AIRSOFT NEWS IN THE GULF COAST REGION

SPRING 2012 VOL 2

THIRD COAST AIRSOFT

THIS ISSUE: "SHOOT, MOVE, COMMUNICATE"



TEAM SPOTLIGHTS JOKER AIRSOFT & ODA205/GFT9

EVENT AAR: 2012 COMMANDO CHALLENGE

DOC: WHY WE PLAY AIRSOFT!

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THIRDCOAST AIRSOFT MAGAZINE

Issue 4, Volume 2 SPRING 2012

Airsoft News In The Gulf Coast Region

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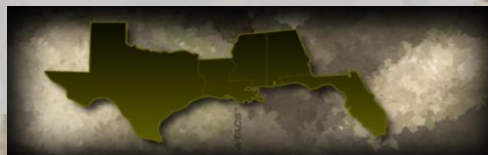

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From the Editor:

Spring 2012 is here and with it one of the most busiest times in sport. For most communities in the region the biggest events are held in the March-May timeframe due to the weather. We have already seen MILSIM events like the South Texas Commando Challenge and players are already looking forward to SKURGE III and STARBURST IV.

This quarter's issue focuses on teamwork, spotlighting events such as the COMMANDO CHALLENGE and Why I play by "Doc" Govan. We also spotlight another new teamset addition to the community, Joker Squad, while spotlighting on one of the pillar teams in TCA, the "COMMANDOS" of ODA 205/GFT 09 1st SFAOC.

And last, from the staff here at TCA, a reminder to play airsoft safe, this busy time for the sport should remain negative issue free and avoid giving opponents of extreme outdoor pursuit hobbies ammunition to use against organized, responsible players.

-Zmonster
Editor in Chief



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LETTERS TO TCA



Hey TCA Mag,

Thanks for the coverage about the Mississippi CSAR Game in the last issue. Since that article, we have gotten alot more interested players here in Mississippi,

Pete, Miss.

TCA,

Had a question about Starburst for this year, are the dreaded mortars going to be allowed again? –Darren, Houston

Editor: Absolutely, but this time the KFORs are going to invade the US.



Been with TCA since it started back in 2009, the level of organization and focus on the hobby has taken Milsim Airsoft to the next level. Keep the events, coverage, and spreading the word about the hobby going.

Chris C
Florida Swamp Rifles

Your organization's ruleset is pretty easy to use and follow. Is there a guide that we can find on the forum to print and brief?

Elliot J.
Minn.

Editor: You can find the event guidance at the link below:

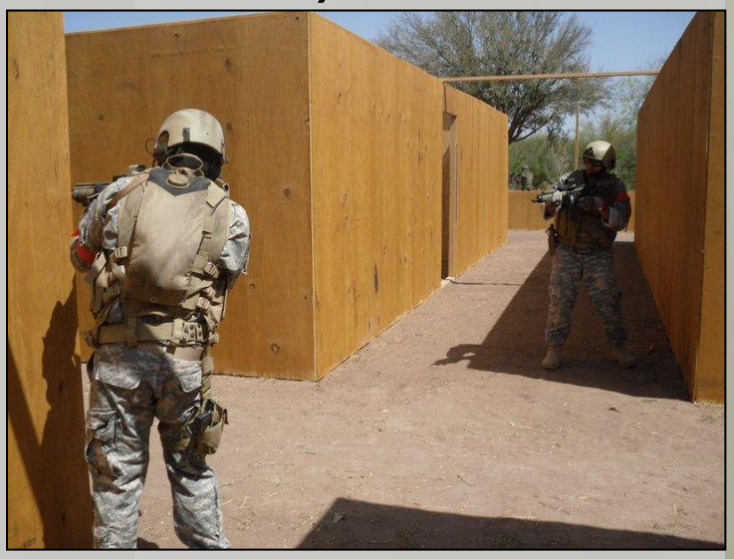
http://thirdcoastairsoft.com/forum/viewtopic.php?f=16&t=22

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU, SEND TO THIRDCOASTAIRSOFT@GMAIL.COM

TEAM SPOTLIGHT ODA 205/GFT 09 "COMMANDOS"

This issue we spotlight one of the most established MILSIM Airsoft teams in TCA, the "COMMANDOS" of 1st Special Forces Airsoft Operations Group's ODA 205/GFT 09.

TCA: When, why, where was ODA 205/GFT09 created?



