



SFC Timothy Briggs and SFC Jeremy Lemma celebrate having crossed the finish line of the final event of the Best Ranger Competition on 12 April at Fort Benning, Ga. The team finished first in this year's competition.

Photos by Patrick A. Albright

ARTB TEAM TAKES TOP HONORS AT 2015 BRC

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For an Army-leading 13th time, a team from the Airborne and Ranger Training Brigade (ARTB) earned top honors at the 2015 David E. Grange Jr. Best Ranger Competition.

SFC Timothy Briggs and SFC Jeremy Lemma were able to best a field of 51 teams, of which 24 made it to the finish line.

The 32nd annual competition, held 10-12 April at Fort Benning, Ga., challenged 102 Soldiers both physically and mentally and recognized the team who could move furthest, fastest, and fight hardest in a matter of 60 hours of strenuous activity.

"Essentially, it's a state of mind, living the Ranger Creed," said MAJ John Vickery, commander, A Company, 4th Ranger Training Battalion. "These guys are born with those instincts, it is not something they take on once they start to train for Best Ranger; it is something they live on a daily basis."

Tabbed and experienced in all events the 51 teams



On 10 April, the first day of competition, Best Ranger competitors tackled the Malvesti Obstacle Course, three buddy runs, a pond swim, an urban assault course, stress shoot, land navigation course, and a foot march.

Day three of the 2015 Best Ranger Competition included the Darby Queen Obstacle Course, a helocast, a combat water survival assessment, and a final buddy run to the finish line at Camp Rogers on 12 April at Fort Benning.

faced in the competition, Rangers and instructors agreed that winning the Best Ranger Competition involved keeping a pace.

"It's running your own race," said 1LT David Matthews with Team 25 from the 25th Infantry Division. "One event at a time is all it is."

From the Malvesti Obstacle Course, Urban Assault Course, a spot jump, a helocast drop from a Black Hawk helicopter into Victory Pond to an unknown distance swim, a foot march and several buddy runs, the competitors are tested on numerous platforms of performance.

"One thing that Rangers pride themselves on is being able to get to an objective through land, sea, or air," Vickery said.

The competition historically includes 26 events on average which vary year to year. There are legacy events, which have been a part of the competition since its inception, and mystery events. Vickery said on Day 1, competitors are on their feet about 40 miles.

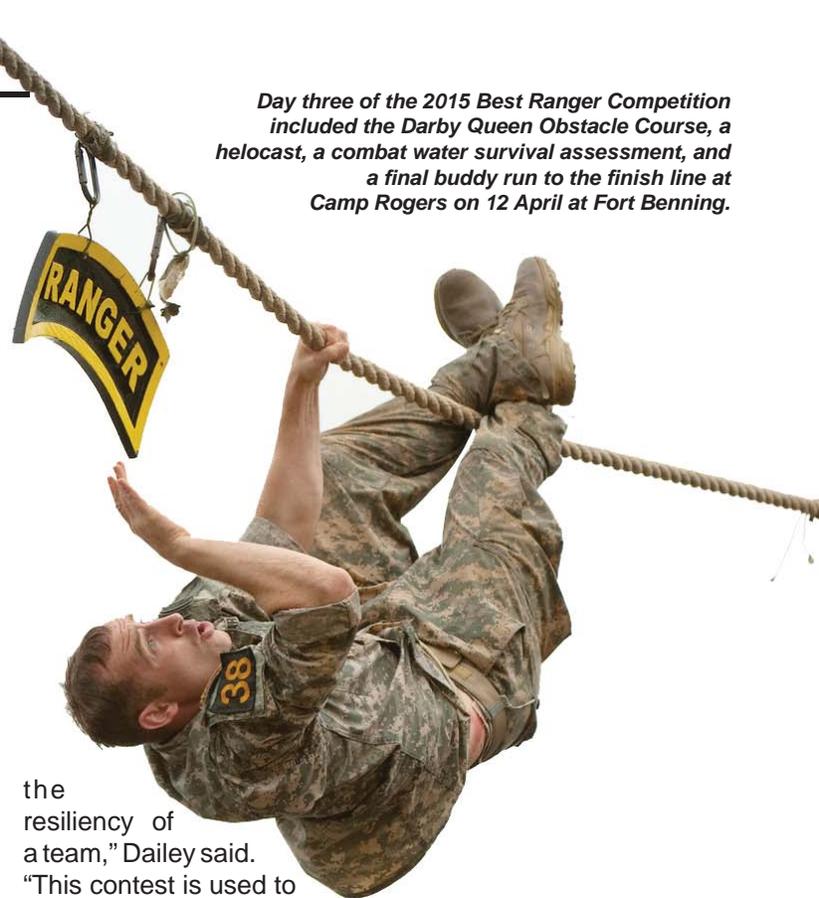
"Day one is all about endurance ... a lot of running, a lot of land navigation, a lot of swimming and then, finally, the foot march, which is the biggest event of the day that's weighted the most and probably what most competitors train for," Vickery said.

