



Expeditionary Contracting Command



ECC NCO of the Year Competition

By Frederick Ryan Poole
Army Contracting Command

Staff Sgt. April Johnson, contingency contracting officer with the 410th Contract Support Brigade at Fort Sam Houston, Texas, proved to be the best of the best at the end of the two-day competition where she captured the honor of being selected as the Expeditionary Contracting Command's first NCO of the Year. The competition took place at Camp Bullis, Texas March 15th to March 16th.

"The most challenging drill was the land navigation course. The terrain had very few flat surfaces and the checkpoints were difficult to find," said Johnson. "But through preparation and hard work I was able to successfully complete the course."

"These NCOs competing represent their units and are the backbone of the Army," said Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray, ECC Command Sergeant Major. "The competition has enabled these NCOs to demonstrate what they know, what every NCO should be, and what they should do."

The two-day competition included warrior tasks and battle drill training that physically and mentally challenged the participants. Prior to the event, the NCOs weighed in and attended a briefing led by Sgt 1st Class Cedric Scott, noncom-

The first Expeditionary Contracting Command NCO of the Year, Staff Sgt. April Johnson, a contingency contracting officer with the 410th Contracting Support Brigade, celebrates with Expeditionary Contracting Command's Command Sgt. Maj. John L. Murray. (Photos by Frederick Ryan Poole)



missioned officer in charge of the competition.

The following morning, the competitors went through an Army Physical Fitness Test followed by a weapons qualifications drill. Afterwards, Soldiers were given four hours to maneuver through wooded areas and locate five checkpoints. As they navigated through the course the Soldiers had to evaluate a casualty and request medical evacuation, perform a functions check on an M-16 rifle,

reacted to a nuclear hazard, and assess unexploded ordnance hazards.

Day two was not as physically challenging but was mentally strenuous. Competitors were required to submit a written essay then appear before a board of senior NCOs.

The members of the ECC NCO of the Year Board included: Murray, president of the board; Sgt. Maj. Douglas Adams, 410th CSB; Fort Sam



Staff Sgt Terry Weth, contingency contracting officer with the 409th contracting support brigade performs a functions check on an M-16 rifle during the four hour land navigation drill.



Prior to the start of the competition, the NCOS completed an Army physical fitness test.

Houston, Texas; Sgt. Maj. Cortorcha Rucker, 412th CSB, Fort Hood, Texas; Master Sgt. Dennis Richardson, 408th CSB; Kuwait; Master Sgt. Marley Cooper 413th CSB; Fort Shafter, Hawaii; Master Sgt. Gerald Wright, 903rd Contingency Contracting Battalion, Kaiserslautern, Germany; Master Sgt. Samuel Cox, 411th CSB; Yongsan, Korea.

the event will get better every year," said Johnson, who received an Army commendation letter signed by the ECC commanding general, Brig. Gen. Joe Bass, a coin of excellence from Murray, and a trophy sponsored by USAA.

The panel asked various questions covering everything from current events to the Military Code of Conduct to security and intelligence. In addition, the NCOs were quizzed about leadership and counseling, subjects they must know in order to take care of their Soldiers.

"Soldiers, under the care of NCOs, look up to them for guidance and leadership. They expect and deserve the best NCOs as Soldiers are America's most precious resource," said Murray.

Johnson will represent ECC at the Army Materiel Command NCO of the Year competition this summer.

"It's great that we NCO's were able to come together to compete in this event and from the lessons learned in the first competition I'm sure



Competitors aim and concentrate on their targets during the weapons qualifications drill.