

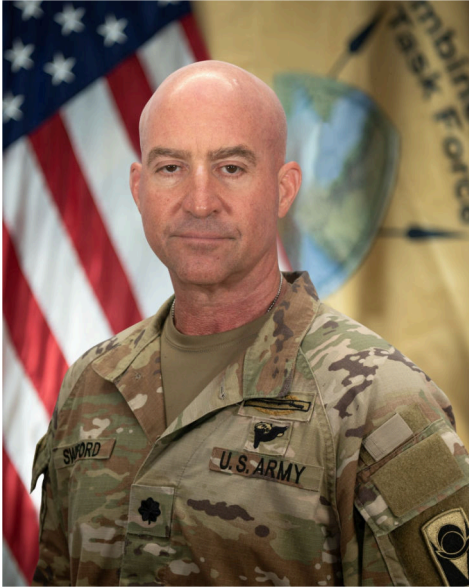
THE SEMINOLE STANDARD



Volume 4 | June, 2026

THE COMMANDER'S COUNCIL OAK

Setting the Standard Across the Horn of Africa



Greetings once again from the Horn of Africa!

As we progress through another month of this deployment, the sheer scope and impact of what our task force is accomplishing across this austere environment never ceases to amaze me. I find myself continually humbled by the grit, dedication, and professionalism of the Florida Army National Guard. Operating across the vast tyranny of distance that defines the Horn of Africa requires exceptional leadership at every echelon, and our formations are proving every single day that they are more than up to the task.

This past month was incredibly fast-paced and highlighted by a comprehensive battlefield circulation alongside the new Combined Joint Task Force - Horn of Africa (CJTF-HOA) Commanding General, Major General Shane Morgan, and the new CJTF-HOA J-3, Colonel

Andy Smith. When higher headquarters leadership visits the tactical edge, it is our time to demonstrate the lethality and readiness of our formations. I want to state right up front, MG Morgan noted multiple times how thoroughly impressed he was with the proficiency, as well as the technical and tactical knowledge, of our Soldiers. From our Company Commanders and First Sergeants down to the Soldiers pulling security in the towers and at the Entry Control Points (ECPs), the dedication to the mission was unmistakable. Whether interacting with personnel in the Base Defense Operations Centers (BDOCs), Joint Operations Centers (JOCs), and Air Terminal Operations Centers (ATOCs), or speaking with squads actively preparing for dismounted patrols, the CG saw firsthand the standard of excellence that resonates across our entire area of operations.

Throughout the circulation, our subordinate leadership teams proved that this task force is in absolutely phenomenal hands. In Mogadishu, CPT Jose Mercado, SFC Scott Sullivan, and their team were exceptionally well-prepared, showcasing an ironclad operational readiness. At BMA, the Blackhawk team demonstrated their deep, nuanced understanding of a highly complex operational situation. CPT John McDonald, 1SG Anthony Calvi, CPT James Wiley, and 1SG Jose Rosario greatly impressed the CJTF-HOA leadership with their situational awareness and tactical acumen. Furthermore, MAJ John Crawford, SFC David Castro, 2LT Adam Kuh, SFC Austin Doughty, and the remainder of the Blackhawk team were specifically praised by the Joint Special Operations Task Force (JSOTF) medical team for their seamless cohesiveness and interoperability with our partner forces. Building deep, functional relationships with multinational partners is a cornerstone of this deployment, and the Blackhawk team is executing it flawlessly.

Back at the Djibouti base cluster, our teams continue to shine brightly under a heavy, constant spotlight. Disco Company, led by CPT Jonathan Spurlock and 1SG Kurt Fox, along with the Nast Dawgs, led by CPT John Clark and 1SG Zack Lewis, continually impress the high-level VIPs visiting from the Embassy and AFRICOM Headquarters. A massive highlight for the task force occurred during the CJTF-HOA change of command, where CPT Spurlock had the distinct honor of briefing the AFRICOM Commander on BDOC capabilities. True to form, he absolutely knocked it out of the park.

At CADJ, CPT Daniel Gilbert, 1SG Jeffery Haney, and the Blackjack team stood out significantly to the CG. Their seamless integration with the Air Force and their rigorous execution of force protection protocols represent truly world-class-level work. Further south at MBK, the Apache and Combat teams are executing a multifaceted mission with total precision. CPT Aaron Benningfield and 1SG Lictor Figueroa from the Apache team, along with CPT Nicholas Childers and 1SG Robert Grieves from the Combat team, impressed the command group with their synchronization, two-base interconnectivity, and their daily tactical interactions with Kenyan Navy forces. Bringing this all together, LTC Jason Mook and SGM Tommy Williford are doing a phenomenal job integrating the two company headquarters elements into a unified, lethal force.

Finally, regarding our crisis response capabilities, CPT McGuire Bennett, 1SG Michael Kendall, and the Comanche team have fundamentally reset the standard for the East Africa Response Force (EARF) piece of this mission. We are an infantry task force first and foremost, and Comanche's relentless, continuous efforts in training and their unwavering preparedness for action continue to impress everyone who observes them.

As the battlefield circulation concluded, MG Morgan shared a profound piece of feedback: his initial tour of our sites has given him not only greater confidence in the overall security posture of the Horn of Africa, but a significantly increased confidence in the National Guard as a whole. You are proving to the highest levels of command exactly what the FLARNG brings to the fight.

