

U.S. Special Operations Command MacDill AFB, Florida

Tip of the Spear

June 2023

**USSOCOM
competes in
DoD 2023
Warrior Games
Challenge**



United States Special Operations Command



USSOCOM competes in DoD 2023 Warrior Games Challenge ... 36

Tip of the Spear

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(Cover) Capt. Joshua Martin competes in the shot-put competition, San Diego, California, June 5, 2023. The 2023 Warrior Games Challenge is a Paralympic-style competitive event featuring adaptive sports used by wounded warriors as part of their recovery process. The games allow them to find new ways of enhancing their recovery journey. Photo illustration by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Marleah Miller. (Above) Team SOCOM celebrates their victory in team rowing competition during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 7, 2023. Photo by Michael Bottoms.

The Quiet Professionals

Highlights



USASOC bids farewell to CSM Weimer, welcomes CSM Naumann ... 14



SEAL Team 5 celebrates 40th year ... 18



AFSOC conducts first-ever Command Chief Change of Responsibility ... 24

Departments

Theater Special Operations Commands

US. military hosts JCET with Uganda Wildlife Authority Rangers ... 4

Partnerships as a pacing item: SOCSOUTH commander speaks at SOF Week ... 6

World Class athletes: SOCSOUTH human performance ... 8

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

Fallen warriors of Army Special Operations honored, remembered ... 10

The Rangers of WWII: Leading the way for future generations ... 12

USASOC bids farewell to CSM Weimer, welcomes CSM Naumann ... 14

Naval Special Warfare Command

Father of Naval Special Warfare posthumously awarded the Charles P. Gallagher Leadership Medallion ... 16

Rare retirement ceremony hosted at Naval Special Warfare Group Four ... 17

SEAL Team 5 celebrates 40th year ... 18

US Navy SEALs conduct nighttime non-combatant evacuation operation training ... 20

USSOCOM commander visits Naval Special Warfare Command, validates value of rigorous training ... 22

Air Force Special Operations Command

AFSOC conducts first-ever Command Chief Change of Responsibility ... 24

AFSOC's second summit tackles how to instill mission command ... 26

AFSOC uses video game-like simulation training, adds realistic, world-wide value ... 27

16th Annual Emerald Warrior jumps into action ... 28

Emerald Warrior 23 hones Mission Command in environment of competition ... 30

Marine Forces Special Operations Command

MARSOC multi-discipline logistics operations course ... 32

Headquarters

Special Operations Forces Week 2023 ... 34

USSOCOM competes in DoD 2023 Warrior Games Challenge ... 36

U.S. Special Operations Command - Africa



US military hosts JCET with Uganda Wildlife Authority Rangers

Courtesy Story
Special Operations Command Africa

Civil Affairs Soldiers deployed in support of Special Operations Command Africa alongside the Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA) concluded a joint combined exchange training at Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda, April 3, 2023.

This six-week training focused on teaching park rangers to counter illicit trafficking within national parks while improving the interoperability between U.S. and Ugandan forces.

“Our hope is that each UWA Ranger will walk away with a newfound confidence to lead their subordinates against the many challenges they face,” said Capt. King, the course leader from the 91st Civil Affairs Battalion. “Their ability to lead creates the space for the animals they protect, while also degrading the capabilities of malign actors which seek to do harm.”

The course included lessons on weapons handling, field medical care, land navigation, crime scene investigations, law enforcement tactics, patrolling as well as human rights, leadership, ethics and values.

“The art of conversation and ability to apply lessons-learned from the civil domain are things that the UWA Rangers already do organically as they work within the communities that they support,” said King. “Our goal is to provide additional tools to aid them as they work with the local communities that live in tandem with the wildlife.”

The UWA is a Ugandan government agency that aims to conserve, manage and regulate Uganda’s



Uganda Wildlife Authority Park Rangers plan their next movement during the land navigation practical exercise. Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Sierra Melendez.

wildlife. They face many challenges protecting the wildlife from armed poachers to violent extremist groups, but after this training, each ranger will be better prepared to counter those challenges.

“The information you are teaching us is so valuable, we will be better leaders with the knowledge you have given us,” said Pvt. Paul Abila, who serves as the leader of an outpost in Queen Elizabeth National Park, Uganda.

After graduation, these 20 UWA Rangers will return to their respective parks in higher positions of responsibility, and will continue to serve and protect the wildlife and people of Uganda.

Pvt. Mary Biira photographing a wildlife crime scene, discovered with information gathered from a successful civil engagement. Photo by U.S. Army Sgt. 1st Class Sierra Melendez.



U.S. Special Operations Command - South



Partnerships as a pacing item: SOC SOUTH commander speaks at SOF Week

By U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Clayton Wear
Special Operations Command South

Brig. Gen. Peter Huntley, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command South, spoke on regional influence inside the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility during a Special Operations Forces Week panel in Tampa, Florida, May 10, 2023.

During this panel, Huntley addressed the importance of having a layered and generational approach with partner special operations forces.

"We have to look at things from a long-haul perspective because it allows us to take a layered approach," said Huntley.

Huntley continued, "For instance, through our relationship with Colombia, we are learning a ton, not just from the operational experience we're getting, but we have a partner who has been operating for more than four decades."

"This layered approach also allows members like our special operations liaison officers, that work in the embassy, to help them work through institutional level issues with the help of us or our neighbors in NATO SOF."

Speaking on a recent engagement with the Colombian Chief of Defense, Huntley drove home the sheer importance of a multigenerational approach.

"A great example recently at



Brig. Gen. Peter Huntley, U.S. Special Operations Command South commander, speaks on regional influence inside the U.S. Southern Command area of responsibility during a Special Operation Forces Week panel in Tampa, Florida, May 10, 2023. The panel, titled, "Partnerships as a Pacing Item," highlighted the importance of multigenerational relationships with partner forces. Photo by U.S. Air Force by Staff Sgt. Clayton Wear.

SOUTHCOM is we had the Colombian Chief of Defense

A great example recently at SOUTHCOM is we had the Colombian Chief of Defense visit our combatant commander, but he also made it a point to stop by SOCSOUTH. We were shocked thinking, 'what the heck'. So, he then shows up with a large picture of himself as a younger team leader in the Colombian Special Forces, and he is in the jungle with a bunch of Green Berets back in the nineties - which again highlights a long-haul, multigenerational approach.

— Brig. Gen. Peter Huntley

visit our combatant commander, but he also made it a point to stop by SOCSOUTH. We were shocked thinking, 'what the heck'. So, he then shows up with a large picture of himself as a younger team leader in the Colombian Special Forces, and he is in the jungle with a bunch of Green Berets back in the nineties - which again highlights a long-haul,

multigenerational approach.”

Huntley then shifted gears to highlight an integrated deterrence model and the importance of consistency.

“We can also look at partnership as a way to not get into conflicts,” said Huntley. “Following an integrated deterrence model, if we can do it right over multiple generations of multiple commands and stay consistent, we can then help our partners maintain civility and thriving democracies.”

The area of responsibility for SOCSOUTH comprises 31 countries, and 10 overseas territories of other nations, and contains more than 410 million people from varying cultures, including 25 languages and ten religions.

Maj. Gabriel Wood, a SOCOM special operations liaison officer to Panama spoke on these same themes of readiness and deterrence.

“Following what Gen. Huntley mentioned on stage in terms of our AOR, SOCSOUTH is in a unique position to deter outside threats through the strength of our partnerships, training, and investments within partner special operation forces throughout SOUTHCOM,” said Wood.

“Having our partners understand what SOF does holistically is really important to help develop our partnerships,” said Wood. “For instance, serving as a SOLO has allowed me to help develop a relationship on behalf of SOF with the Panamanians, and to even have them come here to SOF Week.”

Huntley then closed by saying, “It is truly through this layered approach, and multi-generational relationship, that we are able to form those ties that bind and get to a deeper level of friendship.”



Brig. Gen. Peter Huntley (center), U.S. Special Operations Command South commander, poses with Col. Jorge Luis Gobeia Trejos (left), Panamanian Special Forces Brigade commander and Maj. Gabriel Wood (right), SOCOM Special Operations Liaison Officer to Panama after a SOF Week panel in Tampa, Florida, May 10, 2023. The panel, titled, “Partnerships as a Pacing Item,” highlighted the importance of multigenerational relationships with partner forces. Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Clayton Wear.

U.S. Special Operations Command - South



World Class athletes: SOC SOUTH human performance

*By U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Clayton Wear
Special Operations Command South*

Special Operations Command South provides year-round athletic performance training and resources to members of the command in the human performance facility at Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida.

The board-certified SOC SOUTH Human Performance trainers have trained athletes in the National Football League, National Basketball Association, Major League Baseball and International Olympic Committee, as well as Professional Ballet Dancers and Division 1 college athletes.

Falling under the Preservation of the Force and Family (POTFF) mission, human performance strives to optimize and sustain special operations forces mission readiness, longevity and performance through integrated and holistic programs.

Jarred Lubbers, human performance advisor with SOC SOUTH serves as a technical subject matter expert liaison between the command and higher headquarters at Special Operations Command.

“I became a physical therapist because I enjoy helping people return to their normal daily functioning,” said Lubbers. “There is a great deal of satisfaction in helping people overcome what at times appears to be an insurmountable obstacle,”

“After 30+ years as a practitioner, I have achieved numerous professional goals such as receiving a Specialty Board Certification in Orthopedics and Sports. I’ve also worked with athletes from the NFL, NBA, MLB, and professional ballet dancers to name a few, but using my skills and knowledge to help those that fight to keep us free has been the highlight of a long career.”

