



In her own words...Faith Folts

I rolled over at 6 o'clock on a Saturday morning in a tent, freezing cold. While that may not seem any fun to most people, it is what I live for. Raider's is a way of life, a chance to better yourself. That is why twenty-six of us were in West Palm Beach at the State JROTC Raider Challenge. The last six weeks of intense training, campouts, lunch practices, and morning running had all been worth it. All the pain that we felt before, during, and after was justified. The injuries we bore, and the tears we cried out of sheer exhaustion and pain had finally come to fruition. The avalanche of feelings after winning was indescribable. I felt joy that our hard work had paid off, but I also felt incredibly sad and empty now that it was all over. Raiders had been my life, all I had dreamed about for months. Actually since states last year. A Raiders challenge is an interesting thing, I alternately hate and love it. I have never been more exhausted or in more pain than when I am competing in a Raider challenge. So why continue? Honestly, it is because I am addicted to the commitment and to the team effort. I live for that. It is the greatest sense of accomplishment that you will ever experience. Raiders provide you with a chance to really work together and do things that few other teenagers would ever think of doing. Raiders will always be a worthwhile venture for me. I grew to really know my teammates and to value their company. We did not always get along, sometimes we argued. But we were united in our purpose: win. That is what Raider's is all about. Not necessarily all about winning, although that is a definite perk. It is about becoming the best you can be, mentally, physically and emotionally. It is about helping others too, and urging them on when they feel that they can no longer go on. That is why I am addicted to it- I do love my teammates, the intense training and the trophies. Even more than that, though, I love the chance to better myself, and to play a part of bettering someone else's life too.