



Dahlongega Soldier wins Fort Benning combat pistol championship

By Paula J. Randall Pagán
U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit, Accessions Support Brigade

FORT BENNING, Ga. – The Pro Bowl’s NFC Team wasn’t the only one who got a big win Sunday. A Soldier from Dahlongega, Ga., won the Fort Benning Combat Pistol Championship Feb. 12.

Sgt. 1st Class Eric Leid, a ROTC instructor at North Georgia College and State University in Dahlongega was the overall Fort Benning Service Pistol Champion and received the Commanding General’s Marksmanship Cup Trophy award; Leid’s name will be engraved on the trophy, which will be displayed at Infantry Hall. Fort Benning Chief of Staff Col. David H. Ling presented the trophy to Leid at the awards ceremony Sunday afternoon at Phillips Range.

Sgt. 1st Class Jared van Aalst of Company A, 3rd Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, took second place overall and Staff Sgt. Joel Habard, an Army Reservist drill sergeant with Company E, 1st Battalion, 329th Infantry, Infantry Training Brigade, was third. The post Combat Pistol Championship was an aggregate of the Commanding General’s Pistol Match and the Excellence in Competition Pistol Match.

Leid won the Novice Division in the Commanding General’s Pistol Match and the Excellence in Competition Match; van Aalst was the Open Division winner in both matches. In both matches, Habard finished second in the Novice Division, followed by Cadet Matthew Fitzmayer of North Georgia College and State University. Taking second place in the Open Division in both matches was Army Reservist 1st Lt. Joseph Humphrey of Company D, 1st Battalion, 329th Infantry, Infantry Training Brigade, and Army Reservist Sgt. 1st Class William Albrecht of the Medical Retention Center of Fort Benning, finished third.

The 1st Battalion, 329th Infantry, Infantry Training Brigade, Team of Habard, Humphrey, 1st Lt. Richard McCray and Sgt. 1st Class Lawrence Gregor won the Pistol Team Match. The North Georgia College Team of Fitzmayer and cadets Daniel Johnson, James Pickett and Daniel Jones took second place, and Leid’s Team, appropriately named the We Love Leid Team, finished third; shooters besides Leid were cadets Henry Markham, Daniel King and Elisabeth Flage.

The U.S. Army Marksmanship Unit conducted the Fort Benning Combat Pistol Championship Feb. 10 to 12 at Phillips and Parks ranges. Competing for the title of Fort Benning Combat Pistol Champion were 62 Soldiers and cadets. Army Marksmanship Unit pistol shooters provided M-9 pistol training for all competitors and all Soldiers received Certificates of Training.

Speaking at the awards ceremony, USAMU Commander Lt. Col. David J. Liwanag stressed the importance of marksmanship in today’s Army and asked all the Soldiers who competed if they were more proficient with the Army pistol after the weekend’s training and competition, to which they replied, “Yes.”