Some examples of services to help teammates overcome obstacles are preventative, post-surgical and post injury treatment for neuromusculoskeletal conditions.

“An important aspect of performance that a physical

therapist provides also includes preventative medicine and instruction in the use of post exercise recovery,” said Dr. Michelle Sanders, a SOC SOUTH HP Doctor of Physical Therapy and Orthopedic Physical Therapist.

Sanders continued, “At the SOC SOUTH POTFF Human Performance Facility, physical therapists offer the use of current evidence-based practices that promote post exercise recovery such as cold water immersion, breath work, and thermal stress/sauna. We offer a weekly class designed to teach the SOC SOUTH athlete about the importance of recovery and mobility to promote their best physical performance.”

Of these evidence-based practices, Sanders went on to list different services that the HPF offers.

“Specific services provided include: functional movement assessments, therapeutic exercise instruction, manual therapy to include spinal and peripheral joint mobilization, soft tissue mobilization, and proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation. We also provide modalities like dry needling, blood flow restriction training, electrical stimulation, ultrasound, and Vaso pneumatic cryotherapy to address pain management, motor control, and injury rehabilitation,” said Sanders.

“In October 2022, I accepted a position on the Human Performance Team with SOC SOUTH. I’m very proud and honored to be a member of this Preservation of the Force and Family, POTFF team. My favorite part of working with this organization is the level of expertise from my medical coworkers and the motivated demeanor of the athletes and service members who take advantage of our services.”

“The medical team is determined to provide the very best care in the most efficient manner and the athletes make it a priority to stay healthy, active, and strong. We have the utmost support of the SOC SOUTH command team when it comes to procuring the tools and education we require to maintain high quality medical care and services.”

Another tool the HPF wields is through the expertise

of prior professional triathlete and member of Team USA, Lisa Dorfman, MS, Registered Dietitian, Board Certified Specialist in Sports Dietetics, Certified Culinary Medicine Specialist, Licensed Mental Health Counselor, and member of the Florida Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Through Dorfman's 30-year career, she has helped Olympians, Olympic teams, University athletes, high school athletes and award-winning actors prepare for roles.

"As one of the only Performance Dietitians in the country with a triple expertise as a Licensed Nutritionist/Dietitian, Licensed Mental Health Counselor and Certified Chef/Specialist in Culinary Medicine I offer a unique perspective and ability to guide, counsel and educate within my scope of practice, on call, as needed to provide information to help service members improve who they are today, tomorrow and for years to come," said Dorfman.

"My services are important because food is empowering, food equals fuel. If a service member is nourished optimally, they physically and mentally perform their best. The right food builds confidence and helps improve physique, self-esteem and sleep."

"As a Performance Dietitian, I am available for one-on-one nutrition consultations and group presentations. For individuals, I offer physical and dietary assessments, body composition analysis, personalized programs; ongoing virtual, online and onsite counseling and coaching. For group presentations I can speak on a variety of food, fitness and mental wellness topics; culinary guidance; food, fuel and snack samplings.

"Providing our service members a "snapshot" of their body composition and diet is a valuable way we can help them reach optimal health, sports training and competition, and mental fitness. It is life changing."

"My favorite part of working at SOCSOUTH is giving back to those who have given 1000% of themselves to us, and our country. I also work with an incredible team of physical therapists and athletic trainers who all work closely on ensuring that our programs compliment and co-exist to ensure success for injured, recovering or healthy individuals looking to take their physique, health and performance to the next level."

Following this same passion to help, Chris Olson, HPF Doctor of Athletic Training, brings more than 12 years of professional training and medical coordination with the Texas Rangers and Miami Marlins to SOCSOUTH.

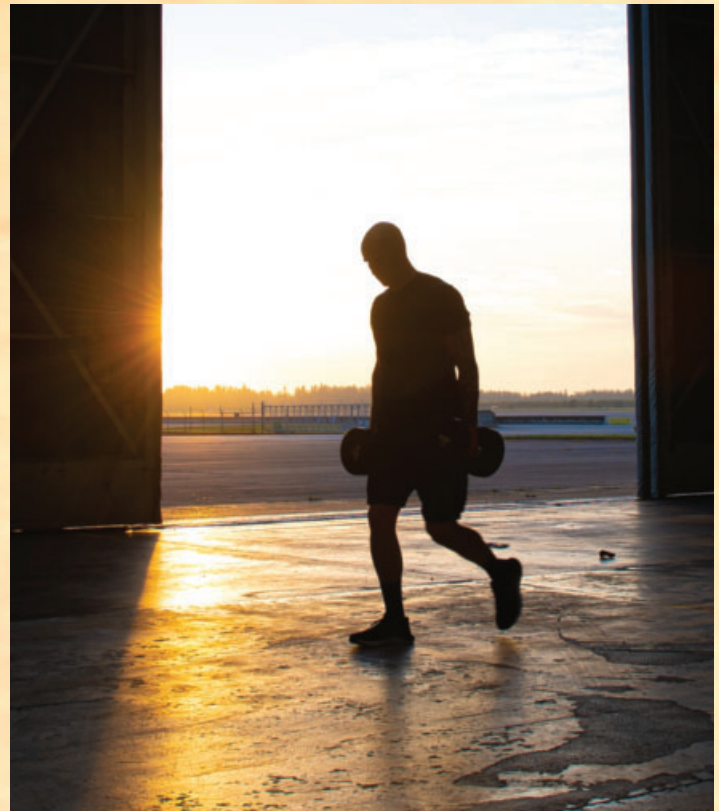
"As an athletic trainer we bridge the gap between post operation or injury and return to full activity while

also providing tactics to help mitigate injury risk," said Olson. "My favorite part of working at SOCSOUTH is being able to help our service members recover from current and previous injuries - giving them an opportunity to return to what they enjoy doing on and off base."

Lastly, the HPF provides strength and conditioning to help members of SOCSOUTH build a foundation of mobility.

"A Strength and Conditioning Specialist provides direction and guidance for all aspects of physical training which includes conditioning, movement instruction, and injury prevention," said Jacob Talcott, Strength and Conditioning Specialist with more than 15 years of experience.

"Each SOCSOUTH individual's goals can be met through either individual training or through group classes. My favorite part is getting to meet and work with all the members associated within SOCSOUTH. I'm very happy to be of service to help everyone meet their goals in fitness."



A soldier from the 112th Special Operations Command South Signal Detachment performs a farmers carry during a group workout organized by the Special Operations Command South Human Performance team, this morning, in a Homestead Air Reserve Base, Florida, hangar. The Human Performance team keeps SOCSOUTH staff ready for any mission through the expertise of physical therapists, a nutritionist, and a strength coach. Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Clayton Wear.

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

Fallen warriors of Army Special Operations honored, remembered



By Elvia Kelly
U.S. Army Special Operations Command

Etched on the Memorial Wall at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Headquarters are the names of 1,242 fallen Army Special Operations warriors who paid the ultimate sacrifice in service to our country.

USASOC honored their legacy during a Gold Star Memorial Ceremony held on the Memorial Plaza surrounded by Gold Star families, friends, and guests who traveled from across the Nation to attend the ceremony at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 25, 2023.

“Thanks for being here on this solemn but important day,” said Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga, USASOC commanding general. “We remember the



U.S. Army Special Operations Command Commanding General, Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga, salutes in memory of fallen Army Special Operations Soldiers at the Memorial Plaza at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 25, 2023. Photo by U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office.



Gold Star family members gaze upon the Memorial Wall at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Headquarters following the annual Gold Star Memorial Day Ceremony at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 25, 2023. Photo by U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office.

1,242 names on this wall, heroes who have fallen in support of this great nation. I'm especially pleased to welcome our most honored guests – our Special Operations Gold Star family members.”

Braga added he is “extremely thankful that we do not have to add a name to the Memorial Wall this year.”

U.S. Army Special Operations forces have been involved in virtually all U.S. conflicts since World War II, performing direct action and unconventional warfare missions. They have repeatedly performed some of the most dangerous and important missions to ensure our victories.

“This is the longest period of time we have experienced without losing an ARSOF soldier in combat since Sept. 11, 2001,” Braga said. “Since that foreboding day, we face the death of 377 men and women of Army Special Operations whose names are on this wall. Many of the family members are here today, and they’re interwoven in that history.”

For Gold Star father Wendall Pelham, memorial ceremonies are reminders to reflect daily on the legacy

it’s not financial but it’s human,” he said. “Every day, I

I’m beyond honored, as we have these conversations, the message that we’re sending is that America is the greatest country on the planet period. That our history is our history, those who have fought and died for our country need to be honored and need to be recognized and their legacies never, ever, ever should be forgotten.

— Wendall Pelham

of our fallen heroes.

“I’m beyond honored, as we have these conversations, the message that we’re sending is that America is the greatest country on the planet period,” Pelham said. “That our history is our history, those who have fought and died for our country need to be honored and need to be recognized and their legacies never, ever, ever should be forgotten.”

Pelham’s son, Spc. John Pelham, was killed in action on Feb. 12, 2014, in Kapisa Province, Afghanistan, in support of Operation Enduring Freedom.

