



First Timers Mile High about the Games

By Michelle Spivak, Public Affairs Officer, Washington, D.C. VA Medical Center

Veterans new to the Games are praising the event for its opportunities for athleticism, new friends, and the national exposure it gives Veterans in wheelchairs.

John “Trey” LaFitte is a 27-year-old Marine Corps Veteran from Laurel, Miss. “I’ve always played sports and now that I’m in a chair, I’m not going to let it stop me from having fun,” said LaFitte, an Iraq War Veteran. He is competing in 9-ball, table tennis and air guns, but handcycling and weightlifting are his true loves. Back at the VA Medical Center in Jackson, Miss., Jeffery Bennett, OEF/OIF patient representative, is cheering on LaFitte. “Bennett was at my bedside just a few days after I was hurt and has been there ever since. He’s a great friend,” LaFitte said. He wants Veterans using wheelchairs to know that “we can still do 99.9 percent of what we did before. You need to participate to know you’re still with it.”

“I’ve been working seven days a week to get in shape,” says Rene Peterson, a Desert Storm Veteran. The 47-year-old from Harrisonville, Mo., has been using a wheelchair since 2006. When he built up his strength, he decided to take on the challenge of the Games. “One of my life goals is to show people there are many things to do other than sitting at home and wasting away,” said Peterson. He travels with a trailer promoting the Wheelchair Games, PVA, and his “never give up” philosophy.

Originally from Minnesota, Nikki Smith has made Denver her home for the last 12 years. Smith likes the lifestyle in the Mile High City because it is very easy to get around. “I decided this was the year to try out the Games, since they’re right here in Denver,” she said. An Air Force Veteran, Smith was in hospital administration so she appreciates the many employees and volunteers at the Games. Smith is another first-timer who says the best part of the Games is the camaraderie with fellow Veterans.

“I never came to the Games before because I was concerned about going public. I had a problem with the stigma of being in a wheelchair,” said Leo Kelly of Mentor on the Lake, Ohio. “Seeing all of these other Veterans helps me get out and get going.” Army Veteran Kelly served in Desert Storm in

1991. Kelly decided to take on as many sports at the Games as he can, including powerchair 200, motorized wheelchair rally, air guns and slalom.

Outgoing and hard-working Christie Hill-Smith is the Membership Program Manager for PVA's mid-south chapter. Hill-Smith, an enthusiastic advocate for persons with disabilities, has overcome many hurdles to be at the Games. Injured in Iraq in 2003, she is competing in 9-ball and swimming. "I'd like more communication about these Games," she said. "Veterans and civilians need to know so we get more people participating."

Consistently, first-timers share the belief that VA and PVA make a great team, enabling wheelchair Veterans to find physical and spiritual healing through activities at the Games.

British Vet Calls Games are a Light for Wheelchair Veterans

By Michelle Spivak, Public Affairs Officer, Washington, D.C. VA Medical Center

Emma Burns is the youngest of the ten-member British team at the Games this year. The Brits have been coming to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games since 1987 and Burns says they are always welcomed warmly by the U.S. athletes. "They love to see us and there's nothing to compare to it in Britain," Burns, a Veteran of the Royal Navy, explains.

"I come for the camaraderie and especially try to catch first-timers," Burns says. "You know you go through a lot of grieving when this happens to you. But there is a light at the end of the tunnel, like these Games." The British team ranges from Veterans in their seventies to 29-year-old Burns, who has an ambitious schedule, competing in weightlifting, shot-put, javelin, discus and exhibition kayaking this year. "It's all about sportsmanship. The Games are always competitive but not in a nasty way. At the end of the day, we're all friends."

During the Opening Ceremonies Sunday, VA Secretary Erik Shinseki remarked about the British participation at the Games, acknowledging the team in his remarks. "As we celebrate the 234th anniversary of our independence, we are happy to welcome back our British friends to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games," he said. "Great Britain is, and has long been, our strongest ally."

Dr Dan

Beating the Heat

With sun at its hottest in July, the temperature is rising and exercising in the heat under the hot sun puts extra stress on your body. Don't overexert yourself too quickly and give your body time to get used to the heat and humidity. This gradual increase helps you adapt to the conditions. You are an athlete, so make sure you dress like one. Wear smart fabrics or lightweight, loose fitting clothes, and keep drinking lots of water.