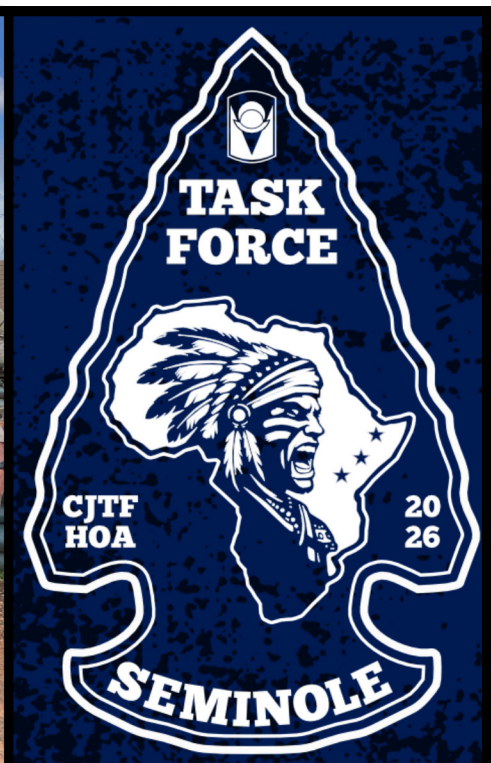


With pride,

LTC Ryan M. Swinford

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NEVER SURRENDER!



(U.S. Army photo illustration by CPT Dakota Burr)

THE WARPATH

This Month's Focus: Standards, Discipline and Professionalism



Having officially crossed the 100-day mark on the ground in the Horn of Africa, we have entered a critical phase of our mission. We have successfully settled into our battle rhythm across our area of responsibility, but this is exactly when the greatest threat to our formation creeps in: complacency. From my previous deployment experiences, I know firsthand that complacency is the silent killer of successful units. From the very beginning, the Commander and I have emphasized a simple truth – this does not have to be a hard deployment. What makes a deployment difficult are the self-inflicted wounds that occur when we stop holding ourselves and each other accountable.

To succeed in this environment and defeat complacency, I require every Soldier to focus on the two personal tenets I always stand by

as your Command Sergeant Major: discipline and professionalism. Discipline means doing the right thing and enforcing our standard operating procedures and regulations, whether you are standing watch, conducting maintenance, or executing a crisis response rehearsal. Professionalism dictates how we carry ourselves, how we respect our teammates, and how we represent Task Force Seminole. These two traits go hand in hand. Disciplined Soldiers are professional Soldiers, and professional Soldiers make professional units.

Every Soldier and leader in this task force is responsible for their actions. This responsibility does not end when your shift does. Off-duty conduct is just as critical to our mission as our on-duty performance. When individuals decide to cut corners, ignore the baseline standards, or act unprofessionally in their personal time, they put the safety, reputation, and cohesion of the entire team at risk. We must refuse to let the daily routine dull our edge. True readiness means doing the right thing when no one is watching and taking pride in executing the basics flawlessly every single day.

This is where our NCO Corps must hold the line. NCOs set the tone: enforce the standards, correct deficiencies on the spot, and remain aggressively engaged at every level. Leaders must be present, adaptive, and uncompromising in their assessments of their formations. Soldiers, take absolute ownership of your actions and your responsibilities. When every individual chooses to uphold the standard, the entire task force becomes an unstoppable, professional force. Stay disciplined, stay focused, and maintain the edge.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan D. Pletcher".

CSM Jonathan D. Pletcher
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NEVER SURRENDER!

AROUND THE AREA OF OPERATIONS



Members of the Japan Self-Defense Force display the 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team shoulder sleeve insignias they received from members of the Florida Army National Guard during close-quarters battle training at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 25, 2026. The training strengthened interoperability between U.S. and Japanese forces by enhancing small-unit tactics and fostering professional military relationships.

APACHE COMPANY



SSG Robert Labossiere signals for a field litter ambulance to recover a simulated casualty during a base defense exercise in the Horn of Africa, June 19, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Jake Anico)

Apache Company entered June with a continued focus on readiness, professional development and maintaining a high level of operational effectiveness at its outstation. Through tactical training, physical challenges and individual achievement, Soldiers remained committed to strengthening the skills needed to support the mission while fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Training remained a central priority throughout the month. Soldiers regularly conducted battle drill exercises designed to reinforce their ability to respond rapidly and effectively to real-world contingencies. These repetitions sharpened individual and collective proficiency while ensuring the company maintained a strong force protection posture. Apache's mortar section also led a block of instruction on the employment of mortar systems, giving soldiers additional knowledge of indirect fire capabilities and further enhancing the unit's overall readiness.

Several Soldiers also represented Apache Company during the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition as well as the Norwegian Foot March, an 18.6-mile endurance ruck march. Successfully completing these event earns participants a foreign badge authorized for wear on the Army

Service Uniform, providing another opportunity for Soldiers to challenge themselves while representing the company with pride.

The month also brought important milestones for the Apache family. SSG Brandon Paramore and SPC Uyi Akhimien returned to the company following parental leave after each recently welcomed a new child. Apache also welcomed three new Soldiers to the formation: SSG Devin Hall, SGT Robert Dacosta and SPC Rodnell Guerrier, Firefinder radar operators from the Massachusetts Army National Guard, whose expertise further strengthens the company's capabilities.

As the deployment reaches its midpoint, Apache Company continues to demonstrate the professionalism, adaptability and teamwork that define the formation. Whether refining tactical skills, pursuing demanding foreign military qualifications or integrating new teammates, Apache Soldiers remain focused on maintaining readiness and standing prepared to accomplish the mission wherever they are called.

BLACKHAWK COMPANY

Throughout June, Black Hawk Company continued building combat readiness through tactical training, physical fitness and professional development. Soldiers embraced opportunities to strengthen individual skills, challenge themselves physically and represent Task Force Seminole during demanding military competitions, reinforcing the company's commitment to continuous improvement.

Earlier in the month, selected Soldiers attended a Close Quarters Battle and breaching course where they learned the fundamentals of room clearing, communication and hasty breaching techniques. Through hands-on practical exercises, participants refined the teamwork and coordination required to operate effectively in close, confined environments while improving the small-unit tactics essential to modern operations.