“The reason we come back year after year is to share with folks like yourselves and your viewers at home that freedom is not free and the cost is exorbitant, and it’s massive and

wake up with the intention to make my son proud of his father.”

The ceremony concluded with each ARSOF unit laying a wreath in front of the Memorial Wall, Taps, and a moment of silence to reflect on those who paid the ultimate price.



The mother of fallen Soldier Staff Sgt. Ryan C. Knauss kneels by her son’s name plate at the U.S. Army Special Operations Command Memorial Wall at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 25, 2023. Photo by U.S. Army Special Operations Command Public Affairs Office.

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

The Rangers of WWII: Leading the way for future generations



Under cover of smoke, a Ranger officer coordinates maneuvers via radio on the beach in Algeria on Dec. 20, 1942. U.S. Army courtesy photo.

*By Suzanne S. Harrison,
USASOC History Office*

From Europe to North Africa to the Pacific, U.S. Army Rangers played a crucial role in many of World War II's most pivotal moments, laying down roots for today's 75th Ranger Regiment. At the onset of the war, the Army had no units capable of performing specialized commando missions. By the end of the war, the Army had fielded seven Ranger battalions, beginning with the activation of the 1st Ranger Battalion in Northern Ireland on June 19, 1942.

Major William O. Darby, an artillery officer, was hand-

picked to recruit volunteers for the battalion, designed to replicate the capability of British commandos. The volunteers underwent a strenuous selection program to identify and train the best candidates. On Aug. 19, 1942, 50 of these specially selected soldiers participated in Operation Jubilee, a Canadian-led amphibious assault on the English Channel port of Dieppe, France. The Rangers helped destroy one of the enemy batteries, at the cost of three of their own. Following the raid, the 1st Ranger Battalion participated in the U.S.-led invasion of North Africa.

In the early morning hours of Nov. 8, 1942, Operation Torch commenced with attacks on the Algerian port in

Arzew. As two Ranger companies led by Maj. Herman Dammer assaulted the port, three others led by Darby assaulted enemy cannons overlooking the harbor, capturing them within 15 minutes. Two Rangers died and eight were wounded during the action, but the Rangers' success helped the Allies secure a foothold on the continent.

The 29th Ranger Battalion (Provisional) was formed on Dec. 20, 1942 in England. The volunteers came from the 29th Infantry Division. Attached to British commandos for additional training, several of the Rangers from the 29th participated in combat raids and reconnaissance missions into Norway before being disbanded on Oct. 15, 1943.

The 1st Ranger Battalion's encouraging performance in Africa led the Army in 1943 to activate four more Ranger Battalions – the 2nd, 3rd, 4th, and 5th. Attached to the 1st Infantry Division of Lt. Gen. George S. Patton's U.S. Seventh Army, Darby led a Ranger Force consisting of the 1st, 3rd, and 4th Ranger battalions that spearheaded Operation Husky, the American landings in Sicily on July 10, 1943.

With Sicily secured, the Rangers turned their attention to mainland Italy and Operation Avalanche. Before daylight on Sept. 9, 1943, the Ranger Force hit the beach west of Salerno on the far-left flank of the Allied landing. The 4th Battalion, led by Maj. Roy Murray, quickly secured the beach, and cleared the way for the 1st and 3rd battalions to move inland. The Rangers rapidly gained their objectives by midmorning of the first day. The Ranger Force later participated in the Anzio operation, where they conducted a daring but ill-fated raid into the Italian town of Cisterna on January 30, 1944.

The 2nd and 5th entered the war on June 6, 1944, on the beaches of Normandy, France, during Operation Overlord. Three companies of 2nd Battalion Rangers, led by Lt. Col. James E. Rudder, daringly scaled the cliffs of Pointe du Hoc, overlooking Omaha Beach, to destroy German gun emplacements targeting troops landing on the beachhead. Meanwhile, the remainder of 2nd Battalion and the entirety of 5th Ranger Battalion fought their way ashore Omaha Beach alongside the 1st and 29th Infantry Division. The D-Day missions earned the Rangers their motto, "Rangers, lead the way!" The 2nd and 5th Rangers fought in the Allied campaign in western Europe until the end of the war.

In the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations, another legendary Ranger lineage unit was organized on Oct. 3, 1943: the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional). Better known as "Merrill's Marauders" after its commander, Brig. Gen. Frank D. Merrill, the 5307th, a Long-Range Penetration Group, fought a grueling campaign in the mountainous jungles of Burma that lasted until mid-1944. Following the capture of Myitkyina, Burma, the remnants of the 5307th were consolidated with the 475th Infantry Regiment on Aug. 10, 1944. The 475th was part the second Long Range Penetration Group formed for service in Burma, the 5332nd Brigade



Soldiers from the 5307th Composite Unit (Provisional), popularly known as Merrill's Marauders, cross a bridge over the Chindwin River in Northern Burma on March 17, 1944. U.S. Army courtesy photo.

(Provisional). Better known as the MARS Task Force, the 5332nd helped secure the last stretches of the Burma Road remaining in Japanese hands, before moving on to service in China.

In mid-1944, one more Ranger Battalion was activated, with the mission of supporting U.S. Sixth Army operations in the Southwest Pacific. Lieutenant Colonel Henry A. Mucci was selected to organize, train, and command the 6th Ranger Battalion, which was formed out of the 98th Field Artillery Battalion, the 6th Rangers played a prominent role in the recapture of the Philippines, starting with the amphibious assault on Leyte in October 1944. On neighboring Luzon, in January 1945, Company A, 6th Rangers, supported by the Sixth Army Special Reconnaissance Unit, also known as the "Alamo Scouts," and Philippine guerrillas, executed its most famous action when it raided a Japanese Prisoner-of-War camp near Cabanatuan, Philippines. Against overwhelming odds, the operation freed more than five hundred Allied prisoners.

It's for these and many other actions that the Ranger units of World War II would go on to earn multiple unit citations prior to being disbanded in 1945. Their legacy endured long beyond the war, with their courage and audacity setting the example for future generations of U.S. Army Rangers.

To learn more about the U.S. Army Rangers of World War II, go to arsof-history.org.

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

USASOC bids farewell to CSM

Weimer, welcomes CSM Naumann



By Elvia Kelly

U.S. Army Special Operations Command

The U.S. Army Special Operations Command conducted a change of responsibility ceremony on Meadows Field at USASOC Headquarters on Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 1, 2023.

Lt. Gen. Jonathan Braga, USASOC commanding general, officiated the ceremony by bidding farewell to Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Weimer and welcoming

Command Sgt. Maj. JoAnn Naumann as the incoming command sergeant major.

“It’s a special day for USASOC,” said Braga. “I’m honored to be part of this phenomenal opportunity to mark Mike’s achievements and dedication to our team and also privileged to welcome JoAnn and her family here today.”

The change of responsibility ceremony is steeped in military traditions and serves the dual function of rendering honors to the departing senior enlisted leader



Command Sgt. Maj. Michael R. Weimer changes responsibility during an official ceremony on Meadows Field at USASOC Headquarters at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, May 1, 2023. Weimer’s next assignment is serving as the 17th Sergeant Major of the Army. Photo by USASOC Public Affairs Office.



Command Sgt. Maj. JoAnn Naumann assumes the duties as the USASOC command senior enlisted leader effective May 1, 2023. Naumann passes the colors to the Commander of Troops, signifying her dedication to the Command and the continuity of the noncommissioned officer support channel. Photo by USASOC Public Affairs Office.

and providing official transfer of authority to the incoming command sergeant major.

“Welcome back to the USASOC family,” Weimer addressed to Naumann and her spouse, Sgt. Maj. Thomas Baird, during the ceremony. “Neither of you are strangers to this formation, and I couldn’t have been more excited to the two of you when the commander made the decision that you were the best athlete to replace me. I have the utmost confidence in your ability to continue the high standard of leadership required to shepherd this amazing formation with its current missions but also evolving it for 2030 and beyond.”

Naumann previously served as the Special Operations Command-Korea’s command senior enlisted leader. She enlisted in the U.S. Army in February 1996 as a voice language analyst, completing the Arabic Basic Course at the Defense Language Institute and Advanced Individual Training at Goodfellow Air Force Base, Texas. Naumann’s assignments include serving as the Joint Special Operations Command J2 senior enlisted advisor, command sergeant major for the 15th Military

Intelligence Battalion (Aerial Exploitation), and JSOC Intelligence Brigade.

“Thank you for the opportunity to serve the men and women of ARSOF (Army Special Operations Forces),” Naumann said. “It is my honor to be a part of this team. I’m excited to be back at Fort Bragg. [...] You’ve managed to invest in people while driving the mission forward, and you’ve certainly done that during your time here at USASOC. I know well how much you invest in people because you’ve done that for me. I can’t imagine a more exciting time to be joining the USASOC team. Our nation and the world are at an inflection point. We’re challenged by new adversaries and rapidly advancing technologies, yet ARSOF is absolutely leading the way, and that is because we have the best people. To the men and women of ARSOF, you are the most talented professional, and dedicated people I know.”

Weimer was sworn in as USASOC’s senior non-commissioned officer on Aug. 13, 2021. His next assignment is serving as the 17th Sergeant Major of the Army.

Naval Special Warfare Command



Father of Naval Special Warfare posthumously awarded the Charles P. Gallagher Leadership Medallion

*By Chief Petty Officer Paolo Peredo
Naval Special Warfare Command*

Capt. Phil Bucklew, known as the “father” of Naval Special Warfare and a Xavier University alumnus, was posthumously awarded the Charles P. Gallagher Leadership Medallion by the university, May 12.

