

NAVY JROTC MAKES A SPLASH IN PENSACOLA

With the occasional roar of practicing F/A-18 Blue Angels Hornets screaming overhead, the **2002 Navy Nationals** event proved to be the most exciting and successful event to date. No other JROTC competition provides a more well-rounded test of overall unit strength than the two-day Navy JROTC Nationals - Academic, Athletic & Drill Championships. Hot weather and even hotter performances were the orders of the day as twenty-seven schools from across the United States competed for the chance to bring home the overall Navy Championship.

The event opened on Friday morning with the intense Unit Personnel Inspection (UPI). Cadets spent weeks preparing to stand before the nine well-trained Navy NCO's that made up the UPI judging corps. When the scores were tallied, **Nease HS** from **St. Augustine, Florida** pushed through the victory. Nease impressed the judges with their solid bearing. The well-prepared unit from **Cape Fear HS** from **Cape Fear, North Carolina** powered through to a 2nd place UPI finish, just barely ahead of always-tough **Flour Bluff HS** from **Corpus Christi, Texas**.

The event then moved outside for the athletic competition. Scorching daytime temperatures may have helped schools from the Sunshine State as the Athletic Championship came down to a two-horse race. When the track cooled down, **Oviedo HS** from **Oviedo, Florida** flew like the wind to gain an Overall Athletic Championship by just 8 points (out of a possible 1000) over **Lake Howell HS** from **Winter Park, Florida**. While both schools received max points within the Oval Relay competition and strong scores within male/female push-ups and curl-ups, a slightly faster Shuttle relay time earned Oviedo the Championship. **Princess Anne HS** from **Virginia Beach, Virginia** put together a very solid 3rd place finish, with maximum scores in the male & female curl-up competition.

After a sun-drenched afternoon, teams quickly grabbed dinner and hustled inside for the pressure-packed Academic Exam. Schools formed 10-cadet academic teams with each cadet taking a 100-question test on relevant Navy JROTC

Academic, Athletic & Drill Championships Pensacola NAS Pensacola, Florida April 5th-6th, 2002

material. When the pencils were lowered, **Nease HS** again grabbed an overall event championship to go with their UPI victory. Their victory was propelled by Cadets Hawkins and O'Donoghue who scored 92 and 90 respectively. Their victory was hard-fought over the tough competitors from **Princess Anne HS**, who earned a 2nd place finish. Multi-year academic exam champion **Flour Bluff HS** had to be a bit surprised as they were relegated to a strong but unfamiliar 3rd place finish.

Cadets slept quickly before jumping into their Summer Blue uniforms to begin the drill competition phase of the event on Saturday morning in the massive A.D. Hangar at NAS Pensacola's Cavalier Hall. Comprised of five team events worth over one-third of the total national championship points, drill superiority remains the backbone of any quality unit. Thousands of hours of hard work are necessary to shine at this level, making all of the performances put forth worthy of admiration and congratulation.

Clark HS from **Las Vegas, Nevada** lit up the venue with their all-around awesome display of drill. Paced by a 1st place Unarmed Exhibition routine, the crack desert drill team left no opening for others, finishing no lower than 6th place in all five drill events. **Oviedo HS** gained a convincing 2nd place finish, while **Flour Bluff HS** competed well to grab the third place drill finish.

The spectacular Awards Ceremony was again held at the National Museum of Naval Aviation located on NAS Pensacola. This historic facility with its hallowed halls is the largest and most beautiful air and space museum in the world.

The Ceremony was kicked off by a brief welcome message by Museum President, Vice Admiral John H. Fetterman (ret.). The opening ceremony then proceeded with a poignant message from the event guest speaker Vice Admiral Alfred G. Harms, Jr., Chief of Naval Education & Training. His words of wisdom enthralled the audience and concluded with a thunderous standing ovation.

The presentation of trophies kept everyone on edge as no single school was wearing a path to the stage. Despite failing to win a single first place trophy, the overall balance of **Flour Bluff HS** was too strong as this powerhouse unit won the National Championship for the 6th straight year, amassing a total score of 4,339. Scoring for the Runner-up and 3rd place finish was extremely tight. By just 15 points, **Princess Anne HS** eked out the tough victory for 2nd place with a total score of 4,244 over the hard-charging cadets from **Cape Fear HS** who gained 4,229.

NAS Pensacola was an exceptional host, providing limitless logistical and personnel support -- and it will again be the home of the 2003 NJROTC Nationals this Spring. Many of the Navy's finest are already working hard to prepare for the **April 4th-5th, 2003** event.

SNI remains confident that the upcoming 2003 NJROTC Nationals will present the most AWESOME display of Naval excellence found anywhere on the planet!



Event report-in can be an intimidating experience when you stare into the eyes of a hard-boiled Marine Head Judge at the Navy Nationals competition.