

RAMSTEIN FITNESS CENTERS 2007 BIGGEST LOSER CHALLENGE

The 435th Services Squadron and Ramstein Fitness Centers hosted the 2007 Biggest Loser Challenge. This program has been showing up all over USAFE and is also going strong at many stateside fitness centers. In the Ramstein military community there is a great desire and need for programs that encourage fitness and health.

Advertising began for the 2007 Biggest Loser in early November and customers were showing a great interest in the program. The actual registration began on 13 January 2007 and was scheduled to go through 20 January 2007. The build-up to the first registration day was tremendous. Customers were calling the fitness centers daily for information and to find out how many teams we were going to accept. Initially due to manning and time we had limited the number of teams to 10. Ten teams of four people each could register as well as individual members who would then be placed on a team with other members. When registration day arrived there were 50 people waiting outside the Ramstein Fitness Center at 0530. The fitness center opened the doors at 0700 and the rush began. When we closed the registration at 0920 we had registered 21 full teams of four people each and took an additional 20 individual registrations; enough for 5 more teams. The program coordinator made a last minute decision to take all the teams who showed that morning and the individuals and did not turn anyone away. Throughout the remainder of the week we were able to keep a waiting list in case anyone of the original registrants dropped out of the competition. In the end when all teams were made we were able to pull approximately 5 people and one full team from the wait list. Before the actual competition began 26 teams were signed up and ready to compete in the Ramstein Biggest Loser. Health histories, doctor's consent forms and informed consents were required by all participants before they could compete.

The next week of the competition comprised of fitness assessments performed by the fitness programmer and various staff members. Each team was given the option of performing the military physical training test consisting of push-ups, sit-ups and the 1.5 mile run or the 1 mile walk test. Also at the time of assessment each team member was weighed and this was recorded as the official start weight. When the week ended 104 fitness tests were performed.

The official start of the program began the following week. Teams are required to attend a weekly workout session. This is a once a week session where all team members meet and workout then have a fitness staff member sign off on their workout cards. At the end of the program all teams will turn in their workout cards. Those teams that miss a weekly session or do not have fitness staff initials on their cards will receive a four pound gain at the end of the program. Teams will meet monthly (23 February, 23 March and 23 April) with the fitness program coordinator for weigh-ins and also to take a fitness challenge. The fitness challenge will be a small competition where teams compete against each other for a 4 pound loss to the winner at the end of the program. Also, throughout the competition there is the possibility of surprise challenges. Teams will be notified in

advance of the challenge; however the challenge itself will remain a surprise until the day of the event. The teams will be reward for attending the surprise challenge with a 2 pound loss and the winner will receive an additional 2 pounds. The Ramstein Biggest Loser Challenge ends with the final weigh-in April 23, 2007 with the results tallied and winners announced April 28, 2007.

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