leavenworth HS** in Leavenworth, Kansas harken my thoughts to 30+ years and over 155 JROTC events knowing I have been a part of something that forever changed young lives for the better. I think back on some of the great men and women from these programs. What a group of characters who all shared the same love of the kids. This proved to me I will never ever be able to leave JROTC because it is in my heart and soul as much as the cadets who graduate have it in theirs. It is such an honor to have made this connection without even realizing it.

I make the connection from the Heartland to the drill deck or the raider field. Taking the time to actually meet people in their home, it starts to click what instructors have told me for years. Every area of the country has differences. The Heartland cadets seem to appreciate more. Like their peers, they have an easy demeanor. They listen and are often more easily instructed. American flags fly everywhere. In general they have upbringings that lend themselves more to being open to the bigger picture. They are receptive to knowing they don't know it all and are respectful and resourceful. They are down to earth and work well with others. Most all of these qualities are shared by their families – unquestionably how they became this way almost effort-

high for some when cornfields, tractors, high school sports and swimming holes can be the biggest points of attraction in the county. But they also innately know just how fortunate they are. And even when some move away, they never forget the blessings they maintained.



My trip involved sitting on porches and letting time roll with no phone and no worries. Standing at gas pumps, seated in restaurants, walking on main streets and even serenaded on a green, grassy field next to a railroad track where a train conductor seeing my shining iron pony gave me a blasting, extended train whistle to end all train whistles! Up and back, it was different cities with the same feelings; the same people. I developed the love and connection I knew I would. If you treat people well, love your neighbors and love your country, regardless of pretty much any other attributes, these people will take you in and treat you like family.





WHY CHOOSE A MILITARY JUNIOR COLLEGE (MJC)?

Only Four Military Junior Colleges (MJC) offer the unique opportunity to become an Army Officer in only two years.

WHY CHOOSE A MILITARY JUNIOR COLLEGE (MJC)?

- Cadets can become an Army Officer in only 2 Years through the MJC Early Commissioning Program (ECP)
- Full Tuition Scholarships are available for those who qualify
- Paid a Book Allowance of \$1,200 per year
- Paid a personal stipend of \$420/Month while attending class
- Paid as a Cadet/E-5 in the Army Reserve or National Guard if enrolled in the Simultaneous Membership Program (over \$300/month)
- MJC ECP Commissioned Officers qualify for the Education Assistance Program, which pays full tuition and fees for the remaining two years at the follow-on college and degree you choose OR elect to receive \$10,000/year room and board
- MJC Commissionees earn time in service during their Junior and Senior year of college for promotions and retirement purposes

For more information, including schools and locations, please visit goarmy.com/drillnation



WHY CHOOSE A SENIOR MILITARY COLLEGE (SMC)?

Six Senior Military Colleges (SMC) in our Nation have Army ROTC programs which are part of a Corps of Cadets.

WHY CHOOSE A SENIOR MILITARY COLLEGE?

- Graduates of Senior Military Colleges are Cadets who will be assessed onto Active Duty upon recommendation from their Professor of Military Science, they do not have to compete nationally for Active Duty
- Full Tuition Scholarships are available for those who qualify
- Paid a personal stipend of \$420/Month while attending class
- Paid a Book Allowance of \$1,200 per year
- SMC's are steeped in tradition and offer students an organized lifestyle, enhanced leadership training, and superb training facilities
- Cadets may choose to commission into the Army Reserve or the National Guard through the Guaranteed Reserve Forces Duty option
- Cadets quickly take on leadership roles and experience every level of leadership from top to bottom
- SMC's have many of their own training facilities

For more information, including schools and locations, please visit goarmy.com/drillnation



National Military Drill Hall of Fame

Begun in 2012 with 13 original inductees, the National Drill Hall of Fame was formed to recognize those individuals present & past who have made immeasurable contributions to either competition or performance drill. Annually at the National High School Drill Team Championships each May, at least one more name is added to the illustrious hall. These individuals and groups have been earmarked as the standard bearers to lead all others. Scores of other individuals and groups were considered and most all brought extremely strong credentials to the table. We will always cherish the impact each has made to the drill world and we look forward to expanding this field annually each May at the National H.S. Drill Team Championships.

