

NHS DTC CHALLENGE LEVEL COMPETITION RESULTS

THESE TEAMS WERE "UP TO THE CHALLENGE" AT THE NATIONALS

What do you have when over 1,200 hungry cadets from 37 schools travel from as far away as Alaska to "draw a line in the sand" in the 2nd annual Challenge Level competition at the 1998 Nationals? You get what you expect -- some wide-eyed wonderment, a few mistakes and many spirited, up-and-coming programs with young men and women giving it everything they've got on "The Worlds Most Famous Beach"!

Their faces told the story. Serious, poker-faced instructors and nervous cadets abounded as the Challenge Level event took center stage on the opening day of the 1998 Nationals drill competition. The Challenge Level competition at the Nationals brought together 37 schools and 51 teams looking to cap off their drill season under the sunny Florida skies at the National High School Drill Team Championships.

The five team events within each division (Inspection, Regulation, Color Guard, Squad/Element and Platoon/Flight Exhibition) gave these proud teams a chance to display what they have worked so hard to achieve. Historically, the Challenge Level featured schools maintaining strength in some events and weakness in others. In 1998, certain teams dominated -- stepping to the forefront, with schools attending from across the country, a wide diversity of drill styles were on display in every area of the Challenge Level Nationals competition.

ARMED DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

Led by strong overall performances in every facet of drill, the **Devil Pups** armed drill team from **Rahway HS** achieved the overall championship within the armed division. Earning a 1st place finish in four of five team events (Inspection, Regulation, Squad & Platoon Exhibition). The Marines from Rahway, New Jersey steamrolled their way to a convincing finish. Their score of 5,003 out of 6,000 was exceptionally high and a testament to the hard work and motivation on display at the Nationals.

Lopez HS from Brownsville, Texas put together a super overall effort in capturing the Armed Runner-up title. The **Lobo Rifles** Army drill team gained a top three finish in all five team events, paced by a 1st place Armed Division Color Guard finish. Their 4,874 total points made a distinctive mark in history at the National High School Drill Team Championships.

Other outstanding performances were on display by numerous armed division schools including: **Winnsboro HS** (2nd-Inspection & Color Guard); **United South HS** (3rd-Platoon Ex., 4th-Inspection); **Cedar Shoals HS** (Silent Knights: 3rd-Color Guard, 4th-Regulation, 5th-Squad Ex. & Lady Knights: 5th-Inspection & Regulation), **C.E. Murray HS** (3rd-Squad Ex.) and **West Charlotte HS** (3rd-Regulation).

The Commander's Trophy is earned from scores given to cadet commanders during Platoon Regulation. **Cadet Knudsen** from **Rahway HS** grabbed 1st place in the tough Armed Division with a solid 277 point total (out of 350). **Cadet Ecamilla** from **Lopez HS** earned 2nd place (261 points) and **Cadet Boyd** from **West Charlotte HS** netted a 3rd place finish (234 points).

UNARMED DIVISION HIGHLIGHTS

In a tremendously tight and tense competition, first year Nationals attendee, **Lopez HS** put forth a highly motivated, well-rounded attack. The **Golden Ladies** drill team from Brownsville, Texas, earned two first-place finishes (Inspection and Color Guard), a second place (Regulation), and a third place (Element Exhibition). These top placements gave their tough cadets an overall score of 4,982 out of 6,000 points.

Annual powerhouse **Hialeah HS** from Hialeah, Florida excelled with a younger team and nearly grabbed the overall title, coming up just short. The **Destruction** drill team was fantastic, gaining a top five trophy finish in four of the five team events. The Air Force program garnered 4,915 points overall with a 1st place finish (Regulation), and three 2nd place finishes (Inspection, Color Guard, Element Exhibition).

Other strong unarmed performances were on display by: **Forest HS** (1st-Flight Ex., 5th-Inspection); **West Anchorage HS** (1st-Element Ex.); **Pine Ridge HS** (3rd-Color Guard, 4th-Regulation); **Fairmont HS** (3rd-Inspection, 4th-Color Guard); **Rayville HS** (3rd-Flight Ex., 4th-Inspection), **Winnsboro HS** (4th-Platoon Ex., 5th-Regulation), **Rahway HS** (3rd-Regulation), **Forestville HS** (2nd-Flight Ex., 4th-Element Ex.), **Sandalwood HS** (5th-Color Guard, Flight Ex.) and **James F. Byrnes HS** (5th-Element Ex.).

The Unarmed Division Commander's Trophy competition is always very close. **Cadet Montez** from **Hialeah HS** captured 1st place with a commanding 316 point total (out of 350). **Cadet Spink** from **Pine Ridge HS** earned 2nd place by only 2 points (292 points) and **Cadet Davis** from **Winnsboro HS** grabbed 3rd place (290 points).

A spirited Awards Ceremony was held immediately following the conclusion of the Armed and Unarmed knockout drills. This brief ceremony gave recognition to the individuals and the schools who helped to make the Challenge Level competition such a success in its second year and a memorable part of their Junior ROTC program.

The ceremony also recognized the winners within the Open Level Color Guard event. The top five finishers in this event were: 1st-**Lancaster HS**-Lancaster, TX
2nd-**McDonough HS**-Pomfret, MD
3rd-**MacArthur HS**-Irving, TX
4th-**White Mountains HS**-Whitefield, NH
5th-**Mulberry HS**-Mulberry, FL

We at Sports Network salute the Challenge level attendees at the Nationals. We were honored by the strong efforts put forth by every team.