As much as possible, avoid overexposure in the mid-day sun. Sunburn decreases your body's natural ability to cool down. Due to the altitude here in Denver, the air is thinner and results in a more intense sun. People tend to burn easily at this higher altitude. The sun is strongest from about 11a.m. until 2 or 3 p.m., and this is when you are most likely to get burned. When you are out in the sun, wear sunscreen with an SPF rating of 30 or more that offers both UVA and UVB protection and wear light

colored clothing. Try to stay in the shade as much as possible. As always, be sure to drink lots of water, especially in hot temperatures.

Best of luck in your events!

Dr. Dan

Paralympian of the Day

Mark Shepherd, Colorado Springs, Colorado

- First NVWG: San Antonio 1988

- Paralympic Games and other athletic highlights:

 - Gold Medalist - Stoke Mandeville Games 1993

 - Gold Medalist - Pan Pacific Games 1994

 - Gold Medalist - World Wheelchair Basketball Championships 1994

 - Paralympic Bronze Medalist Men's Wheelchair Basketball 1996

 - Gold Medalist – World Wheelchair Basketball Championships 1998

 - Gold Medalist – Pan Pacific Games 1998

 - Gold Medalist – World Wheelchair Basketball Championships 1998

 - Silver Medalist – Pan Pacific Games 2002

 - Gold Medalist – World Wheelchair Basketball Championships 2002

- Events he is competing in here:

 - Basketball, Pool, Table Tennis, and Bowling

- How have the NVWG helped you?

 - “The Games got me started in disability sports.”

- Advice to newcomers:

 - “Let the NVWG's serve as a stepping stone for your athletic future in disabled sports. Realize that the NVWG's provide disabled veterans with a wonderful opportunity to experience competitive sports. From there, determine what sport you love and pursue it.”

Question of the Day

“What have you enjoyed most about Denver?”

1. Raymond Fulton #378 Memphis, TN

 - “The weather. It is nicer than the weather in Memphis”

2. Mike Gardner #89 Roseburg, OR

 - “Bubba Gump Shrimp”

3. Jim Weber #99 Purdum, NE

 - “The drive in from Nebraska and the opportunity to meet all different people”

4. Raul Acosta #94 Bronx, NY

 - “The hospitality has been great!”

5. Andre Shelby #168 Jacksonville, FL

“The people are really friendly!”

6. Carol Adams #279 Lake Park, FL

“The Games are so organized and run at a quick pace.”

30th Anniversary NVWG Quiz

- 1) When did power soccer become a medal event?
- 2) When did softball become a medal event?
- 3) When did power soccer become a medal event?
- 4) What is the newest ‘medal event’?
- 5) In what year and place did the host site offer “over the line” as an exhibition?

Answers:

1. 2004, St. Louis; 2. 1997, San Diego; 3. 2004, St. Louis; 4. 2007, trapshooting; 5. 1997, San Diego

Tuesday’s Meal Schedule:

Breakfast:

5:30 - 9 a.m.

Lunch:

11 a.m. - 1:30 p.m.

Dinner:

4:30 - 7 p.m.

Breakfast today will be served at the Hyatt Regency in the Centennial Ballroom. Lunch and dinner will be served at the Colorado Convention Center in Lobby B.

Go Gourmet (located behind the hotel lobby) will be open during athlete meal times for family/guests to purchase food and dine with the athletes.

Menus for Tuesday, July 6

Breakfast:

Chilled apple and orange juice; grapefruit and watermelon wedges; traditional oatmeal with raisins, brown sugar, one percent milk; egg, green chile and cheese breakfast enchiladas; whole wheat toast; and Seattle’s Best coffee and Tazo tea selection

Lunch:

Turkey and muenster sandwich on whole wheat bread; with lettuce & tomato; Granny Smith apple; side pasta salad; chocolate chip cookie; and choice of bottled water or soda

Dinner:

Garden salad with ranch and Italian dressing; fresh rolls and butter; mashed redskin potatoes; steamed broccoli; grilled flat iron steak; N.Y. cheesecake; freshly brewed regular and decaf coffee and herbal tea selection.

Notice

If you are competing in 8 a.m. bowling, plan to be on the bus at 5:45 a.m. Breakfast begins at 5:30 a.m. this year to accommodate your extra early departure.

2010 Spirit of the Games

Show Your Spirit with a Nomination!

If you know of an athlete with athletic competence, sportsmanship and character, nominate him or her for the 2010 Spirit of the Games award. Just fill out a nomination form, located in the dining area or the main hospitality desk, and put it in the ballot box by 10 a.m. Thursday. Submit a nomination today!

Drink up!

Staying hydrated during your time in Denver will help prevent altitude sickness.

Please remember to bring your reusable water bottle to all events and venues this week

Details, details, details...

