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SPORTS & RECREATION

JULY 30, 2009



Postpartum Soldiers stay fit, Army Strong

Photos by Spc. Amanda McBride

Post-Partum Soldiers stretch prior to beginning PT at Newman Fitness Center, July 22. The post-partum program is a daily exercise session that is designed to help post partum Soldiers return to a level of fitness to pass the Army's height and weight standards.

Spc. Amanda McBride
4th IBCT Public Affairs

Throughout every Soldier's career, he or she has to stay physically fit to complete the Army's mission and stay Army Strong.

And that's the same for every 3rd Infantry Division female Soldier who has delivered her baby, returned to duty and enrolled in post partum physical training.

The post-partum program is a daily exercise session that is designed to help post partum Soldiers return to a level of fitness in order to pass the Army's height and weight standards.

"Post-partum PT is for when you have females come off convalescent leave," said Staff Sergeant Kevin Jefferson, post-partum PT facilitator. "Our job is to get them slowly but gradually in shape."

The Division-mandated program requires post-partum Soldiers to enroll

in and complete the program.

On Fort Stewart, approximately 20 Soldiers are currently enrolled within the program. But numbers change quite frequently, with Soldiers giving birth and others returning to their units upon completing the program.

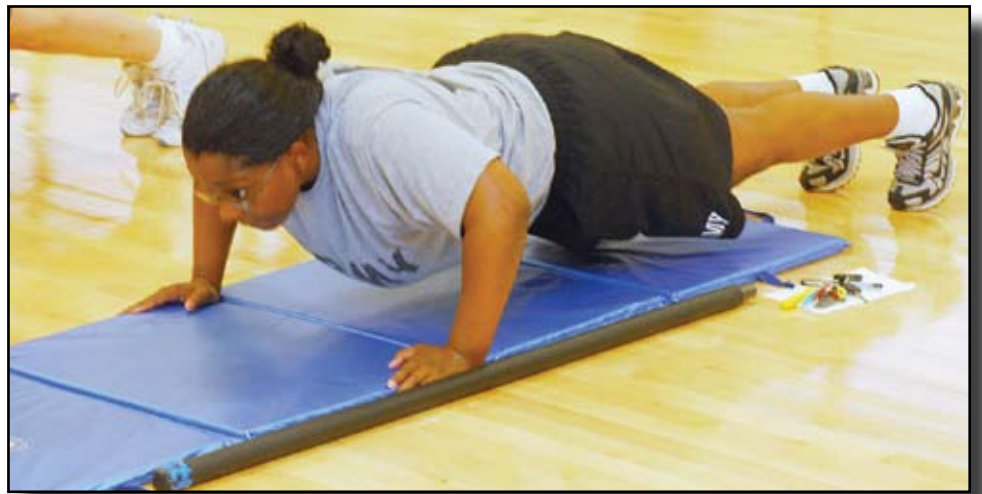
While in the program, Soldiers conduct a slightly alternate PT session that enables them to gradually return to pre-pregnancy standards.

"It's altered slightly because when they come off of convalescent leave, we start them off gradually," Staff Sgt. Jefferson said. "We actually have them broken up into groups."

"Soldiers who have been in the post-partum PT program for a while have a little more intense workout than Soldiers coming into program for the first time."

Soldiers stay enrolled within the program for six months, then take a record PT test and return to their unit.

"When a Soldier leaves the program,



Sergeant Latasha Spain, 703rd BSB, 4th IBCT, does push-ups during post-partum PT at Newman Fitness Center, July 22.

I hope she is able to pass her height and weight standards and also pass the Army Physical Fitness Test," said Staff Sgt. Jefferson.

Spc. NiTassah King, assigned to 4-3 Brigade Special Troops Battalion, 4th

Infantry Brigade Combat Team, who has been in the program for almost a week, said this program is not just about losing weight. She said the program is helping her get to where she was before she was pregnant.

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Football season approaching: Area teams will report to practice beginning August 1

Patty Leon
Coastal Courier

While Aug. 6 signals the start of the new school year, diehard football fans probably have Aug. 1 marked on their calendars. The day marks the official start of football practice as allowed in the bylaws of the Georgia High School Association. It marks the start of two-a-day practices, football helmets, shoulder pads, tackling drills, offensive drills and defensive strategies.