2020 Drill Hall of Fame Inductee

- Baron Friedrich von Steuben
- John "Black Jack" Pershing & the Pershing Rifles
- The U.S. Army Drill Team (TOG)
- Mr. Paul Naki & The King's Guard
- The National High School Drill Team Championships & Sports Network International
- Mr. Constantine H. Wilson & New Guard America
- USMC Silent Drill Platoon
- USAF Honor Guard Drill Team
- LaSalle Military Academy
- CMSgt Frank Killebrew & Oxon Hill H.S.
- Major Odell Graves
- MGySgt Douglas Dunlapp & Fern Creek High School
- LTC James Rose & Riderettes Theodore Roosevelt H.S.
- Major Greg Mikesell & Black Watch Winston Churchill H.S.
- MSgt. Ken Madden
- CDR Armando Solis & Flour Bluff H.S.
- SGM Johnny Snodgrass & The Belles of the Blue Knights
- LCDR Ken Bingham, CPO Edwin Morales & Boca Raton NJROTC
- MSgt Richard Killian, John Jay H.S. AFJROTC, & the Silver Eagles
- SMSgt Antonio Ruiz & Tom C. Clark H.S. AFJROTC
- Mr. Abdul Al-Romaizan
- Mr. Donovan White
- 1stSgt. Christopher Borghese
- MSgt. Dick Lebel
- LtCol. Peter Duggan
- Capt. Joe Matthews
- Mr. M. Keith Warren
- SGM John Gissel & Marmion Academy Flanagan Rifles Drill Team
- MSG Lawrence Badia & Francis Lewis HS Patriot Pride & Patriot Guard Drill Teams
- Mr. Matthew Wendling
- Blue Aces - Brandeis HS

Blue Aces - Brandeis High School

Brandeis High School began as a new program in the San Antonio, Texas area opened just over ten years ago. They have attended the National High School Drill Championships every year since the school opened in the 2008-2009 school year. Counting the numbers of cadets that had ever put on a JROTC uniform that first year (with a finger or two left over), humble beginnings were expected for several early years. Soon we learned the level of talent would be higher than that and the team would rise to meet and then quickly exceed any expectations ever before seen in JROTC.



To say the Blue Aces have made history in their short period in existence may be the biggest understatement in JROTC. Since the inception of the team in 2008 they have amassed 7 district championships, 8 state championships, 7 Air Force championships, 3 regional championships, 6 runners up National Championships and three national championships in just 11 years. They have literally started from ZERO to quickly become one of the most powerful unarmed drill & ceremony units in the nation. And their success shows no signs of stopping. In their inaugural year nobody had ever HEARD of this program. They literally came out of nowhere to capture the Air Force State Drill Championship. I think the only people more blown away than the team members were the instructors. This has never been done to our knowledge in the history of military drill in the great state of Texas in any single service championship.

Despite their solid finish in Texas, as a brand new program with totally raw drillers, the event manager Sports Network International reached out to the program and asked if they planned to enter the Challenge Level competition of the National H.S. Drill Team Championships. Long-time attendee of the Nationals Ken Madden who was handling the bulk of the team logistics answered, "If I win anything, I'm the 31st best team in the country. No way, put us in the Masters Level event."

Working their tails off and knowing they were to compete against the best teams in the nation, the Blue Aces were up to the task as they earned first in the regulation phase and 5th overall against the best all-service units in the nation! Then the "streak" started (c/cmdr listed): 2011 Runner-Ups (Dawn Naville), 2012-2013 Runner-Ups (Janie Rosales), 2014 Runner-Ups (Jessica Krzywonski), 2015 National Champions (Kim Gilson), 2016 Runner-Ups (Alejandra Seminario), 2017 Runner-Ups (Karen Saniel), 2018 National Champions (Monique Bienan), and 2019 National Champions (Juliana DelGuidice). The current commander of the unit is Mia Ramirez and the team was totally primed for excellence in 2020 only to have the event canceled due to the Covid-19 crisis. This team seems unstoppable and the question comes, "who has the talent to take them down?". I guess 2021 will be their first of many tests.