The ODA 205/GFT 9 has a very interesting beginning; The team was formed by myself (Doc), my son Riff, and his friend Creeper. The three of us humbly started our airsoft journey as The Saber Recon Commandos (SRC) in 2009, and we started playing with the Defcon Airsoft community located in Corpus Christi.



Well, once we got the "bug" we attended Operation Dawn to Dusk and Operation Three Birds and from there we were officially committed to this great game. The more we skirmished and trained, the more I began to desire to organize and throw my own op and that is when Operation Skurge was born.

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Team Spotlight ODA 205/GFT 09 "Commandos"

Skurge 1 would end up being the largest milsim op ever organized in the Rio Grande Valley to date, fielding 110 players and bringing 700 pounds of canned goods which were donated to the RGV Food Bank. After Skurge, ZMonster (CO of ODA 204/GFT 8 at the time), approached me and offered us the opportunity to join the 1st SFAOC as ODA 205/GFT9. It was then official—we became an ODA! The ODA 205/GFT 9 roster was soon filled with some serious law enforcement, military and veteran airsoft experienced players and would grow into the formidable, disciplined team it is today.







What is the relationship to 1st SFAOC?

ODA 205/GFT 9 is part of the 2nd Group, 1st SFAOC and a founding team member of the Third Coast Airsoft Community.



Team Spotlight ODA 205/GFT 09 "Commandos"

TCA: Where does the Team practice? Where are you based out of?

The team is based in McAllen, Texas and primarily trains at the Woodlands Paintball field which is located in Mission, Texas. We do a lot of squad and close quarters drill training at Delta Paintball field which is located in Edinburg, Texas. Here in south Texas we have several fields to utilize for training, so we try and spread it around when we can.







TCA: Is there a standard uniform, loadout and kit across the team, any common weapons? Do you have specialty positions like Support Gunner, Sniper, and/or CQB?

The standard uniform for ODA 205/ GFT 9 is the multicam pattern, but our kit, uniform and weaponry usually varies from mission to mission. Most team members run a M4 based weapon for magazine commonality on the field, but we do boast an exceptional sniper element as well, and are very good at adjusting to support our sister units as needed.

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Team Spotlight ODA 205/GFT 09 "Commandos"

When I assembled the 205 my goal for the team was to be very good at conducting ambushes, recon, and guerilla warfare operations and the team continues with these as the foundational mission types preferred.

I do want to mention that as captain of this team from 2009-to early 2012 what has made this team so unique is the veteran leadership it has at nearly every level. I elected to promote E2 (former ODA 205 XO and captain of the valley's first airsoft team,Gunz4hire),

when I was given the opportunity to take a command position in 2nd Group and he (E2) has led the team to a whole new level. Our GFT 9 is also exceptionally gifted with solid leadership with David Elliott as it's CO and he has brought a level of excellence to the GFT 9 element that I think will be hard to ever beat.



TCA: How is the Team Organized, have you attended or hosted any large operations?

The team is organized in accordance with the 1st SFAOC guidelines and is basically built to mirror a real Special Forces team.



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TEAM SPOTLIGHT ODA 205/GFT 09 "COMMANDOS"

We have hosted, co-hosted or attended most of the biggest ops in south Texas.

- OPERATION VERAT (JAN09): ATTENDED WITH THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY IN TEMPLE, TX.
- STARBURST 2: (ODA 205/GFT 9 WAS THE COMMAND ELEMENT IN CORPUS CHRISTI, TX)
- OPERATION SKURGE 2: THE VIRUS LIVES (HOSTED IN VICTORIA, TX)
- THE INAUGURAL COMMANDO CHALLENGE: (CO-HOSTED WITH ODA 204/GFT 8 IN EDINBURG, TX)
- OPERATION JUST REVENGE (SEPT10): (PLAYED ON THE TALIBAN SIDE AT HARWOOD, TX)
- STARBURST 3: (ODA 205/GFT 9 COMMANDED IN VICTORA, TX)
- 2ND COMMANDO CHALLENGE: (FIELDED BOTH CADRE AND CANDIDATES IN CORPUS CHRISTI, TX)
- OPERATION FIRST STRIKE: (OPERATION FIRST STRIKE, CO-HOSTED WITH ODA 204/GFT 8 AND BLACK OPS AIRSOFT IN MISSION, TX)
- 3RD COMMANDO CHALLENGE: (FIELDED BOTH CADRE AND CANDIDATES IN CORPUS CHRISTI, TX)



Team Spotlight ODA 205/GFT 09 "Commandos"

TCA: As a member Third Coast Family, what are your Team's expectations for the upcoming year?

