

Soldiers take home more than 100 prizes, valuable training from All-Army Small Arms Championships

By Paula J. Randall

U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, Accessions Support Brigade

FORT BENNING, Ga. - Besides the more than 100 trophies, plaques, medals and certificates that were awarded to the Army's top combat shooters in the All-Army Small Arms Championships, each Soldier left with something even more valuable - advanced marksmanship training. All the competitors in the All-Army Championships received advanced marksmanship instruction and training materials to conduct Train-the-Trainer clinics on return to their home station.

"It's not just about the competition; it's about the training," USAMU Commander Lt. Col. Charles T. Connett told the competitors at the March 10 awards ceremony at Phillips Range. "You've come here to get better and that's what you've all done."

Nearly 200 Soldiers from the active Army, Reserve, National Guard and Air National Guard as well as Army ROTC cadets from across the country, spent eight grueling days of rifle and pistol competition on the ranges of Fort Benning during the matches. Competitors ranged in rank from private to sergeant major and lieutenant to lieutenant colonel.

The U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit hosted the 2007 Army Rifle and Pistol Championships in conjunction with the U.S. Army Infantry Center March 2 to 10 and the All-Army Long Range Competition March 11 to 13.

At the awards ceremony March 10, Col. Michael Linnington, Fort Benning's deputy commanding general, presented the top awards to recognize the Army's finest marksmen.

"It takes skill and will to be a great Soldier, and an important skill is marksmanship," Linnington said. "Marksmanship is the core of what we do as Soldiers and it's important that you're taking it back to your units to make your Soldiers better."

Overall Small Arms Championship

Staff Sgt. John A. Robertson III of the Missouri National Guard won the overall U.S. Army Small Arms Championship. Army Reservists of the Small Arms Readiness Group Staff Sgt. John Buol and Sgt. 1st Class Hubert Townsend took second and third place respectively.

Staff Sgt. Damon Rufener of the Missouri National Guard was the overall novice winner followed by Spc. Jean-Noel Howell and Spc. Eric Smith of the Small Arms Readiness Group.

Sgt. 1st Class Jack Collins of Company A, 2nd Battalion, 47th Infantry, Basic Combat Training Brigade, Fort Benning, was the overall drill sergeant winner. Staff Sgt. Adam Lehmann of Company D, 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry, Infantry Training Brigade, Fort Benning took second place and Sgt. 1st Class Jonathan Cobb, also of Company D, 1st Battalion, 19th Infantry was third.

The Small Arms Readiness Group Team of Fort Gillem, Ga., won the overall Army Team Championship. Team members were Master Sgt. Joseph Braswell, Sgt. 1st Class Leslie Lewis, Staff Sgts. Mark Ness and John Buol, Howell and Smith. The Missouri National Guard Team of Robertson, Staff Sgt. Chad Francis, Rufener, Lt. Col. Thomas Huber and Sgt. 1st Class Wesley Buehler, took second place. The New York National Guard Team finished third; shooters were Staff Sgt. Frank Petricone, Sgt. Steven Woodruff and Spc. Darin Burroughs of the Army National Guard, and Master Sgt. Bruce Rounds II and Tech. Sgt. Christopher Ashley, both of the Air National Guard.

Service Pistol Championship

Robertson won the Army Service Pistol Championship followed by Buol in second place and Sgt. 1st Class Gregory Neiderhiser of the Pennsylvania Air National Guard in third.

Rufener won the Novice Division, Howell was second and Francis was third. Lehmann was the top drill sergeant; Collins was second and Cobb was third.

The Missouri National Guard Team won the Service Pistol Team Championship; firing members were Robertson, Francis, Huber and Buehler. The Small Arms Readiness Group Team of Braswell, Lewis, Buol and Howell finished in second. The team from Fort Campbell, Ky., took third place; shooters were Capt. Joseph Roman, 1st Sgt. Peter Jones, Staff Sgt. Alvin Hatton and Sgt. 1st Class Lee Buggs.

Service Rifle Championship

Army Reservist Sgt. 1st Class Sean Hartswick of the Small Arms Readiness Group won the U.S. Army Service Rifle Individual Championship. Sgt. 1st Class Mark Benson of the Pennsylvania Army National Guard was second and Ness was third.

Smith was the top novice followed by Staff Sgt. Jeremiah Beck of the 75th Ranger Regiment, Fort Benning, in second place and Lehmann in third. Collins won the Drill Sergeant Division, Lehmann was second and Cobb was third.

The Small Arms Readiness Group Team took the Army Service Rifle Team Championship; team members were Braswell, Ness, Buol and Smith. In second place was the New York National Guard Team of Ashley, Woodruff,

Petricone and Rounds. Nebraska Army National Guard finished in third; shooters were Sgt. 1st Class Gordon Harrod and Staff Sgts. Adam Borer, Thomas Penner and Bradley Huston.

Long-Range Rifle Championship

Staff Sgt. Tom Voss of Fort Bragg, N.C., won the U.S. Army Long Range Rifle Individual Championship, which was an aggregate of the 600-, 800- and 1,000-yard matches. Army Reservist Master Sgt. Scott Anzivino of Fort Devens, Mass., took second place and Huston was third.

For a complete listing of results, visit the CMP web site at http://clubs.odcmp.com/cgi-bin/report_matchResult.cgi?matchID=2056.

(Formed in 1956 by President Dwight D. Eisenhower to raise the standards of marksmanship throughout the U.S. Army, the Army Marksmanship Unit is assigned to the Accessions Support Brigade of the U.S. Army Accessions Command. The Marksmanship Unit trains its Soldiers to win competitions and enhances combat readiness through train-the-trainer clinics, research and development. For more information on the U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, contact the Public Affairs Office at (706) 545-5436, paula.pagan@usaac.army.mil or <http://www.usarec.army.mil/hq/amu/>.)