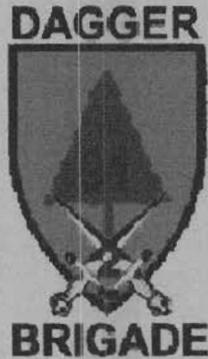




June 06, 2003

Teams conduct a foot orienteering section in the Florissant Fossil Beds National Monument using a 1:15000 scale US Orienteering Federation maps. Teams locate 8 controls.



2nd Brigade, 91st Division

DAGGER CHALLENGE

91 kilometers of intense back country experience, designed to push our brigade's finest to the extreme in a 24 hr test of physical endurance and mental stamina set against the imposing terrain of the Colorado Rocky Mountains

Event Description

The 2nd Brigade Dagger Challenge was a multi sport endurance race that pitted two teams of 4 from each battalion in the 2nd Brigade, 91st Division against each other as they traversed approximately 91 kilometers of grueling terrain in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado. The event is designed to require an average of 24 hours of non-stop racing. Competitors were required to navigate the route while performing a variety of disciplines by day and night to include:

- Orienteering
- Trekking
- Canoeing
- Rappelling
- Ascending/Climbing
- Mystery Events

Course Overview

Section 1: Florissant to Blue Mountain

Phase 1: Bike and Run

Teams of four are provided two mountain bikes and required to complete a 6-mile run using the most efficient method possible for their team capabilities.

Phase 2: Orienteering

Phase 3: Trek and Climbing Wall

Teams trek cross-country from Florissant through Sanborn Western Camps on the way to Blue Mountain. Enroute, teams encounter a climbing wall, which they must ascend while tied together in pairs.

Section 2: Blue Mountain to Eleven Mile Canyon

Phase 1: Foot and Mountain Bike Orienteering

Teams are reunited with their mountain bikes and given 9 additional control points to plot. They must then determine the most effective bike or foot route to locate all of the points in the most expeditious manner possible.

Phase 2: Trek to Eleven Mile Canyon

Teams move cross country from Blue Mountain through Wagon Tongue Gulch and in to Eleven Mile Canyon

Section 3: Eleven Mile Canyon to Eleven-Mile Reservoir

Phase 1: Rope Section

Teams conduct two separate 50-meter mechanical ascent sections, traverse the top of Pine Cone Dome then conduct a 300 ft rappel.

Phase 2: Trek to Eleven-Mile Reservoir

Teams move cross-country to Eleven Mile Reservoir

Section 4: Eleven-Mile Reservoir

Teams conduct open water navigation in canoes, locating 10 control points located along the shoreline of Eleven Mile Reservoir.

Section 5: Eleven-Mile Reservoir to Lake George

Teams are given 4 duffel bags of team gear and a packhorse. They are required to mount the duffels on the horse and then navigate 11 miles cross country, leading the horse to the end point at Mule Creek Outfitters.

Section 6: Mystery Event: Firing Range

Teams rotate through four different weapon systems (M16, AK47, M9 pistol, Six Gun) and engage timed targets. The total score of the team will translate to a time reduction of the teams overall course time.



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The Dagger Challenge

Final Standings pending confirmation of split times

Team Name	Unit	Overall Ranking	Section Winners
Desk Jockeys	1st MOB	1st Place	Fastest Open Water Navigation
The Weapons of Mass Destruction	1/361 EN	2nd Place Overall	Pack Horse Trek
Warhawg 1	1/360 IN	3rd Place	
Stallion	3/362 AR	4th Place	Fastest Ropes Section
Team Red Leg	2/362 FA	5th Place	2 nd Place Tie
Team Spearhead	HHD 2/91	6th Place	
Team Renegades	1/362 ADA	7th Place	
Team Crazy	3/361 CS/CSS	8th Place	
Coyote	2/361 CS/CSS	9th Place	
Phantom Raiders	3/360 CS/CSS	10th Place	
Warhawg 2	1/360 IN	Unranked: incomplete team	
8 Something	S3 2/91	Unranked: missed CP 29	
Team CDA	3/360 CS/CSS	Unranked: incomplete team	
Team Irish Stew	3/361 CS/CSS	Unranked: missed 27, 40-42	Fastest Bike and Run
Team Buffaloes	3/361 CS/CSS	Unranked: incomplete team	Marksmanship Award
Lost Boys	2/356 LSBn	Unranked: incomplete team	Fastest Orienteering
Team Hard Corps	1st Bde	Unranked: missed CP 42-44	
Coyote Ugly	2/361 CS/CSS	DNF	
Team Wolfpack	3/360 CS/CSS	DNF	