This award recognizes exceptional individuals who have made outstanding contributions in a vocation to society, to Xavier University, or to another area of endeavor well beyond expectations.

Capt. Keith Marinics, chief staff officer with Naval Special Warfare Center, and Command Master Chief Deryck Dickerson of Naval Special Warfare Assessment Command, received the award on behalf of Bucklew from Xavier University President Dr. Colleen Hanycz, Ph.D., during an awards dinner.

“Captain Bucklew is the epitome of all this award represents: leadership, humility, grit, determination and perseverance in the face of seemingly insurmountable odds,” said Hanycz. “His accomplishments, not only here at Xavier, but in the defense of our nation for more than 28 years, are remarkable and outstanding. We are proud and honored to consider him a lasting part of Xavier’s family and are pleased to commemorate him in this way with one of Xavier’s highest honors.”

“I am humbled to accept this award on behalf of him, his family, and all of our Naval Special Warfare forefathers,” said Marinics. “As an Ohio native myself, I



Retired SEAL Mr. Rick Knepper, Capt. Keith Marinics and Command Master Chief Deryck Dickerson, posthumously receive the Xavier University’s Charles P. Gallagher Leadership Medallion on behalf of Capt. Phil Bucklew for his outstanding vocational and societal contributions, May 12, 2023. Bucklew is a Xavier alumnus and is known as the “father” of Naval Special Warfare. Courtesy photo by Xavier University.

am equally honored to accept this on behalf of Captain Bucklew, who was also born and raised in Ohio.”

The Charles P. Gallagher Leadership Medallion is given to recognize exceptional individuals for leadership accomplishments of the highest distinction in their field or professional career, including the fields of medicine, law, education, science, government and public service, or business. Honorees are also recognized for their contributions to the betterment of society and who exemplify the values and mission of Xavier University.

NSW is the nation’s elite maritime special operations force, uniquely positioned to extend the Fleet’s reach and gain and maintain access for the Joint Force in competition and conflict.

Rare retirement ceremony hosted at Naval Special Warfare Group Four

*By Chief Petty Officer Dustin Kelling
Naval Special Warfare Group FOUR*

Naval Special Warfare Group Four (NSWG-4) hosted a rare dual retirement ceremony on March 16, 2023.

The ceremony highlighted the military service of Lt. Jeremy Campbell, assigned to NSWG-4, and Chief Yeoman Ebony Campbell, assigned to U.S. Fleet Forces Command, both completing 22 years of military service by retiring on the same day.

Capt. Joseph Geary, commodore, NSWG-4, spoke about the importance of family in the Naval Special Warfare Community and how the Campbells were examples of that throughout their careers.

“This is important, he said. “A husband-and-wife retirement after 21 years together in the Navy; such a great example of service to our country. We should take a second to recognize that.”

The Campbells met during training after boot camp and spent their naval careers successfully navigating the challenges of a “mil-to-mil” family. During the ceremony, they spoke about their experiences navigating those challenges and finding success.

“Our road hasn’t been without hurdles,” said Lt. Campbell. “Every time we’ve reached out, it helped, and we’ve gotten stronger because of that. It’s ok to ask for help. It’s not just ok, it’s necessary.”

Chief Campbell spoke about the positive impacts of asking for help and how her service in the Navy will help into the future.

“I’m thankful for the experiences, the challenges and opportunities that helped shape my career,” said Chief Campbell. “As I move on to the next chapter in my life, I do so with a deep sense of pride, service and commitment to continue to make a positive impact on the world.”



Lt. Jeremy Campbell, right, assigned to Naval Special Warfare Group Four (NSWG-4), and Chief Yeoman Ebony Campbell, assigned to U.S. Fleet Forces Command, render honors during their retirement ceremony onboard Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, March 16, 2023. The Campbells chose NSWG-4 to host their dual ceremony. NSW is the nation’s elite maritime special operations force, uniquely positioned to extend the Fleet’s reach and gain and maintain access for the Joint Force in competition and conflict, and USFFC is responsible for manning, training, equipping and providing combat-ready forces forward to numbered fleets and combatant commanders around the globe. Photo by Chief Petty Officer Dustin Kelling.

Naval Special Warfare Command



SEAL Team 5 celebrates 40th year

*By Petty Officer 1st Class Alex Smedegard
Naval Special Warfare Group ONE*

The sun ascends over the horizon as military personnel make their way onto the compound at Silver Strand Training Complex. After catching their breath from a grueling morning workout, the bagpipes playing in the background orchestrate a calming atmosphere. With the sun now fully visible, five current and past service members step onto the stage in front of approximately 150 personnel to commemorate the 40th anniversary of SEAL Team 5.

“On May 1, 1983, Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) 11 redesignated as SEAL Team 5,” said the current commanding officer of SEAL Team 5. “Recognizing our 40 years of service and the ascension to success is a testament to the incredible leadership, character and cognitive attributes of personnel throughout our unit’s rich history.”

Retired and active operators reunited with former teammates. Enlisted Sailors and officers alike stood united by the trident they had all earned and wore on their chests. The five guest speakers delivered remarks, each representing every decade dating back to the 1980s.

“To understand how SEAL Team 5 formed, we first need to understand the foundation laid by our predecessors of UDT-11,” said retired Capt. Pete Toennies, a former SEAL Team 5 commanding officer.

UDT-11, formed in May of 1944, initially was conceptualized for the invasion of the Pacific Island Iwo Jima. Although they did not serve on Iwo Jima, the men saw significant action in the invasion of Okinawa alongside approximately 1,000 frogmen conducting reconnaissance and demolition work to support the follow-on amphibious invasion.

“They conducted hydrographic surveys, both clandestinely and under fire, to enable conventional force amphibious landings during WWII and the Korean War,” added Toennies. “They were experts at underwater demolitions and saw significant employment clearing obstacles for landing craft to make their way onto enemy beaches.”

During periods in between wars, the Sailors of UDT-11 were innovators, pushing the limits in harsh, uncomfortable, and unforgiving environments like the Arctic and undersea.

“During the Cold War, the command led special projects in

the Arctic, innovated with underwater delivery vehicles, and partnered with the space program to recover astronauts,” said Toennies.

UDT-11 played a very important and public role on July 24, 1969, as millions around the world, including President Nixon in person aboard Essex-class aircraft carrier USS Hornet (CV 12), watched the UDT-11 frogmen recover astronauts from the Apollo 11 mission.

“Continuing into the Vietnam War, the unit was active in South Vietnam conducting hydrographic reconnaissance of nearly the entire coastline as well as conducting operations with SEAL Team 1 and the Brown Water Navy,” said Toennies.

Their success in non-traditional assignments built trust with and demonstrated UDT’s value to the Navy and the Department of Defense. This ultimately set the foundation for UDT-11’s redesignation to SEAL Team 5 in 1983.

Under the new designation as SEAL Team 5, from 1987 to 1988, operators were assigned to task units in the Persian Gulf aboard Mobile Sea Bases during the “Tanker War” – a war between Iran and Iraq that spilled into the maritime environment. These task units were assigned the mission of ending the Iranian mine place efforts, and the presence of SEALs in theater acted as a strong deterrence to Iranian mining operations.

“The U.S. saw the “Tanker War” as a threat to not only to our economy but the world economy,” said Toennies. “We reflagged those tankers as U.S. vessels so we could provide support and protection to them as they transited the Persian Gulf.”

“The 1980s continued to be a time of growth, both in the size of the community and the tactics we developed,” added Toennies.

Retired Cmdr. Tom Dietz, a member of SEAL Team 5 throughout his career and commanding officer from 2000-2002, delivered remarks about the team’s history during the 1990s.

“I can define the success of a SEAL Team in six words,” said Dietz. “The mission. The mission. The mission. And in the 1990s, I was a SEAL Team 5 platoon commander getting ready to deploy to the Philippines when Iraq invaded Kuwait. Within 72 hours, our guys deployed to Saudi Arabia. Our mission was now Operation Desert Storm.”

As Operation Desert Storm developed, SEAL Team 5 would send an additional platoon tasked to work with the CIA and Kuwaiti special operations units to infiltrate behind enemy lines to call in airstrikes and provide deconflictions.

“Our platoon was tasked with the coastal reconnaissance of Kuwait to locate a beach appropriate for the Marines to do an amphibious landing,” said Dietz. “The enemy was expecting this, even though the Marines weren’t going to do it, and one night six guys swam in with 20 pounds of explosives each and simulated a large amphibious Marine assault drawing in and relocating enemy forces allowing our military to conduct other missions nearby. Those missions were all a success.”

Further on in the 1990s, SEAL Team 5’s Delta platoon conducted operations from amphibious ships in continued support to Operation Desert Storm. Following the completion of the platoon’s cycle, they headed back to the U.S. when the 1991 Bangladesh cyclone occurred – one of the deadliest tropical cyclones on record.

“Combat operations are important – it is our mission – but so are humanitarian operations,” said Dietz. “We support our nation’s missions, whatever it may be. A massive typhoon struck Bangladesh and Delta platoon was able to go in there and provide humanitarian support.”

Following the Battle of Mogadishu in 1993, popularly depicted in Hollywood film “Blackhawk Down,” SEAL Team 5 sent a platoon to Somalia in the spring of 1994 to provide support in the extraction of all United Nations forces in country.