The team has so many "firsts" but no one person has made this happen. Something else that has NEVER happened in the 35+ year history of the Nationals? The Blue Aces have maintained this excellence with three different coaches! Major Luis Antequera the original coach directed their early success for the first three years. MSgt. James Mangiafico poured his efforts into their rise to true national excellence for the next six years. Current coach and DHoF inductee MSgt Ken Madden has handled both the Unarmed Blue Aces and the Armed Nighthawks team for the last three years. Quite a testament to both the instructors and the cadets.

The ladies have truly lived their now famous motto, "*It's not me, it's WE and WE are the Blue Aces*".

For the full stories and details on all inductees, please visit: <http://www.drillhalloffame.com>



WORLD DRILL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Dare Mighty Things

Where the Elite Meet to Compete!

Drillers from across America and the world make the World Drill Championships their annual home each & every May. The "Worlds" remain the finest collection of post high school exhibition drillers ever assembled in a single location each & every year. Founded by Drill Hall of Fame member and former nationally-ranked driller, Mr. Abdul Al-Romaizan, the WDC welcomes all drillers who feel they are ready to be a part of the best drill weekend ever presented. However, as with everything else, the pandemic put a halt to all in-person gatherings preventing these incredible drillers from enjoying their once-a-year reunion in Daytona Beach. But these die-hard drillers could not be deterred. MSgt Herman Ybarra coordinated an on-line video event so the World Drill Championships could still be held in 2020.

This international event is operated for independent, college, military reserve or active-duty drillers. With the motto, "Dare Mighty Things", the WDC serves to take drill to the next level beyond the high school arena. The WDC is simply without parallel - ask anyone who has competed. Drillers of all skill levels are urged to be a part of the brother and sisterhood that is the trademark of the WDC. There is simply nothing like it!



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KEEP THE FIRE BURNING!

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SET YOUR CALENDAR TODAY!

For more information on the finest gathering of post-high school, professional drill talent ever assembled in one location, please visit the event website at:

WORLDDRILLCHAMPIONSHIPS.COM

2020 Solo Exhibition Winners

First Place: **Samuel Gozo**

Second Place: **Neriah Guerin**

Third Place: **Alex Elkin**

2020 Tandem Exhibition Winners

First Place: **Ryan & Guerin**

Second Place: **Arroyo & Simmonds**

Third Place: **Paulino & Ramos**



NATIONALS S C R A P B O O K

A Look Around the Nationals and JROTC Universe



ZION BENTON, NATION FORD SWEEP PODIUMS AT JROTC AIR RIFLE SERVICE CHAMPIONSHIPS
With Covid wreaking havoc to JROTC competitions, it is awesome to put forth schools and cadets who excelled prior to the shutdowns! In February 2020, JROTC cadets gathered together in the north, south and west to compete in the scholastic JROTC Three-Position Air Rifle Service Championships. Competitors at each location are scored based on individual shooting as well as overall team accomplishments. Athletes compete in sporter or precision air rifle disciplines.

Nation Ford H.S. (shown above) earned both 1st and 3rd places in the Marine Corps sporter team match. Notable performances were given by sporter team members of Zion Benton H.S. in Illinois (Navy) as well as sporter members from Nation Ford H.S. in South Carolina (Marine Corps) – each securing the Top 3 places at their event locations. Because of their talented athletes, the teams ultimately went on to earn first place in their respective team competitions as well.

Also containing top athletes were precision teams Kaiserslautern H.S., AE (Air Force, Germany), Joshua H.S. (Navy) and Granbury (Marine Corps) H.S., both of Texas. The teams earned two of three spots on the podium. Kaiserslautern H.S. in Germany led the Air Force precision team event. The JROTC Air Rifle Service Championships is conducted by the Civilian Marksmanship Program (CMP). Congrats to all shooters on your hard work and strong efforts!



