Global Strike Command wins CE Readiness Challenge X

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- By Sarah McNair
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TYNDALL AIR FORCE BASE, Fla. –

A team of Air Force Global Strike Command civil engineers hoisted the Readiness Challenge Xwinner's trophy April 26 after a grueling six-day competition that tested 12 teams in more than 25 engineering skills ranging from firefighting to runway repair.

In the capstone competition for Department of the Air Force engineers, Readiness Challenge competitors put their engineering skills to work at Tyndall's Silver Flag Exercise Site April 21-26. The top two teams received Brig. Gen. William T. Meredith award trophies.

"It feels great to win and it's a testament to how bad we wanted it and how much effort we put into every event," said Capt. Matt Lawler, Global Strike team leader. "We never stopped taking it seriously. Being on top actually brings a lot of pressure to stay on top and that just made our feet a little faster and our brains work a little harder."

Along with taking top honors, AFGSC was also the top team for the Fog of War exercise and the Warrior Obstacle Course, the two highest-graded events. Air Mobility Command received the second-place trophy.

The Air Force Civil Engineer Center, a primary subordinate unit of the Air Force Installation and Mission Support Center, and the 801st RED HORSE Training Squadron hosted the civil engineers, combat engineers, and Air Force Services competitors from the Department of the Air Force, Army, Marines and a joint Coalition Team that included participants from the U.S. Space Force, Royal Canadian Air Force and Norwegian allies.

“It’s a great opportunity to engage with all these members from across the world,” said Senior Master Sgt. Brad Johaness, 801st RHTS operations superintendent. “Having our sister services here from the Army and Marines, as well as the coalition partners and allied partners who joined the teams, allowed us to engage across the branches and see where our strengths are while enjoying a little friendly competition along the way.”

The competition included more than 540 participants and 25 event challenges designed to test teams in a wide range of core civil engineering disciplines. Each team competed head-to-head in a simulated contested deployment environment to demonstrate their capability to respond, repair and recover base operations with limited resources.

The Col. Susanne Waylett Award was given to Airmen who worked the hardest and had the most enthusiasm during the week in the four categories below:

- Junior Enlisted – Senior Airmen Luis Medina, Air Education and Training Command CE team
- Noncommissioned Officer – Staff Sgt. Gabriel Flores, Air Force Global Strike Command CE team
- Senior Noncommissioned Officer – Master Sgt. Dustin Haycox, U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa CE team
- Company Grade Officer – Capt. Matthew Lawler, Air Force Global Strike Command CE team

The top competitors on each team received a recognition coin. The evaluation cadre from the 801st RED HORSE Training Squadron recognized these Airmen for their exemplary spirit, principles, professionalism, leadership and teamwork throughout the challenges.

- Expeditionary Airbase Team – Airman Eric Garrison
- Air Force Reserve Command – Senior Airman Connor Kinlin
- Air Education and Training Command – Staff Sgt. Alessandro Carter
- Air Force Global Strike Command – Airman Spencer Smith
- Air Force District of Washington-Air Force Special Operations Command – Staff Sgt. Ivan Perez
- Air Combat Command – Airman First Class Eza Smith
- U.S. Air Forces in Europe and Air Forces Africa – Airman First Class Sterling Bassett
- Pacific Air Forces – Technical Sgt. Lyenn Maglinao
- Air Mobility Command – Airman First Class Tristan Dees
- U.S. Marine Corps – Lance Corporal Isaac Crane
- U.S. Army – Specialist Andrew Martinez
- Coalition led by U.S. Space Force – Technical Sgt. Kevin Ilano

“It was awesome to see all the sister services and the international partners that we’ve had here working with us to better ourselves as a whole,” said Master Sgt. Douglas Dees of the 801st RHTS.

For the first time in 20 years, Force Support and Services Airmen competed alongside the teams they support in real-world deployments. Four Airmen from the career field joined each Readiness Challenge team, not only as Services support members, but also to participate in the competitions with their CE teammates. Their performance was graded by cadres in two competitions: building an outdoor Single Pallet Expeditionary Kitchen and Babington Diagnostics, which tested their ability to troubleshoot mobile kitchen equipment.

“When this event originated (years ago), it was about engineering and services – PRIME BEEF and PRIME RIBS,” said AFIMSC Commander Maj. Gen. John Allen. “So, we brought Services back out here with us. We’re recovering airfields, doing all the testing and all the expedient (tactics, techniques and procedures) that our Services teammates bring to the fight as well.”

Along with teams from the major commands, newcomers who competed this year included an xpeditionary airbase team, teams from the U.S. Army and U.S. Marine Corps, a coalition team, and two participants from the Netherlands who joined the returning USAFE-AFAFRICA team.

“We showcased interoperability, not only with our sister services but with international partners and tested our readiness as a whole force to see where we stand as we go up against our next competitor, next adversary or near-peer threat,” Dees said.

Competition results help leaders and career field managers assess each unit, find resolutions for deficiencies, and identify training opportunities to strengthen posture and reoptimize for Great Power Competition.

“The Air Force, along with some of our sister services, are going through some really big changes now,” said AFCEC Commander Brig. Gen. William Kale. “These are the types of skills we need down range and in the future fight. And we also need our coalition of joint partners alongside us in that fight. So, this Readiness Challenge X has been a huge success.”

Go to Global Strike Command wins CE Readiness Challenge X _ Air Force Civil Engineer Center _ Article Display.html for more information.