



Jim Commentucci / Staff photographer

CORRECTIONS OFFICERS from Auburn prison pull a 45,000-pound firetruck Saturday in Sennett as part of a competition with their fellow corrections officers from

Attica prison. Members of the team included (from right) Lauren Hailston, Jamie Cordway and Mike Murphy. Proceeds from the event benefit the Special Olympics.

Pulling for Special Olympics

Auburn, Attica corrections officers vie in fund-raiser

By John Stith
Staff writer

A team of corrections officers from Attica Correctional Facility went head-to-head Saturday with a team from Auburn Correctional Facility in a grudge match at a firetruck pull in Sennett.

The nine-man Attica team stepped forward, picked up the rope attached to a 45,000-pound firetruck from the Sennett Volunteer Fire Department and leaned back, muscles tight as they waited for the starter's gun.

The team's task was to pull the truck 20 feet in the shortest time. Each team had two chances to post the best time.

Attica had lost to Auburn at a similar event at Attica last month.

Saturday, Attica got its revenge.

The real winners of Saturday's event, however, were the 40,000 athletes statewide who compete in the Special Olympics. The \$500 fee for teams entering the firetruck pull, organized by the Auburn prison staff, goes to the Special Olympics.

"These guys do a ton of good for the Special Olympics," said Jeff Foley, director of public relations for the Special Olympics in New York

Proceeds from the sale of 250 barbecued half-chickens, 20 pounds of hot dogs, 10 pounds of hamburger, salad, beans and refreshments — along with money raised through raffles — help pay for athletes to participate in the Special Olympics.

Foley said the Olympic Torch run, which passed through Auburn on May 29, involved more than 4,000 law enforcement personnel across the state carrying the torch more than 1,500 miles before it reached the Special Olympics summer games, held June 12-15 at Hofstra University on Long Island.

The fall games will be Oct. 10-12 at the New York Chiropractic College, Route 89, Seneca Falls.

"These guys have a big heart to come out and help us spread our message," Foley said.

A hard rain fell Saturday morning at the Auburn Correctional Facility Recreation and Training Facility on Franklin Street Road in Sennett. The temperature hovered in the 50s.

The cold, wet conditions — so well-known throughout Central New York this spring — proved too much for three

teams scheduled to compete Saturday. Those teams never showed, leaving just Attica and Auburn to face off.

The rain let up and the sky began clearing as the competition neared.

With Auburn disc jockey Rudy and the Fat Man cranking out the Guns N' Roses song "Welcome to the Jungle," the Attica Nine took their positions along the rope. They had to knock 0.73 seconds off their first-round time of 9.05 seconds to go ahead of Auburn and its first-round time of 8.32 seconds.

Attica turned in a time of 8.028 seconds. Auburn couldn't catch up, posting a time of 8.25 seconds in its second pull.

"We got a good rivalry going," said Mike Murray, a sergeant at Auburn, after the event. "The Big A-Auburn. The Big A-Attica."

Murray helped to organize the local leg of the torch run in May as well as the firetruck pull Saturday.

"Last month, we were the Big A," he said. "This month, they are."

For information about the Special Olympics, call (518) 388-0790 or go online to www.specialolympicsnewyork.org