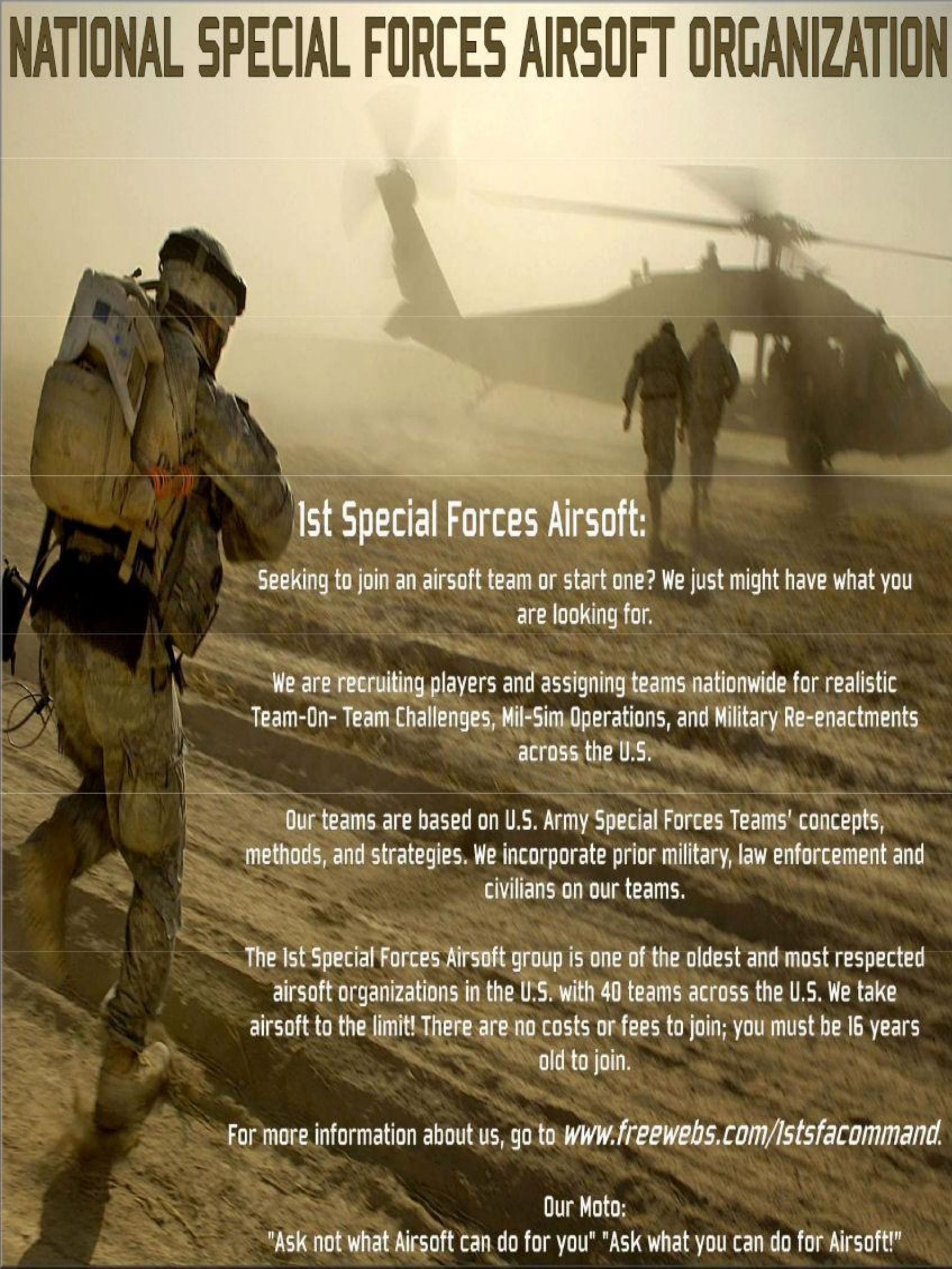
We are really excited about hosting Operation Skurge 3; Dr. Gladstone's Revenge, this April in Mission, TX. Skurge 3 promises to be the most intense version in the "Skurge family" with some twists and turns no one will be expecting! We are also anticipating Starburst 4 which will once again be held in Victoria, Tx, as well as roadtripping to Houston the participate in the Commando/Operator Challenge being hosted by our newest 2nd Group members, ODA 203/GFT 7 and ODA 207/ GFT 11.

TCA: Any age restrictions? Who can be a member?

