



# MEDIA RELEASE

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## Three Tennessee Guardsmen take on Nebraska Guard Marathon

**NASHVILLE** – The annual Lincoln/National Guard Marathon was held on May 3 in Lincoln, Neb., with 163 Soldiers and Airmen from across the U.S. competing, including three Tennessee Guardsmen. The marathon was made up of 43 teams of Army and Air National Guard members from 42 states and one territory.

Master Sgt. Danny Moore, from the Tennessee Air National Guard's 228<sup>th</sup> Combat Communications Squadron in Knoxville, led the Tennessee trio, placing 67<sup>th</sup> overall. "It was an honor and a privilege to get the opportunity to represent Tennessee," Moore said. "I didn't want to let down my unit, the Air Guard or my state."

"It is nice to be known as one of the chosen few from Tennessee," said Maj. Michael Banks, an Army National Guard Soldier assigned to Joint Force Headquarters in Nashville, who placed 107<sup>th</sup> overall.

To participate, runners must be members of either the Army or Air National Guard, but not just anyone in the Guard could participate in the marathon. To be qualified to compete, you must have run in a long-distance marathon within the last year and finished in less than four hours. This year, one person from each state who had not competed recently was allowed to participate. Moore's previous marathon was over a year ago.

"Running in a marathon takes a little athletic ability, but it really takes a *lot* of time, training and discipline ... plus some luck," Banks said. He explained that he usually starts training for long distance races about four months in advance.

Moore said he officially started his training 18 weeks prior to the race and emphasized that good eating habits play an important part.

The third member to participate from Tennessee was Staff Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski, Strength Maintenance NCO from Smyrna, who placed 69<sup>th</sup> overall. Currently out of state completing Advanced Individual Training, "Sgt. Wojo" also participated in the Music City Marathon last month.

This marathon was definitely not new for the Tennessee Guardsmen. Previous marathons helped them to prepare for what they endured. Moore ran in the U.S. Air Force Marathon in September 2006 at Wright Patterson Air Force Base in Dayton, Ohio.

(more)

## **“Marathon 2-2-2**

“The 2006 marathon was harder because it was my first,” Moore said. “It had more hills and it was much hotter.”

Banks has been in eight marathons, including one while deployed to Kuwait. “The better shape you’re in, the better you’ll perform during a deployment,” he said.

These three men pushed themselves hard, fighting both muscle and mental fatigue.

“Those last few miles I always just concentrate on maintaining my pace and finishing,” said Moore, who finished 19 minutes faster than his last race. “It’s an awesome feeling when you cross that finish line.”

Banks agreed. “Finishing is winning for me,” he explained. “You question yourself as you’re running, but by mile 20 or 21 you know that you’ve worked so hard to get there, you just can’t let yourself quit. Then when you finish, you get this euphoric feeling unlike anything you’ve ever experienced.”

“The 26.2 miles of pounding took its toll,” Moore said. “My legs and feet were aching really bad. I’ve never experienced any physical challenge on a deployment as physically demanding as running 20-plus miles. But completing a marathon gives me an attitude that I can accomplish anything.”

### **CUTLINES:**

**From left: Master Sgt. Danny Moore, Staff Sgt. Mark Wojciechowski, Maj. Michael Banks who participated in the Lincoln/National Guard Marathon in Lincoln, Neb., May 3. The three Tennessee Guardsmen were among 163 who participated in the marathon from across the United States. (Photo courtesy of the Nebraska Joint Force Headquarters Public Affairs.)**

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