



21st Theater Sustainment Command
16th Sustainment Brigade
18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion
Public Affairs Office
USAG Grafenwoehr, Germany
DSN 475-4197
Commercial from U.S.: 011-49-964-183-4197

18th CSSB ‘Warhammers’ shine during ESPN Veterans Day event

By Capt. Jennifer Dyrz
18th CSSB Public Affairs Officer

GRAFENWOEHR, Germany – The Soldiers of the 18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion, 16th Sustainment Brigade, had much to be proud of during ESPN’s Veterans Day event at the Grafenwoehr Training Area here. The “Warhammers” were represented by their Warrior Challenge team, SportsCenter Top 10 announcers and hundreds 18th CSSB Soldiers who came out to support and wave the Warhammer banner.

“The event was good for moral, especially for those veterans back home and our forward deployed Soldiers,” said Pfc. Demarcus Eagleton, a native of Beaumont, Texas, and a wheeled vehicle mechanic for Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 18th CSSB. “They could see how they are not forgotten and how much we want to support them.”

While the Warhammer Warrior Challenge team came in second place out of six teams, they gave the first place team from the 172nd Infantry Brigade a run for their money with only a half a point difference. The graded and timed events consisted of a grenade toss, weapons relay, tire flip, litter carry, tug-of-war and relay while pushing a loaded Humvee.

“I felt flattered to have this opportunity to compete as a Warhammer, and I was honored to have been able to do it in support of Veterans Day,” said Spc. Thomas McPherson, a wheeled

vehicle mechanic for the 23rd Ordnance Company and a native of Satsuma, Fla. “I was disappointed we lost, but ultimately it was close and well fought.”

The Warhammer Warrior Challenge team set up a mock Warrior Challenge course while they were practicing for the event.

“We spent over two weeks trying to train to the events,” said Staff Sgt. Eric Johnson, a native of Charles City, Iowa, and an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team leader with the 702nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company.

The Warhammer family came out to support their own. Sgt. Migual Santiago, a native of Bayamon, Puerto Rico, and an HHC shop foreman, brought his wife and child to the event. They braved more than six hours of cold, wind and rain as they cheered on the 18th CSSB team and, especially, Santiago’s Soldier, Eagleton.

“I was so proud of him. He is so motivated in the motor pool and he was just as motivated when he was competing with the Warhammer team, said Santiago. “This was such an honor from ESPN to see how they support their veterans. The American Veteran’s example is one of the reasons I chose to join the Army.”

“I was so frustrated at the outcome of the Warrior Challenge,” Santiago added. “We are a support battalion going up against an infantry brigade; it was a real challenge for us and we did so well. I want to see a rematch in the near future; the Warhammers would win it.”

The battalion was also represented by two Soldiers during the live SportsCenter Top 10 countdown.

“I was honored to be involved in the day’s activities and to be chosen to represent the 18th CSSB,” said Spc. Maria Saunders, a native of West Union, W. Va., and a driver for the 1st

Inland Cargo Transfer Company. “I loved incorporating our Warhammer into the Top 10 presentation. I thought it really highlighted our esprit de corps and what our battalion is about.”

“My grandparents called to tell me they were so excited and proud to see me on TV; they cried,” Saunders added.

The 18th CSSB Warrior Challenge team consisted of Staff Sgt. Eric Johnson of the 702nd EOD Co., Staff Sgt. Richard Kessel of the 23rd Ordnance Company, Spc. Thomas McPherson of the 23rd Ord. Co., Spc. Daniel Salas of the 574th Quartermaster Support Company, Spc. Michael Parker of the 5th Maintenance Company and Pfc. Demarcus Eagleton of HHC, 18th CSSB.

The SportsCenter Top 10 team included Sgt. Jacob Zetino of the 41st Transportation Company and Spc. Maria Saunders of the 1st ICTC.

The ESPN Veterans Day event was broadcast live across the U.S. Nov. 11 with an estimated audience of more than 15 million viewers.



Spc. Thomas McPherson, a native of Satsuma, Fla., and a wheeled vehicle mechanic for the 23rd Ordnance Company, throws a grenade during the ESPN Veteran's Day Warrior Challenge grenade toss event. The 18th CSSB "Warhammer" team took part in the ESPN Veterans Day event at the Grafenwoehr Training Area, competing against five other teams in various events. The 18th CSSB placed second out of six teams. (Photo by Spc. Robert Lynds, 18th CSSB Public Affairs)



Staff Sgt. Eric Johnson, a native of Charles City, Iowa, and an Explosive Ordnance Disposal team leader with the 702nd Explosive Ordnance Disposal Company, is interviewed by ESPN SportsCenter newscaster Hannah Storm before the tire flip event during the ESPN Veterans Day Warrior Challenge at the Grafenwoehr Training Area. The 18th CSSB “Warhammers” placed second out of six teams. (Photo by Spc. Robert Lynds, 18th CSSB Public Affairs)



18th Combat Sustainment Support Battalion “Warhammers” compete in the litter carry event during the ESPN Veterans Day Warrior Challenge at the Grafenwoehr Training Area. 18th CSSB Warhammers placed second out of six teams. (Photo by Spc. Robert Lynds, 18th CSSB Public Affairs)