

## SOUTH AFRICAN RESERVES TAKE ON NATO'S BEST

The South African Military Skills Teams competed in the 2011 CIOR (*Confederation Interallié des Officiers de Reserve*) Summer Congress competition held in Warsaw Poland during August 2011.

This Military Competition for Reservists of all ranks consists of the following disciplines:

- Rifle and pistol shooting using the service rifle and pistol of the host nation. In this competition the P-83 pistol and Beryl Rifle (the NATO version of AKM) were used.
- Land obstacle course (using the NATO standard military pentathlon obstacle course).
- Water obstacle course (using the NATO standard military pentathlon water obstacle course). This is done with full combat uniform being worn.
- Military orienteering march (based on the civilian sport of orienteering) and incorporating the following additional events along the route:
  - Map reading
  - Range estimation
  - Hand grenade throwing

The following competitions were also included:

- First Aid.
- Law of Armed Conflict.

The competitors in the two South African teams were selected from participants in the South African competition that was held in Potchefstroom during November 2010.

An initial training group was selected and after rigorous training, two teams of three were selected, with one reserve.

The teams comprised the following:

Colonel Wim Alberts of Defence Reserves Division, who was coach and manager.

### **South Africa 1**

Lt Zakes Ditshego	Mobile Deployment Wing - SAAF
Sgt Leon Daniels	Transvaal Scottish
AS Rock Muchlanga	Navy Reserves

### **South Africa 2**

Maj David Labuschagne	3 Parachute Battalion
Capt Dougie Le Roux	3 Parachute Battalion
2Lt Edward Murray	Cape Town Highlanders

### **Reserve**

Lt Sifiso Nene	Transvaal Horse Artillery
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The Netherlands invited the South African team to train with them in Oirschot near Eindhoven in Holland. The team then attended an orienteering training exercise in Marburg Germany before departing for Warsaw for the competition.

Lt Nene was allocated to an International Team consisting of reserves of participating countries which then took part as an international team.

The Armed Forces of the Republic of Poland specially built a new land obstacle course with high quality finishes which impressed all. The track was covered by a rubber coating making it rather fast, thereby benefiting participants.

All teams had cadets allocated to them as guides and translators. They really assisted our team and went out of their way to make their stay memorable.

The South African team did very well in the shooting and land obstacle competitions. Unfortunately Capt Dougie le Roux ruptured his patella tendon jumping off one of the obstacles and had to withdraw.

Orienteering is still one of the South African weak points and although some team members took part in the Gauteng orienteering championships before they left, the level of the European countries is just so much higher than what we find in South Africa.

2Lt Edward Murray caused a stir when he won the training day shooting competition, however he could not maintain the high standard he set for himself and slipped back to 3<sup>rd</sup> position in the competition itself. His bronze medal is a great achievement and motivation to other team members.

Lt Sifiso Nene, as part of an International team, came third in the category for International Teams. This was also a great achievement as the competition in that category is very fierce.

Both teams performed well and we now have a solid base to work from for the future. Special thanks should be paid to the Reserve Force Council for funding the athletes and Defence Reserve Division as co-organiser of the South African Competition with the SA Army. Thanks also to the Light Artillery Regiment in Potchefstroom who always host the competition and subsequent training weekends.

Next year the International competition will be in Copenhagen, Denmark.

We are looking forward to the South African Championships which will be held in Potchefstroom over the period 17 to 23 October 2011. Any Reserve Force member of any rank can take part.

The competition is divided into different age categories as well as a female category. Any person that wishes to take part in this exciting Military Skills competition can enter through their Reserve Force Unit.

It is anticipated that more than 200 soldiers will enter this year's event. Four countries have already indicated that they will send teams to participate. We are looking forward competing against the USA, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Italy and possibly also Tanzania.



The beautiful specially built Land Obstacle course at the Zerge in Warsaw, Poland  
Photo by Marcin Zapalski



Lt Sifiso Nene (3<sup>rd</sup> Place with International Team) Colonel Wim Alberts, Manager and Coach; 2Lt Edward Murray (3<sup>rd</sup> Place Shooting Competition Rifle and Pistol combined)



Lt Zakes Ditshego and AS Rocks Muchlanga attending to a “seriously injured soldier” during the First Aid Competition



The two teams during a “bon-voyage” function at Transvaal Horse Artillery HQ  
Back row: Maj David Labuschagne; 2lt Edward Murray; Capt Dougie Le Roux; Sgt Leon Daniëls;  
Lt Sifiso Nene; AS Rocks Muchlanga; Dr John Job; Maj Gen Roy Andersen  
Front Row; Col RC Brand (Army Force Prep ETD); Col Wim Alberts; Lt Richard Ngwenya (Acting OC  
THA); Lt Zakes Ditshego



The two cadet guides/translators who were allocated to the South African team:  
Zosia Kuśmierowska; 2Lt Edward Murray and Marcin Zapalski



The team in their track suits: Lt Nene;Maj Labuschagne; Lt Ditshego; Col Alberts; AS  
Muchlanga; Sgt Daniëls; 2Lt Murray; Capt Le Roux