Correction to the Results

After a meticulous review of team times by section and revisions of the leader board, race management has identified an error in the initial rankings for the Dagger Challenge. Several teams were erroneously penalized for wait times for shuttles and Team WMD was not penalized for having missed the paddle section. While first and third place overall standings remained unchanged, 2nd place overall was earned by Team Redleg. In the Olympic tradition, given that awards were already issued, race management will resource an additional 2nd place award for Team Redleg and will not withdraw WMDs award. The final standings are in the attached spreadsheet. My apologies for the confusion and our error.

MAJ Hoffmeister



Photo by SSG Mark Crookston

Team Desk Jockeys receive 1st Place Trophies

Dagger Challenge test soldiers tactical proficiency

By Spc. Candis Mason and Spc. Mitch Armbruster
207th Military Public Affairs Detachment

FLORISSANT, Colo.—

A new breed of military competition was born in the mountains of Colorado on May 31 as the Dagger Challenge adventure race kicked off in the small town of Florissant, formerly best known for its fossil beds.

Soldiers representing units from four states converged for this first of its kind competition, which combined the teamwork and endurance ethic of adventure racing with an emphasis on military tactical proficiency.

According to Maj. Mark Hoffmeister, race director, the Dagger Challenge is a 24-hour, multi-sport endurance race, which consists of trekking, canoeing, rappelling, wall climbing and paddling, among other events that were unknown to the competing soldiers beforehand.

"It's considered mostly as an adventure race, in which teams navigate their way through rough terrain to selective checkpoints, completing each event in the time allotted," said Hoffmeister.



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This year's race consisted of 19 teams: 16 teams from the 2nd Brigade 91st Division, two teams from the 1st Mobilization Brigade, and one team traveling from Fort Bliss, Texas, Hoffmeister said.

"We have battalions originating from South Dakota, Utah, Denver and Fort Carson," said Hoffmeister about the competitors who assembled in this Colorado mountain town to test their fortitude.

"The teams were challenged with a variety of problem-solving and decision-making tasks to see how they performed under physical and emotional stress."

Organizers didn't pull any punches with the race layout. Competitors traveled more than 60 miles from start to finish. For most of the race they were allowed only a compass, protractor and map to navigate over difficult terrain – which included the 9,500-foot peak of Blue Mountain. In addition to their feet, racers also used bikes, canoes and even horses as their endurance and adaptability were pushed to the limit. Mother Nature threw a few wrenches into the works, too, as rainstorms made footing treacherous and rappelling ropes slick.

Teams found the race to be an exceptional challenge and quite demanding.

"Land navigation with the bicycle was most challenging because of hills, rain and elevation," said Capt. Brandon L. Payne, a Wolfpack team member.

"They have responded enthusiastically and embraced every challenge even when there were difficulties on the course. The teams gave it their all," said Hoffmeister.

"We knew we had to have a complete team effort," said Sgt. 1st Class Robert Swift, captain of the victorious Desk Jockeys. Swift said the team had high spirits, a sense of humor, knowledge of what their jobs would be and a high level of fitness going for it in the competition.

Swift said humor was the key to his team's success. By being able to raise each other's flagging spirits, and by watching out for teammates in difficulty, Swift said that the Desk Jockeys were able to overcome the arduous challenges by supporting each other.

Support for the event was overwhelming. From the planning stage to the finish 75 people worked to get permits and coordinate for the use of 40 mountain bikes, 40 canoes and numerous other supplies to ensure the race ran successfully. Volunteers were also on hand to help at checkpoints or with medical attention. Supporters from the brigade and family members followed the course to cheer on competitors during the event.