**A DIVISION OF THE NATIONALS ON-LINE?
FROM THE SURREAL TO THE VERY REAL!**
 Yes, after nearly ten years of telling teams we just couldn't see that happening, Event Manager Sports Network International has moved forward and realized the future is bright and upon us!

Having hosted on-line competitions now for nearly a decade in one form or another, combined with the now commonly accepted use of video competitions and even more importantly, the experience of JUDGING video top-level drill competitions, SNI has decided the timing is now right to expand the entry pool into the National High School Drill Team Championships by creating an on-line “virtual” competition.

The event will host both Armed & Unarmed teams. Details on the actual structure, costs and other vital information can be found via a link on the Nationals Main Page (<https://thenationals.net/nhstdc.htm>)

While the benefits to an on-line competition division are many, the deciding factors this year came down to several items. “We believe that many schools now are used to competing in this format, and certainly SNI is proficient in hosting meets in this format, so the time is simply right,” stated 32 year Competition Director for the Nationals, Justin Gates. “We have seen interest from schools across the USA and the globe. We believe this will be a great measuring stick as well as a tool for programs that have always wanted to compete at the Nationals - using Nationals judges, etc. to make this a great experience for the cadets - at a very low cost compared to flying here from Germany.” Teams are very excited to see how their scores stack up against the best of the best schools from across the nation competing on the shores of Daytona Beach in person.

Spaces are limited so look for information today and lock in your registration. Make your teams a part of the Nationals experience on-line today!



Colonel Paul Willis (ret.) Shines a Beacon for His Fortunate Schools & JROTC Cadets

Junior ROTC sees greatness in many areas - it is what they do! But there is no brighter star in the sky than Army Col. Paul Willis (ret.). He grew up in a small Mississippi town and had no exposure to anything outside his county. But after a stellar 25-year military career that opened his horizons beyond measure (including several years as a ROTC instructor at Chicago State University), he faced retirement. But he received a gift and he was again blessed to provide opportunities for others. “I still felt the passion for working with young people,” Willis stated. “I told myself, if I ever had the opportunity to work with high school students, I was going to do it.” And in 2004, a newly-retired Colonel Willis became the Director of Army Instruction with the Jackson Public Schools in Jackson, Mississippi just down the road from his hometown. “It was like divine intervention. It was perfect timing,” stated Willis.

Willis expanded on a solid existing structure and grew it to greatness developing numerous new programs to give his cadets amazing opportunities in a variety of interesting areas. “We want them to see what they can be,” Willis said. “When they get positive experiences, it broadens their horizons. It inspires them to want to do more and be more; to strive to meet their potential.”

To Col. Willis and those like him in all service branches, we salute the efforts you undertake on behalf of the kids and their families. Your efforts make our nation better. You exemplify the team model that encourages greatness and we wish you all continued success in all of your future efforts!

U.S. Space Force Takes Shape Starting in the Centennial State
If you thought the first Space Force officers would be graduating from Starfleet after solving the Kobayashi Maru, that would be a negative Ghostrider! It turns out they will be commissioning this spring in Colorado Springs.



The Air Force said about 60 of the 1,000 cadets graduating will earn commissions in the new U.S. Space Force. The practice is called cross-commissioning and is similar to Navy Midshipmen commissioning into the U.S. Marine Corps. Officials from the Air Force Academy and Air Force will be traveling to Annapolis to see how cross-commissioning works for them, but stress that the Naval Academy way is just “one solution and not The solution.”

As of now, there is no plan to offer cross-commissions into the Space Force from the U.S. Military Academy or Midshipmen at the U.S. Naval Academy. However, Army & Navy enlisted personnel will be able to transfer in the next few years. The only rank currently is General, although the rest of the rank structure is expected to mirror the Air Force.

Juniors at the Academy are already being counseled on potential career paths in the Air Force, including intelligence, cyber, acquisitions and engineering. The cadets that will be the first Space Force Commissioned Officers will have a job simply referred to as Space Operations. The majority of the Officers commissioned will have jobs that focus on the direct mission at hand. As of now, officer and enlisted roles that are considered support will have those spots filled by members of the Air Force.

