

Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Amanda Ford dominates women's Scottish Games

GRANDFATHER MOUNTAIN, N.C.—Amanda Ford, a 33-year-old former Marine door gunner who served two combat missions in Iraq, took on her competition in Scottish athletic events at the 61st Grandfather Mountain Highland Games like she was still on active duty.

The Minnesota native and current Wilmington, N.C. resident won six of the seven athletic events and finished third in the other.

Ford tossed the clachneart, a nine-pound stone, 28 feet, 6 inches; the 28-pound weight 32 feet, 5 inches and the 14-pound weight 63 feet, 2 inches.

Next in orbit were the two hammer throws (weights on the end of a stick). The 14-pound hammer sailed 87 feet, 9 inches and the 16-pound hammer 69 feet, 4 inches.

Ford's only loss was in the 28-pound weight tossed for height. She matched the winning height of 12 feet, but it took her three tries. The winner cleared 12 feet on her first try and the runner-up in two tries.

In the most exciting of Scottish athletic events, Ford was the only one of eight contestants to turn the caber, an 18-foot, 110-pound telephone pole-like tree trunk. A perfect turn would be flipping the caber end over end to land directly away from the contestant (e.g. tossing it entering a clock at 6 o' clock and having the pole fall at 12 o' clock). Ford's landed at 1:30.

Ford completed her service in the Marines eight years ago and is now a surgical technologist at a VA hospital in Wilmington. This is her second year competing in women's Scottish athletic events. In her first, she won Grandfather's inaugural women's competition, which started in the Games' 60th anniversary year.

Ford credits her fiancé, Chris Chafin, a professional Scottish athlete, for getting her into the sport.

"Chris taught me the technique and encouraged me to try it, and I love it," said Ford, who credits weight training, especially for leg strength, and a lot of practice for her success.

She competes in 10 games a season, mostly in the fall, through an organization of women Scottish athletes called the Southeast Highland Athletic Group.

There are approximately 500 women Scottish athletes competing in games across the United States, and Ford is currently ranked 23. Her ranking will improve significantly after her dominant showing in the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games.

For more information on the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games, visit www.gmhg.org.

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070916_GFM_GMHG_Amanda_Ford_1_SS: Amanda Ford competes in the hammer throw at the Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Ford won by throwing a 14-pound hammer 87 feet, 9 inches and a 16-pound hammer 69 feet, 4 inches. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation

070916_GFM_GMHG_Amanda_Ford_2_SS: Amanda Ford competes in the weight toss at the 61st annual Grandfather Mountain Highland Games. Photo by Skip Sickler | Grandfather Mountain Stewardship Foundation