Tyler Firefighters Bound For World Challenge

By KENNETH DEAN
Staff Writer

Thousands flocked to Broadway Square Mall this weekend as Tyler firefighters captured another berth in the World Championship Firefighter Combat Challenge after a strong showing at Tyler's annual event.

"We made it into the championship challenge again," Tyler firefighter and event organizer Brent Hail said. "I can't tell you how happy we are that the community has come out and supported us."

Firefighters from across the region and the nation participated in the Brookshire's Firefighter Combat Challenge Friday and Saturday.

The competition, a regional event in the Scott Firefighter Com-bat Challenge, is one step on the way to the nationals, scheduled for November in Las Vegas.

In full gear, firefighters participate in individual and team competition in five events: high-rise hose carry, hose hoist, forcible entry, hose advance and victim rescue.

Members of the Tyler team include firefighters Brent Hail, Glynn Ray, Brandon Davis, Patrick Mayo, Don Williams, Stuart Weatherford, Casey Cabaniss, Joey Hooten, Terry Hawkins, Zack "Toolbox" Houston and District Chief Tom Mooney.

Capt. Jeff Akin, Tyler Fire's public information officer, said the crowds were larger this year.

"There has definitely been more people here this year than there were last year, and that is a great thing for the city," he said.

Akin said the department was behind the team and volunteer firefighters from around the area to help set up and tear down the event.
"The more we do this, the more fun it becomes," he said. Tyler's Over 40 Tandem

Team of Hawkins and Weatherford captured first place, and Hawkins, Williams and Mooney all placed in various events.

The stands on both sides of the course were full with families of the competitors and people who brought their children to see the firefighters.

Hail said the event was a great economic boost to the city.

"Some of the teams have told me they are staying through the weekend and seeing what all we have here," he said. "That means more money spent in Tyler."

At the World Competition last year, Tyler's over-40 relay team placed third. Team members include Hail, Hawkins, Ray, Weatherford and Williams.

Williams won second place in his age category, and the relay team finished in the top eight in the world. Team members include Cabaniss, Davis, Hooton, Houston and Mayo.

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The Fire 'Fro Five from the El Paso Fire Department help keep everyone loose at the Firefighter Combat Challenge.

BIBLE VERSE

Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, The Holy One of Israel: "I am the Lord your God, who teaches you to profit, who leads you by the way you should go." - Isaiah 48:17