



News Release

STATE OF MARYLAND

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY AND CORRECTIONAL SERVICES

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOC Sniper Team Places Seventh in Elite Competition

Two Hagerstown Men are Members of DOC's Special Operations Group

TOWSON, MD (June 8, 2009)---Two Division of Correction Special Operations Group specialists from Hagerstown who recently trained at the Maryland State Police sniper school and had never before worked as a team have placed a highly respected seventh in an elite national sniper competition held at Fort Meade.

Cpl. Travis Booth and Cpl. Gene Mullins, both from DOC's Western Region Transportation Unit, finished seventh overall out of thirty teams, and second in the moving target competition, which earned them a trophy. The other teams were amazed at the two Maryland DOC officers' precision and skill in a grueling event they had never before participated in.

The competition, sponsored by gun maker FNH USA and Leupold Optics, is a mettle-testing five-day event (this year done in driving rain) that includes not only precision long-distance shooting, but numerous obstacle courses, moving and unknown-distance targets, and hostage rescue scenarios. The events are strictly timed and include strenuous physical challenges prior to each test.

"It's our first year in the competition," said Cpl. Mullins, a 14-year DOC veteran and Washington County resident. "We're thrilled to be a part of it and to be learning from the best."

Added Cpl. Booth, a nine-year DOC veteran also from Washington County: "It's the most realistic training you can get. We're taking it all in and learning as much as we can."

"I have a lot of pride in DOC's Special Operations Group," says Major Mark Martin, SOG Commander. "They are highly-skilled and every bit as well-trained and competent as any law enforcement team in the nation."

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The Special Operations Group handles crisis situations and specific missions within State prison facilities. Its members are highly regarded by both local and national corrections and law enforcement for their training and performance.

Last week's national competition featured law enforcement sniper teams from across the nation, as well as highly-skilled military units from Camp David, the Pentagon, the U.S. Capitol, and the U.S. Army Special Forces at Fort Bragg.



Cpl. Travis Booth (left) and Cpl. Gene Mullins of the Maryland Division of Correction's Special Operations Group, finished second among 30 teams in the moving target competition, and seventh overall, at last week's elite sniper training held at Fort Meade.

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