



20th National Disabled Veterans
Winter Sports Clinic



Snowmass, Colorado ★ April 2 – April 7, 2006



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Setting Your Sights Higher The Clinic's First Ever Race Training and Development Program

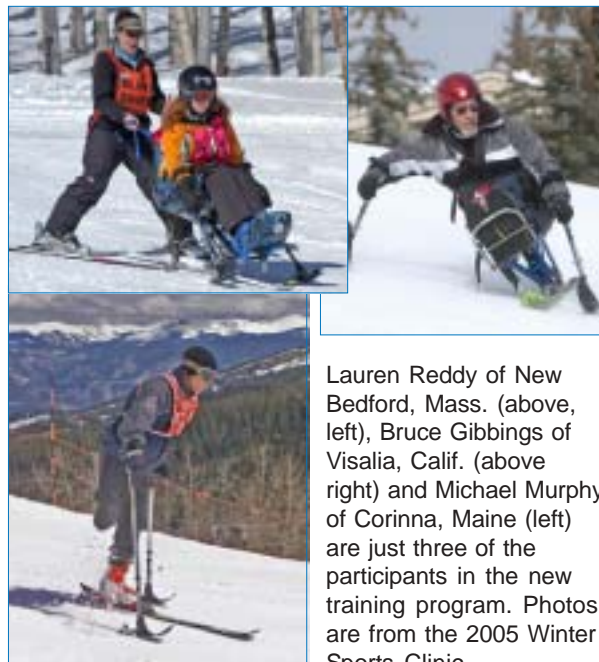
For years, more advanced Clinic skiers have informally grouped together in order to challenge themselves and ski the more difficult runs. This year, the Clinic is offering the first ever formal race training and development program. Designed to challenge elite level skiers as well as teach racing skills (including gate training), the new program also reviews philosophy, incorporates cross-training and uses video to critique form.

The opportunity to develop a formal program presented itself when the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and the United States Olympic Committee (USOC) signed an agreement this past November. Under the terms of the agreement, there is potential for disabled veteran participants to be identified for possible positions on the U.S. Disabled Ski Team.

The program will last all five days of the Clinic, and skiers will go through a series of progressions designed to build on the skills taught the previous day. Coaches will meet and evaluate the skiers after each day. Requirements include being an intermediate skier or above; skiing independently and off tether; loading and unloading from the lift independently; picking yourself up independently after a fall; and being a mono-skier,

4-tracker, 3-tracker or visually impaired skier.

The development program is designed to be challenging and rigorous, and



Lauren Reddy of New Bedford, Mass. (above, left), Bruce Gibbings of Visalia, Calif. (above right) and Michael Murphy of Corinna, Maine (left) are just three of the participants in the new training program. Photos are from the 2005 Winter Sports Clinic.

those experiencing difficulty keeping up may be asked to re-join the regular learn-to-ski lessons. All those who sign up, however, are not expected to be accomplished racers at this time.

Sandy Trombetta, Winter Sports Clinic director, guarantees that the original philosophy of the Clinic will not be jeopardized. "Each year, the Clinic seeks to provide the greatest recreation and therapeutic experience for all

level skiers," Trombetta said. "The new program builds on the original mission and is part of our ongoing evolution to provide a high level of training for those who wish to compete at the Paralympic level."

Skiers such as Chris Devlin-Young, who have achieved incredible athletic success, would like to help others follow in their footsteps. It is often difficult for individuals to get involved in elite level sports because they are not sure of the process and who to turn to for help. Devlin-Young, recent silver medalist in the 2006 Torino Paralympics, returns to the Clinic each year to help instruct others about how to achieve their athletic dreams. (Read more about Devlin-Young on page 2.)

Currently, twenty-five participants have been selected for the week-long program. Kendra Betz, long-time Clinic team leader, will serve as the race

team leader for the week. Danny Metiver, Chris Devlin-Young, Harlen O'Brien, Peter Axtelson and Ben Roberts will serve as instructors.

The Clinic's short term goal is to identify skiers who will be able to compete for positions on the U.S. Disabled Ski Team. The long range goal is to train and develop skiers who have the potential to achieve elite status.

Silver Medalist Served as Flag bearer at 2006 Paralympics



Chris Devlin-Young carries in the U.S. flag during the opening ceremonies of the 2006 Paralympic Games in Torino, Italy last month.

Paralympic athlete Chris Devlin-Young thrives on success. He has won two gold medals and one silver in Paralympic competition, and last month added another silver medal at the 2006 Paralympic Games in Torino, Italy.

Despite his numerous achievements in the competition, Devlin-Young said his greatest honor was being selected to carry the flag representing the United States team. "Being chosen as flag bearer is an honor I never expected and didn't even dream of," he said. "I represented my country in the purest form. This experience has been more special than just winning medals." The Coast Guard veteran was chosen for the honor by the team captains of the winter Paralympic sports because of his exceptional leadership.

Injured in a 1982 plane crash that left him paralyzed from the knees down, Devlin-Young struggled with his disability, feeling like half a man. Now, he says that skiing helped lessen his disability in his own eyes.

He was introduced to skiing and racing at the very first National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in 1987. He recalls that one day, while watching TV in a lounge at

the VA Palo Alto Health Care System, a chance meeting with a recreation therapist changed everything. The therapist invited him to participate in the Winter Sports Clinic and, although Devlin-Young had never skied, he gave it a try. By his own admission, he was hooked on his very first run with a sit-ski.