Weapons proficiency remained another key area of focus. Soldiers conducted training on the M240B machine gun, Squad Designated Marksmanship Rifle (SDMR) and AT4 anti-armor weapon system, increasing familiarity with each platform while reinforcing the fundamentals needed to employ them safely and effectively. These training events strengthened individual confidence and contributed to the company's overall combat readiness.

Physical fitness also continued to play a central role in the company's culture. In observance of Memorial Day, Soldiers completed the Murph Challenge, honoring the sacrifice of fallen service members through one of the military's most demanding workouts. The event served as both a test of endurance and a reminder of the commitment and selfless service demonstrated by those who gave their lives in defense of the nation.

Black Hawk Soldiers also showcased their commitment to fitness during the company's 1,000 Pound Club assessment, which combines an athlete's best bench press, squat and deadlift. Several Soldiers exceeded the traditional benchmark, earning recognition in the 1,250 Pound Club. SPC Jack Meyers posted a combined total of 1,280 pounds, followed by SPC Jacob McCaslin with 1,260 pounds and SPC George Schnack with 1,250 pounds. Their achievements reflect the discipline and dedication required to maintain peak physical performance throughout the deployment.

The company was also represented during the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition by SPC Strayer and SPC Fedkiw. The internationally recognized event tests participants through a series of demanding physical fitness, military skills and marksmanship challenges while strengthening partnerships with allied militaries.

As Black Hawk Company continues its deployment, Soldiers remain committed to becoming stronger, more capable and more prepared for the challenges ahead. Whether refining tactical skills, pursuing physical excellence or representing Task Force Seminole during multinational events, the company continues to demonstrate the professionalism and readiness that define the formation.



CPL Benjamin Stuka and SPC Trey Lear, assigned to Combat Company, Task Force Seminole, conduct squad designated marksman training in the Horn of Africa, June 6, 2026.

BLACKJACK COMPANY

Throughout June, Blackjack Company strengthened both its tactical capabilities and international partnerships through a series of multinational training events across the Horn of Africa. From marksmanship competitions to emergency response training and cultural exchanges, Soldiers continued building the skills and relationships essential to operating alongside allied and partner forces in a joint environment.

The company hosted a German Armed Forces Marksmanship Badge qualification that brought together 48 participants representing multiple

partner nations. Competitors completed a series of timed pistol engagements from 7 to 15 meters and rifle stages from 10 to 200 meters, testing precision speed and weapons proficiency under demanding conditions. Following the qualification and completion of the Norwegian Foot March, Blackjack Company hosted a joint awards ceremony recognizing those who successfully earned the German Armed Forces Marksmanship Badge and Norwegian Foot March certificate. CPT Daniel Gilbert, Blackjack Company's commander, joined a representative from the German Navy in presenting the awards, highlighting the continued cooperation between allied militaries.

Blackjack Soldiers also trained alongside members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force during a Squad Designated Marksman Rifle familiarization range. Participants received instruction on the rifle's manual of arms before engaging targets at distances ranging from 100 to 500 meters, providing an opportunity to exchange techniques and strengthen interoperability between the two forces. The partnership extended beyond the range later in the month when select leaders participated in a cultural exchange centered on traditional Japanese calligraphy. The event offered Soldiers an opportunity to gain a greater appreciation for Japanese culture while reinforcing the personal relationships that underpin successful multinational operations.

The month concluded with emergency response training conducted in partnership with the installation fire department. Nine Blackjack Soldiers received hands-on instruction in operating self-contained breathing apparatus, handling live fire hoses and safely evacuating casualties using medical litters. The practical training expanded the company's ability to respond effectively during emergency situations while reinforcing the importance of cross-functional readiness.

As Blackjack Company continues its deployment, Soldiers remain committed to enhancing tactical proficiency while strengthening the partnerships that make multinational operations successful. Every range, training event and professional exchange contributes to a more capable, adaptable and interoperable force prepared to accomplish the mission across the Horn of Africa.



SPC Paul Mercer, assigned to Blackjack Company, 1st Battalion, 167th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Seminole, conducts emergency response training with the installation fire department in the Horn of Africa, June 13, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SSG Marshall Verkler)

COMANCHE COMPANY



Soldiers assigned to Comanche Company, Task Force Seminole, work with members of the Japan Self-Defense Force on close-quarters battle tactics at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 25, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by CPT Dakota Burr)

June showcased Comanche Company's commitment to building lethal, adaptable Soldiers while strengthening partnerships. Across the formation, platoons refined infantry fundamentals, trained alongside allied militaries and demonstrated that readiness extends beyond tactical proficiency through meaningful service to the local community.

Training remained the company's primary focus throughout the month. Soldiers from 1st Platoon sharpened their urban operations skills through instruction on mechanical and explosive breaching before applying those techniques during live practical exercises at the Fire Training Center. Using Halligan tools and

sledgehammers, Soldiers rehearsed breaching procedures while rotating through leadership positions to build confidence directing small teams under realistic conditions. The platoon also supported security operations in the U.S. Africa Command area of responsibility, demonstrating its ability to rapidly respond to emerging mission requirements.

Elsewhere in the company, 2nd Platoon strengthened marksmanship fundamentals, immediate action drills and building-clearing techniques through hands-on training at the Gunfighter Gym and fire training facilities. Meanwhile, 3rd Platoon focused on communications and infantry proficiency through radio operations classes, Expert Infantryman Badge preparation and weapons malfunction drills. Realistic scenarios designed to induce stress challenged Soldiers to apply radio procedures, tactical reporting and decision-making under pressure while reinforcing the skills required of modern infantrymen.

Comanche also expanded interoperability with allied partners throughout the Horn of Africa. The mortar section conducted 60 mm mortar familiarization training alongside French and Japanese forces, while company medics led multiple Combat Lifesaver courses for Task Force Seminole units, Air Force aeromedical personnel and French military members. These exchanges strengthened multinational relationships while improving the ability of all participants to provide lifesaving care during combat operations.

