



Athlete Profile (National)

Holly Koester
Army Veteran

50 years old
Walton Hills, Ohio

Holly Koester has made amazing personal achievements since participating in her first wheelchair sports event in 1991, including becoming the first wheelchair track star to complete a marathon in all 50 states.

Koester was injured in a car accident in 1990, while on alert at Redstone Arsenal in Huntsville, Alabama. She sustained injuries to her spinal cord and was discharged from the Army several months later.

Since facing civilian life as a paraplegic, Koester has constantly pushed herself to greater feats and has not missed a year of competition at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games since she began.

In addition to her strong athletic drive, Koester also is very active in her community, both as the sports director for the Paralyzed Veterans of America Buckeye Chapter and as a substitute teacher in her local public school system.

As a special honor, Koester was one of 12 Veteran athletes chosen to be featured on Cheerios boxes in 2009. For this spirited wheelchair athlete, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games have opened up a whole new life, and she looks forward to finding new challenges at the 2010 Games in Denver.



“When I was first injured, I thought my active life was over,” Koester said. “After discovering wheelchair sports, I realized that is clearly about as far from the truth as can be imagined.”