We are currently holding 16 team members on the roster with two new candidates currently under review. As with all the ODAs, we consider all military and law enforcement players and civilians, with the high standards of integrity and teamwork, with the desire to grow the game safely and honorably in the community.



NATIONAL SPECIAL FORCES AIRSOFT ORGANIZATION



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Our Moto:
"Ask not what Airsoft can do for you" "Ask what you can do for Airsoft!"

Tactics: Shoot, Move, and Communicate

By
Ranger Mike (Florida TCA Chapter)

So your team has gotten established and organized. Meaning your normal group of players that always works together has decided to take the big step and call yourselves a team. This is no small step. In a lot of the airsoft communities that I have seen and been a part of, I have witnessed groups of players evolve into teamsets. They want to take the hobby/sport more seriously and be able to compete against other established teams. Gear, loadouts, and weapons are decided upon, and the team starts looking more and more professional, you hold private skirmishes to test tactics and work on improving individual skills.



I have even seen teams remove themselves from the larger community in order to get better then return to the larger community once they feel that they can compete (I do not recommend this, practice makes perfect, force on force training provides a lot of lessons learned).

Recently a young group of players ("young" not referring to age but "new" to the hobby) asked my team leaders how to develop a training plan. I told them to focus on the basics, SHOOT, MOVE, and COMMUNICATE.

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Tactics: Shoot, Move, and Communicate

SHOOT



A friend of mine, Gabe L., an Army Veteran and Airsoft player, stresses marksmanship as a part of his team training. A lot of players immediately ask "Why? Airsoft Replicas are not that accurate?" his response was every shooter needs to know the pattern of his weapon at various distances. Knowing how your weapon shoots will give you an edge when time counts. I have seen a lot of players not even bother to mount their carry handle/sites on their M4/M16s, and most of the time they do not hit what they are aiming at, trust me sites do work in airsoft.







I have played with a member on my team that uses an aimpoint red dot site without batteries, his reasoning is that if the target is in the red dot's tube, he can hit them. Because he is so familiar with his weapon, it works for him. Also do not neglect to train with your secondary as well, whether it is a machine pistol, pistol, or shotgun. And practice transition drills. If your main goes down in the middle of a fight, you do not want to scramble for your secondary, and then be unfamiliar with its shot placement.

Tactics: Shoot, Move, and Communicate



MOVE

Once marksmanship has been trained, get the team to work on movement, starting at the individual level, then progress to buddy movement, and then on to team movement. The two types of movement are in contact and not in contact to simplify things. Individuals should practice moving from cover to cover even if not in contact.



Later you can train with a buddy, taking turns bounding, covering each other as one moves. When you move, you are moving, do not stop to take a shot, that is when you are most likely to be out of cover and get hit. Develop trust among each other.



At this point the communication begins, some teams having come up with code words for “moving” “set” “got you covered” in order to not tip off the other team, train initially with these words before you try to use code words. There might be a time when you have a non team member in your element and he will not know the code words but understands the concept of bounding. My team has a rule, 2 operators executing a mission is better than one.



Tactics: Shoot, Move, and Communicate

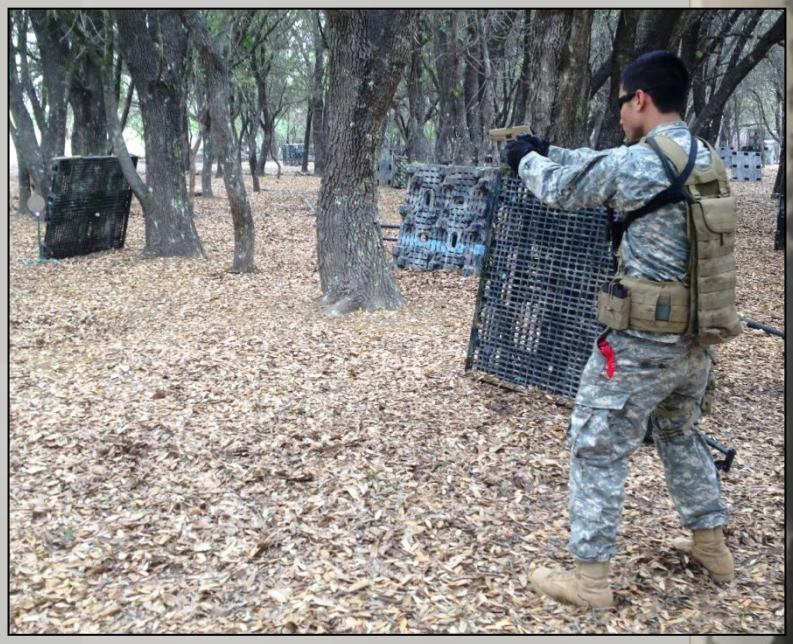
That means a lone ranger is not much of a threat to the mission, but two motivated teammates can wreck shop. A lot of you have talked amongst yourselves and noticed that one shooter is not much of a threat, but two can cause a lot of damage.





