

Name of the event	Jungle Warfare Course
Institution, which organised the event	Saint-Cyr Military Academy
Country of the organiser	France
Year of the event	2021
Date of the event (from-to)	March 2021
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Authors' country	Lithuania

In February, together Lithuanian and French cadets participated in jungle training, in French Guiana, South America. In the military training of Saint-Cyr Military Academy cadets, this course



requires most physical and psychological preparation throughout the study period. Already before our travel to South America, we heard mystical stories from the French themselves about the jungle course and its surroundings. Therefore, we were looking forward to try our strength in this lifetime challenge.

As cadets of General Jonas Žemaitis Military Academy of Lithuania, or more broadly, representatives of the Lithuanian Armed Forces, we were given a unique and, probably, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to attend such training. So far, only one Lithuanian serviceman has participated in the Jungle Warfare Course, therefore, we are among the few who have successfully completed the course and have acquired the jungle warfare qualification.

For us, it was one of the best experiences gained in the military. French Guiana is a totally different world compared



to that in Lithuania. Upon our arrival, we immediately felt the fundamental differences in climate and nature. As there are no jungles in Lithuania and Europe, such environment and climate were a challenge.

The title of the course is *Aguerrissement* meaning increasing one's physical fitness in French. The course is designed to reach one's psychological and physical limits. Each day of the course was tiring and difficult; nevertheless, the interesting programme and military spirit in the platoon always

made us move forward and never give up, no matter how difficult it was.



The course took 2 weeks in rainforest, far away from civilisation where dangerous and poisonous creatures were living. Every morning we had to get up at 4 a.m. and to be ready for new adventures and challenges. We also had 3 legionnaire instructors from Poland, Spain and Brazil who were in charge of

our platoon training. Mornings with French legionnaires usually started with an inspection of different equipment and some physical exercise. In the course of time, we realized that no matter how well we were prepared in the mornings, we would not escape morning exercise, as it was part of the military training programme.

From morning to night, we had intensive lectures and challenges. In two weeks, we learned various aspects of survival in the jungle, tested ourselves in different obstacle courses, and faced fatigue and psychological pressure. The course was finalized with a 3-day survival stage without food and water, only with several things essential for survival. During the survival stage, our platoon acted like a fist: some were looking for food, some were setting up a campfire and some were



preparing building materials, i.e. weaving lianas and cutting down trees.

The course was professionally prepared. Although everything was in French, but it did not prevent us from keeping up with French cadets. We were very lucky to get into one of the strongest platoons from Saint-Cyr. In addition, the platoon was very friendly and welcoming. 26 of 30 cadets of our platoon successfully completed the course. It is one of the best results of Saint-Cyr Military



Academy. We also successfully overcame challenges and received the badges of the jungle course.

Those who would like to attend the Jungle Warfare Course should know that it is more about individual and team skills and physical and psychological challenges than tactics. Secondly, everything one learns throughout the course will

have to be demonstrated at his/her best at the end of the course. Furthermore, one has to be very careful because reckless or careless actions may cause injuries and serious health problems.

We are very grateful to Saint-Cyr Military Academy for an extraordinary opportunity to attend this type of course and to gain invaluable experience that will be necessary in our future military service.

