

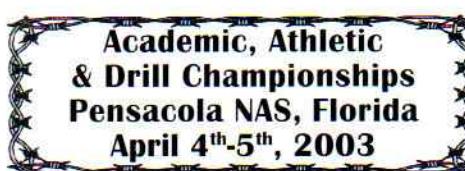
Navy Nationals Brings Excellence Onboard

On the shores of the Gulf of Mexico with the Blue Angels practicing excellence above, the **2003 NJROTC Nationals** cadets put forth excellence below, giving the spectators another nail-biting, seat-squirming affair! No other JROTC competition provides a more thorough test of unit talent than the two-day **NJROTC Nationals - Academic, Athletic & Drill Championships**. In all facets of the competition, Navy pride was on the line as cadets gave a 110% effort in the attempt to bring home the Navy Championship.

The event opens with Navy Chiefs giving every competing cadet the once-over in Unit Personnel Inspection (UPI). Summer Blues were sparkling as cadets fought back nerves while interacting with the tough judges. When the scores were tallied, **Flour Bluff HS** from **Corpus Christi, Texas** took home the victory. The multi-year NJROTC National Champions eased to victory with cool confidence, gaining 1,346 points out of a possible 1,500 total points. **Boca Raton HS** from **Boca Raton, Florida** earned 1,333 points in grabbing 2nd place, while **McDowell HS** from **Marion, North Carolina** surprised the field with a very strong 3rd place finish (1,317 points).

The event then moved outside to overcast skies for the arduous athletic competition. Once again, **Lake Howell HS**'s powerhouse unit from **Winter Park, Florida** stole the show, earning 934 out of a possible 1,000 points. Strength across the board gave these hard workers their victory. Just missing in 2nd place was **Princess Anne HS** of **Virginia Beach, Virginia**. Great team scores got them close, with only a soft male push-ups score costing these cadets a chance at the Athletic victory. Grabbing 3rd place were the flyers from **Valdosta HS** in **Valdosta, Georgia**! Looking like a high school track squad, these cadets nearly maxed out the Oval and Shuttle Relay scores as the skies cleared, the track dried, and the sun shown bright the rest of the weekend!

Teams hustled to the chow hall to grab dinner before returning for the pressure-filled Academic Exam. Schools formed 10-cadet academic teams, taking 100-question tests on



relevant NJROTC material. When the pencils hit the desks, three schools really set the standard. **Princess Anne HS** smoked the competition, nabbing first place by answering an amazing 900 out of 1,000 questions correctly! "PA" needed virtually every point as **Flour Bluff HS** gained a solid second place finish with 893 questions answered. In the academic mix every year, **Nease HS** from **St. Augustine, Florida** amassed 878 correct answers for third place, FAR outdistancing their nearest competitor by a staggering 81 points!

Cadets hit their racks for a few hours of sleep before jumping into the crowd-pleasing portion of the event, the drill competition. Comprised of five team events worth over one-third of the total national championship points, drill superiority remains the backbone of any quality unit, and three schools clearly excelled in this area.

Flour Bluff HS dominated the drill competition portion of the NJROTC Nationals. Capturing 1st place in four of the five team events, Flour Bluff's only missing piece of the puzzle was an uncharacteristic run of rifle drops with their armed exhibition team. **Lake Howell HS** kept the pressure up in gaining a solid 2nd place finish, while **Boca Raton HS** easily distanced their closest competitor for a 3rd place overall drill finish.

The red carpet was again rolled out for the event awards ceremony at the **National Museum of Naval Aviation** (www.naval-air.org). This historic facility on the grounds of NAS Pensacola remains an unparalleled presentation of Naval aviation history. The museum remains one of the largest and most beautiful air and space museums in the world.

The closing ceremony began with a brief welcome message by Museum President, **Vice Admiral John H. Fetterman (ret.)**. The ceremony was

then highlighted by a keynote speech from distinguished guest speaker **Rear Admiral Ann E. Rondeau, Commander, NTC**. Her captivating words and the standing ovation she received set the tone for a very special evening.

As the presentation of trophies proceeded, the handwriting appeared to be on the wall. By capturing the Overall Drill Championship, the Unit Personnel Inspection, and taking 2nd place in the Academic Exam, **Flour Bluff HS** cruised to a 7th consecutive NJROTC Nationals Championship. With a phenomenal score of 4,751 points, the victory left many to wonder what can defeat this immovable object? Grabbing the National Runner-up title was **Lake Howell HS** with a solid score of 4,537. Scoring for the 3rd, 4th and 5th place overall was very tight with **Boca Raton HS** (4,467) just surpassing **Princess Anne HS** (4,447) who barely nudged past **Nease HS** (4,436).

NAS Pensacola proved again to be an exceptional host, providing limitless logistical and personnel support. Many of the Navy's finest JROTC units are already gearing up for the 2004 event, scheduled to return to NAS Pensacola on **April 2nd-3rd**. Hats off to all of these NJROTC units for their hard work, dedication and pursuit of excellence!



Navy Nationals color guard units compete under the steely-eyed glare of the seasoned, dedicated U.S. Marine Corps judges of NAS Pensacola.