It marks the return of starting players eager to make the first touchdown or first tackle. It marks the opportunity for new players to display their talent and grab the attention of the coaches.

It's the return of the spread offense or the wing-T, the return of the zone or man coverage. It's the return of the sport that epitomizes the start of a school year.

Here is a quick look at the Liberty County Panthers and Bradwell Tigers upcoming season:

LCHS Panthers

In 2007, the LCHS Panthers finished 7-3 overall and 3-2 in region 3-AAA. Last year, the team was hit with the 2008-10 region realignment, thrusting them against middle Georgia squads like Thomson, Baldwin, Washington County and West Laurens. In 2008 they finished 3-7 overall and 2-4 in the region.

The bright spot for the Panther is the return of their starting quarterback Julian Stokes.

Stokes proved he was comfortable in the spread offense the team put together last season, giving him the opportunity to start from the shotgun formation and giving him the option to run when needed. Stokes is quick to scramble and, once in motion, is hard to catch.

The return of Shadrach Thornton will close the gap left by start running back Roderick Jones who is now at Shorter College. Thornton started to see some play time as a freshmen last season in the last three games. In addition to being quick, Thornton is versatile with the ability of slipping into a receiver position or, on defense, a corner slot. His leaping ability accounted for a few interceptions last year. Showing a lot of improvement look for Michael Rodriguez to fill in the other running back slot left by Demetrius Stinson.

The defense returns a virtual who's who of starting players. Jovan Jones, Artavious Frost, Shakur Cook, Tucory Rhodes, Solomon Ball, Byron Johnson, Trammel Morris, Marquis Jefferson and Jarqual Roberts all bring two seasons of game experience back on the defensive side of the ball.

Look for Jovan Bennett, Aaron Bennett and Demetrick Mothershed to get more time on the field this season after a successful spring program showing.

Look for veteran kicker Eddie Chipple to lead the special teams.

Head coach Kirk Warner will lead the offense while coach Jeff Daffron will conduct the defense. He said there will be less blitzing and more heads up defense.

Below-the-knee amputee runs for 2012 Paralympics

Tim Higgs
FMWRC Public Affairs

CHULA VISTA, Calif. – Sgt. Jerrod Fields capped his track and field season by winning a gold medal at the 2009 Endeavor Games and setting his sights on the 2012 Paralympics.

Fields, a below-the-knee amputee sprinter in the U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program, won the 100 meters with a time of 12.15 seconds, June 13 in Edmond, Okla., site of the Endeavor Games for athletes with physical disabilities.

Earlier this spring, he finished second against an able-bodied field of collegiate sprinters with a 12.0 clocking in the 100 meters at the Occidental Invitational in Los Angeles.

Fields' coach, Al Joyner, believes his sprinter will flirt with world records on the road to London for the 2012 Paralympics.

"I think he's a potential world record-holder," Joyner said in early February. "I would put my money on him in both the 100 and 200."

There's little reason to doubt Joyner, an Olympic gold medalist

and Jim Thorpe Award winner who helped his late wife, Florence Griffith-Joyner, and sister, Jackie Joyner-Kersey, sprint and jump for Olympic gold during their illustrious careers.

Joyner, Team USA's sprint and jump high performance coach, began working with Fields last November at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista.

"In terms of track and field, he's just a baby," Joyner said. "He's just now starting to learn techniques."

"He may be that one athlete that ends up changing the barrier as far as how people look at things."

Among Joyner's current crop of athletes, Fields received a special nod of approval.

"If I had to pick a most-improved athlete, he would get the award," Joyner said. "He really has improved in leaps and bounds with his mechanics."

"If somebody came out and watched him run from afar, they could not see that he had a prosthetic leg."

"But if you saw him the year before, he was falling all over the place. It's really like night and day."

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AMPUTEE

Fields is chasing the world marks of 11.3 seconds for 100 meters and 22.48 for the 200.