“We had a platoon pulled off an amphibious ready group to support this,” said Dietz. “These operations continued to 1996.”

Dietz would become SEAL Team 5’s executive officer in 1997. Operations continued with a stronger emphasis on maritime interdiction operations. And the platoons aboard the amphibious ready groups would engage enemy ships out of Iraq against United Nations sanctions.

“We sent a lot of guys out there to operations out in Bosnia and Herzegovina,” said Dietz. “So you look at the operations we did across this decade alone – underwater, above water and land mission sets. It was the mindset in the leaders from this decade, those who were molded from those in the 80s and UDT era. The approach these guys had in finding solutions is a testament to the resilient mindset that continues to shape our special operation forces in upcoming decades.”

Following the attacks on 9/11, SEALs were in theater less than one month later. SEAL Team 5 would deploy platoons to Afghanistan to work with interagency and international partners. What started off with the deployment of platoons to theater, and by the Iraq War, turned into full SEAL team deployments.

“That little thing called ‘to serve’, where we didn’t have enough SEALs to go into combat for Afghanistan and Iraq,”



Recovery swimmers assigned to Underwater Demolition Team 11 rehearse the recovery of Apollo Spacecraft in San Diego Bay. The practice of anticipating and rehearsing contingencies remains a crucial aspect of contemporary special operations mission planning and execution. Courtesy photo.

said retired Master Chief Petty Officer Ron Culpepper, a former SEAL Team 5 command master chief. “We became tired. What were typically six-month deployments turned into seven, eight, all the way up to eleven. We answered the call of our nation, and we were willing to pay the ultimate sacrifice in doing so.”

The wars in Afghanistan and Iraq extended into the next decade.

“The war continued, and it always came back to being ready,” said an active-duty operator and former SEAL Team 5 commanding officer. “We continued to train as much as we could, while still fighting the fight. You never knew what was going to come next, but as it did, it came very quickly.

“It was the shift in tactics and our approach that changed the dynamic, eventually leading local counterparts to gain traction,” added the former SEAL Team 5 commanding officer. “This ultimately led to the securing of East Mosul and eventually set the conditions for forces to continue westward.”

The speeches all reflected on the evolution of SEAL Team 5.

“To truly appreciate history, you first have to understand it,” said the current commanding officer of SEAL Team 5. “Regardless of the size of platoon and whatever the mission tasking may be, the warriors here today carry the same DNA in their blood as the generations before. As we look towards the future, we can expect SEALs to continue to be a critical component in our National Defense Strategy.”

“I could not be prouder to serve at SEAL Team 5, nor could I be more excited for the future of this great command,” added the current commanding officer.

As the ceremony concluded, past and present teammates along with their families gathered in small circles in front of the stage. Frogmen shared their stories, laughed and reminisced about their days as SEAL Team 5 operators.

Naval Special Warfare Command

US Navy SEALs conduct nighttime non-combatant evacuation operation training



By Lt. j.g. Martin Carey
Naval Special Warfare Group TWO

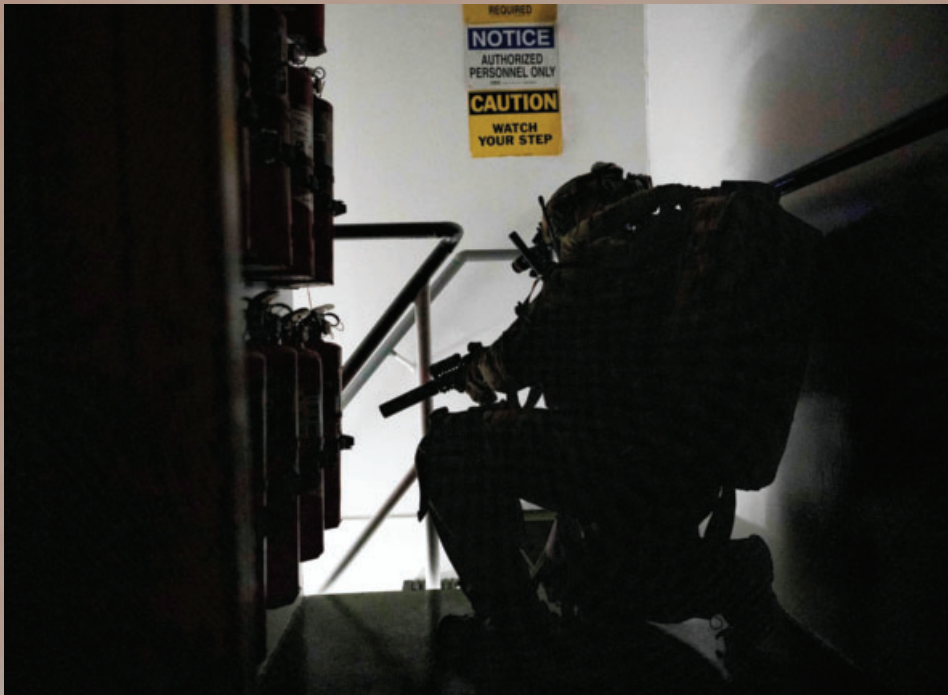
East coast-based Naval Special Warfare Operators (SEALs) recently conducted a comprehensive training exercise focused on non-combatant emergency evacuation operations. The training, held at night, involved the use of simulated munitions to better emulate real-life scenarios.

The elite maritime special operations commandos, renowned for proficiency in executing high-risk missions, embarked on the training to further enhance their capabilities and readiness in the event of humanitarian crises, natural disasters, or other contingencies that require rapid and efficient evacuations.

Under the cover of darkness, Navy SEAL elements assembled at locations throughout Southeastern



East coast-based U.S. Naval Special Warfare Operators (SEALs) clear a simulated enemy threat during non-combatant evacuation operation training. Naval Special Warfare Group 2 produces, trains, supports, and deploys the world's premier maritime special operations commandos to conduct full-spectrum operations and integrated deterrence that support national objectives. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Matthew Dickinson.



East coast-based Naval Special Warfare Operators (SEALs) clear a space of a training vessel during a maritime interdiction operation training exercise in a simulated chemical, biological, radiological environment. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Trey Hutcheson.

Virginia where they meticulously planned and executed the exercise. The scenario aimed to replicate the unpredictable and challenging conditions that SEALs might face in real-world situations, where lives are at stake and time is critical.

During the exercise, the Navy SEALs employed simulated munitions to create a high-intensity environment while ensuring the safety for all participants. The realistic nature of the training allowed the commandos to develop and refine their skills in a controlled setting, replicating the stress and pressure they may encounter in actual evacuation situations.

The training encompassed evacuations from hostile environments, rescue missions in treacherous terrain, and transportation of non-combatants under extreme circumstances.

Commodore Bill Gallagher, Commander, Naval Special Warfare Group TWO, expressed his appreciation for the dedication and professionalism

These exercises provide an opportunity for our operators and support personnel to hone their skills, coordinate with other units, and enhance their ability to conduct complex operations. It is critical for us to train under the most challenging conditions – and thereby prepare our teams for what they will face during real-world operations.

— Commodore Bill Gallagher

exhibited by the SEALs and support personnel during the exercise. He emphasized the importance of such training in ensuring the Navy SEALs remain the world's leading maritime commandos.

“These exercises provide an opportunity for our operators and support personnel to hone their skills, coordinate with other units, and enhance their ability to conduct complex operations,” Gallagher said. “It is critical for us to train under the most challenging conditions – and thereby prepare our teams for what they will face during real-world operations.”

The recent withdrawal of the U.S. Embassy in Sudan underscored the importance of readiness to exquisitely plan and execute non-combatant emergency evacuation operations. The real-world event

was a timely reminder of the critical role these elite commandos play in safeguarding lives during complex international crises.

The Navy SEALs’ commitment to constant training and refinement is a testament to their reputation as the premier global maritime commandos.



East coast-based Naval Special Warfare Operators (SEALs) clear a space of a training vessel during a maritime interdiction operation training exercise in a simulated chemical, biological, radiological environment. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Trey Hutcheson.

Naval Special Warfare Command

USSOCOM commander visits Naval Special Warfare Command, validates value of rigorous training



U.S. Army Gen. Bryan P. Fenton, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, speaks with Naval Special Warfare Sailors during a visit to NSW West Coast commands. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Alex Smedegard.

*By Petty Officer 1st Class Felicito Rustique Jr.
Naval Special Warfare Command*

The U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) commander, Gen. Bryan Fenton, and senior enlisted leader, Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Shorter, visited Naval Special Warfare Command (NSWC) and Naval Special Warfare Center (NSWCEN) June 2, underscoring the crucial role of

NSW in maritime special operations.

During their visit, Fenton, Shorter, Rear Adm. Keith Davids, commander, NSWC and Force Master Chief Walter Dittmar toured NSW Center and NSW Group One while interacting with NSW operators and instructors seeing firsthand the rigorous training, resilience, and resourcefulness that are hallmarks in the training of U.S. Navy SEALs.

"The men and women serving in our Naval



U.S. Army Gen. Bryan P. Fenton, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, presents a command coin to the Naval Special Warfare Command, Senior Sailor of the Quarter, 2nd Quarter FY23, Personnel Specialist 1st Class Cecilia Figueroa at Naval Special Warfare Command headquarters aboard Naval Amphibious Base Coronado, California. Naval Special Warfare is the nation's elite maritime special operations force, uniquely positioned to extend the Fleet's reach and gain and maintain access for the Joint Force in competition and conflict. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Keypher Strombeck.

