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McLean Sweats For Vets

Three-hour spin class raises more than \$100,000

By Alex McVeigh

The basketball court at Tysons Sport and Health was covered with machines Saturday Nov. 12, as about 100 rowing machines and exercise bikes were manned by participants in the second annual Sweat for a Vet event.

The three-hour event raised more than \$100,000 for rehabilitation equipment for wounded warriors recovering in local hospitals. More than 25 other health clubs around the world also participated and were streamed live via Skype to participants at Tysons Sport and Health.

Riders could use rowing machine, regular exercise bicycles or special hand cycles, the same type that veterans with leg injuries use to rehabilitate. While some stayed on their bikes the entire three hours, others came as part of a team, and took breaks for water and donated snacks.

Local band The Taste performed for part of the event, which also featured wounded warriors onstage and other professional trainers.

Carlos Evans, a Marine who was wounded in Afghanistan on his fourth deployment was one such participant. Evans, who is married with two children, stepped on an IED last year and lost both legs and his left hand. But he was right there during Sweat for a Vet, using a hand cycle throughout the day.

"It's very motivational to me, and it gives me hope to see so many people dedicated to this one cause," said Evans, who recently

participated in the Army Ten Miler and the Marine Corps Marathon.

The event raised funds for Project VisAbility, a nonprofit that uses the money raised to buy exercise and rehab equipment.

"We wanted to make sure that we could have our disabled folks not only participate, but inspire people as instructors as well," said Debbie Miller, president of Project VisAbility.

Last year the event raised \$70,000, and this year participants raised more than \$100,000 before the event even started. One of the top teams was TNT Fitness, who brought more than 20 people and raised \$25,000 for this year's event.

"The event just has a great energy to it, and of course it's for a great cause," said Maz Movahed, owner of TNT Fitness. "I've spent the last day and half with a lot of our veterans, just talking with them, learning their stories and watching how positive they are despite all they've been through, it's very inspiring."

Jason Carden, one of the participants, is a regular at Sport and Health, and said he was glad to come in to support the cause.

"It's amazing to think about what these guys have given up for all of us, supporting an event like this is the least we can do," he said. "They've worked hard to recover from their injuries, and I feel blessed just to have a chance to help out."