

NRDC-ITA Sports Associations

The Sports World of NRDC-ITA

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This is the first article focussed on the NRDC-ITA sporting activities and initiatives. I hope this will be the first of a long series and that a "Sports Corner" will be reserved in all the future numbers of the NRDC-ITA Magazine in order to inform the readers on events, planned activities and results.

Ancient Romans used to say "mens sana in corpore sano", meaning that a healthy mind lives in a healthy body. Not entering into all benefits associated with physical fitness, but only considering the military individual values, it is important to keep in our minds that all military personnel must reach a sufficient level of vigour, in order to react in a timely manner to operational requirements.

The NRDC-ITA Sports Board is the Headquarters' internal organisation established to deal with all issues related to sports activities and initiatives. Representatives from all branches gather at least quarterly to discuss those topics related to sports activities and addressed to NRDC-ITA military personnel. Thus, branch representatives have to be regarded as a point of contact for all personnel who propose sport activities and projects or just need some information on a possible approach to sports.

Unfortunately, the board itself is not enough to provide the internal and external visibility required and the follow up of all sports activities and events organised or planned within

the Headquarters. For this very reason, many initiatives are ongoing in order to open the door to the sports world to all personnel.

Some individuals have taken the lead to promote sports projects, aimed not only to enhance the internal and external visibility of NRDC-ITA through the participation in amateur competitions and sporting events (Stramilano run, cycling tourist events, shooting, etc.), but also to entice all personnel to approach sports.

Sport is an important vector for physical and mental fitness, team building and socialisation at the same time. The constitution of NRDC-ITA sport teams and societies, affiliated to Italian official sport organisation, will provide an important means for integration and intercultural communication, improving the visibility of the multinational background of NRDC-ITA Headquarters.

Are we looking for first class athletes? Do we want to win every competition? Sure not, this is not the main aim. The intent is to encourage team building, to exchange our ideas, to link with external organisations and to promote the NRDC-ITA HQ image outside the wire. After that, if a good sports result comes out and provides a positive media impact, better; but this last is not the main aim. So, don't be shy! Contact your branch representative, join one of our initiatives and enjoy the sports world of NRDC-ITA!



Cycling

The NATO Rapid Deployable Corps cycling team is aimed at promoting sports with participation in cycling activities and events, encouraging civilian and military integration, and providing visibility of NRDC-ITA through the organisation of cycling activities or by competing in official cycling events. The team has been first registered in 2007 with the UDACE (Unione Degli Amatori Ciclismo Europeo), the European recreational cycling organisation and is currently made up of 30 people. Amateur competitors and cycle-tourists, riding road and mountain bikes, are participating, individually or collectively, in unplanned or organised events in order to fly the NRDC-ITA flag outside the barracks. Until now, team members have taken part in more than fifteen different road and MTB (mountain bike) official races. Membership for 2008 is open to all NRDC-ITA HQ and its assigned to support units' personnel and their dependants.



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Parachuting

The club was created in May 2007, in order to perform and to make popular parachuting, both civil and military. It has also the aims to introduce this sport to all those who have never bailed out from a perfectly functioning airplane, to strengthen the ties among active duty comrades, to entice civilians to jump and to represent HQ-NRDC-ITA in competitions and fairs.

The Club offers to its members: parachute courses "static line" under Italian military control, courses static line "square", accelerated free fall, and "tandem" jumps. Currently, 25 members have applied for it. Membership is open to all HQ NRDC-ITA staff and its assigned support units' personnel, and to their dependants.

Running

The NRDC-ITA Running Society was constituted at the NATO Rapid Deployable Corps (Italy) on 15 January 2007. The Society is set up to develop and promulgate running through the participation of the members and relatives in competitive and non-competitive running events, improving the friendship among the personnel and integrating the members of the families inside the NRDC-ITA world. Furthermore, the NRDC-ITA Running Club is aimed at promoting the integration of military and civilian people in a social and sporting environment, following the Federazione Italiana Di Atletica Leggera (FIDAL - Italian Light Athletics Federation) regulations, in order to expand relationships with the civilian environment.