"I'm almost there," he said. "This is my second season and my first real year of

training. Everybody else that I'm competing against either was born without a femur or foot or something. I'm just coming on brand new. I'll catch them by London Games. I'll be ready."

Fields, 27, who played football, basketball and baseball for Carver High School in Chicago, encountered an improvised explosive device in Baghdad, Iraq, in March of 2005.

"I was out on a routine reconnaissance with my platoon and we got a tip that there were explosives inside of a dog," he said. "At that time, they were cutting dogs and cattle open and placing explosives in them. We got the call for the mission to go out and to handle the situation. We saw the dog and kept our distance to see what the situation was. We didn't want to get too close to it, but it turned out that was a decoy.

"We got the call to return home. I was the trail vehicle in the convoy. As we turned around, I became the lead vehicle, and that's when an IED went off underneath it. The first IED took the floor plate of my Bradley out. The second one got me in the leg. It took from the calf muscle all the way down to the heel of

my foot – the Achilles tendon and muscles. I was able to continue the mission. I didn't feel it really at first. I just felt a lot of fire.

"To be honest, when I first looked down to see what happened, I laughed, because I thought I had dropped a grenade. I was thinking to myself: 'Man, these guys are never going to believe what I've done.' I finally heard over the net that it was an IED and that I had been hit. When I looked at my leg, I saw that it was mangled."

Fields returned to the States and reported to Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington on March 1. After six rounds of surgery and six days of miring his most difficult decision, Fields requested amputation below his left knee.

"It would have taken 22 surgeries, and they were going to fuse my ankle," he said. "I would not have been able to play basketball anymore."

Fields resumed walking on April 2. By mid-June, he was playing basketball in a Chicago summer league.

"I never got down or angry about this injury," said Fields, who since has graced the cover of ESPN The Magazine for his "streetball" prowess. "I just felt that it was a new step or direction that I had to go in. I try to go back (to Walter Reed) as often as I can to mentor some of the others."

Fields said he never considered leaving the military, as long as it would have him.

"I saw more support by staying in the Army," said Fields, who suffered the injury at age 22. "That's when President Bush signed a bill for us to stay on active duty pending a PT test to see that we were fit for duty and could return. That was my intention. Then this program came

along."

Fields received a call from John Register, a former member of WCAP and a Paralympian in both swimming and track and field who now serves as director of community and military programs for U.S. Paralympics.

"He told me the Army had something for me if I wanted to continue active duty and also become an athlete," Fields recalled. "He faxed me all the paperwork. I got in contact with WCAP, they looked into it, and we went from there. Now, I think I can retire from active duty and come back as a coach to work with some younger Soldier-athletes coming up.

"I was a career Soldier the day I signed up."

Fields suggests that wounded warriors get active as soon as physically possible.

"I would say to get out here and face those fears, if any, and have fun," he said. "This beats sitting in a house and being depressed, or being off your leg or your arm, or thinking how people might view you because of your disability. 'Just get out and have fun.'"

Fields is still learning to run on the prosthetic.

"I am more focused, and I'm finally able to put my workouts together – transferring the benefits from the weight room to the track," he said. "The prosthetic is starting to be a part of me. I'm still learning how to get full usage of it, and it's showing on the track."

Fields recently began dabbling with the long jump.

"I'm going to let the event find him," Joyner said. "Getting ready for the Olympics, it's mental, so I'm going to attack his body to let him know that he can do anything he wants as long as he puts his mind to it."



Tim Hipps, FMWRC Public Affairs

U.S. Army World Class Athlete Program Paralympic sprinter hopeful Sgt. Jerrod Fields works out at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista, Calif. The below-the-knee amputee won a gold medal in the 100 meters with a time of 12.15 seconds at the Endeavor Games in Edmond, Okla., on June 13.

STRONG

"I want to be back in physical shape like I was before I was pregnant," Spc. King said. "Before I was pregnant, I was a PT stud, so I want to be able to run as fast as I used to, max out my pushups and sit-ups."

Prior to entering post-partum PT, Spc. King said she never realized how hard it was going to be and that it wasn't going to start so soon.