Special Warfare units provide an unparalleled maritime special operations capability,” Fenton said. “Their unique skillset is vital to executing our national security strategy and maintaining a competitive edge in an increasingly complex global environment.”

Fenton’s visit served to validate the necessity of the challenging training that takes place at NSWCCN. He watched as SEAL and SWCC candidates pushed through grueling exercises, developing the physical stamina, mental resilience, and tactical acumen necessary for their demanding roles.

Dauids echoed Fenton’s sentiments, emphasizing the crucial role that NSW units play in the broader special operations community.

“Our mission at NSWC is not only about developing and deploying naval commandos capable of operating in maritime environments,” said Dauids. “It’s about cultivating leaders who can think creatively and build world-class teams that are ready and willing to solve our Nation’s toughest problems in high-stakes, high-pressure situations.”

Dauids went on to underscore the importance of

inter-service collaboration. He expressed gratitude for the continued support from USSOCOM and noted the relationship between NSW and USSOCOM as integral to the success of special operations across the globe.

Fenton’s visit highlighted the ongoing commitment of USSOCOM to understand, support, and invest in the unique capabilities of NSW and served as a reminder of the community’s critical role in protecting U.S. interests at home and abroad.

The mission of NSWC is to provide maritime special operations forces to conduct full-spectrum operations, unilaterally or with partners, to support national objectives. The command’s greatest competitive advantage is its people, and it provides the nation’s premiere maritime special operators and combat support personnel in support of USSOCOM’s global mission.



U.S. Army Gen. Bryan P. Fenton, commander, U.S. Special Operations Command, speaks with a Naval Special Warfare Sailor during a visit to NSW West Coast commands. Photo by U.S. Navy Petty Officer 1st Class Alex Smedegard.

Air Force Special Operations Command



AFSOC conducts first-ever Command Chief Change of Responsibility

*By U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Caleb Pavao
AFSOC Public Affairs*

During a first-ever Air Force Major Command Change of Responsibility ceremony, Chief Master Sgt. Anthony Green assumed Command Chief responsibilities for Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, Fla., May 19, 2023.

Taking the colors from Chief Master Sgt. Cory Olson, Green became the 11th command chief of AFSOC which boasts approximately 22,000 total force and civilian Air Commandos worldwide.

Lt. Gen. Tony Bauernfeind, commander of AFSOC, presided over the ceremony.

“Command Chief Olson’s warfighting mindset, his sound guidance and his wisdom advanced this command for the future,” said Bauernfeind. “Command Chief Green is absolutely the right leader to manage and accelerate the change necessary to evolve Air Force Special Operations Command for the future.”

Change of Responsibility ceremonies are a standard within the joint community, but this was the first for an Air Force Major Command. Bauernfeind directed the holding of the ceremony to highlight the critical role of the senior enlisted leader in mission success.

Green spoke on the meaning of the title worn by the Airmen of AFSOC, “Air Commandos.”

“[The meaning of Air Commando] is not the planes. It’s not the cool kits,” said Green. “It’s what we’re called to do. It’s the mission. It’s the people. It’s the team.”

Among the attendance of roughly 250 individuals were notable guests such as Deputy Chief for Operations,



Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Joanne Bass, and U.S. Special Operations Command Senior Enlisted Leader, Army Command Sergeant Major Shane Shorter (left to right) and other distinguished visitors attend a Change of Responsibility ceremony at Hurlburt Field, Florida, May 19, 2023. The ceremony was the first-ever Air Force, Major Command Change of Responsibility ceremony. Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Alysa Knott.

Headquarters U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Jim Slife, Chief Master Sergeant of the Air Force Joanne Bass, and U.S. Special Operations Command Senior Enlisted Leader, Army Command Sergeant Major Shane Shorter.

Green entered the Air Force in September 1995. His background includes positions as an instructor and maintenance technician on the C-130 and various other non-standard aircraft. Throughout his career he has filled numerous roles including flying crew chief, combat aviation advisor, maintenance superintendent, and senior enlisted advisor.

U.S. Air Force Chief Master Sgt. Anthony Green assumes Command Chief responsibilities for Air Force Special Operations Command at Hurlburt Field, Florida, May 19, 2023. The ceremony was the first-ever Air Force, Major Command Change of Responsibility ceremony. Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Alysa Knott.



1ST AIR COMMANDO GROUP
IN MEMORIAM

JOHN AKSTON	2LT	BRENTS A LOVERLY	2LT
EDWARD W ALMANN	PFO	WM E MANTLE	PFO
HADLEY D BALDWIN	SSGT	VERNON A MCINICH	SSGT
WM C BARBER	PFO	MARTIN J MCGUIE	PFO
BILLY E BOEN	CPL	DONALD L MERRILL	CPL
FRANK H BOROWSKI	2LT	TEDDY L MOYERS	2LT
JAMES BROWN	CPL	JOHN MULLEN	CPL
FRANK S BYRNE	SSGT	WM H NEFF	SSGT
K CASEY	2LT	FAY L NIELSEN	2LT
HERBERT D CURRIDEN	SGT	ESTIL L NIENBER	SGT
WM E DAVISON	2LT	MARTIN L O'BERRY	2LT
ROBERT L DAVIS	PFC	LEE J PACKER	PFC
MURRELL J DILLARD	2LT	HENRY A PALMER	2LT
ROBERT L DOWE	PFO	BISHOP PARROTT	PFO
RALPH W DUBAY	PFO	H S PETTIT	PFO
ROBERT E EVERETT	SSGT	STANLEY W PIONTER	SSGT
EMIL J EASTWOOD	2LT	BURT C POWELL	2LT
GLEN R FEICHERT	T/SGT	WM H POSTLEWAIT	T/SGT
WM H FELDHUTER	SSGT	THOMAS E PURCELL	SSGT
JOHN M FERRON	2LT	MEILE E REDD	2LT
JOHN L FEY	2LT	ERNEST N RICHARDT	2LT
CHARLES E FISCHER	PFO	WM C RITZINGER	PFO
CLINTON B GATY	SSGT	ARTHUR W RUCK	SSGT
WM R GILHOUSEN	SGT	FRANK SADOSKI	SGT
JACK W GILLEDGE	CAPT	FRANK H SCHNEIDER	CAPT
ALBERT E HANNEY	2LT	RALPH A SELKIRK	2LT
BILLY HASTINGS	2LT	ROBERT D SHARROCK	2LT
CARL HARTZER	PFO	LEROY C SHIMULUNAS	PFO
FREDERICK W HELBIG	SGT	ELTON SILVER	SGT
CHARLES H HESS	PFC	LOUIS SIMON	PFC
JAMES W HICKEY	2LT	CLYDE S SLICK	2LT
BRIAN H HODGES	CPL	EMMIT R SOMMER'S	CPL
L D HOLLIBAUGH	SGT	JOSEPH G SPERONI	SGT
KEITH R HUGHES	CPL	WALTER C STELTER	CPL
JAMES C HUTCHINSON	2LT	ELMER J STONE	2LT
BRUCE V JOHNSON	T/SGT	WALTER R SWEENEY	T/SGT
JOSEPH KAPLAN	2LT	ROBERT D THOMAS	2LT
ROBERT L KARNES	SSGT	NGUYEN T TOM	SSGT
PETER D KELLY	2LT	EDWARD C VAN HOFF	2LT
JOHN A KELTING	2LT	LEONARD D WATERS	2LT
ROBERT D KINNEY	2LT	KENNETH L WELLS	2LT
JOE R KLAUS	CPL	GEORGE C WHELOCK	CPL
DONALD A LEFEVRE	PFC	WM J WINN	PFC
JOHN M LESHNER	2LT	STEPHEN A WANDERER	2LT
CHARLES B LISTON	CPL	JULIUS E YACKIE	CPL
EDMOND T LOPEZ			

Air Force Special Operations Command



AFSOC's second summit tackles how to instill mission command

*By U.S. Air Force 2nd Lt. Cassandra Saphore
AFSOC Public Affairs*

Air Force Special Operations Command's second Mission Command Summit concluded its three-day event on May 18, 2023, with the goal to generate how to instill a culture of mission command across the formation.

During the first summit, the team developed the philosophy of mission command which empowers our commanders and subordinates to execute assigned missions using some or all of the seven joint functions. Those missions are assigned by commanders via mission-type orders that ultimately enable subordinates to operate competently and confidently.

This summit provided an opportunity to connect key stakeholders from DAF, joint and ally counterparts to have candid conversations about the vision for mission command in AFSOC's new force presentation construct.

"Our future operating environment looks very different than how we've fought over the last three decades and our adversaries have been paying attention to that," said Lt. Gen. Tony Bauernfeind, commander of AFSOC, during opening remarks for the summit. "We've become on reliant on our global reach, active FOBs (forward operating bases) and centralized command/decentralized execution. For us to be successful, we need to shift our focus to the control piece, which is mission command."

He expanded on the "how" and laid out the aspects that surround mission command: mutual trust built through exercises, ensuring clear commander's intent, having an aggressive but disciplined mindset, a higher tolerance for risk and building competence.