The effort and planning put into Dagger Challenge was not a one-time affair. Organizers expect an annual, and growing, event to continue to challenge soldiers to bring out the best in themselves and in their teammates.

Spc. Brian P. McMahon of team Lostboys said, "Tough event, really tough. The event was harder than expected."

Sgt. 1st Class Lynnlea Bible of team Coyote Ugly said, "I was proud to be here, participate, and plan to do this event again."

Peter Forbes & Nancy Verespy of VVNW, Inc



Photo by SSG Mark Crookston

Team Warhawg 2 and Veterans of the Vietnam War, Inc., sponsors of the Dagger Challenge.

Veterans of the Viet Nam War Inc. People Who Care

Team VVnW is an adventure racing team consisting of a group of dedicated athletes who share in a common mission:

1. To honor the veterans of our Armed Forces, past and present, for dedicating a part of their lives to the defense of our nation and its allies
2. To demonstrate by performance and example that no obstacle is so great that the human spirit cannot overcome it
3. To promote awareness of the goals and mission of the Veterans of the Vietnam War, Inc to the veterans of our Armed Forces as well as civilians and serving members of Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve Forces

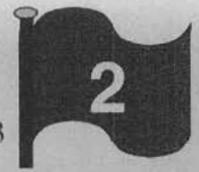
The team is comprised of Active Duty, Guard, and Reserve Service Members, Veterans, and family members of the above who share the common experience of service to our nation. Two of the team's members are currently deployed on a sustaining base mission in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

The Team competes in honor of all service members and all veterans, as well as to raise money for the Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors and awareness for the Veterans of the Vietnam War, Inc.

The goal of the Veterans of the Vietnam War, Inc., the team's title sponsor, is to serve Veterans of not only the Vietnam Era, but anyone who served in the Armed Forces of the U.S. at any time; in the Armed Forces of Allied countries during the Vietnam era; civilians who served in Vietnam in support of the U.S. forces; and concerned citizens in support of all veterans.



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The 2nd Brigade XO's Comments

On behalf of COL Miller I would like congratulate all participants and thank all of the support. All of you worked very hard to make this event successful. As a participant myself I really enjoyed having a number of you stop by my office and talk about the competition. There are many great stories about points, getting lost, the rocks, the weather and especially the Jackasses (I still don't know if jackass refers to the participants or the animals).....I could go on and on. However, I do hear talk of next year, which tells me how successful the event really was. I would like to thank MAJ Hoffmeister publicly and let him know the importance of the event, even though many of us were cussing heavily at point 16. The commander was impressed with many of the teams as he ran parts of the course. All of you are great soldier with heart and courage. We all look forward to the next challenge. Sharpen the edge!
LTC Ritz

Our Hosts at the M Lazy C Ranch



Photo by SSG Mark Crookston

Brenda and Randy Myers, owners of the M Lazy C Ranch, hosted the command post, the shooting range, and the awards dinner. COL Miller presents a coin of appreciation to Brenda.

Down the road we go



Photo by CPT Kerrie Hurd

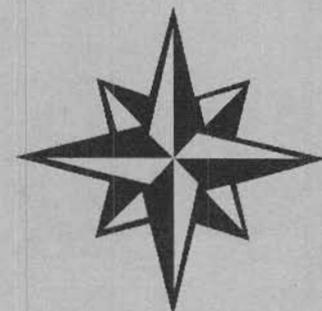
The race begins with only half the team members on bikes. At least one tire on every other bike was flat and required an air pump before the teams could continue with the race.

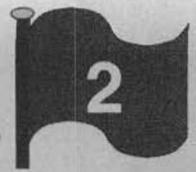
Up the mountains I climb



Photo by CPT Kerrie Hurd

SFC Eric Fies, Team Wolf Pack, hikes up a steep hill to find a point during the Bike and Hike phase.





Orienteering



Photo by CPT Kerrie Hurd

MAJ Eric Tauch, Team CDA, plots points for the Orienteering phase of Dagger Challenge.

