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POC: Cynthia.Vaughan@us.army.mil

Phone: 703.325.0470

Warrior Games Assessment and Selection Clinics underway By Emily Anderson, WTC Stratcom

The U.S. Army Warrior Transition Command Warrior Games assessment and selection clinics are currently being held throughout the United States to find the best athletes to represent the Army during the annual Warrior Games.

"The clinics are really good because it gives me a chance to get active and be a part of a team again," said Sgt. Jeremy Bowser, currently assigned to B Company, Fort Drum Warrior Transition Unit. "I feel I'm getting involved and not just sitting around doing nothing."

The first multi-sport event was held on Fort Belvoir, Va., the last week of October and the second multi-sport event, November 4 – 9, 2012 at Fort Bliss, Texas. The Fort Belvoir clinic included specialized training in archery and sitting volleyball and the Fort Bliss clinic specializes in cycling and swimming activities.

"Providing opportunities to compete and rebuild confidence in their abilities is the primary reason we're holding these clinics, but we also want Soldiers and Veterans to try the different reconditioning activities," said Lt. Col. Keith Williams, Adaptive Reconditioning branch chief, Warrior Transition Command. "This is the athletes chance to see if there's another sport they would really enjoy doing."

"Bringing awareness to the different types of activities available is the one of the reasons we host clinics and camps on military bases or highly populated military areas," Williams added. "Our primary camps and clinics focus on holistically reconditioning our Soldiers in each of the six comprehensive transition plan domains."

Since 2010, nearly 200 wounded, ill, and injured service members and Veterans have competed annually at the Warrior Games, a unique partnership between the Department of Defense and U.S. Olympic Committee Paralympic Military Program.

Athletes compete in sitting volleyball, wheelchair basketball, swimming, cycling, track and field, archery, and competitive shooting. Gold, silver and bronze medals are awarded to athletes or team members who place 1st, 2nd and 3rd in their events.

"It'll be exciting if I make the team because I've never done a competition like this before," said Staff Sgt. Charles Baird, currently assigned to A Company, Fort Belvoir Warrior Transition Unit. "This is a new experience, and it will be a great honor to take part in something like this which not everyone is able to do."



Although Baird is competing for a position on the Army's archery team, he decided to look into the other Warrior Games sports.

"Participating in these clinics is therapeutic and helps take my mind off of other things," Baird said. "I've played wheelchair basketball before, but I will have to learn how to swim because if I don't make the team this year, I'll have an extra advantage for next year's team."

Last year the Army dominated in several events, winning more than sixty medals, and 2013 Warrior Games will be no different.

"After watching the competitors during the clinic and the feedback I'm getting from the field, I have no doubt the Army's team will be a reckoning force during the 2013 Warrior Games," Williams said.