

Soldiers from across the state compete in combatives tournament

Written by Staff Sgt. Cassidy L. Snyder, Illinois National Guard Public Affairs
Tuesday, 18 September 2012 14:46

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SPRINGFIELD, IL (09/17/2012)(readMedia)-- Approximately 25 Soldiers from units throughout Illinois competed in the Illinois Army National Guard's third annual Adjutant General's Combatives Tournament at Camp Lincoln in Springfield, Sept. 16.

The tournament was open to all Illinois National Guard Soldiers regardless of combatives experience.

"I didn't know what to expect," said Sgt. Zechariah Johnson of Oregon, a cavalry scout with Troop B, 2nd Squadron, 106th Cavalry Regiment in Dixon. "It was a smaller tournament, but the Soldiers who showed up were motivated and made it a good competition."

Fighters competed individually in brackets based on weight class, while team points were awarded based on individual placement. The 33rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion received the overall team award.

The tournament was double elimination. The preliminary rounds were fought under Modern Army Combatives standard rules, which allows takedowns, joint locks and choke submissions. The championship bouts were fought under intermediate rules, which added open hand strikes to the head, punches to the body, and head to toe kicks.

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Just before the end of the 10-minute light heavyweight championship round, Johnson defeated his opponent 1st Lt. Jarod Thomas of Decatur, with the 766th Engineer Battalion in Decatur, by a collar choke submission. Johnson said this was his first combatives tournament.

"He put up a really good fight and it was close," said Johnson. "I look forward to next year's competition."

Overall individual winners included: Bantamweight division (110 pounds and under): Spc. Ashley Hicks of Pickneyville, Company C, 33rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion in Carbondale

Flyweight division (110.1 to 125 pounds): Spc. Ricardo Brambila of Berwyn, Troop C, 2nd Squadron, 106th Cavalry Regiment in Aurora

Lightweight division (125.1 to 140 pounds): Spc. Jacob Bultmann of Petersburg, Company B, 33rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion in Bloomington

Welterweight division (140.1 to 155 pounds): Sgt. Jacob Trigleth of Altamont, Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 2nd Battalion, 130th Infantry Regiment in Marion

Middleweight division (155.1 to 170 pounds): Spc. Allen Simmerman of Chillicothe, Company A, 33rd Brigades Special Troops Battalion in Marseilles

Cruiserweight division (170.1 to 185 pounds): Sgt. Ardel Buchanan of Cicero, 766th Engineer Battalion in Decatur

Light heavyweight division (185.1 to 205 pounds): Sgt. Zechariah Johnson of Oregon, Troop B, 2nd Squadron, 106th Cavalry Regiment in Dixon

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Heavyweight division (over 205.1 pounds): Spc. Jason Pilman of Johnsburg, Company A, 33rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion in Marseilles

Hicks was the only female competitor in this year's tournament. No other Soldiers weighed in at the bantamweight class, so she competed with Soldiers in the flyweight division.

"I liked the challenge of being the only female," said Hicks.

She recently completed the Tactical Combatives Course (Level 2) and decided to enter the tournament after hearing about it at the class.

The Modern Army Combative Program (MACP) uses competitions as a tool to motivate soldiers to train, build esprit de corps and to build confidence by testing techniques against a fully resistant opponent. MACP Instructors with the Illinois Army National Guard administered this year's tournament.

"I was really impressed by the raw determination I saw in many of today's Soldiers," said Staff Sgt. Nick Grant of Caseyville, tournament noncommissioned officer in charge and Combatives Course Manager for the 129th Regional Training Institute. "Even those that fell short certainly displayed a strong will to win. It was also very satisfying to see Soldiers I've personally trained in the past comeback and employ potentially life saving techniques they learned months or years ago."

Top tournament finishers will be considered to join the Illinois Army National Guard Combatives Team at future national competitions such as the All-National Guard and All-Army Combatives Championships.

For more information on Illinois' Combatives Program and updates on future competitions, please visit the Illinois Army National Guard Combatives Team's Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Illinois-Army-National-Guard-Combatives-Team/224254734272195>

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High resolution photos of all the winners are available. Contact the Illinois National Guard Public Affairs Office at ngilstaffpao@ng.army.mil .