

## **Buckeye Trains Army Rangers in Return to Fort Benning**

Ohio State Student and Varsity Rifle Team Captain Sam Ohlinger recently had the honor of serving his country over winter break. Sam shared his knowledge and expertise in marksmanship with members of the Army's 3<sup>rd</sup> Ranger Battalion, Delta Company. Sam worked alongside the Army's best shooters from the Army Marksmanship Unit (AMU), as well as other civilian instructors, to help the members of Delta Company complete the Squad Designated Marksmanship course.

Sam was chosen to be a Military Rifle Instructor by the AMU through the Civilian Marksman Program (CMP) in June of 2005. Sam is now 21 years old and still the youngest civilian involved in the Squad Designated Marksmanship Program. This program was initiated by the AMU's previous Commander, LTC David Liwanag, as a way to improve marksmanship skills throughout the Army. In the open desert and mountainous battlefields of modern warfare, improved marksmanship skills are needed to be able to engage targets that can be seen by the average soldier, but were previously out of his effective range.

The goal of the program is to train soldiers and drill sergeants in advanced marksmanship principles, so that they may effectively engage targets at ranges of up to 600 meters. Ideally these soldiers receiving training directly from the AMU will then pass along these techniques to others and eventually, every squad in the Army will have a Squad Designated Marksman, who will not only be the squad expert, but who will improve the accuracy of the men and women around him as well.

With such a grand scale of operations, the AMU found itself to be short-handed, and hence put out the call to the CMP for the best civilian marksman and instructors. That is how Sam and many other civilians like him were chosen to aid the cause.

The program consists of a week-long course. The first day is spent entirely in the classroom, learning the fundamentals of marksmanship that often are overlooked. Then, the class takes to the range and receives superb instruction in the use of both iron sights and optic-equipped weapons, out to 600 meters.

Sam had a wonderful experience and high praise for the men of Delta Company, the AMU, and the other civilian instructors. He was honored to participate in the program and looks forward to helping again soon. For now though, Sam is a senior at OSU majoring in Political Science, preparing to graduate in June, and attend law school thereafter. That should keep him busy for awhile, not to mention his last season on the Varsity Rifle Team.