



ROD RESHEL

US Army (*Retired*)

Rod Reshel was born in northern Illinois and spent his youth bouncing between there and southern Texas where he lived on the ranches outside of Laredo. Being accustomed to such extreme cultural variances molded him into a flexible person very understanding of the need to adapt to various situations, whether learning to navigate public transportation in the north or saddling up to ride horseback between villages in the south. Growing up in a family with a rich military heritage, it only seemed right to join the Army when after graduating high school his direction in life was uncertain. In 1995 he enlisted in the US Army as an 11B Infantryman, spending the next seven years serving in this capacity from Asia, to Alaska, to Europe, the whole time though understanding there was an even greater calling for him in the military. In 2002 he joined the “training team” with the 20th Special Forces Group, where he prepared for and completed the Special Forces Qualification Course (SFQC). This course left him at a crossroads of options, in the end he decided to move to 1st BN 10th Special Forces Group to work alongside his good friend Fred Lewis. At 1-10, Rod operated as an 18D (Special Forces Medic), completing several trips to Africa, Afghanistan and Europe. In 2010 he was transferred to the John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School (SWCS) where he worked for three years helping to mold and care for students tempting

their fate at the SFQC. After that three-year tour Rod was blessed with yet another opportunity to work at 1-10, however, this time was different as he was a seasoned soldier with a lot of information to share, and with that helped develop several other junior medics until the call was needed for an 18Z (Special Forces Operations Sergeant/“Team Sergeant”). This job would take Rod away from the medical field and instead put him directly in charge of a Special Forces Operational Detachment Alpha, also known as an ODA. For the next two-plus years Rod served as the Team Sergeant for ODA 0115, completing deployments in Afghanistan and central and eastern Europe, then finally making a final move back to Colorado to serve in a staff role for his final years of service. It was after this time that the “adrenaline” started to wear off as the slower pace of life started to make injuries and limitations more noticeable. In years prior, the drive to go further and faster distracted him from injuries and breakdown, mostly since such acknowledgements would cause a halt to operations. As it worked out, the timing was ok. This slowdown of pace allowed Rod to begin seeking the overdue medical treatment he long needed, and that would later help him better transition to a civilian environment. Despite all, there was still a fire within that burned for competition and camaraderie, which is what ultimately led him to the U.S. Veterans’ Rowing & Kayaking Team where his aspirations to compete in the 2022 competitions being held in Hungary were stoked. As hoped, and admirably obtained, Rod excelled winning three Gold Medals in each of the races in his lightweight category.

