Press Release

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Runners represent Fort Drum, 10th Mountain Division at virtual Army Ten-Miler race

FORT DRUM, N.Y. - Spc. Colwyn Driver never ran 10 miles before today. But with a little training and a desire to try something new, he recorded the fastest time on the Fort Drum Army Ten-Miler Team.

Driver crossed the finish line outside Magrath Sports Complex with a time of 1:02:08 during the virtual Army Ten-Miler race Oct. 15.

“I’m glad my company allowed me to participate because I’ve always wanted to run this race,” said Driver, with C Company, 41st Brigade Engineer Battalion, 2nd Brigade Combat Team. “It’s the first time I’ve ever run this distance, so I was pretty proud of myself.”

Driver said that he ran in high school and then enlisted in the Army, where short runs and long ruck marches were the norm.

“I’ve done a 10K before, but I’ve never had the chance to run any farther than that,” he said. “Going into this race, I just relaxed the day before and carb loaded.”

Driver said that he aspires to improve his running and possibly try out for the All Army Sports program.

First Lt. Olivia Arnold, with 10th Special Troops Battalion, 10th Mountain Division Sustainment Brigade, placed first among female runners with a time of 1:18:17.

“I think I hit the time that I wanted, so I was pretty happy about that,” she said. “I’ve been running for a long time, but I never ran an Army Ten-Miler before.”

Although she does not consider herself competitive in nature, Arnold earned a spot on the team during one of the qualifier races this summer.

“I think I’m more competitive with myself than with other people,” she said. “If you start comparing yourself with others there is always going to be someone better or faster than you, and you might think less about what you have accomplished. So I just like to personally challenge myself and try to do things that are difficult, because I think that helps you grow.”

Arnold had spent two weeks off the road and in a field environment when she earned the Expert Field Medical Badge.

“That threw a wrench in my running schedule, but luckily I had a good base from our training plan,” she said. “All of the interval runs we had on the weekdays and the long runs on weekends built a good base that I could come off the EFMB and still be happy with my run today.”

The person who devised the training schedule and helped Arnold succeed in the race was 1st Sgt. Alexis Sprakties, with the 10th Mountain Division Band. She competed in the Army Ten-Miler several times before, but a ski accident and subsequent surgery kept her from participating in the run this year. Instead, she turned her attention to coaching.

“I’ve coached running for many years, but I hadn’t actually gotten the certification for it until now,” she said. “I was able to work on that while I was convalescent leave. Honestly, coaching has been more rewarding for me than running the race.”

Sprakties said that, as a senior noncommissioned officer, she serves as a coach, mentor and leader to Soldiers, so coaching the Army Ten-Miler team felt natural.

“These are all phenomenal Soldiers, and phenomenal athletes, so it was really an honor for me to work with them,” Sprakties said.

The training program she developed for the team only had them meeting twice weekly for runs, but they were given something to do every day.

“The challenge is that they are all from different units, with different work schedules and some were in the field for long periods of time,” Sprakties said. “So when we were able to meet as a team, I felt the two most important workouts were the interval speed workout and then the long run to get those crucial miles in.”

Chaplain (Maj.) Jonathan Ginder, 1st Brigade Combat Team, said that he has been training for several years for a chance to run on an Army Ten-Miler Team.

“It’s really cool that I finally got to do this with the best division in the Army,” he said. “It’s a huge, huge honor.”

Ginder said that he never started running until he joined the Army.

“The Army is where I figured out that I like to run,” he said. “Five years ago, I had my first running coach, and that boosted my pace.”

His wife, Kelly, brought a chair, whistle and mini-megaphone to the race and served as the entire cheering section for the team. The whistle and megaphone were in constant use, but the chair she had little use for as she shouted encouragement to each runner passing by.

“My wife is my biggest fan and the biggest fan for the Army,” Ginder said. “We like to be called Team Ginder, so I don’t do this on my own – we’re in this together.”

Maj. Gen. Milford H. Beagle Jr., 10th Mountain Division (LI) and Fort Drum commander, met the team at the starting line before the race and encouraged them to run strong.

“I appreciate all of you for coming out here and running on this team, and for putting your time and effort in to represent the post and division well,” he said. “Climb to Glory! Everyone wants to be at the top, but the fun part is the climb. So, go climb this morning!”

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