Movement formations like the Squad File or Column, and Squad online should be trained on both in contact and out of contact. Training on just one or the other may short change the team when it counts the most. A lot of the 1st SFAOC teams use the online movement with great results both in the defense and offense.

My team constantly practices this online push because our new members are less prone to participate in an onine attack for fear of getting hit.



Another team leader uses metal pans as OPFOR when training and as the team attacks online, everyone is walking and shooting these pans. An excellent technique to instill confidence in those newer team mates.

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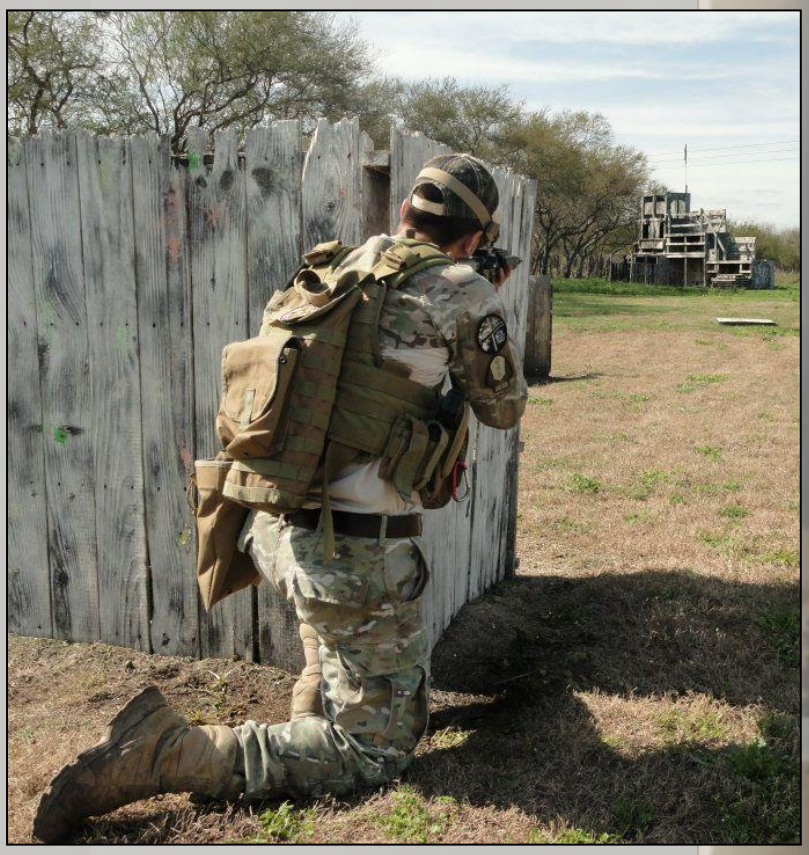
Tactics: Shoot, Move, and Communicate

COMMUNICATION



The last item on the “to train” list is communication. Start with focusing on verbal and hand communication before training on the use of radios. Buddies and fireteams moving should be communicating to the leaders when they are set as well as augmenting the verbal commands with hand signs.

Train your teammates to back brief their leaders to ensure that all understand the mission they are getting. Remember words have meaning. In Mississippi and in Laredo, Texas, I witnessed a classic example of misunderstanding.





Team leaders told their people to secure a location, but the team mates thought it meant to pass through the objective and kill the enemy on another part of the field, causing the team to lose the event.

A back brief is nothing more than the assigned team member explaining what they think the mission you have given them means. “Move to Tu Pams, secure that location, block enemy from coming through, back brief me,” “Roger, go there, hold it, let nothing pass,” “Roger, execute.” As simple as that, most teams that do well in MILSIM airsoft use this concept and are pretty successful in making mission and winning the fight. It separates a common dressed team from a team that is a coordinated fist!

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Tactics: Shoot, Move, and Communicate



Shoot, move and communicate is a good basis to begin improving your teamset and a starting point for building a training plan to get a new team to become more organized and effective. As other players start seeing your team taking it to the next level, they themselves will want to and the community as a whole will become more and more competitive.

