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## Somerville defends Barn title

Published: Tuesday, February 9, 2010 2:13 AM EST

COXSACKIE — It may have been cold outside in Coxsackie, but fierce competition heated up The Barn quickly last Saturday as strongman competitors flocked to compete in the second annual Battle at The Barn.

The event kicked off at 10 a.m. and lasted six hours with participants hauling some of the heaviest objects you could think of.

"It wasn't really that long for a strongman competition. I like mine to run in four hours, but none of the competitors complained," stated event coordinator Curtis Lake in a release. "The trick is to have good events that will bring the athletes out and to also be able to run two competitors per event or two events simultaneously. I'll do it faster next year."

Despite the low temperatures, Lake felt the event drew a decent amount of fans to the area.

"I think the cold weather kept some people from coming, but I did better at advertising it so we had as many if not a few more than last year," he said. "I like to get a good crowd and let them know what is going on and the weights being lifted, it definitely helps the lifters when a crowd is cheering them on."

To start things off, competitors headed to the Press Medley.

This event consists of six implements including a regular dumbbell, a two-inch thick handle dumbbell, two "freakishly huge" circus dumbbells, a chain-and-sand-filled keg and a block.

In the 200-pound class, Steve Engels pressed all six in 64 seconds for the win; in the Masters over-40 class, Mike Beyers put five implements overhead in 47 seconds for the win; at 231 Cory Clark pressed five implements for the win; In the 265 class Craig Phisterer got five for the win; in the open heavyweight (HW), or heavies class, defending champ Brett Somerville pressed all six in a time of 61 seconds for the win.

With one event down, everyone headed to the Yoke. The weights for the yoke were 650 pounds for the 200 class and lightweight (LW) Masters; 700 for 231s and HW Masters; 750 for the 265s; and 800 for the heavies.

In the 200s, Steve Engels took another win with a time of 12.75; in the LW Masters



Battle at the Barn overall winners pose for a picture. From left, Sean McDonough (Lightweight class, under 200 pounds), Jon Van Tassel (Masters), Brett Somerville (Heavyweight Open), Craig Phisterer (Heavyweight, under 265) and Rob Agnoli (Lightweight Open). (Contributed photo)



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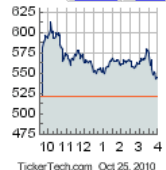
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Buddy Schweder carried 50 more pounds on the yoke for the event win with a time of 13 seconds; In the 231s Jeff Holt sped down the 60-foot course in 11.94 seconds for the win; In the 265s Nick Keough claimed a first-place finish with a time of 22.53; In the heavies Brett Somerville got another event win with a 12-second run.

Next up was the car dead lift.

In the 200s Sean McDonough wowed the crowd with 17 reps for first place; In the LW Masters, Jon Van Tassel lifted the car 12 times for first place; In the 231s Cory Clark lifted the car 14 times for the win; In the 265s only one competitor, Andrew Mangan, lifted the car with two reps to get the event win. Three 45-pound weights were added to the car for the heavier division; after that another 45 plate was added, making it 180-pounds of additional weight on the frame. All the heavies were able to lift the car and it was Brett Somerville who reached 11 reps for yet another event win.

With three down and two to go, the strongmen moved to the Farmers Walk.

The weights for the farmers were 275 in each hand for the 200 class and LW Masters; 300 for 231s and HW Masters; 325 for the 265s; and 350 for the heavies.

In the 200s Harv Rajwans carried for 15 seconds for the win; In the Masters Buddy Schweder took only 12 seconds to win the event; In the 231s Jeff Holt flew down the course in 11 seconds for the win; In the 265s nobody carried the cylinders the full 60 feet so distance determined the placing and Craig Phisterer went 31 feet for first; in the heavies Brett Somerville won by running the course in 12 seconds.

Going into the keglod the top three 200s — Steve Engels, Sean McDonough, Harv Rajwans — all had a shot at first with 33, 32 and 31 points, respectively.

In the 200s, McDonough got the win and took first place overall by virtue of weighing less in a tiebreaker; in the Masters Van Tassel loaded them the fastest and ended the day in first overall; In the 231s Cory Clark loaded all seven implements for first in the keglod and second overall with Rob Agnoli finishing first overall; in the 265s Craig Phisterer blazed through the implements in 31 seconds, winning the keglod and securing first place in the division; Brett Somerville loaded all six kegs and the power stair for his fifth event win and a dominating overall win in the heavyweight open class.

"If you've never been to The Barn it is definitely a place you have to go," stated competitor Rob Agnoli. "It's in the middle of nowhere, complete with concrete floor, exposed beam ceiling and wood burning stove; not to mention the chicken coupe outside the front door. It's also a top notch contest.

"Curtis puts a lot of time and effort into making it great. The events are always tough and it runs very smoothly. He also gets cool stuff for the competitors. This was my second time doing this show and I'll definitely keep doing it if I'm able."

Lake expects to host another show next year. He aims for the weekend between the NFL Conference Championships and the Super Bowl.

The top two finishers in each class qualify for North American Strongman Nationals held in the fall. For more information about that and other upcoming strongman competitions check out [www.nastrongmaninc.com/](http://www.nastrongmaninc.com/).

On the Web:

<http://battleatthebarn.net/>

<http://www.youtube.com/user/BarnBattleTV>

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