



AIR FORCE JROTC UNIT GA-958
ETOWAH HIGH SCHOOL
6565 PUTNAM FORD DRIVE
WOODSTOCK, GA 30189

May 25, 2026

MEMORANDUM FOR ALL GEORGIA JROTC RAIDER TEAMS

FROM: AFJROTC UNIT GA-958

SUBJECT: Details of the 2026 Early Eagle Raider Challenge

1. **PURPOSE.** The purpose of this memorandum is to outline the details of the Etowah “Early Eagle” Raider Challenge scheduled for Saturday, September 5, 2026, at Etowah High School, 6565 Putnam Ford Drive, Woodstock, Georgia, 30189. Raiders from all services are most welcome and encouraged to participate.

2. **CONCEPT.** The competition will consist of five events: a team run, a rope bridge, a physical training test (PTT), a HUMVEE + tire flip event, and a sandbag carry relay. The top three teams in each event and the top three teams overall, per division (male, mixed, female), will be awarded for their accomplishments.

3. **REGISTRATION.** Schools can register a maximum of four total teams, not to exceed two teams per division. Registration is currently open, and registration will close on Friday, August 28, 2026. To register, please email stephen.bergey@cherokeek12.net. The cost to participate will be a flat rate of \$125 regardless of the number of teams participating. Mail in advance is preferred, but payment on the day of the event will be accepted. Checks should be made payable to Etowah High School. A hard copy registration form can be found at Annex A, and the Etowah High School W-9 form can be provided upon request.

4. **SCHEDULE OF EVENTS.** A coaches and commanders’ meeting will commence at 0715 in the old gymnasium above the JROTC classroom, and the team run will begin promptly at 0800. After the team run, teams will adhere to the schedule for the remaining four events that will begin by 0915 and will conclude when all teams are finished. The award ceremony will be held at the field where the sandbag relay will be conducted shortly after the conclusion of the competition.

5. **MISCELLANEOUS.** Please park in designated parking areas only. This is especially true for buses. Also, concessions and t-shirts will be available for purchase. Further, instructors should plan to bring one stopwatch for each team competing in the team run (e.g., three teams would require three stopwatches). Competition specific instructions include:

- a. Upon arrival, instructors must check in at the old gymnasium above the JROTC classroom (look for the building labeled “Ormand Anderson Gymnasium”). You will verify your teams and make any payments that are owed. Although covenant not to sue forms will not be collected, it is expected that the instructors have one for every one of their participants.
- b. Each team will be given a packet with a sequence of events they must follow, wrist bands for each team member, and a vest for the team run.

- c. In each of the three divisions, each team will consist of up to 14 members of which 10 must compete in any one event. Competing cadets will only be allowed to compete on one team only; no Raider on a particular team can sub on another team.
- d. Mixed teams will have a minimum of four females competing in each event and can have up to nine females competing.
- e. Equipment should be treated with care. Dropping equipment can damage the equipment and cause an event to get behind. Penalties will be assessed for neglected equipment.
- f. Only Raiders competing in a particular event will be authorized to be on that event's course during the competition. Every effort will be made to have sufficient spectator space off the event course. If your team has someone taking pictures, they will be allowed to go on the course as long as they do not interfere with other teams or coaches.
- g. Judges will brief teams clearly before each event. Penalties will be clearly defined. Each competition event will keep the same judge throughout the competition to ensure standardized scoring. After the completion of the event, the team commander will go to the judge for the time and notification of any penalties assessed. Do not argue with the judge. All concerns should be addressed by the coach/instructor to the Etowah Senior Aerospace Science Instructor (SASI).
- h. Teams will be given a round robin schedule matrix to follow. Please follow the matrix you are given to prevent bottlenecking at longer events. If a team or school decides not to compete in an event, please inform the Etowah SASI or the scoring room to prevent a frantic search at the end of the day for a missing scoresheet.
- i. Teams must follow signs and/or trail guides to stay on the course. If a team leaves the designated course, they will be disqualified. Part of each event is attention to detail. All courses will be clearly marked, so this should not be a problem.
- j. There will be a medic on site. In the event of an injury, notify a judge, instructor, or any Etowah cadet who will be in an orange or yellow vest, and the medic will be dispatched to the site of the injured person. Only dispatch the medic in case of an emergency.
- k. Seeing as this competition will be held during Labor Day weekend, hot temperatures most likely will be a factor. Each team should bring their own water and ice. Ensure all cadets start hydrating at least two days prior to the competition. There are some shaded areas around the school; however, it is recommended that schools bring their own shade tents.
- l. Lightening or severe weather stops the competitions; however, if rain should take place throughout the competition day, the competition will continue with safety as Etowah's top priority.