Beyond mission requirements, Comanche Soldiers made a lasting impact within the local community. After volunteering at the Decan Wildlife Refuge earlier in the month, 3rd Platoon organized a donation drive benefiting the Caritas Orphanage before returning to volunteer alongside the facility's staff. Soldiers cleaned classrooms, supported medical personnel treating local residents, taught English lessons, prepared meals and spent time mentoring children through games and activities. Inspired by the orphanage's ongoing needs, the platoon has since launched additional fundraising efforts to provide medical supplies and other essential resources, demonstrating that service extends far beyond the battlefield.

As Comanche Company moves forward, its Soldiers continue to embody the values of professionalism, selfless service and readiness. Whether conducting tactical training, building relationships with allied forces or giving back to the local community, Comanche remains committed to making a positive impact wherever the mission leads.

COMBAT COMPANY

Throughout June, Combat Company continued demonstrating the adaptability and professionalism required to support mission success across the Horn of Africa. As operational requirements evolved, Soldiers answered the call by supporting missions beyond their organic platoons around the AFRICOM area of responsibility before seamlessly returning to their teams, reinforcing the flexibility and readiness that define the company.

One such example came as Soldiers assigned to temporary support missions for AFRICOM medical operations rejoined 1st Platoon after completing their taskings. Their return highlighted the strength of the platoon's cohesion and the ability of Combat Company Soldiers to quickly integrate into new missions while

remaining prepared to transition back to their primary responsibilities. The experience gained while supporting joint operations broadened their expertise and strengthened the platoon's overall capabilities.

Throughout the month, Combat Company continued supporting site security, engineering efforts and mission sustainment activities alongside partner units across the area of operations. Working alongside Soldiers and Airmen from multiple military occupational specialties, the company contributed to maintaining secure operating environments while supporting projects that enhance readiness and operational effectiveness. These collaborative efforts underscored the importance of teamwork and the role every Soldier plays in accomplishing the broader mission.

Whether serving alongside another organization or returning to their home platoons, Combat Company Soldiers consistently demonstrated the professionalism, discipline and commitment expected of Task Force

Seminole. Their ability to adapt to changing operational requirements while maintaining a high standard of performance reflects both the strength of the individual Soldier and the cohesion of the company as a whole.

As the deployment continues, Combat Company remains focused on supporting the mission wherever needed. By embracing flexibility, strengthening teamwork and maintaining a constant state of readiness, the company stands prepared to meet future challenges while continuing to contribute to the success of Task Force Seminole across the Horn of Africa.



Soldiers assigned to Combat Company, Task Force Seminole, reunite while on mission in the Horn of Africa, June 2, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Nicholas Roy)



Soldiers assigned to Combat Company, Task Force Seminole, receive their Shoulder Sleeve Insignia—Military Operations in Hostile Conditions during a patching ceremony in the Horn of Africa, June 12, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SGT Nicholas Roy)

NASTY DAWG COMPANY

Throughout June, Delta Company continued strengthening its ability to respond across a wide range of mission requirements while reinforcing partnerships throughout the Horn of Africa. From securing key installations and supporting community engagement efforts to conducting specialized training alongside joint and multinational partners, the company remained focused on maintaining the readiness and adaptability required to meet evolving operational demands.

Across the company's area of operations, Soldiers balanced daily security responsibilities with a demanding training schedule designed to sharpen tactical proficiency. Working alongside Marine Forces Special Operations Command explosive ordnance disposal personnel, Soldiers expanded their understanding of explosive hazards and specialized breaching considerations while gaining valuable experience operating in a joint environment. Additional training with Army Special Forces reinforced close-quarters battle techniques and breaching procedures, ensuring Delta Company Soldiers remain prepared to operate effectively in complex environments.

Delta Company also strengthened interoperability through continued collaboration with sister services. Soldiers assigned to the Quick Reaction Force at Camp Lemonnier trained alongside Navy Master-at-Arms personnel to refine room-clearing procedures, tactical communication and coordinated movement during close-quarters operations. The joint training enhanced the ability of both services to respond quickly and effectively during potential contingency operations while reinforcing the importance of operating as a unified force.

Beyond tactical training, Delta Soldiers contributed to improving readiness across Task Force Seminole. Fourth Platoon led driver training for the East African Response Force, increasing mobility and ensuring personnel remain prepared to respond wherever needed. Third Platoon provided advanced instruction on tactical detainee handling, flex cuff procedures and close-quarters battle fundamentals, sharing expertise that strengthened the formation's overall capabilities.

Community engagement remained an equally important component of the company's mission. Soldiers from 1st Platoon supported Civil Affairs operations, helping strengthen relationships with local communities while reinforcing the trust that underpins long-term regional stability.

The month also provided unique professional development opportunities. Two Soldiers from 2nd Platoon flew aboard an MV-22 Osprey with Marine aviators during aerial gunnery operations, gaining firsthand insight into aviation capabilities and further expanding their understanding of joint operations.

As Delta Company continues its deployment, Soldiers remain committed to maintaining a high level of readiness through realistic training, strong partnerships and continuous professional development.



Soldiers assigned to 1st Platoon, Nasty Dawg Company, Task Force Seminole, receive commemorative shirts after joining the "1,000-Pound Club" June 5, 2026 in the Horn of Africa. Soldiers earn membership by achieving a combined total of more than 1,000 pounds across the squat, bench press, and deadlift, recognizing their commitment to strength and fitness. (U.S. Army Photo by SFC Phillip Lewis)

DISCO COMPANY



Soldiers assigned to 4th Platoon, Disco Company, Task Force Seminole, conduct close-quarters battle training with members of the Japan Self-Defense Force at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 14, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by 2LT Benjamin Bartlett)

Throughout June, Disco Company remained focused on strengthening readiness through continuous training, technical expertise and joint interoperability. From improving communications systems and medical readiness to refining tactical skills alongside partner forces, Soldiers continued building the capabilities needed to support the joint mission across the Horn of Africa.

