



Newsletter

February 2025



Fort Eisenhower players and coach group for team photo after January win at the 2025 MLK Classic.

Fort Eisenhower wins MLK Classic

Fort Eisenhower topped 12 teams at the MBA MLK Classic, a four-day tournament held Jan. 17-20 in Columbus, Georgia. Fort Moore Women's Military Basketball Team won the women's division.

2025 Tournament 'One of the Best'



Fort Moore plays Fort Eisenhower at the 2025 MLK Classic.

the unknowns stake their claims at the best in military basketball."

Spencer High School hosted the tournament, expressing gratitude for the MBA and its mission. "The organization and structure of your program is bar none. Thank you for dedicating your resources, time

"This was one of the best tournaments we have put on," said Mike Meyers, founder and commissioner of the MBA. "To me, it's the new talent that's rising to the occasion. I love to see the underdogs and the

MBA launches mental health newsletter

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Women's games grow: 8 teams vie for victory



Nellis AFB players smile on the court.

One of the hottest sports of 2025 is getting hotter. The Women's Military Basketball Association (WMBA) is growing, as 8 teams vie for victory to combat suicide.

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Double-header championships May 25

Finalists will compete in a nationally televised broadcast to raise awareness on suicide prevention. The men's and women's championship games will air live from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania May 25 on CBS Sports Network.

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and energy to the critical work of taking care of soldiers and their families,” said Rosa Patterson, Spencer High principal.



Mike Meyers interviews VA official.

More than a dozen organizations participated in the event, including the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA).

“That is a resource that our service members not only need, but deserve—and they earned that,” said Fort Eisenhower’s coach in a [post-game interview](#).

Women’s games grow: 8 teams vie for victory

One of the hottest sports of 2025 is getting hotter. The Women's Military Basketball Association (WMBA) is growing. Eight women's teams from across the United States are vying for victory to combat suicide. Active-duty and military veterans are competing for a spot in the 2025 Women's MBA Championship game, slated to air live on CBS Sports Network on Sunday, May 25.



Nellis AFB plays Fort Moore at the 2025 MLK Classic.

"This will be the first nationally televised women's championship," said Mike Meyers, commissioner and founder of the MBA. "Women's basketball is on fire right now, and this is an excellent opportunity for our female military athletes to take the stage."

The Women's Championship game will tip off at 5:30 p.m. Eastern Time at Temple University's Liacouras Center in Philadelphia and will precede CBS Sports Network's coverage of the MBA Men's Championship game, airing at 8 p.m. Eastern Time. The WMBA is currently a tournament-season platform, with military athletes and veterans competing in tournaments around the nation.

"'Life through basketball' is for everyone, and we're proud to share the stage with our sisters-in-arms," said Angel "Ace" Acevedo, commissioner of the WMBA.



Fort Moore players and coach smile at the 2025 MLK Classic.

Athletes compete as an outlet, a means to change the stigma in mental health and for suicide prevention.

"It's important that we display the great work our women service members continue to achieve in military basketball

and to highlight their inspiring impact on mental health and wellness through sports," said Betty Diaz, director of programs & operations at [Paramount Veterans Network](#).

Female service members are more likely than their male counterparts to report mental health issues.

"Our female veterans and active-duty soldiers are demonstrating that despite the traumas of service, there is 'life through basketball' that improves their mental health and staves off unhealthy thoughts and behaviors," said Rita Chappelle, chief of external affairs and media for the Philadelphia Veterans Affairs Healthcare System.

MBA launches mental health newsletter



The MBA launched a new, monthly publication on mental health issues affecting athletes. The Mental Performance Newsletter, written by sports psychologist Jeremy Rahn, sheds light on a

different topic every month and lands in the inboxes of coaches across the MBA. January’s debut edition explores how athletes can navigate fear of failure to unlock their true potential. February’s edition delves into performance anxiety.

“Mental health fitness is a big theme this year—one that’s particularly important for our veterans and active-duty military members in crisis,” said MBA Founder and Commissioner Mike Meyers.

The Department of Defense’s Annual Report on Suicide in the Military, released in November of 2024, outlines a 9% increase in military suicides and rising need for efforts to prevent military deaths by suicide. The MBA reduces veteran and active-duty military self-harm through strategic partnerships, public education and athletic programs across the globe. Each year, nearly 1,000 players on 40 teams throughout the United States and Europe compete to reduce mental health stigma, raise awareness on military suicide and connect service members with prevention measures.

“Our aim for this newsletter is to touch as many people as possible so we can get left of bang,” said Meyers, a retired Army major who discovered basketball as an outlet for his own post-traumatic stress injuries (PTSI) after combat in Iraq.

Service members and veterans in crisis, or those experiencing thoughts of suicide, can call the Veterans/Military Crisis Line for confidential support 24 hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days a year. Call 988 and press 1, text 838255 or chat online at [MilitaryCrisisLine.net](#).



Player of the Month: Gary Johnson



Gary Johnson from Fort Bliss is the MBA’s Player of the Month. An E5 sergeant, Johnson has been actively serving in the United States Army for four years. The 25-year-old athlete joined the Military Basketball Association in 2023 and received the most votes from coaches with an impressive performance so far in 2025. Verified with Snipback stats, Johnson scored 18.5 points, 9.5 rebounds and 4.5 assists for the regular season in January.

He sees the MBA as an outlet to the challenges of active duty.









Gary Johnson prepares for a shot in El Paso, Texas.

“Being in the military is not easy,” said Johnson, a petroleum supply specialist based out of Fort Bliss in El Paso, Texas. “Serving can affect your mental state, and being able to play basketball and travel for games and see the guys at other military bases really helps.”

Scores: Luke AFB beats Yuma MCAS

The MBA supports nearly 1,000 players on 40 teams across the United States and Europe. Check out who won the latest games.

See scores

	MCAS Yuma vs		Luke AFB
	Nellis AFB vs		Davis Monthan
	WTXMB - Bliss vs		Holloman AFB
	NAS Jacksonville vs		Tyndall AFB

Double-header championships May 25

Season finalists will compete in a nationally televised double-header broadcast on May 25 to raise awareness on suicide prevention. The men's and women's championship games will air live from Philadelphia on CBS Sports Network.



"The MBA gives our military personnel an opportunity to see the birthplace of freedom in our country," said Mike Meyers, founder and commissioner of the MBA. "The experience we give our athletes is priceless."

The Military Basketball Association (MBA) and Women's Military Basketball Association (WMBA) Championship Games provide the highest level of visibility in volunteer military varsity sports.

In addition to serving as an outlet for trauma associated with military service, players participate to fight the stigma of mental health and prevent self-harm.

Keep an eye on future editions of the MBA Newsletter to learn where to watch the 2025 Championship Games.

For more information about the Military Basketball Association, visit mymbaglobal.com.

Coming up...

- March 14-16, 2025 Puerto Rico Military Classic
- April 11-13, 2025 Eastern Conference Finals: Charlotte, N.C.
- April 25-27, 2025 Western Conference Finals: Oklahoma City, Okla.
- May 25, 2025 MBA Championships

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