

Army commercial star leaves training

By Rowan Scarborough
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An Army soldier who starred in the "An Army of One" TV ads aimed at a new generation of recruits has voluntarily left a grueling Special Forces assessment process at Fort Bragg, N.C.

The course is used to weed out those who cannot survive a rigorous schedule of physical tasks as the

first step toward becoming a Green Beret, the commonly used name for Special Forces soldiers.

Spc. Richard Lovett, a combat engineer, cited "personal and professional reasons" indicating that now was not the time to complete the selection process, said Col. Tom Begines, an Army spokesman at the Pentagon. Col. Begines said Spc. Lovett plans to re-enter the course in November.

"They're pretty confident he's going to do well," the spokesman said.

His departure presented an awkward moment for the Army, whose "An Army of One" ad campaign has been criticized within and outside the Army as catering to self-centered youth. The critics say the Army should play up themes of patriotism and teamwork.

In the ad, Spc. Lovett said, "Even though there are 1,045,690 soldiers just like me, I am my own force. With technology, with training, with support, who I am has become better than who I was. And I'll be the first to tell you, the might of the U.S. Army does not lie in numbers. It lies

in me. I am an army of one. And you can see my strength."

Maj. Richard Patterson, spokesman for the Army's John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School at Fort Bragg, said Spc. Lovett left the course on June 18 in his 14th day of a 24-day selection process.

"He voluntarily withdrew from the course," Maj. Patterson said. "He did not flunk out. Basically, any time an individual coming through the course, if they want to withdraw, all they have to say is, 'I voluntarily withdraw,' and that is what he has done."

Spc. Lovett is prominent for his TV role, but when it comes to quit-



Spc. Richard Lovett cited "personal and professional reasons" for withdrawing from an Army Special Forces training course on June 18.

ting the screening course, he is not alone. Of the 1,905 soldiers who have attended this year, more than half, 989, were not selected, of which 543 voluntarily withdrew.

The 24-day assessment is the start of a long training regimen to earn the right to wear the Green Beret in an operational unit. Soldiers must pass a qualification course of five to 14 months, 19 days

of survival training and three to six months of foreign-language classes.

An Army spokesman said Spc. Lovett's ads, as originally planned, will continue to run, although not as frequently as earlier this year. The spokesman said the "An Army of One" ads are now featuring soldiers going through basic training.

The Army is on track to achieve its goal this year of 75,000 inductees.

Name	Corporal R
Age	22
Hometown	Tampa, FL
MOS	Combat En
Stationed	Fort Bragg