

Go team!



photo by Stephenie L. Tatum/Paraglide

Coach Richard Bellamy, right, and the Fort Bragg Bulldogs (ages six to eight) get ready to start the last game of the fall flag football season at the Polo Field Saturday.

Champions

Clint Clevenger, Bragg United Soccer Team alternate team captain, receives the first place trophy Oct. 15 from a league representative at "La Federacion de Soccer Sanford", a six week tournament. The Bragg United outscored the Sanford team 4-2.

Bragg United Soccer Team members are: Djoury Cazares, Vladimir Hernandez, Mike Artis, Felipe Giraldo, head coach David Kelley, Percy Telle, Clint Clevenger, Stephen Joseph, Carlos Ramirez, John Simon, Oscar Yepes, Ademar "Tico" Cubero, Rayon Cunningham, Gamal Forbes, Joffre Celleri, assistant head coach Anthony Recinos, team captain Achobe Ngong, Ramon Arreola, Jalmar Luna, Jorge Arita, Mario Pinilla, Danell Willis, Carlos Chumpitazi, Juan Benjumeci, Chris Connors, Jerry Nimmo, Maxwell Totimeh and Team Coordinator Julio Ramirez.



photo by Stephanie Joseph/Special to the Paraglide

Wounded Fort Bragg Soldier chosen to start cross country race

by **Pfc. Jaime Avila**

1st BCT PAO

Fayetteville Academy school officials in Fayetteville chose Sgt. George Perez, armorer for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Brigade Combat Team, 82nd Airborne Division to be the honorary meet starter for the Cape Fear Independent Conference 2006 Cross Country Championship hosted by Fayetteville Academy and Fayetteville Christian School on Oct. 18.

"The school was very honored to have him there," said Tom McCollum, the official time keeper of the race.

In September 2003, Perez lost his left leg at mid-shin as a result of combat operations in Fallujah, Iraq when the military vehicle he was riding in triggered an improvised explosive device.

After several surgeries and months of rehabilitation, Perez is back to work. He has since completed two airborne operations and continues to train and run every morning.

"We wanted someone who would inspire the kids," said McCollum.

Perez was the honorary starter for both the boys and girls race.

He also had the opportunity to talk and interact with the students of Fayetteville Academy and the visiting schools.

"It feels good to do this for the kids," said Perez. "I like doing things like this for the children."

The school wanted to show the racers that even though they may suffer from shin splints, or other running-related injuries, they could overcome those set backs said McCollum.

"I wanted to show them that three miles is nothing compared to what others have gone through," said Donna McCollum, coach for Fayetteville Academy Eagles.

"They can't let a little thing bring them down," said Perez. "They can't let minor injuries make them quit, because if they try hard now, they will be better off later on in life."

About 20 percent of the school is made up of military dependents; this is part of the reason why there is a strong relationship between the school and Fort Bragg, said Rick Cameron, the head of the Fayetteville Academy.

"It makes me feel very proud and patriotic to have people like Sergeant Perez here," said Cameron. "I think anything we do to strengthen our relationship is great."

Perez presented the winning schools with their awards, and the event ended with a closing prayer.

"We have a lot of respect for what the American Soldiers do in our country and overseas," said Cameron.

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