

Despite Big Obstacles, Academy 'Firefighter Combat Challenge Competitors' Qualify for November World Competition in Las Vegas



From l-r: Eric Rose, Michael Mazzaro, Zac Hamilton, Brian Turner and Coulton Main

Over the weekend of May 30-31, four students from current Central Florida Fire Academy classes at TECO, along with one recent Academy graduate, successfully competed in the Scott Combat Challenge held in Kissimmee.* By completing the five required tasks in well under the allowable time limits, the five competitors happily qualified for the November World Competition in Las Vegas. The eager competitors were Eric Rose, Michael Mazzaro, Zac Hamilton, Brian Turner and Coulton Main.

According to Kimberly Schilling, the Academy's EMT Program Manager, "The students from day one were very motivated to train together, get their own gear (all of which they each paid for), register and complete the necessary paperwork to compete. However, due to financial concerns and difficulties in getting everyone the necessary "competitive" gear, as well as time constraints (attending class all day and clinicals on the weekends), the students were not able to get together to achieve their goal until Friday afternoon, the day before the competition.

"Each participant arrived at the Challenge at 0830 on Saturday, May 30 with payment, gear and determination. Without ever competing together before, they had to compete three times to eliminate all the competition from other departments....and they did it!

"The qualifiers proudly raised their "winning" flag at TECO this week. We will now be working with them to prepare them for Vegas with training, as well as raising money to send them all to the November Challenge. Congrats to each of them."

Those congratulations are proudly echoed by Fire Academy Director Rick Stilp, Assistant Director Jeanette Eddie, and all the faculty, staff and students of the Central Florida Fire Academy. On to Vegas!

** The FFCC consists of 5 events that simulate what a firefighter may encounter on the job. These events include ascending a 5-story tower, hoisting, chopping, dragging hoses and rescuing a life-sized, 175 lb. "victim." For a complete description, please go to:*

www.fireacademy.org/PDF_Files_Temp/Five_Combat_Challenges.pdf



In one of the five tasks, competitors are timed as they hammer a 175-pound weight along a track as fast as they can, as shown here in a photo taken during a Minimum Standards class.