There are 16,000 individuals assigned to the Space Force and one official Officer, the Chief of Space Operations, General John “Jay” Raymond. The military portion of the 16,000 personnel will, at some point, have to transfer into the Space Force. Officers will have to resign their commissions, and enlisted will have to re-enlist into the new branch. The Air Force will be the first to be allowed to transfer in starting this year. The Army and Navy will have to wait until 2022 for the option to transfer.

Space Force personnel will be located primarily in three states; California, Colorado and Florida.

U.S. Army Golden Knights Jump Team to "Drop In" during the upcoming Raider Championships in late February in South Georgia



Cadets will get a huge treat when the U.S.

Army aerial demonstration team, **The Army Golden Knights**, descends upon the **Raider Nationals Weekend** in Molena, Georgia the final weekend of February. They steal the show like no others! The Golden Knights are one of three Department of Defense-sanctioned aerial demonstration teams, along with the U.S. Navy Blue Angels and U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds.

The Fort Bragg, North Carolina-based team has four parachute units, a tandem team, and an aviation unit. It uses five dedicated aircraft to perform at both domestic and international events. Since 1962 the Golden Knights have performed in more than 16,000 shows. They've earned the Army more than 400 national championships and more than 60 world championships. With the event pushed back to late February 2021, it is an amazing honor to have such a high profile part of Army excellence crashing the big stage with thousands of cadets on-hand.

U.S. Army JROTC Continues to Look Hard at a Westward Expansion Involving the Drill / Raider / Fitness Universe

While Covid has thrown a proverbial sticky bomb into the tracks of the Army JROTC plans to expand co-curricular activities, those plans are still smoldering and on the radar screens of those with the power to make them happen!

Both SNI and Army JROTC Cadet Command staff have undertaken extensive facility reviews for sites across the midwest and far west in preparation for a future roll-out. As programs come back on-line and demand continues to grow, expansion is a matter of when, not if!



SNI will be working with U.S. Army Cadet Command, Brigades and Areas from all services to hopefully formulate successful, first-class competitions that can grow to support the growing interest from Western schools seeking championship events closer to home. This will allow many schools to no longer be forced to travel across the country to attend. Western Army JROTC schools should keep their antenna up as this event dream becomes a reality.



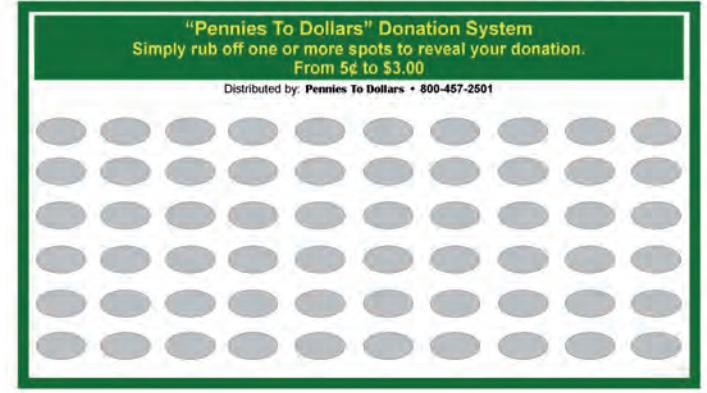
Virtual Drill Learning Pops Smoke and Drill-Team Dynamics Leads the Way!

Drill-Team Dynamics has been on the front lines of quality in-person school-based JROTC drill training and preparation for almost a decade at this point. No group services more JROTC cadets and instructors, can point to more excellence on display, and they remain the go-to people on such efforts.

Obviously with the large number of school closures and training limitations in place nationally, it can be difficult to bring their excellence on-site for training. BUT FEAR NOT! DTD has perfected training techniques ON-LINE to sharpen your teams both individually and as a group! Armed & Unarmed, Basic Drill & Exhibition Drill, Commanders...and far more.

Use the link we have included below to begin your journey and learn more on how to help your unit gain proficiency in all areas of competition military drill ON-LINE! <http://drill-dynamics.com>.

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