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## WTB Soldier attends Army Trials



By Jeff Troth, MEDDAC PAO

Wounded, ill and injured Soldiers and Army veterans from around the world have converged on Fort Bliss, Texas, for the Army Trials. All have hopes of representing the Army at the DoD Warrior Games that take place in June at the U.S. Military Academy, West Point, New York.

Sgt. Matthew Meuche, assigned to the Fort Carson Warrior Transition Battalion, is one of the 125 Soldier athletes who made the trip to Texas in hopes that his performance at the trials March 6 to 10 will earn him a slot on the Team Army.

At the trials and the Warrior Games, the Soldier athletes compete in archery, cycling, track and field, shooting, sitting volleyball, swimming and wheelchair basketball. Participants include service members with upper-body, lower-body and spinal cord injuries, serious illnesses, traumatic brain injuries, visual impairment and post-traumatic stress disorder.

Meuche, who suffers from nerve damage, is competing at the Army Trials in bicycling, swimming and seated volleyball.

"I bicycled when I was younger, but got out of it years ago," Meuche said. "When I started riding again I was like 'wow I forgot how great this is'."

Meuche said that his time on the bike and in the pool has not only helped his body repair itself, but these activities are also helping his mind.

"When you are biking and swimming, you have to concentrate on what you are doing," he said. "It helps to clear your mind."

One thing that is clear in Meuche's mind is that he wants to represent the Army at the Warrior Games.

"Being on the team is a really big goal that I have set for myself and I have been working hard at it," he said.

The WTB also sent six veterans to Fort Bliss who hope to make the team. They are Nicholas Titman, Sean Timmins, Mathew Mueller, Cherry Maurice, April Darowski, and Sierra Zamora.

But for most of the athletes competing at the trials it is not just about winning their sporting event and making Team Army.

“It is about comradeship,” said Meuche. “I would like to make the team, but I am also looking forward to seeing the other Soldiers I met at the adaptive sports camp last summer.”

In August, Meuche attended the Warrior Care Camp at Joint Base Lewis-McCord, Washington, where he had the opportunity to try all the adaptive sports of the Warrior Games.

“Being at the camp and the trials is different than other sporting events,” Meuche said. “We all are competing, but everyone is in a similar situation, we are all injured. And everyone cheers on each other making it feel like a family.”



Sgt. Matthew Meuche competes in the Warrior Transition Battalion Commander Stakes last year. He is now at the Army Trials at Fort Bliss, Texas. (Courtesy photo)