

A NATIONAL OF THIER OWN by Chuck Hudson

The Military Nationals will be coming home, home to Virginia Beach. While it is true that this is the first time the Nationals will be held in Virginia Beach, this is the location that we envisioned even long before the event came into existence, so in a sense, it is returning home.

Back in 2017 myself and a small group of investors launched the United States Sports Dart Alliance and began to leave our mark on the landscape of American darts. We knew we had to start slow and build our organization up before creating these types of new events. But from the start, I wanted to hold a Military National Championship to honor those who had served our country.

We held a 501 National that year and added a Cricket National and a Youth National in 2018. We were eyeing a 2020 date for the Military Nationals before Covid turned the world upside down. I always saw Virginia Beach as the perfect location but we had to wait to see when the world would get back to normal. In 2022 we saw our chance but it was too short of notice to bring it to my home state of Virginia, so we held the first one in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina at the Saltwater Classic. We had a solid turnout and the title was claimed by Patrick Gibson who topped Steve Chorba in the all U.S. Army final.

In 2023 we had an opening in Asheville, NC at the Fire on the Mountain tournament which was scheduled in January. Again we had a solid turnout with many new faces and Jimmie Jones (USAF) defeated Don Conway (USN) in the Finals. Links for both of these event pages are below.

<https://www.unitedstatesdarts.com/2022-military-nationals.html>

<https://www.unitedstatesdarts.com/2023-military-nationals.html>

But I still wanted to bring the event to Virginia Beach and contacted the Tournament Director last year about making it happen. Paula Bushey has been more than helpful and we were able to work together to bring the Target-USSDA 501 Military Nationals to the Virginia Beach Dart Classic on March 22, 2024. Please check the link below for more details on the event.

<https://www.unitedstatesdarts.com/2024-military-501-nationals.html>

The atmosphere at these events is pretty cool if I do say so myself. People who served their country and were molded by their military experience. They have a different mindset, they have sense of pride and brotherhood among them. They pick on each other about which branch is better. They were comrades in arms, now comrades in darts. These events are for them, Men and Women, old and young, active duty and veterans. We do this because we care that those who wrote a blank check to our country, to honor, protect and defend America. For all they do and all they have done in service to America, they now have a National Championship of their own.