The foot march was the final event of Day 1, and the top 24 were allowed to advance to Day 2. In days two and three, remaining teams participated in night and day stakes, night orienteering, the Darby Queen, a combat water survival assessment, and final buddy run to end the competition.

"... I watched perseverance beyond what I expected," said MG Scott Miller, Maneuver Center of Excellence commanding general. "I watched as some people didn't make it to the finish line, but I didn't see anybody quit. I saw people who fell over because their body wouldn't move anymore. I saw partners taking extra weight. I saw that perseverance through adversity, which is something our military needs to know all about."

SMA Daniel Dailey, who served as the guest speaker at the competition's award ceremony, said those who finished, no matter their final standing, deserve recognition.

"Not only is the Best Ranger Competition a test of individual strength and stamina, it's a test of readiness and



the resiliency of a team," Dailey said.

"This contest is used to motivate others to exceed the standards. These competitors are expected to return to their units and pass on the skills they've learned as a result of the grueling experience they have endured during this competition..."

"Make no mistake, a team that can say it completed the Best Ranger Competition has plenty to boast. That's why I'm in awe of your fortitude," Dailey continued. "...These Soldiers have not only achieved something for themselves, but they have ensured the legacy, traditions, and honor of the Rangers will once again endure. I am honored to be among these Soldiers. I am proud to represent them as their sergeant major. After witnessing all of you (this weekend), you have reminded me how proud I am to call myself a Ranger."

(This article was adapted from articles written by Nick Duke and Noelle Wiehe that appeared in the 15 April issue of the Bayonet and Saber newspaper.)

2015 Best Ranger Final Standings

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|---|---|---|
| 1. Team 38 — SFC Jeremy Lemma and SFC Timothy Briggs, ARTB | SSG Joseph Liddle, 82nd Airborne Division | 17. Team 34 — CPT Kevin A'Hearn and 1LT Ben Zakariasen, 3rd Infantry Division |
| 2. Team 10 — CPT Robert Killian and CPT Travis Cornwall, National Guard | 10. Team 33 — MAJ Casey Mills and MSG Christopher Nelms, U.S. Army Special Operations Command | 18. Team 21 — 1LT Timothy Robberstad and 1LT Andrew Nieminski, 4th Infantry Division |
| 3. Team 27 — SSG Philip Jewah and SGT Thomas Malphrus, 75th Ranger Regiment | 11. Team 5 — SFC Jesus Zuniga and SGT Matthew Hiebner, 173rd Airborne Brigade | 19. Team 6 — SGT Elliot Cochran and SPC Bridger Van Ness, 173rd Airborne Brigade |
| 4. Team 39 — SFC David Floutier and SSG Nicholas Fenton, ARTB | 12. Team 51 — 1LT Colin Raymond and 1LT Eric Kim, 7th Infantry Division | 20. Team 22 — 1LT Michael Matthaeus and 1LT Roy Glasgow, 1st Cavalry Division |
| 5. Team 36 — SSG Michael Roggero and SSG Joshua Rolfes, ARTB | 13. Team 28 — SSG Charles Martinez and SSG Charles Gonzalez, 75th Ranger Regiment | 21. Team 20 — MAJ David David and 1LT Matthew Otterstedt, 4th Infantry Division |
| 6. Team 37 — SFC Antonio Paparella and SSG Michael Bockman, ARTB | 14. Team 45 — CPT Trevor Shirk and CPT Kevon Raymond, Fort Jackson, S.C. | 22. Team 3 — CPT Kristoffer Chamales and 1LT Peter Eulenstein, 82nd Airborne Division |
| 7. Team 25 — 1LT David Matthews and 1LT Kyle Cobb, 25th Infantry Division | 15. Team 19 — 1LT Brian Rowen and SSG James Smith, 101st Airborne Division | 23. Team 7 — SFC Keith Batchelor and SFC Dannon Sunga, 7th Special Forces Group |
| 8. Team 1 — 1LT James Teskey and SSG Theodore Guinn, 82nd Airborne Division | 16. Team 48 — CPT Jay Brend and CPT Mark Gaudet, 199th Infantry Brigade | 24. Team 42 — 1LT Christian Groom and 1LT Brett Schuck, 1st Infantry Division |
| 9. Team 2 — 1LT Herbert Jockcheck and | | |