- m. Unsportsmanlike conduct, such as profanity, will be subject to a one-minute penalty each time a member of a team does not conduct themselves as a JROTC cadet. The judge also has the authority to disqualify a team for unsportsmanlike conduct, to include the actions of team coaches and parents.

6. EVENTS. The Early Eagle will consist of five events that are designed with minimal chance for penalty. Teams may recon the sites prior to the start of the competition. Etowah will try and have all school teams competing at the same location for the convenience of the coaches and participating school guest support.

- a. Team Run. The team run will be a distance just short of 1.6 miles around the Etowah campus. The event will start promptly at 0800, and teams will start in 60 second increments by school until all teams are on the course. Also, a 10-yard finish box will be in effect. Any team completing the run and not having all ten members in the box at the time the first member of the team crosses the line will be assessed a penalty. This is the only event of the day when running shorts and running shoes are permitted, although ABU/OCP pants and boots are allowed. This is also the only event of the day when coaches will be scoring their own team(s) using stopwatches they provide.
- b. Rope Bridge. This is a telephone pole course where the poles on both courses are 60 feet in length as to be able to run both courses simultaneously regardless of team division. Standard Raider rope bridge rules apply. Reference FM 3-97.61, TC 90-6-1, and 6th BDE HQs Raider SOP dated 2018 for more information. Uniform will be ABU/OCPs with boots.
- c. Physical Training Test (PTT). Two courses will be utilized for the PTT, one each for the male division and then the other for the mixed and female division. Teams will navigate their respective course in the fastest time possible by doing such things as carrying items such as water jugs and various weighted ammo cans (35 pound and 60 pound), jumping over a six-foot wall, crawling through a culvert, zig-zagging through a maze, carrying a canoe, high-stepping through tires, leaping over a vault/table, and more. This will be an out-and-back, approximately quarter mile course where the team will reach a turnaround point and reset the course on their way to the start/finish line. Note – Raiders do not need to stay together on this course, but they must finish within a 10-meter box before time stops. Penalties will be assessed for any Raider(s) crossing the finish line before all ten Raiders are in the 10-meter box. Uniform will be ABU/OCPs with boots.
- d. HUMVEE + Tire Flip. Teams of 10 will start next to a tug-of-war rope secured to the front end of a HUMVEE. On “go,” the team will pick up the rope and begin pulling the HUMVEE 30 yards. Once the front bumper of the HUMVEE passes a drop point, the team can drop their rope, run a short distance to a designated area containing ten streetcar tires, and begin carrying those ten tires 50 yards to a second designated area where the streetcar tires will be dropped off. The team will then run onto an athletic field where an old-school tire flip begins. The team will find their tire positioned on

the tire's start/finish line between two cones. The team will begin to flip the tire 50-yards and around the designated turn-around point and return to the start/finish line. Cadets may organize the team on the tire as they wish, but they must have a minimum of three cadets on the tire for all flips and can have no cadets in front of the tire for safety purposes. All other members of the team will walk behind those flipping the tire and will sub out at the team's discretion and according to its strategy. The turn-around point will be a single cone, in which the team must flip the tire around to return to the start/finish line. If the tire touches the turn-around cone, a 30-second penalty will be assessed for the violation. At the finish line, the tire must be completely flipped past the start/finish line between the two cones designating the start/finish line. The team will then exit the field the way they entered, carry the ten streetcar tires back to their initial designated area, and then the team will sprint the final 50 yards to the finish line (not pulling the HUMVEE as the HUMVEE will only be pulled at the start). The time will stop when the last Raider crosses the event's start/finish. As stated above, to prevent an injury caused by the tire-flip tire coming down on a lower leg or foot, no cadet can be ahead of the pivot point once the team begins each lift. The pivot point is defined as the point of the tire contacting the ground once a team begins the lift of the tire for each flip. At no time can the tire be rolled, pushed, or dragged along the course once the judge begins the event until the team is complete with the event. Refer to the Tire Flip Scoresheet for additional guidance. Male and mixed tires are 600 pounds, and the female tire is 485 pounds. Uniform will be ABU/OCPs with boots.