"Developing mission command across our command will take more than writing doctrine or policy," said Bauernfeind. "This is why we've established the headquarters A7 and are establishing the Air Commando Development Center this summer. This will allow us to focus



U.S. Air Force Lt. Gen. Tony Bauernfeind, commander of Air Force Special Operations, speaks at the second Mission Command Summit at Hurlburt Field, Florida on May 18, 2023. This summit provided an opportunity to connect key stakeholders from DAF, joint and ally counterparts to have candid conversations about the vision for mission command in AFSOC's new force presentation construct. Photo by U.S. Air Force Airman 1st Class Alysa Calvarese

that energy to synchronize and coordinate the training, education, exercising and experimentation that are required to develop the competence around mission command. And competence leads to the first aspect of mission command, mutual trust."

This is yet another change AFSOC is tackling to prepare Air Commandos for the future operating environment. The command has been a pathfinder for the Air Force chief of staff, Gen. C.Q. Brown Jr.'s five drivers for change across the force: AF Force Generation, Agile Combat Employment, Multi-capable Airmen, wing A-staff implementation and now, mission command.

Moving forward, the 492 Special Operations Training Group and A7 are outlining actions and owners for the identified barriers to normalize mission command in AFSOC formations and updating the Mission Command Toolkit to rollout the next version at Commando Rally scheduled for June 2023.

"There's no denying that this is a heavy developmental effort across the Air Force, said Bauernfeind. "But here in AFSOC, we're up for the task."

AFSOC uses video game-like simulation training, adds realistic, world-wide value

*By U.S. Air Force 2d Lt. Cassandra Saphore
AFSOC Public Affairs*

Imagine you're at home, playing your favorite online warfighting video game with friends from different parts of the country --each with a different contribution to the overall effort. Your goal? Mission success!

After eight months of planning and mission rehearsal, all five U.S. Special Operations Command (USSOCOM) components did just that for the first time in conjunction with the 16th annual Air Force Special Operation Command (AFSOC) hosted Emerald Warrior exercise.

Connected virtually across six separate geographic locations, SOF participants "gamed" using a mix of local, distant, and virtual players. Specifically, the players included an AC-130J (constructive) and MQ-9 crew from Hurlburt Field, MQ-9 and CV-22 crews from Cannon AFB, a MH-60 crew from the 160th Special Operations Aviation Regiment and three groups of Joint Terminal Attack Controller's from Naval Special Warfare, Marine Special Operations Command and Joint Special Operations Command.

The objective was to capture and collect all information from a person of interest to eliminate a threat against the U.S. and our allies within a constructed virtual environment.

"This was a USSOCOM initiative we were able to turn into a reality and yet another pathfinding step towards SOF components being able to fully exercise in a distributed mission operation (DMO) network," said Mr. Bill Spicer, Emerald Warrior virtual planner.

The AFSOC Air, Space and Information Operations directorate, or A3, and EW planners led the effort from the 492d Special Operations Wing Operations Center and aircraft simulator facilities.

"Future technology continues to challenge current training capabilities with the introduction of virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed/extended reality," said Lt. Col. Heather Demis, C-146 pilot and DMO chief of readiness training. "While there are rigorous cyber security requirements and minor occasional technical issues between software and hardware compatibility, once connected, the simulators allow for



An AC-130J weapons systems officer prepares for the joint virtual simulation training event as part of the annual Emerald Warrior exercise at Hurlburt Field, Florida, April 26, 2023. The joint, combined training executed in Emerald Warrior continues to build and strengthen relationships with our allies and partners, establishing a common sight-picture for operations around the globe. Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Caleb Pavao

streamlined joint and combined interoperability."

These devices can be connected across the world to ensure the warfighter can train, exercise and implement tactic, techniques and procedures in any environment to prepare for real-world events and missions.

"The future of DMO events will include extended reality for any AFSOC platform in a network exercise through the newest AFSOC Emulator System which is currently projected to be on network for Bold Quest, a joint staff test and evaluation event," said Demis.

With this notable success, AFSOC hopes to continue to push the envelope for DMO with more participation worldwide across not only SOF units but also allies and partner nations in training our warfighters to succeed on any battlefield.

"Now that we are in the era of strategic competition, we must adapt and look for opportunities to innovate and transform to remain the most capable, most lethal Air Force in the world," said Demis. "And with wins like DMO ... that's exactly what AFSOC is doing."

Air Force Special Operations Command



16th Annual Emerald Warrior jumps into action

Air Force Special Operations Command hosted the 16th Annual Emerald Warrior exercise at multiple locations across Florida, as well as Puerto Rico and ran through May 6, 2023.

This joint, combined exercise provides realistic and relevant, high-end training to prepare special operations forces, conventional forces and international partners in the evolving strategic environment, shifting focus to growing kinetic and non-kinetic effects in strategic competition.

Emerald Warrior applies lessons learned from real-world operations to provide trained and ready personnel to the joint force, while addressing priorities laid out in the 2022 National Defense Strategy. Vital to this effort are effective trained forces and strong international partnerships. Partner force participants for this year are primarily from France, Germany and Lithuania.

This exercise hones the skills of participating units and is an opportunity to test future concepts in support of Agile Combat Employment operating under the new Air Force Generation deployment model. In line with AFSOC's Strategic Guidance, the exercise fuels on-going pathfinding and experimentation efforts within the command.

Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Joshua De Guzman.





Air Force Special Operations Command



Emerald Warrior 23 hones Mission Command in environment of competition

By U.S. Air Force Capt. Jantzen Floate
AFSOC Public Affairs

Air Force Special Operations Command concluded the 16th annual Emerald Warrior exercise which provides realistic and relevant, high-end pre-deployment training encompassing multiple joint operating areas to ensure preparedness of Special Operations Forces, conventional force enablers, partner forces and interagency elements.

This annual exercise allows AFSOF to integrate with and execute full spectrum special operations in a complex and evolving security environment using all aspects of live, virtual, and constructive training assets – spanning multiple geographic locations. This year locations included Hurlburt Field, Homestead Air Force Base, Florida and Puerto Rico.

The EW 23 planning team applied lessons learned from last iteration and real-world operations to train and ready AFSOF with sister service and partner forces, while keeping focus on security priorities laid out in the 2022 National Defense Strategy, specifically, pacing strategic competitors.

“In this year’s iteration of Emerald Warrior, we continued to improve on AFSOC’s new approach to mission command of Air Force Special Operations Forces through the continued employment of the Special Operations Task Group and Special Operations

In this year’s iteration of Emerald Warrior, we continued to improve on AFSOC’s new approach to mission command of Air Force Special Operations Forces through the continued employment of the Special Operations Task Group and Special Operations Task Units. The geo-separation of leadership created within the EW exercise scenario, allowed for real-time, on-the-ground decision making from the SOTG and SOTU commanders.

— U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. David Allen



A German combat controller observes U.S. Air Force Special Tactics Operators during Emerald Warrior 23 at Mercedita Airport, Puerto Rico, May 1, 2023. The joint, combined training executed in Emerald Warrior continues to build and strengthen relationships with our allies and partners, establishing a common sight-picture for operations around the globe. Photo by U.S. Air Force Senior Airman Stephen Pulter.

Task Units,” said U.S. Air Force Lt. Col. David Allen, Emerald Warrior exercise director. “The geo-separation of leadership created within the EW exercise scenario, allowed for real-time, on-the-ground decision making from the SOTG and SOTU commanders.”

Not only was the objective for EW 23 to hone the processes for mission command

of SOTG's and SOTU's with geo-separated AFSOF, but also, to incorporate agile combat employment movements through austere, more complex environments.

"Honing AFSOC's rapid ACE capability was a priority set for Emerald Warrior this iteration and the last as we continue to develop this concept through our mission sustainment teams or MSTs," said Allen. "Being able to bring AFSOF and our partner force allies to the island of Puerto Rico allowed us to really get to exercise this rising capability in environments that we don't typically get to in the states, and for that we are very appreciative of the government and people of Puerto Rico."

The MSTs established forward operating bases for a SOTG HQ and SOTUs to operate out of, providing initial site security, receiving cargo and personnel, and setting up shelter.

In addition to exercising employable command and control structure, EW continued to exercise the incorporation of non-kinetic effects (NKE) and capabilities. This year's iteration brought a more robust NKE fusion cell than previous exercises, incorporating information related capabilities such as information operations, intelligence, intelligence support to IO and

public affairs.

"Synchronizing information related capabilities (IRCs) across intelligence, information operations, cyber, space, and public affairs subject matter experts allowed us to further educate our SOTG and SOTU commanders on the capabilities they can provide when down range," said Maj Jessica Vogle, Emerald Warrior J2 and Non-Kinetic Fusion Cell lead. "Whether it be the utilization of cyber effects to create complex dilemmas for our adversaries, space capabilities to get a site picture of the operation area or using IO and PA to get strategic messaging out, fusion cells create operational effects in the information environment and strategic advantage for AFSOF, our allies and partners through unique access and placement."

A key part of Emerald Warrior is having partners and allies training alongside U.S. forces. France, Germany and Lithuania participated in the three-week exercise this year.

"Interoperability with partner forces is always a priority mission set here at Emerald Warrior," said Allen. "Training together makes all of us stronger, so we are appreciative that France, Germany and Lithuania were able to participate this year and are looking forward to having them back again in the future."



A Special Tactics operator with the 24th Special Operations Wing plays as blue force, searching the collapsed structure for survivors as part of Emerald Warrior 23 at Camp Santiago, Puerto Rico, May 1, 2023. Emerald Warrior is the largest joint special operations exercise involving U.S. Special Operations Command forces training to respond to various threats across the spectrum of conflict. Photo by U.S. Air Force Staff Sgt. Joshua De Guzman.