A major effort during the month centered on modernizing the company's communications capabilities. Operating in the harsh climate of East Africa presents unique challenges for electronic equipment, making preventative maintenance and repairs essential to mission success. SGT Micheal Bray and SPC Gregory Etheridge led an extensive effort to inventory, repair and restore aging communications

systems while standardizing the company's communications plan. Their work increased equipment readiness, reduced logistical constraints and ensured Soldiers maintain reliable communications during daily operations and future contingency missions.

Disco Company's medics, SPC Joesph Moore, SSG Shawn Leitten, and SPC Michael Freeman also expanded their ability to support joint operations by participating in a mass casualty training exercise with the evacuation section. The realistic scenario walked participants through every stage of casualty care, from the point of injury through evacuation to a C-130 aircraft serving as an aeromedical platform. Working alongside Air Force medical personnel and practicing medical evacuation procedures strengthened interoperability while improving the unit's ability to respond during large-scale emergencies.

Tactical proficiency remained a constant priority throughout the month. Soldiers trained extensively at the Gunfighter Gym, refining marksmanship fundamentals with both individual and crew-served weapon systems while improving overall weapons proficiency. Additional instruction from Air Force explosive ordnance disposal personnel provided valuable training on identifying unexploded ordnance, recognizing improvised explosive device threats and applying appropriate risk mitigation procedures. One platoon also conducted close-quarters battle training with members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force, practicing room-clearing and breaching techniques while further strengthening relationships with a key regional partner.

Physical readiness continued to play an important role in the company's training plan as Soldiers prepared for the Norwegian Foot March, an 18.6-mile endurance ruck march completed under strict time standards while carrying a 24-pound rucksack. To prepare for the demanding event, participants completed multiple timed six- and 12-mile training rucks despite temperatures exceeding 90 degrees and high humidity, demonstrating the discipline and determination required to meet the challenge.

As Disco Company continues its deployment, Soldiers remain committed to improving every aspect of mission readiness. Whether maintaining critical communications systems, strengthening joint medical capabilities or sharpening tactical skills alongside partner forces, the company continues to build a more capable and resilient formation prepared to accomplish the mission.

HATCHET COMPANY



A Soldier assigned to Hatchet Company, Task Force Seminole, ground guides a Heavy Expanded Mobility Tactical Truck (HEMTT) Wrecker during a maintenance exchange with members of the Japan Self-Defense Force at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, May 30, 2026. (U.S. Air Force photo by SSgt. Nicholas Ross)

Throughout June, Hatchet Company continued providing the sustainment and transportation capabilities that keep Task Force Seminole moving while demonstrating a commitment to professional development, physical readiness and operational excellence. Whether supporting daily logistics across Camp Lemonnier or participating in multinational training, Hatchet Soldiers remained focused on ensuring the task force is prepared to accomplish its mission across the Horn of Africa.

Earlier this month, Hatchet Soldiers participated in an integrated multinational exercise. The experience broadened individual skill sets, strengthened interoperability and earned high praise from leadership.

Readiness also remained a priority as the company conducted the Army Fitness Test, with numerous Soldiers improving upon their scores from the January assessment. Hatchet personnel also joined fellow Task Force Seminole Soldiers during a Memorial Day 5K run and 3K walk, strengthening esprit de corps while building relationships across the joint force.

The month also marked several important milestones within the formation. SPC Dareen Pedromo was promoted to sergeant, recognizing continued leadership and professional growth, while SGT Elijah Parnell and SPC Nixon Jean reaffirmed their commitment to service by reenlisting for an additional three years.

Behind the scenes, Hatchet Company continues serving as a critical sustainment asset for the task force. Soldiers provide daily troop transportation, mail distribution and combat logistics vehicle support while ensuring personnel and equipment reach their destinations safely and efficiently. The company's maintenance section works tirelessly to keep both organic and supported vehicle fleets mission capable, while the distribution section manages supply deliveries, route reconnaissance and logistical support for units operating throughout the area of operations. Together, these efforts ensure Task Force Seminole can maintain operational momentum across the theater.

Outside of mission requirements, Hatchet Soldiers remained engaged in morale and community-building activities, participating in Morale, Welfare and Recreation events and supporting the Friends of Africa program as another way to strengthen relationships within the host nation. Company leadership also continued emphasizing professional development by encouraging Soldiers to pursue educational opportunities throughout the deployment.

As the deployment progresses, Hatchet Company remains committed to delivering responsive sustainment, supporting fellow units and developing Soldiers who are better prepared for future missions. Through dependable logistics, adaptable leadership and a focus on continuous improvement, Hatchet continues to provide the foundation that enables Task Force Seminole to succeed.

TOMAHAWK COMPANY

Throughout June, Tomahawk Company continued serving as the force behind the force, providing the medical, operational, communications and administrative support that enables Task Force Seminole to accomplish its mission across the Horn of Africa. From multinational medical training to behind-the-scenes operational planning, Tomahawk Soldiers demonstrated that mission success depends on both frontline readiness and the dedicated professionals who sustain it.

The Task Force Medical Platoon expanded its capabilities through a series of joint and multinational training events designed to improve interoperability and battlefield medicine. Working alongside Air Force Aeromedical Evacuation crews, Combat Medics participated in a realistic mass casualty exercise that tested their ability to rapidly triage, treat and transport casualties from the point of injury to an airborne intensive care platform. The demanding scenario challenged participants to perform under pressure while strengthening coordination between Army and Air Force medical personnel.