Hospitality: Hospitality tables are located in the Hyatt Regency Hotel near the Altitude restaurant and in the Convention Center B Lobby at the Welton Street entrance. They will be staffed daily from 6 a.m. to 8:30 p.m. Hospitality staff is wearing straw cowboy hats with a colorful bandana (or a military uniform). There will also be "On-the-Go" roving hospitality concierges. Welcome packets for athletes are available – stop and get one.

Lost and Found: Contact the Command Center, Convention Center Room 703, if you have lost (or found) something.

Medical Assistance: Hyatt Regency Hotel, Room 519 and in the C Mezzanine at the Convention Center. Normal hours are from 7 a.m. to 10:30 p.m. daily. For non-emergent medical attention after 11 p.m., please call the hotel operator. Medical staff is also available at each event, identified by their red T-shirt with a white medical cross on the back.

Durable Medical Equipment: Mineral Hall D/E at the Hyatt Regency Hotel.

Memorabilia items: Available throughout the week near the Awards table in Lobby C of the Convention Center. Stop by to pick up your favorite mementos of this great week!

Internet Café: Ten workstations are available at the Internet Café, located in B Lobby. Stop by to check your e-mail, Facebook or Games results! The Internet Café is open daily from 7:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. Special thanks to HP for making this service possible.

Main Wheelchair Repair Shop: Hyatt Regency Mineral B, C from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., extended when necessary.

Invacare Minor Repair: Service for minor repairs will be available at the Convention Center venues and at all off-site venues Monday, July 5 through Friday, July 9. They operate 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m.

Specialty (Sports Chair) Chair Corral: Store your specialty chair in the Chair Corral in Exhibit Hall C. You can claim your chair one hour before your event(s).

Emergency Repair: Service will be available by calling (720) 939-6633 or (303) 359-6244.

Transportation: Buses run daily from 5:15 a.m. - 10 p.m. Buses to off-site venues will be loaded at the Transportation Hub outside of the Convention Center, B Lobby. Please check your specialty chair into the chair corral to be transported to your events. Buses depart every 5-10 minutes

Event	Time
Bowling (a.m. session)	start loading at 5:45 a.m.
Bowling (p.m. session)	start loading 10:45 a.m.
Trapshooting (a.m. session)	start loading at 6:45 a.m.
Trapshooting (p.m. session)	start loading at 7:45 a.m.
Kayaking (a.m. session)	start loading at 8:15 a.m.
Kayaking (p.m. session)	starting loading at 12:15 p.m.

Awards: Immediate Awards will be given two ways. Most will be awarded in the Immediate Awards area located between Halls B and C. Team events, Slalom Super G and handcycling will be awarded at those event locations.

Delayed Awards will be given in Lower Lobby C, next to the memorabilia area and around the corner from the food court.

Award Presentations for July 6

10:30 a.m. - 2 p.m.	Delayed
3:30 - 6:30 p.m.	Immediate
7:30 - 11:30 p.m.	Immediate

NVWG Schedule

Tuesday, July 6		
Time	Event	Location
8 a.m.	Bowling, Ramp	Brunswick Zone
8 a.m.	Air Guns	Hyatt Capitol Ballroom
8 a.m.	Softball, Games 1 & 2	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A
8:30 to 10:30 a.m.	Weightlifting Weigh-In	Colorado Convention Center
9 a.m.	Trapshooting	Family Shooting Center
	Kayaking	Fishback Landing Park
9:30 a.m.	Softball, Games 3 & 4	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A
10 a.m.	Air Guns	Hyatt Capitol Ballroom
11 a.m.	Softball, Games 5 & 6	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A
12:30 p.m.	Softball, Games 7 & 8	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A
1 p.m.	Air Guns	Hyatt Capitol Ballroom
1 p.m.	Trapshooting	Family Shooting Center
1 p.m.	Bowling, I A, B, C, Stick & Handleball	Brunswick Zone
1 p.m.	Kayaking	Fishback Landing Park
2 p.m.	Softball, Games 9 & 10	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A
3 p.m.	Air Guns	Hyatt Capitol Ballroom
3:30 p.m.	Softball, Championship & Consolation Games	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall A
6:30 p.m.	Quad Rugby, Game 3	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall C
6:30 p.m.	Power Soccer, Games 3 & 4	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall C
6:30 p.m.	Slalom, Class 2 & 3	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B
6:30 p.m.	Table Tennis, Class 4, 5 & Standing	Colorado Convention Center, Exhibit Hall B
6:30 p.m.	Air Guns	Hyatt Capitol Ballroom