

Sports

Bliss Ten-Miler Team to compete in Washington

SPC. JASON STADEL

108th ADA Bde.

Eight men and eight women will represent Fort Bliss this weekend at the annual Army Ten-Miler competition in Washington D.C. This is the 22nd year of the annual event.

Last year more than 13,000 runners were registered. However, last year's event didn't count as an official race because of a change in the run route during the race. The route was changed, and subsequently lengthened, due to a suspicious package found near the 7-mile mark of the race. The package turned out to be nothing, but the change in the route, made the race reclassified as a "recreational" run.

This year, the captain of Team Bliss, Larry Smith, hopes both the men's and women's teams can go to D.C., run well, and represent Fort Bliss positively. "We're ready. I'll be happy if we go top six in mens and womens," Smith said.

"It's been a little hectic trying to get ready," added the team captain. "We've all had a lot of field training exercises and 4th BCT, 1st Cavalry Division has been getting ready to deploy, so that has made training as a team tough. But we're all ready to go out, run our races and represent this post."

All 16 team members are active duty Soldiers from Fort Bliss.

Derek Miller has been running about 60 miles a week to prepare for the competition since he qualified for the team after the Fort Bliss tryouts which were held in May.

"I'm a runner and that's what I do every day. I love to compete," said Miller. "It's awesome to represent Fort Bliss. There were a lot of good runners at the qualifier back in May and only so many people can go [to Washington D.C.] so I'm happy to represent this post."

Katheryn Gatewood echoed the comments of Miller.

"This is an awesome opportunity to be a part of the Bliss team," said the 22-year Army Soldier.

Gatewood said the Fort Bliss team is comprised of good runners and she expects a good showing from Team Bliss.

"My expectation is to do my best for the team. We have a lot of team pride."

A sense of that team pride has come from one of the Team Bliss members. Jabri Jennings is making his fourth trip to the Army-Ten Miler and second as part of Team Bliss. This year however he will be running as a cancer survivor.

Jennings was diagnosed with the



MASTER SGT. RICHARD LAMBERT

The 2005 Army Ten-Miler started with a fifer playing colonial marches as he began the race.

early stages of prostate cancer. He said the aggressive use of antibiotics has cleared the cancer and he's doing fine. The 30-year-old is modest about being a cancer survivor and shrugs off the notion he is an inspiration to others.

"Cancer is beatable. I continue to keep going. There are worse things out there that can happen. I've seen Soldiers come back from Iraq and Afghanistan with their legs blown off. I can still run. You take a hit and keep on going."

Jennings has run 10 miles in about 55 minutes before; but knee injuries and nerve damage in his right leg has slowed him a bit.

"I'm hoping for a time of about 58 minutes. I just hope I can help the team place."

He added training at Fort Bliss provides Team Bliss an advantage going in the competition.

"Fort Bliss is prime real estate for runners, we have a lot of flat ground to run on, and we're at a high elevation. We have to take pride in being from Fort Bliss and go out and do our best."

The Army Ten-Miler takes place Saturday morning. More information and updated results can be found at www.armytenmiler.com.

HHT, 1-9 Cav. claims post softball championship

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"The Cav" has made their presence known once again during the Fort Bliss Post Softball Championship game. Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry Regiment coasted to a 20-2 victory over E Battery, 5th Battalion, 52nd Air Defense Artillery. The game was played last Friday at the Omar Bradley Softball Complex.

In the second game during the championship round, (E Btry., 5-52 ADA forced the "If Game" to be played by winning the first game and handing HHT, 1-9 Cav their first loss during the tournament) HHT, 1-9 Cav took advantage of their very hot bats to put up eight runs in the first inning and never looked back.

"After we lost the first game we knew we had to get the bats going," said HHT, 1-9 Cav's Randy Fallon. "The tempo was in their pace; but the second game we turned it around and got going."

Fallon was 2 for 4 with two runs batted in the second championship game.

After the big first inning, HHT, 1-9 Cav kept the tempo in their favor by putting up two runs in the second inning, another eight in the third, two more in the fourth and another two in the fifth. The game was called after the fifth inning due to the 10-run "mercy rule."

E Btry., 5-52 ADA tried mounting a comeback by scoring single runs in the second and third innings, but were too far behind and couldn't maintain a rally.

"Swinging the stick in softball is what is important; and they did it a lot better than us," said E Btry., 5-52 ADA team captain Eric Espinoza.

"We played team ball," said William Beever, HHT's team captain. "That's the only way we know how to play. After we lost [the first championship game] we showed a lot of heart out there."

The trouncing of the air defenders by the cavalry players does not tell the story of the championship; E Btry, 5-52 ADA put up a fight. Going into Friday night's title game HHT, 1-9 Cav. was undefeated in tournament play including a 14-3 victory over E Btry., 5-52 ADA in the winner's bracket semifinal game. After the semifinal loss the E Btry., 5-52 ADA players moved to the loser's bracket semifinal game. To reach the championship E Btry., 5-52 ADA edged HHT, 3-43rd ADA 15-14. The air defenders knew going into the championship game they had to beat the cavalry players twice to claim the post title.

In what would be the first of two championship games, HHT, 1-9 ADA scored two runs in the top of the first inning, but E Btry., 5-52 ADA took the lead on a three run first inning and never relinquished it. They held on to force a second game by winning 16-13. However, in game two the bats cooled off.

"We just came out here to have fun and support our unit," Espinoza said. "We shouldn't have been here, we're really proud of what we accomplished and how we showed our unit pride."

HHT, 1-9 Cav. will have very little time to celebrate their post championship as the Armored Reconnaissance Squadron will deploy to Southwest Asia with the rest of the 1st Cav. Div. later this month. "We knew this was it and the trophy is going with us to Iraq," Beever said. "We're a team here and we'll be a team over there."

"By winning the post championship we ended our time [on Fort Bliss] on a good note," added Fallon.

Wounded Soldier golf tourney

Col. Heidi Brown, Fort Bliss chief of staff, gets ready to tee-off the first shot at the newly remodeled Sunset course's grand opening, which took place during the Association of the U.S. Army Omar Bradley Chapter's golf tournament Sunday at the Underwood Golf Complex. The grand opening, in conjunction with the golf tournament, were held as a fundraiser for wounded Soldiers. More than 40 teams participated in the event. Approximately \$3,000 was raised and will benefit the AUSA Bradley Wounded Warrior Fund.



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