Building on that momentum, East Africa Response Force medics led Tactical Combat Casualty Care instruction for Italian, French and Japanese service members. The training introduced allied partners to the MARCH trauma care protocol before



U.S. Army 1st Lt. Zhanya Richards, Task Force Seminole's Personnel Officer, promoted to the rank of Captain during a promotion ceremony at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 10, 2026. The promotion recognizes Richards' demonstrated leadership, professionalism, and commitment to continued service in support of the mission in the Horn of Africa. (U.S. Army photo by CPT Dakota Burr)

progressing into practical exercises where multinational teams performed lifesaving interventions in a simulated combat environment. Beyond improving medical proficiency, the exchange strengthened partnerships and reinforced a shared commitment to preserving life on the battlefield.

Tomahawk's support extended well beyond medical operations. The Unit Ministry Team fostered resilience and esprit de corps by supporting Bible studies, patching ceremonies, birthday celebrations and morale events across Camp Lemonnier and Chabelley Airfield. During the Army's 251st Birthday celebration, Chaplain Fletcher delivered the invocation, reflecting the trust and relationships built throughout the joint force.

Behind the scenes, the task force staff continued enabling operations across the theater. The S3 section coordinated planning, logistics, medical support and range operations for both the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition and the Norwegian Foot March, giving Soldiers the opportunity to compete for two of the military's most respected foreign awards. Outside the operations center, members of the S2 and S3 sections volunteered at the Decan Wildlife Refuge and participated in cultural exchanges that strengthened relationships within the local community.

The S6 section also recognized SGT Angel McCormick for her outstanding contributions as the Mounted Mission Command subject matter expert. Throughout the month, she trained communications personnel, configured mission command systems supporting the Quick Reaction Force, resolved complex technical issues and developed procedures that enhanced the team's ability to maintain critical communications across the task force. Her technical expertise, initiative and positive attitude continue to make a lasting impact on both the section and the mission.

As the deployment progresses, Tomahawk Company remains committed to enabling every aspect of Task Force Seminole's mission. Whether providing lifesaving medical care, planning complex operations, maintaining communications or supporting Soldier well-being, Tomahawk continues to demonstrate that effective mission support is the foundation of operational success.

SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

Meet Specialist Emily Reagan



Hometown: Miami, FL

MOS: 92Y Unit Supply Specialist

Favorite MRE: Beef Ravioli

Favorite Show: Big Bang Theory

Hobby: Volleyball

For SPC Emily Reagan, joining the Army was about creating opportunities for the future. Seeking financial stability, educational benefits and new experiences, the Miami native enlisted three years ago with the goal of building a strong foundation for herself. Since then, every challenge has become another opportunity for personal and professional growth.

Now serving as a 92Y Unit Supply Specialist with HHC, Task Force Seminole, Reagan works as the Property Book Officer clerk, helping manage the accountability of equipment across the task force. Her responsibilities include maintaining property records, tracking ammunition consumption, supporting inventories and ensuring the administrative side of property accountability runs smoothly.

While much of her work takes place behind the scenes, Reagan understands that accurate accountability is essential to mission success.

Throughout her Army career, Reagan has embraced opportunities to challenge herself. One of her favorite experiences came during training at the National Training Center (NTC), where she learned the value of perseverance while building lasting relationships with fellow Soldiers.

"NTC was a whole new level of embracing the suck," Reagan said. "I learned to work through adversity, met a lot of new people and grew closer with them through the experience."

Looking back on her career so far, Reagan says her greatest accomplishment has been the growth she's experienced during the past year and throughout the current deployment.

"I've learned a lot and grown immensely as a person," Reagan said. "I've learned to look at challenges differently and realize I can push through them."

Much of that development, she says, is thanks to the mentorship of Chief Warrant Officer Roberto Lafont.

"He broadened my knowledge of supply operations, regulations and the different systems we use," Reagan said. "He taught me a lot and always found a way to make it easy to understand."

Outside of work, Reagan enjoys playing volleyball, spending time at the beach, reading and participating in outdoor recreation whenever she has the opportunity.

Looking ahead, she hopes to continue developing both personally and professionally. Reagan plans to complete her associate degree, become a Non-commissioned Officer and pursue a full-time career in the Army National Guard as an Active Guard Reserve Soldier working in supply operations.

As she reflects on her deployment, Reagan is equally appreciative of the people around her.

"This has been the best battalion," Reagan said. "We've been through so much together and have been extremely successful. My leadership has always put Soldiers first, and I've had great mentors who genuinely care about developing people."

SOLDIER SPOTLIGHT

Meet Sergeant Robert Baron



Hometown: Tampa, FL

MOS: 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic

Favorite MRE: Chili Mac

Favorite Movie: Fast & Furious (1-3)

Hobby: Motorcycle Riding

While combat arms often take center stage, every mission relies on the Soldiers who keep the force moving. For SGT Robert Baron, ensuring vehicles and equipment remain mission ready has been his purpose for nearly two decades.

A Tampa native, Baron enlisted in the Army at 17 years old while still in high school. Nearly two decades later, he continues to serve with the same dedication that first led him to put on the uniform. Now serving as a 91B Wheeled Vehicle Mechanic with Hatchet Company, Task Force Seminole, Baron serves as the Recovery Non-commissioned Officer in Charge for the maintenance section.

Leading the recovery team, he oversees the Soldiers responsible for recovering disabled vehicles and equipment, ensuring critical assets are returned to service and remain available to support the mission.

"I have an amazing recovery team," Baron said. "They're constantly looking for ways to adapt and improve. Hatchet Company sometimes gets overlooked because we're part of an infantry battalion, but we can stand toe-to-toe with anyone. We're in the mud with them."

Throughout his career, Baron has supported missions around the world. Among his favorite assignments are Defender Europe in 2021, a deployment to Qatar and numerous State Active Duty missions responding to emergencies throughout Florida.

"Helping people back home during State Active Duty always stood out," Baron

said. "Knowing I could help make the best of a bad situation for someone else made those missions especially meaningful."

While those assignments provided unforgettable experiences, Baron says his greatest accomplishment isn't tied to a specific deployment or award.

"Being able to stay in for almost 20 years without major medical issues or ever questioning whether I wanted to keep serving is what I'm most proud of," he said.