Leaving at night



Photo by 207th Public Affairs Detachment

Some teams spent five hours on the lake during the night looking for checkpoints. More than one storm passed over the lake before sunrise.

Wall Climbing

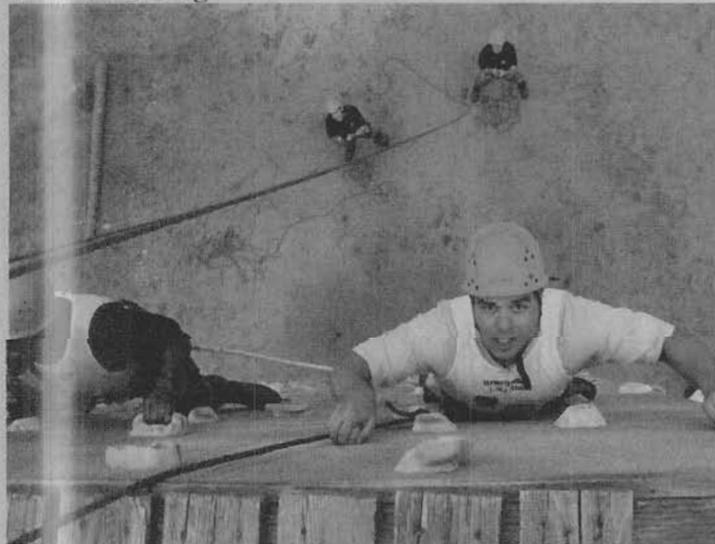


Photo by MSG Patrick Valdez

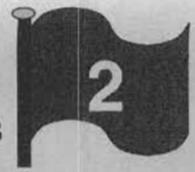
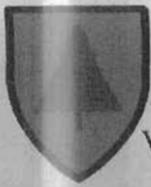
Team Renegade approaches the top of the 32-foot tall climbing wall at checkpoint 14

Returning in the morning



Photo by 207th Public Affairs Detachment

Canoe landing after going to all the checkpoints on Eleven-mile Reservoir.



At least the bike went where I wanted it to go

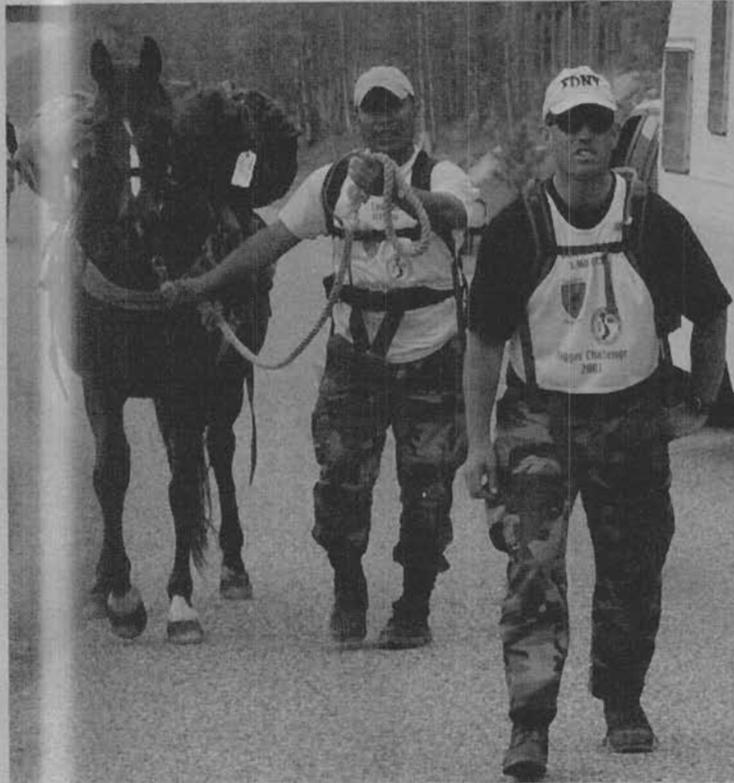


Photo by CPT Kerrie Hurd

Team Lost Boys join up with Team Phantom Raiders for the Horse Orienteering section of the course.