All personnel assigned to NRDC-ITA (including affiliated Units) can apply for membership to the NRDC-ITA Running Society; it is currently made up of 81 people, but we are very eager to increase this number in order to be able to take part in many competitions. The team foresees the participation of

its members in both competitive and non-competitive races, such as the "Half Marathon of Cesano Boscone (MI)", "Stramilano 2008" and many other events, which will be held in Milan and its province. Therefore, if you want to spend a pleasant and challenging moment during future weekends, join the Running Team.



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Shooting

Starting from 2002, a shooting Team has been established within NRDC-ITA. The Team, initially composed of Italian personnel, in the last two years has enlarged in terms of nations and gender. The Team is now composed of 20 people, including women and a few German and Greek fellows. From the very beginning, it was decided that only military weapons were going to be used, with the aim of improving specific military skills like tactical shooting, sharp-shooting and close quarters combat techniques. The Team normally trains on a weekly basis in Tradate Range, a civilian range also affiliated to the Italian Shooting Federation. Training sessions, weapons, ammo and transportation are provided by the HQ, in compliance with (especially for weapons and ammo) the Italian Laws and the Italian Army regulations. The Team has participated in several competitions from the very beginning, achieving always good results:

2003: 1st place in the Armed Forces Trophy organized by UNUCI Busto (Retired Armed Forces Officer Organization)

2004: Runner-up in the Military Valour Gold Medal Tournament organized by UNUCI Busto-Gallarate-Legnano with more than 160 shooters and 55 Teams (4 different competitions: 9 cal pistol, tactical rifle, sport rifle, sniper).

Due to the HQ Afghanistan commitment (ISAF VIII) in '05 and '06 we didn't participate in any tournaments. It is important to highlight that NRDC Shooting Team is normally invited to the International Beretta Defence Cup, a tactical competition reserved –by invitation only– to military and law enforcement agencies. In 2004 NRDC-ITA reps scored 15th place, and in 2007 13th place, out of more than 45 teams. The team has also organized two internal events: COMNRDC-ITA Shooting Trophy and the Clay-Pigeon Shooting Competition. Standard activity is now being resumed and the shooters are preparing themselves for the 2008 competition calendar.

Skiing

All started with an invitation for HQ NRDC-ITA to take part to the "Alpini Ski Championships" in San Candido (Northern Italy), 28 Jan-2 Feb 07. After selection of the team for participation (COMNRDC-ITA guidance was to form a team with high multinational flavor in it), four training days have been conducted in Champorcher (AO), S. Maria Maggiore (VB), Pila (AO) and Macugnaga (VB) in January 2007. A further step in the preparation for the race was to buy a standard snowsuit and to submit all selected people to a medical test. Once we knew the list of teams registered, we fixed our objective in trying to be, in the overall classification, in the first position among the four Multinational HQ's (ARRC, EUROFOR, LCC Heidelberg and NRDC-ITA).

Championships consisted of – beyond a parade and opening party, where we had the opportunity to show the NRDC-ITA flag – a 15 Km cross-country on the World Cup track in Dobbiaco. Afterwards, a Giant Slalom in two trials and a Sprint Cross-country race (relay with two competitors performing three times a lap 1,5 km. long). We did not take part in the Ski Patrol (25 Km Cross-country and shooting for a four member team) and could not get support by NRDC-ITA female teams.

In the final classification, we obtained, together with HQ ARRC, the first place among multinational HQs. Lessons learned for next year is to form a combined team for as many disciplines offered. As an internal final highlight, the NRDC-ITA team enjoyed a challenging 5 km adventure on sleds.

In the future, the event will be inserted in the NRDC-ITA calendar, so mark your agenda for next year: believe me, you will dig deep, but you will have fun, lots of fun.



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Diving

The Sub Aqua club was founded in HQ NRDC-ITA in 2006. About 62 active members are enlisted in the club. The objective of the NRDC-ITA Sub Aqua Club is to promote underwater sports, water safety and related activities; to encourage friendship among these sportsmen of NRDC-ITA and their families; to build up self confidence and good sportsmanship and to engender understanding in the use, safe handling and care of diving equipment for the purpose of conducting safe diving in a variety of environments. The Sub Aqua club organizes courses for all levels starting from beginner up to advanced levels. Promontorio di Portofino, one of the most beautiful natural sea parks in Italy located in Liguria region, is mainly the favorite site where the club performs the dives. Colours of the marine vegetation, a great variety of fish and the wonderful backdrop the picture where a diver is the main subject.