"When I was pregnant, I used to look at post-

partums and used to think they weren't doing much work, but since I have been in the program, we've worked out to the max," Spc. King said. "Before I started post-partum, I did try to do some work outs on my own. I tried running, and I realized how slow I was. I was like, 'oh, man. I'm not going to be able to make it.'"

With hard work and dedication while in the program, Spc. King said she believes she and every

other Soldier in post-partum PT will be mission ready.

"Now that I've joined the program, I see that I am able to build up to the standard that I need to be within the Army and it is going to get me mission ready for when I do deploy again," Spc. King said. "This program has given me a lot of confidence so that way when its time to deploy, I won't be too nervous about my physical fitness."

Hurricanes kill Assassins, 11-0

Squad heading to Myrtle Beach for Saturday game

Patty Leon
Coastal Courier

Even after a 4th of July break and a string of road games, the strength of the Hinesville Hurricanes hasn't diminished to tropical storm status. The 'Canes maintained their intensity and blew away the Low Country Assassins, 11-0, Saturday night at Long Bell Stadium.

Both teams battled through the first quarter when defense set the tone, and the squads remained scoreless. The 'Canes first touchdown came in the second quarter when Frank Troup connected on a 35-yard pass to Kentarius Carlisle. Cedric Lovejoy made the 2-point conversion to put the 'Canes up 8-0.

Just before the close of the first half, the Assassins made an offensive drive that was cut short by a Marcus Simpson interception. That set up an Ed Smith field goal to close the half with the 'Canes up 11-0.

Simpson came back in the third quarter with another interception, but the play was called back on an interference call. On the next 'Cane offensive drive, Tracey Lewis broke free on a 30-yard-run but was called back for holding. The Assassins took over on downs but were also plagued by a series of false starts and penalties, negating their 40-yard gain.

In the fourth quarter, the Assassins' quarterback began to scramble and find the open man

as the 'Canes defense shifted its coverage. However, fatigue and the game clock ran its course on the Assassins who let the clock run with less than 30 seconds and called the game.

The Hurricanes improved to 5-1. They'll travel to Myrtle Beach Saturday to play the South Carolina Predators.

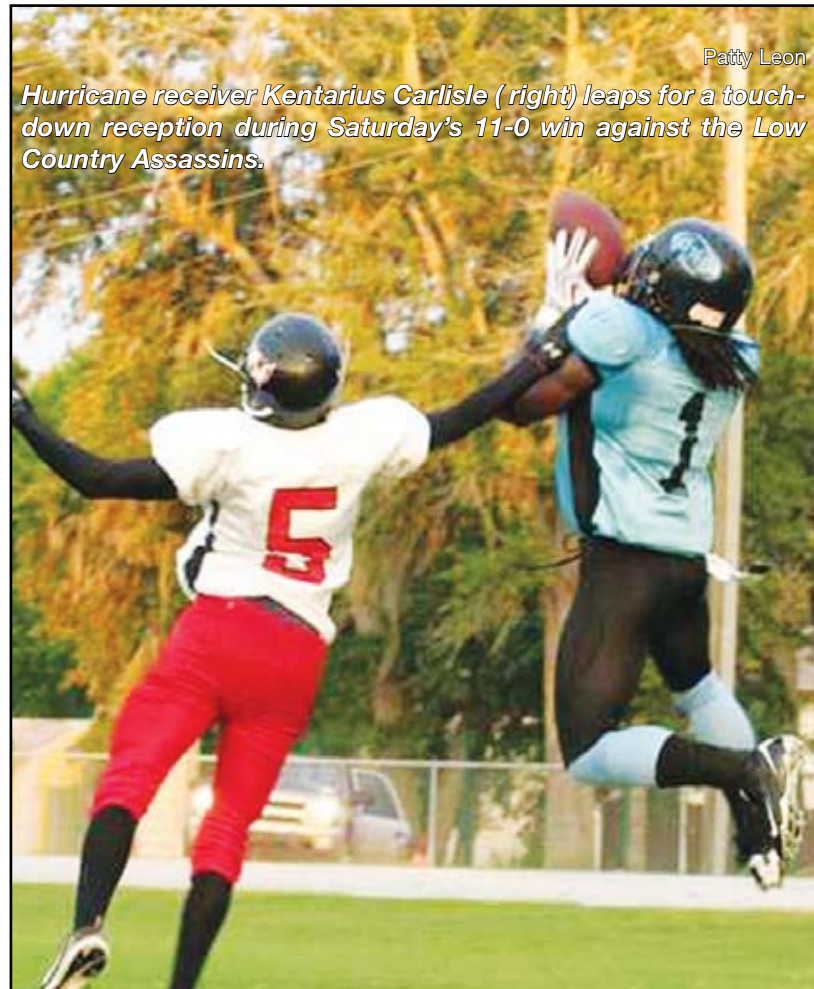
Offensive coordinator Bobby Hawes will look to cement the blocking up front, which was plagued by gaps in coverage, essentially shutting down the 'Canes running backs. The 'Canes defense, made strong by the new 5-2 program put in place by defensive coordinator Jade Richards, will have to keep it together without their new coach, who said he is stepping aside.