Preparing for and executing the deployment has presented new challenges, from adapting to the operational tempo to improving maintenance operations across the battalion. Baron takes pride in leaving every work area better than he found it, whether organizing the motor pool, maintaining accountability or ensuring equipment is recovered and returned to the fight.

Outside the Army, Baron enjoys working on and riding motorcycles, camping and attending electronic dance music festivals. He also practices flow arts and has been performing gloving for more than 12 years.

Looking ahead, Baron is excited to reunite with his family, especially in time to celebrate his daughter's 18th birthday. Professionally, he hopes to continue expanding his knowledge and earn a promotion before the deployment concludes.

As Task Force Seminole continues its mission across the Horn of Africa, Soldiers like Baron provide the expertise and leadership that keep the battalion moving. Through nearly 20 years of service and a commitment to both his Soldiers and his community, Baron continues to demonstrate that every successful mission depends on the team working behind the scenes.

Building Tomorrow's Leaders

Junior enlisted leaders from across the joint force strengthened their leadership skills during the Marine Corps Corporals Course at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, in June. The professional military education program brought together Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines to develop the leadership, decision-making and warfighting competencies required of tomorrow's noncommissioned officers.

Throughout the course, participants worked through classroom instruction, practical exercises and peer discussions focused on small-unit leadership, ethical decision-making and mission command. The joint learning environment also provided an opportunity for service members to exchange perspectives and build professional relationships across the different branches, reinforcing the teamwork required during deployed operations.

"The Corporals Course gives junior leaders the tools and confidence they need to lead from the front," said SFC Sylvester Gomes, a platoon sergeant assigned to Comanche Company, 2nd Battalion, 124th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Seminole. "By sharing experiences across different branches, we're building more adaptable leaders who are better prepared to make sound decisions, take care of their people and accomplish the mission in any environment."

By investing in the development of future leaders today, Task Force Seminole continues strengthening the foundation of its formations while ensuring the next generation of noncommissioned officers is prepared to lead with confidence, professionalism and purpose.



SFC Sylvester Gomes, a platoon sergeant assigned to Comanche Company, Task Force Seminole, instructs Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines during the Marine Corps Corporals Course at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 25, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Pablo Tafur)

SSG Christopher Baumgardner, assigned to Comanche Company, Task Force Seminole, instructs Soldiers, Airmen, Sailors and Marines during the Marine Corps Corporals Course at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 25, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SPC Pablo Tafur)



SEMINOLE STRENGTH

Building strength, endurance and readiness — Never Surrender!

★ WORKOUT OF THE MONTH ★

MILES MATTER

BUILD STRENGTH. BUILD ENDURANCE.
LOG MILES. MAKE PROGRESS.

COMPLETE 3 ROUNDS



1-MILE RUCK
(35-POUND RUCK)



20 PUSH-UPS



20 WALKING LUNGES
(EACH LEG)



20 SIT-UPS



10 BURPEES



EVERY MILE COUNTS.
TOGETHER, WE CIRCLE AFRICA.

★★ TASK FORCE SEMINOLE ★★



CHALLENGE

COMPLETE ALL THREE ROUNDS
FOR TIME WHILE MAINTAINING
PROPER FORM.



LOG YOUR RUCK MILES TOWARD THE
AROUND AFRICA RUCK CHALLENGE
AND ENCOURAGE A BATTLE BUDDY
TO JOIN YOU!



Ruck Around Africa

The Task Force Seminole Around Africa Ruck Challenge continued to gain ground during June, with Soldiers logging an additional 1,980 miles across the formation. Combined with previous months, the task force has now accumulated 4,189.92 miles toward the 18,950-mile journey around Africa's coastline.

With more than one-fifth of the route now complete, Task Force Seminole has completed 22.1% of the challenge, leaving 14,760.08 miles remaining. The steady pace reflects the formation's continued commitment to physical readiness and individual initiative.

A significant portion of June's mileage came from Soldiers participating in the Norwegian Foot March and the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge, both of which included challenging ruck march requirements. These events not only allowed participants to pursue prestigious foreign military badges but also contributed hundreds of miles to the overall challenge while building endurance, resilience and esprit de corps across the task force.

Although there is still ground to cover, the challenge remains well within reach. At the current pace, each Soldier only needs to average approximately 2.5 rucking miles per month to complete the journey



Current Distance: 4,189.92
Miles Remaining: 14,760.08



Task Force Seminole Pursues GAFPB and Schützenschnur

The German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge (GAFPB) and the Schützenschnur, which is the German Armed Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency, are among the most prestigious foreign military awards authorized for wear by U.S. service members. Hosted by the Bundeswehr, the GAFPB evaluates physical fitness, military skills, and tactical proficiency to earn a Gold, Silver, or Bronze badge, while the Schützenschnur recognizes excellence in marksmanship. This month, Soldiers from Task Force Seminole tested their endurance, strength, and combat skills while competing for both coveted German military awards.

Participants completed the German Basic Fitness Test, a 100-meter swim in uniform followed by removing their uniform in deep water, pistol qualification, first aid, and Mission-Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) proficiency testing, culminating in a timed ruck march ranging from 6 to 12 kilometers depending on the award level. In addition, Soldiers pursuing the Schützenschnur demonstrated their marksmanship proficiency through German weapons qualification standards. Together, the events recognized individual excellence while strengthening interoperability with our German partners through shared training and professional military exchange.











CHAPLAIN'S CORNER

The Father's Love

Chaplain Jason Fletcher



Deployments have a way of revealing what is already in our hearts.

For Soldiers, months away from home can bring loneliness, stress, discouragement, and temptation. For spouses and families, carrying responsibilities alone can create exhaustion, frustration, and emotional fatigue. The distance between loved ones is measured not only in miles, but often in missed birthdays, holidays, milestones, and everyday moments.