Marine Forces, Special Operations Command



MARSOC multi-discipline logistics operations course

*By U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Jesula Jeanlouis
Marine Corps Forces Special Operations
Command*

Marine Forces Special Operations Command held a Multi-Discipline Logistics Operations Course, March 6-31, 2023, to certify a new class of special operations capability specialists in the logistics (SOCS-L), maintenance (SOCS-M), and ordnance (SOCS-O) fields.

The MDLOC is the final aspect of an 11 to 12-week

training pipeline designed to create multi-disciplined logisticians able to provide expertise and support unique to the special operations forces operating environment. Each SOCS training pipeline includes special operations forces fundamentals; survival, evasion, resistance, and escape; and a culminating military occupational specialty specific course.

“The Multi-Discipline Logistics Operations Course is tailored for logistics enablers at MARSOC,” said the MDLOC lead instructor. “Marines from multiple different MOSs can come to MDLOC and get further



Marines with Marine Forces Special Operations Command and the Fleet Marine Force assemble a M134 Minigun during the MARSOF Ordnance portion of Multi-Discipline Logistics Operations Course at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, March 20, 2023. MDLOC is the final aspect of an 11 to 12-week training pipeline that is divided into three specific career fields: logistics and sustainment, maintenance, and ordnance. This course, in addition to Special Operations Forces Fundamentals and Survival, Evasion, Resistance, and Escape, produces MARSOC special operations capability specialists with the unique skills needed to support and sustain Marine Special Operation Companies. Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Jesula Jeanlouis.

trained on their occupational specialties and enhance their capabilities, broadening the spectrum of things that they would learn from one platform or technical background to multiple different technical backgrounds to better enable small teams in austere environments with limited logistical support to accomplish their mission.”

MDLOC is open to all Marines within the logistician communities who are interested in advancing their skills and potentially serving at MARSOC later in their careers.

“We are looking for Marines that have been recommended by command, that have a lot of experience, that they’re proficient in their MOS, and have capacity for more,” continued the lead instructor. “Not only should they have interest in MDLOC and in expanding their knowledge, their technical background, and their technical specialty, but they should also be coming here eager to learn.”

The logistics and sustainment track of MDLOC focuses on mobility, supply, and procurement catered to the special operations logistics architecture.

“Being at MARSOC and being a logistician will make you more effective when you go back to the fleet because you are now seeing the bigger picture of logistics,” explained a supply chief with MARSOC. “SOCS-L is now incorporating all the functions of logistics and supply and how to transport and support the teams and units you’re deploying with. In the fleet, you’re only seeing that one function of logistics or supply that you’re attached to, whether that be embark, supply or ammo. Understanding the overall picture of all the functions of supply and how they work together will make you a more efficient Marine going back to the fleet.”

The maintenance Marines receive commercial training on diagnosing and repairing a wide variety of combustion engines with limited access to parts and tools.

“I did benefit from MDLOC,” said a motor transport maintenance chief with MARSOC. “In my experience, the technical side of my MOS is very important to help support the [Marine Special Operations Team’s] mission down range. Focusing on the fundamental theories of electrical, engine, powertrain, and troubleshooting, helps the Marine understand how the components work and how they can apply mechanical theory to all the gear sets they may fall in on down range.”

The ordnance curriculum cross-trains Marines in a wide variety of weapons systems and optics, including SOF-peculiar and foreign weapons.

“I benefited from this course due to the [number] of weapons we were able to get our hands on during this course that generally I don’t have time to work with,” said an electro optical ordnance repairer with MARSOC. “The main difference with this course is it’s specificity to MARSOC weapons and foreign weapons that MARSOC uses that isn’t implemented in the Fleet Marine Force.”

The MARSOC graduates of MDLOC will go on to be assigned to Marine Raider Support Teams with the unique skills needed to support and sustain Marine Special Operation Companies.



Marines with Marine Forces Special Operations Command and the Fleet Marine Force conduct practical application during the MARSOF Maintenance portion of the Multi-Discipline Logistics Operations Course at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina, March 28, 2023. Photo by U.S. Marine Corps Sgt. Jesula Jeanlouis.

Headquarters - U.S. Special Operations Command Special Operations Forces Week 2023

SOF Week enables the SOF enterprise to strengthen existing partnerships and forge new ones by partnering with industry.



(Above) U.S. Army Gen. Bryan Fenton, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command, MacDill Air Force Base, Florida, introduces the keynote speaker for day three of Special Operations Forces Week in Tampa, Florida, May 10, 2023. Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Marleah Miller.



(Top right) Honorable Christopher Maier, assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low-intensity conflict, provides opening remarks for day three of Special Operations Forces Week in Tampa, Florida, May 10, 2023. Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Marleah Miller.



(Middle right) Maj. Gen. (retired) Delfin Lorenzana, former minister of defense Philippines, speaks to an audience during Special Operations Forces Week in Tampa, Florida, May 11, 2023. Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Marleah Miller.



Members with Global Special Operations Forces and U.S. Special Operations Command conduct a panel on Total Human Performance: Today and Tomorrow, during SOF Week in Tampa, Florida, May 9, 2023. Photo by U.S. Air Force Tech. Sgt. Marleah Miller.



(Clockwise) Gen. Bryan Fenton, commander U.S. Special Operations Command, and Command Sgt. Maj. Shane Shorter hosted the 2023 Awards Ceremony with the Director of the National Counterterrorism, Christine Abizaid, giving the keynote speech. Retired Chief Master Sgt. Wayne Fisk was given the Bull Simons Award. The Bull Simons award, named after the legendary Colonel Arthur "Bull" Simons is presented annually by US Special Operations Command as a lifetime achievement award to those who embody the spirit, values and skills of the Special Operations Unconventional Warrior, and is USSOCOM's highest honor. Photo by Michael Bottoms.

The Director of the National Counterterrorism, Christine Abizaid, gives the keynote speech. Photo by Michael Bottoms.

Naval Special Warfare Group 4 received the Dr. Christian J. Lambertsen Award for innovation. Photo by Michael Bottoms.

The late Maj. Gen. Gary Harrell was given the Bull Simons Award with his wife Jennifer accepting. Photo by Michael Bottoms.

The late Maj. Gen. Gary Harrell was given the Bull Simons Award with his wife Jennifer accepting. Photo by Michael Bottoms.



Headquarters - U.S. Special Operations Command USSOCOM competes in DoD 2023 Warrior Games Challenge

Photos by Michael Bottoms.



Gen. Bryan P. Fenton, commander of U.S. Special Operations Command and Command Sgt. Maj. Shane W. Shorter, attended the Warrior Games opening ceremony with Team SOCOM aboard the USS Midway Museum in San Diego, California, June 2, 2023. The 2023 Warrior Games Challenge is a Paralympic-style competitive event featuring adaptive sports used by wounded warriors as part of their recovery process. The games allow them to find new ways of enhancing their recovery journey.



Army Staff Sgt. Jackson Williams competes in the powerlifting competition during DoD's 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 3, 2023.



Petty Officer 1st Class Erika Neal prepares to lift in the powerlifting competition during DoD's 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 3, 2023.



Army Sgt. 1st Class Anthony Ghent (left) competes in the recumbent bike competition, San Diego, California June 4, 2023.



Army Specialist Justin Radbill competes in the recumbent bike competition, San Diego, California June 4, 2023.



Air Force Master Sgt. Roger Hopkins (center) competes in the men's upright cycling competition, San Diego, California, June 4, 2023.



Army Master Sgt. Ivan Morera competes in the discus competition, San Diego, California, June 5, 2023.



Senior Chief Petty Officer Werner "Tiny" Mammen competes in the shot-put competition, San Diego, California, June 5, 2023.

USSOCOM



Army Staff Sgt. Kevin Coleman from Team SOCOM competes in the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 6, 2023.



Petty Officer 1st Class (SEAL) Dustin Bouelle from Team SOCOM celebrates after he competed in the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 6, 2023.



Petty Officer 1st Class Erika Neal competes in a track event during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 6, 2023.



Team SOCOM plays in the Bronze Medal Wheelchair Rugby match during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 6, 2023. Team SOCOM would go on to win.



Chief Petty Officer Elizabeth Campos competes in the rowing competition during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 7, 2023.



Team SOCOM competes in the rowing competition during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge June 7, 2023, San Diego, California.



Army Capt. Zachary Polega from Team SOCOM competes in the freestyle during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge June 10, 2023, San Diego, California.



Lt. Cdr. Scott Terry from Team SOCOM competes in the archery competition during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California June 8, 2023.



Army Sgt. 1st Class Joshua Farmer competes in the rifle competition during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 12, 2023.



Chief Master Sgt. Louis Orrie prepares to shoot in the team recurve archery competition during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 9, 2023.



Team SOCOM would go on to win the gold medal beating Air Force in seated volleyball during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge, San Diego, California, June 12, 2023.

Army Specialist Justin Radbill competes in a track event during the 2023 Warrior Games Challenge San Diego, California, June 6, 2023. The 2023 Warrior Games Challenge is a Paralympic-style competitive event featuring adaptive sports used by wounded warriors as part of their recovery process. The games allow them to find new ways of enhancing their recovery journey. Photo by Michael Bottoms.