"I wish the guys the best, and I really appreciate all their hard work," Richards said. "I hope they stay focused and make it all the way to the championships."

He said he was proud of the players' accomplishments this season.

Richards' defense has helped the 'Canes hold their opponents to a mere 45 points this season, improving their record to 5-1, reversing their 2-5 regular season record from last year. The offense, under Coach Bobby Hawes, has scored 205 points and the squad remains in first place in the Southeast division of the Southeastern American league.

Saturday's game at Myrtle Beach is at 7 p.m.



Hurricane receiver Kentarius Carlisle (right) leaps for a touchdown reception during Saturday's 11-0 win against the Low Country Assassins.

FOOTBALL

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The Panthers will start with a home scrimmage against Wayne County, Aug. 21. The regular season starts at 7:30 p.m., Aug. 28, at home against McIntosh Academy. They will follow with three more non-region games before hosting their region opener, Sept. 25 against Washington County. Last season the Washington County Golden Hawks clawed the Panther 42-0.

Like last season, the Panthers don't have a bye week until the end of the season, Nov. 6.

The Bradwell Tigers

The Tigers finished last season 8-4 overall and 6-1 in region 3-AAAAA. Last season was the first time in 11 years the Tigers made it past the first round of the

playoffs before losing to Lowndes County.

The Tigers welcome back starting quarterback Wilson Brown to the lineup. Brown took his first snap as a Tiger QB in 2006 as a freshman. He missed the 2007 season due to a knee injury. In 2008 the junior QB threw for 166 yards. More impressively, he rushed for 433 yards and six touchdowns, proving his knee was not a factor.

Head Coach Jim Walsh Jr. defines football in one word, execution. With Brown returning as a senior this season, the team is being led by a QB who knows the plays and how to execute the Tigers Wing-T offense. This year Brown will be backed up by Nick Smith, who has led the Junior Varsity Tiger squad the last season.

Rounding out the offensive is the return of standout running back Sheldon Barnes. As a junior, Barnes rushed for 1,649 yards, getting 19 touchdowns. Barnes has a passion for the sport and is normally seen in the off season toting a football under his arm. When he turns on the after burners there is no stopping him. Defensively, Barnes made three solo tackles last season and is likely to be the one smiling from ear to ear after the hit.

Veteran kicker David Miller returns to the lineup. Miller has made the kicks since his freshman year and is known for making them from 35-yards out.

This year Coach Adam Bryie, who was the offensive line coach in his first year last season, takes over as the offensive coordinator. Coach Jeff Miller continues

to lead the defense in their 3-5 scheme.

Miller said his defensive secondary is strong with the return of Darveon Herron, David Swinford, Delrish Moore and Corey Gilliard. Herron led the squad in solo tackles last season with 49. Swinford was second with 33 and Moore was third with 23.

The challenge for the offense will be the big guys up front. Ulrich John is the returning lineman. The rest of the line will need to learn the blocks to give Brown his opportunity to run or throw.

The Tigers first three games are non-region opponents in Glynn Academy, Wayne County and Houston County. The Tiger have a bye week before opening region action on Sept. 25 at Groves High School. All the Tigers' games are Fridays at 7:30 p.m.