

Afghan wounded warriors compete for spot in Invictus Games

By **Rahim Faiez**
The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — Wounded warriors from Afghanistan’s National Security Forces recently competed for a spot in the Invictus Games to be held in Canada this September.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Resolute Support mission hosted a selection event for seven openings on the Afghan forces wounded warriors’ team who will compete against soldiers and veterans from 17 countries September 23 to 30 in Toronto. The Invictus Games are an international paralympic-style multi-sport event created by Britain’s Prince Harry. Afghan soldiers and veterans are taking part for the first time.

At the event’s opening, U.S. Gen. John W. Nicholson, NATO commander in Afghanistan, said the games in Toronto will be the largest Invictus Games ever. It will feature more than 550 competitors from 17 nations, with 13 of the 17 nations having sent soldiers to Afghanistan at some point.



“This isn’t just about the warriors who will be competing, it is about the support and the celebration of a warrior’s spirit,” he said. “It is a recognition of the sacrifices that you and the other competitors have made.”

About 40 athletes participated in Kabul,

but only seven athletes and several alternates will be chosen for the team that competes in Toronto in events including indoor rowing, seated volleyball, and power lifting.

“In Canada, alongside other wounded warriors from other countries who have

INVICTUS GAMES. Wounded warriors from Afghanistan’s National Security Forces arrive at the Resolute Support Headquarters to participate in the Invictus Games in Kabul, Afghanistan. Afghan soldiers and veterans are taking part for the first time. (AP Photos/Massoud Hossaini)

lost their limbs in Afghanistan fighting against al-Qaeda and terrorism to establish democracy and defend human rights, we will also fulfill the presence of Afghan wounded warriors,” said Ahmad Shah, 50, a former Afghan national security forces member who lost both hands in a roadside bomb during fighting a few years ago in eastern Kunar province. “We want to show that Afghan wounded warriors can also participate in such events.” Shah was completing in the indoor rowing event.

The Invictus Games include a dozen adaptive sports, including archery, cycling, golf, swimming, and wheelchair basketball.

The games are being funded by the Canadian government, the province of Ontario, and the City of Toronto, as well as corporate partners.

Japan launches rocket with satellite to build its own GPS

TOKYO (AP) — Japan is building its own GPS in hopes of reducing location errors for drivers, drone operators, and other users. A rocket launched from southern Japan is carrying a satellite that will form part of a Japanese GPS.

An initial satellite was launched in 2010, and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency and Mitsubishi Heavy Industries plan to launch two more satellites by next spring to complete the “Michibiki” system. *Michibiki* is the Japanese word for guidance.

Japan currently relies on an American GPS. Having its own system is expected to reduce location errors in Japan to a few inches from as much as 30 feet by some estimates.

Three satellites will be visible at all times from the Asia-Pacific region, and the Japanese system could be integrated with the American one, enabling highly precise positioning, the Japanese government says.

The more accurate information could be used for both driving and drone deliveries. Japanese media report it also may enhance the country’s defense capabilities.

Japan is considering adding three more satellites to the system in the future, as mountains and tall buildings will still affect the positioning under the four-satellite system.

Madison High School princess cherishes Tongan heritage, traditions

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“It took persistence and hard work to get here,” she said. “At my first volleyball practice, I arrived in my all-black Chuck Taylors because I literally did not know anything about volleyball.”

Being part of the 2017 Rose Festival Court is significant for Mele, who feels it is an opportunity to represent the Polynesian community in one of Portland’s most vibrant and enduring institutions. She’s looking forward to enhancing her public speaking skills and is enjoying travelling to different places as part of the court.

“This role means so much to me because it shows strong women who are willing to take a stand and represent an entire community,” Mele said. “It is not often that a Polynesian woman is recognized for her accomplishments and rewarded by a program like the Rose Festival.”

Princesses have a packed schedule of appearances leading up to Portland’s signature festival this month. When asked about the one Rose Festival Court experience she was most looking forward to, Mele had an instant answer: “Going to Pendleton and riding a horse!”

A Rose Festival princess represents her school and acts as the “face of the Rose Festival” at many events in the community, including parades, volunteer activities, luncheons with community and business leaders, and more. The Portland Rose Festival Foundation awards each court member a \$3,500 scholarship, courtesy of The Randall Group.

To qualify for the Rose Festival Court, a candidate must be a full-time junior or senior at a 4A, 5A, or 6A high school in Multnomah, Washington, or Clackamas county and have a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.0. Potential princesses are evaluated on citizenship, scholastic achievement, school activities, civic involvement, volunteer projects, communication skills, and overall impression.

The Portland Rose Festival Queen is chosen from all of the court members at Portland’s Veterans Memorial Coliseum on Saturday, June 10 from 8:30am to 9:30am. To learn more, call (503) 227-2681 or visit <www.rosefestival.org>.

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