- e. Sandbag Relay. This 10-Raider activity has the Raider team breaking up into two groups of five. Raiders 1 through 5 will move ten, 30-pound sandbags (six for female division) from Circles A through F. Raiders 6 through 10 reset the course. Time stops when all sandbags are returned to Circle A. To start, Raider 1 will grab up to two sandbags from Circle A, carry them around a cone 25-yards away, and then run the bags to Circle B where they will be set (not dropped or thrown!) down. Raider 1 will then return to Circle A in the most direct manner possible to repeat this process until all ten sandbags have been moved to Circle B. Raider 2 will carry any available bags from Circle B to Circle C by carrying them around a cone 25-yards away. As soon as Raider 3 has any bags to carry in Circle C, Raider 3 will carry those bags around a cone 25-yards away and place them in Circle D. This process will continue until all ten sandbags have been moved by Raider 5 from Circle E to Circle F. At this point, Raiders 6 through 10 repeat the process in reverse Circle order until all sandbags have been returned to Circle A. For mixed teams, females will be Raiders 4 through 7. Raider 4 will only take six of the ten sandbags brought to Circle D, leaving the other four, and move them to Circle E where female Raider 5 will take the bags around the cone to Circle F. Female Raider 6 will take the six sandbags from Circle F around the cone to Circle E where female Raider 7 will take the six sandbags from Circle E around the cone to Circle D. At that point, Raider 8 needs to move all ten sandbags around the cone to Circle C and so on. Three notes worth mentioning here. First, every Raider will only carry the appropriate number of sandbags (ten or six). In other words, no Raider can do the course twice so a weaker Raider does not get a turn. Second, if a mixed team uses more than four females for this event, only female Raiders 4 through 7 carry six bags. In other words, any additional female will be required to carry all ten.

Last, also for mixed teams, because female Raiders 4 through 7 are carrying six bags, this means that there are four bags waiting in Circle D as mentioned above. Raider 8 cannot begin moving those bags early in an effort to get a head start on getting those bags moved from Circle D to Circle C. Raider 8 can only begin carrying bags when female Raider 7 starts bringing the bags from Circle E to Circle D. Uniform will be ABU/ACU/OPCs with boots.

7. Scoresheets and necessary course diagrams will be provided. The point of contact for the Early Eagle is the undersigned and can be reached at either stephen.bergey@cherokeek12.net or (813) 361-1613. Dream big. Be big.

//Signed, seb, 5/25/2026//

STEPHEN E. BERGEY, PhD, Lt Col, USAF (retired)
Senior Aerospace Science Instructor

ANNEX A: Registration Form
ANNEX B: Covenant Not to Sue Form

ANNEX A. Registration Form for the Etowah Early Eagle Raider Challenge

Please complete the form below and submit it to stephen.bergey@cherokeek12.net or by mail to:

Etowah High School
Attn: Steve Bergey
6565 Putnam Ford Drive
Woodstock, GA 30189

School Name	_____	
POC Name	_____	(please print)
POC Contact Number	_____	
Total # Teams*	_____	(not to exceed 4 total)
Male Teams	_____	
Mixed Teams	_____	
Female Teams	_____	
Amount Due	_____	(\$125)
Amount Enclosed	_____	(to "Etowah High School")
POC Signature	_____	

* No more than two in any category, but only the "A" team will be considered for awards.

Annex B: Covenant Not to Sue

Statement Required by Privacy Act of 1974

- 1. AUTHORITY. Title 10, US Code 2031
- 2. PURPOSE. To release the U.S. Government, Air Force Junior ROTC, and Etowah High School from liability for injury, death, or damages for Junior ROTC cadets participating in voluntary training programs.
- 3. ROUTINE USES. Normal personnel actions. Disclosure of information may be provided to proper authorities in actions regarding law enforcement, legal actions as a result of injury or death, investigations of accidents resulting from such voluntary training.
- 4. Mandatory or voluntary disclosure and effect on individual not providing information: disclosure is voluntary. Failure of the individual to complete this form will disqualify the Junior ROTC cadet from participating in specific voluntary training.

I (parent/guardian), _____,

residing at (street address, city, state, zip) _____

do hereby agree that in consideration for allowing my child to participate in the Junior ROTC Raider competition conducted at Etowah High School, and whereas she/he is doing so entirely on her/his own initiative, risk and responsibility; and being fully aware of the risks adhering to this type of training, I hereby RELEASE AND DISCHARGE FOREVER the United States Air Force, the State of Georgia, Cherokee County School District, Etowah High School and all of its officers, agents, and employees, acting officially or otherwise, from any and all claims, demands, actions, or cause of action, on account of my child or on account of any injury to my child which may occur from any cause during said activity or continuances thereof; and I do further covenant and agree to hold the said organizations above, their officers, agents, and employees blameless for any and all damage which my child may cause either intentionally or through his/her negligence.

(signature of parent or guardian)

(signature of participating cadet)

(print name of parent or guardian)

(print name of participating cadet)

(relationship to cadet)

(age on day of competition, 9/5/26)

(date of signature)

(signature of witness)