



PRESS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

G Co Battles for German Proficiency Badge

Story and photos by Sgt. Jerry Wilson 2CR Public Affairs

VILSECK, Germany – Can you swim 200 meters in six minutes? Can you run a little under two miles in 13:30? Do you have what it takes to throw a shot put, and march 30 kilometers with 25 pounds? These were questions that Troopers of Ghost Rider Company, 3rd Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment found the answers to as they competed for the coveted German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge. The GPB is one of only a few foreign service medals that U.S. Soldiers are allowed to wear. Troopers from G company sought to obtain this honor during a week-long competition held Sept. 6 through 9 at Rose Barracks in Vilseck.

The competition was tough, as 120 contestants competed for the prize by day three however only 42 remained eligible. Despite being eliminated from eligibility to earn the badge all the Soldiers continued to participate in the events enjoying the healthy competition.

“This is a great boost for morale,” said 2nd Lt. Jason Teague, 3rd Platoon Leader of G Co. “It gives the guys a chance to get out and do something different for PT.”

According to Teague, whether the Soldiers made it or not, everyone was having a good time.

“All I have seen on the guy’s faces are smiles,” he said. “They really like this chance to compete against each other.”

The test consisted of 6 events, some of which are not found on the ordinary Army Physical Fitness Test, but are part of a yearly requirement for all German Soldiers. Some of these events included 200-meter swim and various track and field events such as the shot put and long jump.

The shot put was one event that hit home for some young Soldiers like Spc. Anthony Smirk who got to relive some of his glory days.

“I had a little experience in high school with the shot put,” Smirk said. “My senior year I track and went to conference for the shot put so it was great to do it again.”

Smirk said he and his fellow Soldiers have thoroughly enjoyed the chance to show what they are made of in a friendly rivalry.

“There is a lot of pride in this competition,” Smirk said. “The guys favor competition over regular PT because it gives you the opportunity to beat someone and everybody likes beating someone.”

Following the track and field day participants conducted a 30 kilometer march. The competition will concluded with a 9mm weapons qualification event on Sept 16.



Up and Away! Spc. Anthony Smirk puts his best foot forward during the long jump portion of the German Proficiency Badge competition held Thursday Sept 8 at Vilseck High School.



First Lt. Alexander Frank throws the shot put during the German Proficiency Badge competition held Thursday Sept 8 at Vilseck High School.