

### Quilts of Valor presented.

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### Mifflinburg girls fall.

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# The Standard-Journal

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## Para-athletes train to meet biathlon standards

### Group also rode in Freedom Bike Ride ahead of parade weekend

BY MATT FARRAND  
Staff writer

MONTGOMERY — Late June heat and humidity were of little deterrent to a group of dedicated para-athletes gathered for a training camp.

The developmental camp was hosted by Kevin Bittenbender, coach

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Matt Farrand/  
The Standard-Journal  
**Julius Schram**, a para-athlete training for biathlon, focuses on a target 10 meters away.



Matt Farrand/The Standard-Journal  
**Christ Rasmussen** (at left) is outfitted with gear which will let him stand and train for cross country skiing by **Russ Myer**, president

## Lbg. man allegedly raped other women

BY THE STANDARD-JOURNAL

LEWISBURG — A 31-year-old Lewisburg man already jailed on rape charges is facing additional felony rape and sexual assault charges stemming from newly filed charges by State Police At Milton and allegations from two other women.

Jeffrey Allan Camp Jr., of 650 Millers Bottom Road, Lewisburg, was charged earlier this month with rape and sexual assault charges following allegations he

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Matt Farrand/The Standard-Journal

Kevin Burnside, trains for biathlon with Doc Peoria, at a developmental camp for para-athletes hosted by Kevin Bittenbender in Montgomery.

## Training

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of the US Paralympic biathlon team, at his home in the Montgomery area. He noted that participants hoped to qualify for one of the biathlon teams, a sport which combine target shooting with cross country skiing.

"These guys are taking advantage of every training opportunity to try and increase their abilities and their skill," Bittenbender said. "Today we had a 30-mile bike ride."

The ride was part of the annual Freedom Bike Ride, a prelude to the Union County Veteran's Fourth of July Parade. The skiing was done on sit-skis, which simulate riding along snow and uses the same muscle groups the para-athlete would use in the winter.

Bittenbender said the athletes raise their heart rate during the skiing portion, then relax enough to accurately shoot targets at a distance of 10 meters. He noted two spots would soon open on Paralympic biathlon team due to retirement.

Most of the para-athletes used an air-powered pellet rifle, loaded with a clip of five rounds and equipped with an optical site. However, David Collins, a visually impaired para-athlete from Corona, Calif., used an electronic rifle connected to an electronic target and an audio generator.

"My optic nerve swelled up and scarred while I was in the military," Collins said. "I have no center vision. It looks like there is a light in my face all the time. Then the outsides are blurs of color."

Once the adaptive gear takes effect, and the audio signal lets him know he is on target, Collins said it is shooting like everyone else.

"You've got to control your breathing and your finger movement," he said. "And pull at the right time."

Collins took up biathlon a few years ago after he'd become "tired of being sore and tired." He saw the activity as an all-around health benefit and also rides a tandem bicycle with a partner. A recumbent tandem from Campus Cycles and Fly Fishing was borrowed for the week of the Freedom Bike Ride.

Collins noted that Project Heroes Road to Recovery introduces sports to veterans to keep them active physically and their minds busy. He saw sport as a remedy to the melancholy faced by many veterans which sometimes ends catastrophically.

Collins was introduced to the world of para-athletics by Julius Schram, an Army veteran who lost mobility more than 30 years ago against Sandanista guerillas in El Salvador.

They were joined by Kevin Burnside of Little Falls, N.Y. Not a military veteran, Burnside lost legs due to spina bifida.

Bittenbender said supporters of the para-athletic movement want to ensure it keeps growing. Participants need not have been in the military. Bittenbender, committee president, may be contacted via the Union County Veterans 4th of July Parade website for more information ([www.unioncountyveterans4thofjuly.com](http://www.unioncountyveterans4thofjuly.com)).

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Matt Farrand/The Standard-Journal

Pa. National Guard Staff Sgt. Miles Kamson (at left) coaches David Collins, a visually impaired para-athlete training to compete in biathlon.