As I reflected on Father's Day this month, I found myself drawn to Jesus' parable of the Loving Father in Luke 15.

Most people know the first part of the parable. The younger son leaves home, wastes everything, and eventually finds himself broken and alone. When he finally decides to return, his father sees him from a distance, runs to him, embraces him, and restores him to sonship.

What often gets overlooked is that there were two sons in the story. The older son was obedient and hardworking for his father, yet his heart was entirely disconnected from his father's. So, when his younger brother returns home, he becomes angry and refuses to go to the father's party. Here the older son missed the father's heart completely. Both sons needed something from their father. One needed to come home. The other needed to come in. That truth speaks powerfully to this deployment experience.

Some of us may feel like the younger son. Life has not gone as planned. We may feel distant from God, struggling with mistakes, disappointments, or burdens that seem too heavy to carry. The good news is that no matter how far we have drifted, our Heavenly Father has not stopped looking for us. His love remains constant, and His invitation is simple: come home.

Others may feel more like the older son. We are doing the right things. We are fulfilling our responsibilities. We are showing up every day and carrying the load. Yet beneath the surface, frustration, bitterness, loneliness, or disappointment may be growing. Like the older son, we can be physically present while emotionally distant. The Father's invitation to us is equally simple: come in.

The beauty of this parable is that the father loved both sons. He pursued the rebellious son and pleaded with the resentful son. His heart was for restoration, relationship, and family.

As our Task Force continues this deployment, my prayer is that every Soldier and family member remembers this truth: the issue is not whether the Father loves you. The cross settled that forever.

The question is how you will respond to His love.

Whether you need to come home or come in, the Father's arms are open.

1 John 3:1: "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the children of God."

PHOTOS FROM THE FIELD





Soldiers assigned to Comanche Company, Task Force Seminole, work with members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force on close-quarters battle tactics at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 25, 2026. The training enhanced interoperability and strengthened tactical proficiency through combined instruction and hands-on rehearsals. (U.S. Army photo by CPT Dakota Burr)



U.S. Army Soldiers assigned to Comanche Company, Task Force Seminole, work with members of the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force on close-quarters battle tactics at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 25, 2026. The training enhanced interoperability and strengthened tactical proficiency through combined instruction and hands-on rehearsals. (U.S. Army photo by CPT Dakota Burr)



U.S. Army soldiers assigned to Delta Company Task Force Seminole, 53rd Infantry Brigade Combat Team, Florida Army National Guard, receive their Shoulder Sleeve Insignia—Military Operations in Hostile Conditions during a patching ceremony at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 11, 2026. The Shoulder Sleeve Insignia—Military Operations in Hostile Conditions, commonly known as the “combat patch,” is worn on the right sleeve of the Army Combat Uniform to signify a soldier’s deployment and service in a combat zone. (U.S. Army photo by CPT Dakota Burr)



SPC Nicholas Jama, SGT Caleb Cronkite, and SPC Lane Wheaton, assigned to Delta Company, Task Force Seminole, pose for a photo after receiving their Shoulder Sleeve Insignia—Military Operations in Hostile Conditions during a patching ceremony at Camp Lemonnier, Djibouti, June 11, 2026. The Shoulder Sleeve Insignia—Military Operations in Hostile Conditions, commonly known as the “combat patch,” is worn on the right sleeve of the Army Combat Uniform to signify a Soldier’s deployment and service in a designated combat zone. (U.S. Army photo by CPT Dakota Burr)



Soldiers assigned to Task Force Seminole compete for the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge and the German Armed Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency (Schützenschnur) in the Horn of Africa, June 2026. The events tested participants' physical fitness, military skills, and marksmanship while strengthening interoperability and professional relationships between U.S. and German armed forces. (U.S. Army photo by SSG Marshall Verkler)



Soldiers assigned to Task Force Seminole compete for the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge and the German Armed Forces Badge for Weapons Proficiency (Schützenschnur) in the Horn of Africa, June 2026. The events tested participants' physical fitness, military skills, and marksmanship while strengthening interoperability and professional relationships between U.S. and German armed forces. (U.S. Army photo by SSG Marshall Verkler)



A French Air Force Mirage 2000 flies over Djibouti, June 22, 2026. The flight demonstrated the continued presence and interoperability of allied air forces operating in support of regional security and stability throughout the Horn of Africa. (U.S. Air Force photo by SSgt. Nicholas Ross)



A soldier assigned to Blackjack Company, 1st Battalion, 167th Infantry Regiment, Task Force Seminole, conducts emergency response training with the installation fire department in the Horn of Africa, June 13, 2026. (U.S. Army photo by SSG Marshall Verkler)



MG Shane Morgan, the Commanding General of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, meets with soldiers assigned to Black Hawk Company, Task Force Seminole, Florida Army National Guard, during an outstation visit in the Horn of Africa, June 2026. The visit allowed Morgan to engage directly with soldiers, discuss mission requirements, and observe operations at the remote site.



Soldiers assigned to Black Hawk Company, Task Force Seminole, Florida Army National Guard, fire M4 carbines during a live-fire range in the Horn of Africa, June 2026. The training enhanced individual marksmanship proficiency and reinforced the skills required to maintain combat readiness in support of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa's mission.



MG Shane Morgan, the Commanding General of Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa, presents challenge coins to soldiers assigned to Nasty Dawg Company, Task Force Seminole, Florida Army National Guard, in the Horn of Africa, June 2026. The Soldiers received the coins in recognition of their outstanding performance and excellence while supporting Combined Joint Task Force-Horn of Africa's mission.



CPL Ryan Alire, assigned to Nasty Dawg Company, Task Force Seminole, Florida Army National Guard, fires a pistol during the German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge competition in the Horn of Africa, June 2026. The German Armed Forces Proficiency Badge is one of the most prestigious foreign military awards authorized for wear by U.S. service members.

MASTHEAD

The Seminole Standard

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