Many thanks to our ranch hands



Photo by SSG Mark Crookston

M Lazy C Ranch Staff provided help with the horses

Yes, I'm having a great time!

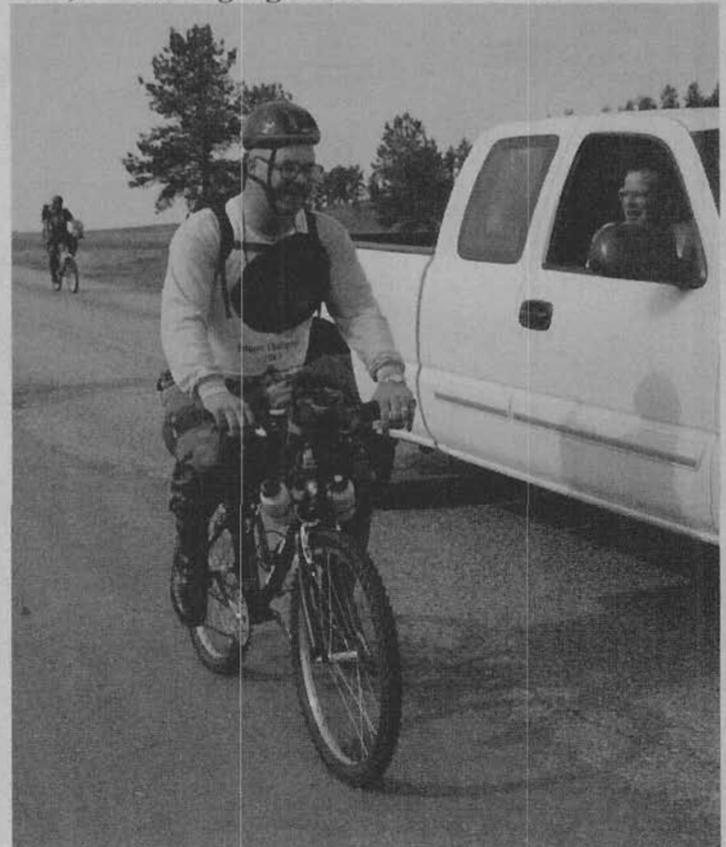


Photo by CPT Kerrie Hurd

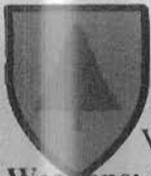
CSM Scott Williams, Team Crazy, 2/361st rolls along during the Bike and Road March, hoping to get to CP 3 as quickly as possible, not to win, but rather so he can take off his "Harley" helmet.

Ascend/Repel

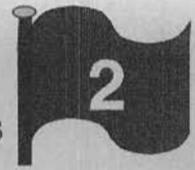


Photo by CPT Kerrie Hurd

SGT Schell, Team Coyote Ugly 3/361st struggles to ascend the vertical rock wall as the rain pours on him like a waterfall. The line was later moved to a different location due to the difficulty of the wall with the rainfall.



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Weapons: Check Point 44 – The end of the race



Photo by SSG Mark Crookston

SFC Collier, Team Weapons of Mass Destruction, fires at targets of Osama bin Laden during the final phase of the Challenge.

These are very unhappy feet



Sincere Thanks !

to everyone involved in the first ever **DAGGER CHALLENGE**. There is talk of making this an annual event for the 2nd Brigade. Team members are already signing up for future events such as the North American Eco Challenge.

A special thanks goes to the medical support and communication personnel that followed the competitors day and night. Every member of each team should be considered a winner for attempting the Dagger Challenge Course.

Several hundred photos are being copied to CD and will be available sometime next month.

Got a news story? Someone getting promoted? Married? Get the facts, take a photo and send it in! We will help you write a prize winning story! Well, a printable one, anyway.

**2nd Brigade Public Affairs – 719-526-4750
Room 106, Building 1118**

Many thanks to those who assisted and provided input for this newsletter. The 207th Public Affairs Detachment, MSG Pat Valdez, CPT Kerri Hurd, and SSG Mark Crookston.