



**3rd Expeditionary Sustainment Command  
16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade  
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### **‘Thunderbolt’ strikes at boxing smoker**

Sgt. Samuel Curameng  
1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 185<sup>th</sup> Armor

CONTINGENCY OPERATING BASE SPEICHER, Iraq — Spc. Ray Davis, wheeled vehicle mechanic, Charlie Co. “Thunderbolts”, 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 185<sup>th</sup> Armor, 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade, won the heavyweight bout at the boxing smoker at the Morale, Welfare, Recreation center here June 5.

The Smoker consists of Soldiers and civilians who chose to compete in an amateur exhibition boxing match against one another. The fighters trained with boxing coaches who taught proper techniques and conditioning programs.

Davis, a 23-year-old native of San Bernardino, Calif., on his first deployment with 1-185<sup>th</sup> Armor, decided to compete to help himself to cope with the loss of his grandmother last year.

“I wanted to do it for my grandma,” said Davis. “She was everything to me; I would always remember her saying, you can accomplish anything no matter how hard it may be.”

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Davis knew this was something he had wanted to do for a long time. Davis had only a month to train for the fight. His training each night began late in the evening right after a long day at work.

“I would find myself training up to three times a week,” said Davis. “Sometimes it was hard, having to go to work the next day. I would always be really sore from working out.”

Davis, who had no prior boxing experience, trained with boxing coaches that showed him basic and advance techniques to use against his opponent in the ring. Davis emphasized how hard the training was.

“I thought it was just getting in the ring and landing solid punches, but I soon learned that that wasn’t just it,” said Davis. “I had to learn to lead my opponent to expose himself so that I could land a solid punch.”

On the day of the event, the main gym at Speicher was filled with a line of people that snaked around the perimeter of the facility. The ring was lit by the bright lights, and all the seats were filled with Soldiers and civilians cheering for their favorite fighters. As smoke filled the air from the many cigars, the time had come for the first bout.

Davis was up against a Soldier from another base not far from Speicher. The fight lasted three rounds with hard hitting haymakers, lightning fast jabs, and thunderous cheers from the fans. Davis was victorious with a technical knockout in the third round.

“I want to dedicate my fight to my grandma; without her words of encouragement, I don’t know if I would have been able to pull it off,” said Davis.

Davis is extending his tour in Iraq, joining the next unit to relieve 1-185th Armor. He plans to pursue the next boxing smoker set sometime later in the year.



Spc. Ray Davis, wheeled vehicle mechanic, Charlie Co., 1<sup>st</sup> Battalion, 185<sup>th</sup> Armor, 16<sup>th</sup> Sustainment Brigade, raises his gloves after winning the heavyweight bout at the boxing smoker at the Morale, Welfare, and Recreation center at Contingency Operating Base Speicher June 5. (Courtesy photo)