- Ranger Mike

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New Team Spotlight
Joker Airsoft

This Spring we are featuring a new member of the Third Coast Family of Teams, JOKER AIRSOFT out of Corpus Christi and the surrounding South Texas Area. TCA Magazine recently sat down with Anthony Luna, the CO of Joker Airsoft,



TCA: When, why, where was Joker Squad created?

Joker Team was created in mid August of 2011. We created the team because we were getting a good amount of regular players and decided to have a team after a few skirmishes at AO Islander when we realized we worked real good together.

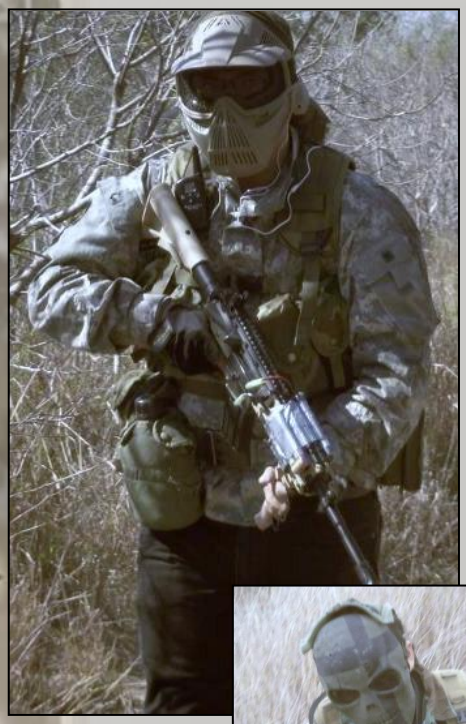




TCA: Where does the Team practice? Where are you based out of?

The team practices and skirmishes a lot at Dustin H's Ranch. We are based out of the Corpus Christi area.

New Team Spotlight: Joker Airsoft



TCA: Is there a standard uniform, loadout and kit across the team, any common weapons?

Our standard uniform are ACUs, and most of our team use M4s.

TCA: Do you have specialty positions like Support Gunner, Sniper, and/or CQB?

We have specialty positions with Recon Specialists like Beto R. and David A. Our Team CQB Specialists are Alexis F. and Rene G.





TCA: Have you attended or hosted any large operations?

We haven't hosted any ops yet, but we have attended Third Coast's Turkey Trot 2, North Star (Toys for tots), Polar Sun, and recently the Commando Challenge.



New Team Spotlight: Joker Airsoft

TCA: As a member Third Coast Family, what are your Team's expectations for the upcoming year?



Our expectations are to recruit more players, spread the news of airsoft to make our community bigger. And most importantly to have fun.



TCA: Any age restrictions? Who can be a member?

Our team has no age limit. We invite anyone to come and try out airsoft. The main rule is to be mature and respectful to everyone around you and obey all safety rules.





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WHY WE PLAY AIRSOFT

By
Mike "Doc" Govan (RGV, TX TCA Chapter)

South Texas is a very unique place to live. Our "special" climate pretty much affords us twelve months of almost anything you want to do, if you can bare ten of those months in scorching hot temperatures.



As I sit here writing this, I find my thoughts drifting off in anticipation of the upcoming OP my team will be travelling to next weekend.



The adrenaline is already flowing, and knowing that this will be the first of several events we have in the hopper for 2012 makes for a lot of good things to look forward to.

So, being that we are about a month and a half into a new year, I think it's a good time to address the big question ----why do we play?

For those of you players like me who have a wife you probably hear that question a lot. Why do guys like me who are forty-something with a beat up body and an ever-increasing stock of grey hair get excited over stuff like "thunderb" grenades, MICH helmets with video cameras on them, and the latest model full metal blow-back BB launcher?

WHY WE PLAY AIRSOFT

"X Box is just a game, while Airsoft is an experience!"



Why do I look forward to gearing up in my uniform, wearing my ODA colors, and sweating my fourth point of contact off only to go home with a series of red welts and sunburn? Well, I can surly tell you why. It's not just a game we "play." It's a game we experience! Think about that surge of adrenaline you felt when you and your buddies pushed in to hit that enemy defensive line!

Or how about that sense of excitement and satisfaction you felt after your squad executed that near-perfect ambush! X Box is just a game, while airsoft is an experience!

