



Sgt. Nathan Schrimsher fences during modern pentathlon competition at the 2015 Pan American Games in Toronto, Canada, in this July 2015 photo. Schrimsher is ranked ninth overall heading into the final day of competition at the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. (Tim Hipps / Army News Service)

NCO Ranked in Top 10 Heading into Final Day of Modern Pentathlon

By Pablo Villa, NCO Journal

No American has ever won the modern pentathlon since its inception at the Olympic Games in 1912. An NCO is in a decent position to be the first.

Sgt. Nathan Schrimsher heads into the final day of the competition Saturday in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in ninth place overall. Schrimsher, a motor transport operator and member of the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program at Fort Carson, Colorado, is America's lone competitor in the modern pentathlon. The 24-year-old is being coached at the Olympics by fellow WCAP member and 2012 Olympian, Staff Sgt. Dennis Bowsher.

The modern pentathlon is rooted in military endeavors, Schrimsher told the Albuquerque Tribune last

month. The competition — which consists of fencing, swimming, jumping, running and shooting — is comprised of events that a 19th century cavalry Soldier would have to be proficient in.

“He had to have the ability to ride a horse he had never met before, to be able to cross land or water by running or swimming, and then be able to defend himself with a sword and gun to deliver the message across enemy lines to the commander,” Schrimsher said.

Schrimsher showed his savvy with the épée sword during the first day of competition Thursday. He scored 20 wins, good for 220 points and a No. 9 ranking. The competition concludes Saturday with the swimming, jumping and run-shoot events.

No matter the outcome, Schrimsher said he is grateful to represent his country both on sports' biggest stage and as a Soldier.

"The Army has supported me for three years," he said. "Without that support it would be extremely hard on me. But it's an honor to be able to represent not only my country through athletic perspective, but to represent the Army is awesome."

NCO leads 2 boxers into gold-medal bouts

Team USA boxing will have two shots at a gold medal.

Claressa Shields punched her ticket to the women's middleweight gold-medal match after beating Kazakhstan's Dariga Shakimova by unanimous decision Friday in their semifinal match. Shields joins Shakur Stevenson (men's bantamweight) as the two U.S. boxers remaining in the hunt for the country's first gold medal since Andre Ward claimed the hardware in the light heavyweight division of the 2004 Olympic Games in Athens, Greece.

When the pair returns to the ring for action Friday and Sunday, they will have an NCO in their corner.

Sgt. 1st Class Joe Guzman is part of the coaching staff led by Billy Walsh. For Guzman, who is an assistant boxing coach for the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program at Fort Carson, Colorado, the Olympics are familiar territory. He was part of the staff for Team USA

Boxing at the 2012 London Olympics as a trainer. This time around, he is a full-fledged assistant, part of a staff that includes Augie Sanchez in addition to Walsh.

Shields will fight Nouchka Fontijn of the Netherlands on Sunday. Stevenson faces Cuba's Robeisy Ramirez Carrazana on Saturday.

Nunn competes in 50k race walk

Staff Sgt. John Nunn finished 42nd out of 80 competitors in the 50-kilometer race walking competition Friday.

Despite missing out on a medal, finishing the race was momentous enough for the dental hygiene specialist. Nunn, a WCAP member, was in danger of missing out on his third Olympic berth earlier this year before mustering the fortitude that has made him a standout Soldier.

Nunn was stricken by the flu during the 2016 U.S. Olympic Team Trials, which took place February in Santee, California. In order to qualify, Nunn was told he would have to finish the race in order to punch his ticket to Rio despite having previously attained the "A" standard time required for the team at a race two months earlier.

So with a body temperature topping 100 degrees, chills, aches and swollen eyes, Nunn took to the track and ended up winning with a personal best time.

Nunn finished the race Friday with a time of 4:16:12. ■



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