

# RANGER SCHOOL CONTINUES TO DEVELOP CLOSE COMBAT AND DIRECT FIRE BATTLE SKILLS

## RANGER TRAINING BRIGADE

Since 1952, Ranger School has prepared Soldiers for leadership positions within our Army. The primary mission of the Ranger Training Brigade (RTB) is to conduct the Ranger course to further develop the combat arms skills of officer and enlisted volunteers whose primary mission is to engage in close combat and direct fire battle. The RTB will return to the Army a mentally and physically tough leader able to plan, organize and conduct small unit combat operations in any environment. The RTB has looked for opportunities to incorporate elements of the contemporary operational environment (COE) in both Iraq and Afghanistan into existing training while continuing to stress the fundamentals of leadership.

The Benning Phase, which is the crawl stage of Ranger School, focuses on the basic skills which will be needed throughout the course. Examples of COE-driven changes include incorporating intelligence-driven missions which focus on improvised explosive device (IED) cells. Opposing force (OPFOR) uniforms include clothing commonly seen in the Middle East. Finally, numerous rotary wing insertions/extractions are conducted replicating operations conducted in Iraq and Afghanistan.

As students enter the mountain phase of Ranger School, they receive additional COE-related training. Students continue to receive intel-driven missions while the number of air assaults during this



*Rangers are proficient in air, ground and waterborne movements. These Rangers employ an inflatable assault raft.*

phase increases. Truck movements into the mountains are interrupted by IED strikes and ambushes. Ranger students are trained to secure the damaged vehicle and begin the evacuation process on injured Soldiers injured, all while fending off a determined OPFOR.

Finally, during the Florida phase of Ranger school, the level of realism involved in the scenarios is increased. Urban operations (UO) training is done in mock-ups, teaching Soldiers room clearing techniques. Student patrols are conducted out of combat outposts against a complex OPFOR. Students are given a targeting package detailing an insurgent cell leader whom they track throughout the phase. Students talk and direct attack aviation in support of their missions, to include AC-130 “Spectre” gunships. Ranger training in Florida culminates with an attack on a multi-room, multi-floor objective where the target is finally captured.

The fundamentals, which allow a Soldier to be successful regardless of the COE, continue to be the focus within Ranger School. These fundamentals produce a competent and confident Ranger leader that is physically and mentally tough; embodies the Ranger and Soldier’s Creeds; and is able to plan a mission, organize men and equipment for combat, and execute/lead a combat mission regardless of the environment. The RTB will continue to look for ways to use the COE within the framework of Ranger School.



Courtesy photos

*Crossing a water obstacle presents no barrier to these Ranger students.*