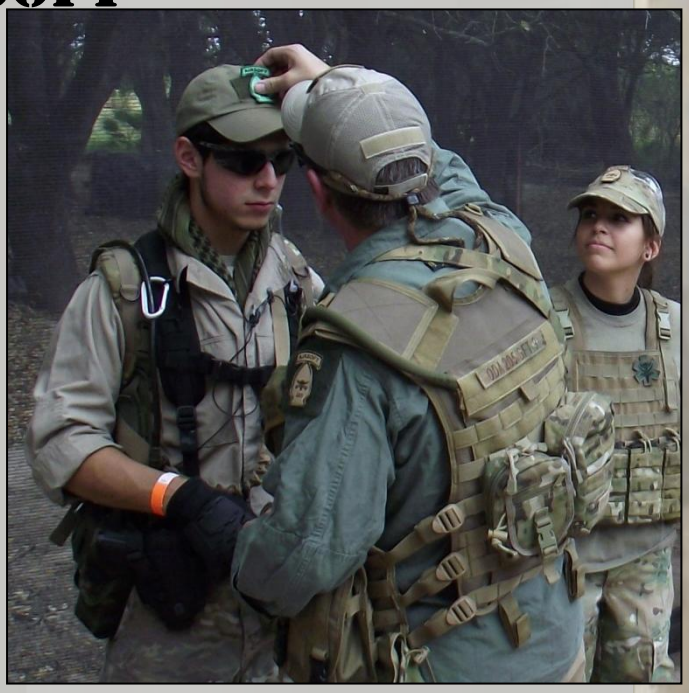
It's the opportunity to go out and experience the camaraderie and fellowship of great friends, with the opportunity to pretty much always make new ones.

It's a chance to honor others with an expression of integrity and fair play, and be an example of good sportsmanship.

It's a chance to mentor, and even a chance to learn, and enjoy the spirit of working as a team. These are just a few of the reasons why we love the great game of milsim airsoft!



Why We Play Airsoft



Now let me take a moment to tell you why I love it. I started the airsoft experience with my son and let me tell you it has been awesome.

Through airsoft I have been able to teach my son how to handle a weapon at a young age, and build in him a strong sense of safety and respect for fire arms. It has been awesome to see him get promoted to Team Sergeant and I was extra proud the day I pinned the Commando Tab on his uniform.

These awards and accolades don't mean anything in the real world but they do to a young man and his dad as they experience them together. This great game has allowed me a way to grow closer to my son.



As a veteran it has allowed me to enjoy once again the amazing bond of fellowship with other vets, and the uniform has become a healing tool for those of us who have seen the ugly face of war.

Airsoft is also becoming a way that we are able to reach out to others in places where we live. Our community has organized Ops that have not only benefited and supported local businesses that sponsor and support us, but has afforded us the opportunity to give back through food drives for charity and the less fortunate. To date we have already donated over 1,000 pounds of canned goods to local food banks in two cities as well as hundreds of toys to the Toys for Tots program.

Why We Play Airsoft



We even were able to help a fellow team member offset some unforeseen medical bills when he got sick. All this was done through the great experience called Airsoft.



So if you are ever asked "Why do you play?", I would ask you to strive to put yourself in the position to give the best answer you can by taking your airsoft experience to the next level, making a difference on your team, in your community, and in your town.



Strive to be the player who leads the charge for honor and integrity. Teach others the art of good sportsmanship and always be in a position to learn something new.

This is a different kind of game; be the player who is the difference maker and then there will be no doubt in anyone's minds why we play.

- DOC

OPERATION STARBURST IV: KFORCE STRIKES BACK
MAY 19 2012

Location: Paintball of Victoria,
Saturday May 19 2012 10:00am
Played with the TCA Ruleset Cost: Pre-registration Online - $25
Registration opens 15 April 2012
(First 100 players signed up get a T-shirt and Patch!)
Registration at the field - $35
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OPERATION: SKURGE III :THE DOCTOR'S REVENGE



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Commando Challenge 2012 at AO Islander

By

David Elliott, CO GFT 9





This (now former) Commando Candidate's Event AAR begins early Saturday morning. We left McAllen, Texas at 0530 (am) and arrived in Corpus Christi, TX at Area of Operations (AO) Islander around 0800 (am). We had been watching weather reports all week with an eye out for rain. ODA 205/GFT 9 had a 12 member team traveling to Corpus for this highly anticipated annual event. A total of 3 vehicles, 5 cadets, and 7 cadre riding together.

The field was a little muddy, but there was no serious rain and we had an overcast day with temperatures in the upper 40’s in the morning and lower 60’s at night, it was perfect weather for airsofting.

