

Leading Seaman Hayley John wins Canada's first ever gold medal at the 3rd Military World Games

CATANIA, Italy - Leading Seaman Hayley John captured one gold, two individual and two team bronze medals at the 3rd Military World Games (MWG) in Catania, Sicily. Previously, Canada's best performance was a bronze medal in tae kwon do at the 2nd MWG in Zagreb.

LS John, a clearance diver from CFB Esquimalt, took home Canada's first ever gold medal in the 50-m manikin carry, a lifesaving event. Earlier in the competition, she captured a bronze medal in the 100-m manikin carry with fins, with a time of 1:04:23, a personal best. "It's still a little bit surreal and a little overwhelming," she said after her race. "I gave it 110 per cent ... it feels awesome."

The Canadian Forces (CF) Female Athlete of the Year for 2002 also medaled in the 100-m manikin tow with fins, finishing third with a time of 1:06:53. A talented swimmer, she and her teammates also won a bronze medal in the 4x100 m medley relay and the 4x100 m freestyle relay.

Steve Box, one of the lifesaving coaches, said he was very impressed with the team's overall performance. Finishing third, it was Canada's best ever result. "The athletes had nearly 100 per cent best times," he explains. "That's very unusual."

While lifesaving may not be well known in North America, Box says it's as popular as hockey in countries like Australia. "In North America," he says, "it's a new and growing sport."

The Canadian 3rd MWG team, sponsored in part by Logistik Unicorp Inc., is comprised of approximately 125 CF members and support staff. Under the direction of the contingent organizing committee, the Canadian Forces Personnel Support Agency (CFPSA), the athletes are competing in basketball, marathon, the 10-km run, sailing, swimming, lifesaving, and volleyball.

Organized by the Conseil International du Sport Militaire (CISM), thousands of military athletes from 87 countries are competing in 11 events. Second in size only to the Olympics, the MWG are also held every four years.



LS Hayley John, a clearance diver from CFB Esquimalt, wins Canada's first ever gold medal in the 50-m manikin carry at the 3rd Military World Games (MWG) in Catania, Italy. Photo by Cpl Cindy Gobin

The CF has participated in international sports as a member of CISM since 1985. Annually, CISM holds more than 20 competitions in various host countries. Canada currently participates in basketball, golf, parachuting, running, sailing, shooting, soccer, swimming, tae kwon do, triathlon, and volleyball. For more information on the 3rd MWG, including photos and video clips, visit <http://www.cfpsa.com>

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