Driven to Success, JMTC's new Driver's Training Complex goes into high gear

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Italian combat engineer Fabiana Gatta checks his safety gear as he prepares to drive through an unpaved stretch of road on the Grafenwoehr Training Area. Soldiers from the 21st Engineers, Italian Combat Service Support Battalion based out of Caserta, Italy, train with Mine Resistant Ambush Protected vehicles at the U.S. Army Europe Joint Multinational Training Command in Grafenwoehr, Germany. The soldiers were attending a two week intensive MRAP Driver/Operator certification course. (U.S. Army Photo by Michael Beaton, Joint Multinational Training Center Public Affairs)

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany-- The Joint Multinational Training Command’s Training Support Activity Europe, also known as TSAE, officially opens a state-of-the-art Advanced Driver’s Training complex on the Grafenwoehr Training Area, next month.

JMTC’s commander, Col. Bryan L. Rudacille will preside over the ribbon-cutting ceremony, Oct. 4, at Grafenwoehr Training Area Position No. 156, near Range 126, at 1:30 p.m.

"The new complex is spread over a 7.6 km area, and consists of a sequence of eleven obstacles designed to train Soldiers navigating the complex in a variety of U.S. and multi-national military vehicles, from the common High Mobility Multipurpose Wheeled Vehicle, better known as the HMMWV, to U.S. and NATO European model tanks," said Ed Bogawitch, TSAE Range Land Training Coordinator. "Each of the eleven obstacles replicates the dangers and challenges Soldiers, Marines and airmen encounter when driving in diverse battlefield environments."

The course includes arid and eroding terrains as well as wet areas that require fording, and urban operations sites, bridges and overpasses, steep grades that require quick and accurate judgment, sharp curves and roads that are ideal for concealing IEDs. Each obstacle requires soldiers to possess an accurate knowledge of their vehicles’ capabilities, Bogawitch said.

The driving complex is situated near complimentary training ranges to facilitate and promote better use of a training unit’s time. Many obstacles are built along trails leading through agricultural terrain, terraced landscapes and open-spaces with tall grasses, gaping water filled ditches and deceptive bogs and include stone barriers, road blocks and culverts.

The obstacles and their features are also designed to be adjusted or altered fundamentally to mirror a specific incident, set of circumstances or terrain that military drivers may encounter in future missions.
The completed complex is the result of a long and successful collaboration between Master Drivers Instructors and NCO’s of the Grafenwoehr Military Community, working in collaboration with the Training Support Activity Europe, the U.S. Army in Europe’s Sustainable Range Program, the GTA Department of Public Works and the JMTC Safety Office.

For more information, or to learn more about Europe’s unique training mission visit the JMTC website: http://www.eur.army.mil/jmtc

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