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Commando Challenge 2012,

ODA 205 was joined by ODAs (Operational Detachment Alphas or A-Teams) 204, 206, and 207 along with their respective GFTs (Guerilla Force Teams), and a mixture of non-ODA teams and unaffiliated players .

All who would be able to earn the "Commando" badge (a first for the Commando Challenge for non 1st SFAOC teams).





Vehicles were unloaded, players geared-up, and guns were chrono'd. At the safety briefing the candidates were broken into 4 companies of 9 to 12 players, Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, and Delta.

I was given command of Alpha Company which consisted of 205 candidates , and 4 unaffiliated ODA players including Pockets' (ODA 206) mother, father and sister who were a pleasure to work with.

The Safety and Ops briefing was completed and the candidate companies went to their respective classes.

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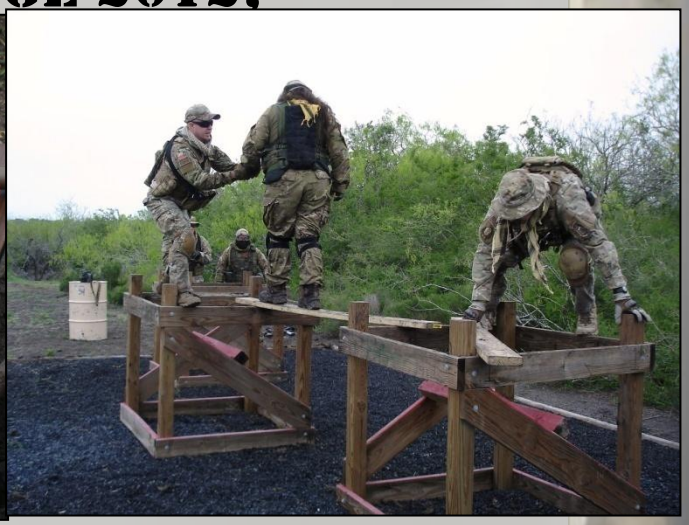
Commando Challenge 2012.





There were 5 classes through the day; Airsoft sniping, Airsoft medic, equipment maintenance (AEG and Gas Blowback), and two team challenge courses.

The morning rotation ended with a candidate vs. candidate skirmish followed by a break for lunch. The afternoon rotation ended with another skirmish which included candidates and cadre followed by a dinner break.







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Commando Challenge 2012,

The Commando Cadre did an excellent job of organizing the classes (which went very smoothly) and the skirmishes helped to keep everyone on their toes.





After a quick dinner, we all reloaded and prepared to hit the field again for the night time exercise.

I was asked to command the candidates who would outnumber the better equipped (night vision is awesome), better disciplined, and better trained Cadre who made up the opposing forces. Needless to say, we lost.





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Commando Challenge 2012,





The candidates performed better as they were led, and I must recognize the quality of the other company leaders. They were all excellent leaders and operators and I would happily work with them again. It was hard for me to get through most of that last game on running the fight on the radio instead of pulling a trigger, but it was a valuable experience.

I want to specifically recognize ODA 207. Houston to Corpus is a long haul which shows great dedication. 207 carried great gear, great tactics, and even better guys. I look forward to seeing them on the field again in the near future. Spooky's leadership, along with LSD, Bill, Doc, Ace, E2, Tony, Greg, Riff, Jared and Squeaks made all the difference in making this event the success that it was. I am sure there are others who should be recognized for their part in the Commando Challenge, and I thank them as well.





Commando Challenge 2012,

The night time game was followed by an award ceremony, and our departure from the field. 205, 204, and 206 met at a local 24 hour restaurant for food, laughs, and some good-hearted joking with each other. For me, the time we get to spend with each other after an op is just as fun and an excellent means of team building. After our meal we climbed back into our vehicles, fueled up, and began the track back to McAllen and our excursion concluded 24 hours after it began.





The major lessons I learned from the Commando Challenge were: the importance of team integrity, a well trained well organized small group working together can and will defeat a larger less prepared opponent; training is more important than skirmishing, knowing what you will do and how you will do it as a team is more useful than continually charging into the storm of an unorganized skirmish; good comms and intelligence are as valuable as a reliable AEG in this sport.

I made it home with sore feet, aching muscles, and in need of more sleep, but that will all fade and I will still smile proudly when I hold my "ODA 205 COMMANDO" patch…..it was all worth it.

WE WANT YOU FOR THIRDCOAST AIRSOFT!





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