



PRESS RELEASE

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No.100311-01

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

War Eagles tackle Schutzenschnur

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VILSECK, Germany – It was a day for testing your marksmanship skills and making new friends Wednesday, Sept. 28 at the Luitpold Kaserne in Dillengen as 44 Dragoons from 1st Squadron, 2nd Cavalry Regiment gathered with their German counterparts from 2nd Company, 292 Guidance Support Battalion to try their luck at earning the coveted German marksmanship medal known as the Schutzenschnur. This event marked the first time for these two units to engage in a partnership activity.

Following a class on weapons familiarity, Dragoons were given the opportunity to fire the G-36 rifle and the P-8 pistol. The G-36 is a 5.56 x 45mm assault rifle manufactured by Heckler and Koch GmbH of Oberndorf am Neckar and was accepted into service by the Bundeswehr in 1997. The G-36 was the replacement for the 7.62 mm G3 battle rifle. The P-8 is a 9mm semi-automatic weapon also developed by H and K GmbH as a replacement for the P7 series handgun. Each participant was taken through the same tests every German Soldier performs to qualify on their weapon. One exercise is a timed event where the shooter has six seconds to hit

two targets from the prone kneeling and standing positions. Most participants found firing these weapons a new and exciting experience.

“These weapons are not like anything we have,” said Spc. Nathaniel Bernardo of Rockledge Florida. “They are all composite materials so they are very lightweight.”

Some of the German Soldiers running the event found teaching their new American friends to be a new and exciting challenge.

“It’s quite interesting teaching the Americans what to do,” said Staff Sgt. Kai Schwarsberg, “We are so use to Germans who know what to do.”

“This has given me a great chance to practice my English,” he said.

According to Master Sgt. Michael Mayer of the German 292 GSB, one of the organizers of the event, the day was more about partnership and providing Soldiers a chance to get to know one another. As countries continue to work side-by-side in combat theaters like Afghanistan, it is imperative that allies continue to cultivate strong partnership bonds.

“These kinds of events are quite important,” said Master Sgt. Michael Mayer from the 292 Guidance Support Battalion. “In theaters like Afghanistan we have to work together, so why not train together?”

As the event drew to a climax, 23 participants were presented with the coveted gold Schutzenschnur badge and 19 were awarded the silver. The Schutzenschnur is one of the few foreign service badges authorized to be worn on American enlisted ranks uniforms.



Strong Bonds: Staff Sgt. Grant Lewis (lft) is instructed by Staff Sgt. Kai Schwarberg (rt) on the proper handling procedure of the P-8 pistol during the static shoot exercise of the Schutzenschnur held at Luitpold Kaserne in Dillengen.



Bang: A Dragoon Trooper fires the G-36 assault rifle during the Schutzenschnur held at Luitpold

Kaserne in Dillengen.