This year, he is back at the Clinic as part of the new program developed by VA and the U.S. Olympic Committee that provides



Devlin-Young competes in the 2006 Paralympic Alpine Downhill competition (sitting category) in which he won the silver medal.

formal race training and development for disabled skiers. Those successful in the program could be candidates for the U.S. Disabled Ski Team, of which Devlin-Young has been a member for 14 years.

Many Clinic participants feel that Devlin-Young is not only a world-class athlete, but also an innovator in disabled ski equipment and wheelchair accessible furniture. "He has lead the way in developing technology that adapts mono-ski equipment to a snowboard, a device that helps prevent shoulder injuries and fatigue for beginner mono-skiers," said Sandy Trombetta, director of the Clinic.

"Chris has shown a tireless dedication to the advancement of mono-skiing and the continual improvement of his own racing. He really wants to give back and make it easier and better for vets who will come after him." As a coach, he hopes to help others see that many opportunities exist for athletes with disabilities.

Devlin-Young's accomplishments:

- ◆ First U.S. athlete to win gold medals in two disability categories.
- ◆ Ski Racing magazine's 2003 Disabled Athlete of the Year.
 - ◆ Three-time Paralympian (1994, 2002 and 2006).
 - ◆ Four-time Paralympic medalist (two gold, two silver).
 - ◆ Flag bearer for 2006 U.S. Paralympic team during the Opening Ceremony of the IX Winter Paralympic Games.
 - ◆ 2005 World Cup Super-G champion.
 - ◆ 2005 World Cup Grand Slalom runner-up.
 - ◆ 2005 X Games Sit-Skier Mono-Cross champion.



Devlin-Young poses with Clinic Director Sandy Trombetta with his 2005 World Cup trophy.

Tips for First Timers

If you are attending the Winter Sports Clinic for the first time, here are some helpful hints for the best possible week:

- ◆ Get lots of rest, especially when you have an early morning ski run or other scheduled activity.
- ◆ Save yourself – don't expend all your energy the first day or two.
- ◆ Drink lots – and lots – of water all week.
- ◆ Stay away from alcohol for at least the first 48 hours.
- ◆ Go to the medical unit immediately if you feel any signs of altitude sickness – don't wait!
- ◆ Use sunscreen when you are out on the slopes.



- ◆ Get to your events on time. If something changes and you need to cancel something, let your team leader know right away.
- ◆ Try to experience as much as you can while you are here. Go to the educational and instructional sessions – you will learn great things!
- ◆ Take this opportunity to meet some new people and make some new friends. Sometimes those

friendships will last a lifetime.

Have a wonderful week in Snowmass Village at the 20th National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic!



In recognition of VA's 75th Anniversary, some more historical facts...

On July 21, 1930 President Herbert Hoover signed an executive order establishing the Veterans Administration. The new agency consolidated the previously independent Veterans' Bureau, the Bureau of Pensions and the National Homes for Disabled Volunteer Soldiers into one organization. Then, on March 15, 1989, President Ronald Reagan signed legislation that marked the elevation of the Veterans Administration to cabinet level, renaming it the Department of Veterans Affairs.

History of the Clinic Quiz

Think you know your National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic history? Test your knowledge by taking the Clinic History Quiz featured in each day's *SkiGram* this week. Submit an entry form with the correct answers and you could prizes!

Quiz entry forms will be located in the Conference Center Ballroom where meals are served, or you can pick one up in the Media Center, located in the Erickson Room in the Conference Center. Drop your entry in the box located outside the Media Center. All forms must be submitted by 11 a.m. each day to qualify, and the first form with all of the correct answers wins. Winners (and correct answers) will be announced in the next day's newsletter.

So come on, history buffs, put on those thinking caps and see how much you know about the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic!

Here is the first quiz. Good luck!

1. Which Clinic had the largest number of participants attending – where and when was that Clinic held?
2. Have any athletes attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic all 20 years?
Bonus: If “yes” how many?
3. What was the first year VA held the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic? How many staff and veterans attended?

Year: _____ Number of Veterans: _____
Number of Staff: _____

4. What is the theme of the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic?



Sending Hometown News from the Winter Sports Clinic

For many years at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic, your public affairs team members have operated a “hometown news” program, designed to let our participants’ hometown newspapers know about their participation in this exciting event. Located on the Clinic’s Web site, this effort generates an individual news release for all veterans who have asked us to prepare one. All week long, we will be calling local newspapers to generate interest in this wonderful story. You will receive a copy of your own news release at the end of the week.

Hometown news releases are not written unless we have your permission to prepare one *and* you have provided all of the information needed. Releases are downloaded to the Clinic Web site (www.wintersportsclinic.org) and are available to anyone accessing the site (look under “[Participant Information](#)”). We expect to have this year’s news releases posted to the site by Thursday morning, and the photos by the time you return home.

In order to do that, it is very important that any veteran with missing information stop by to see us **by 3:00 pm today**. Your team leaders will be told if you are on the list. We cannot upload the news releases to the web site until they are all completed, so please see us in the Erickson Room right away. We usually need things like home phone numbers, birth dates, local VA medical facility, branch of service, or perhaps a quote to personalize your news release.

If you gave us the names of your local hometown newspapers on your release form, we will notify the paper this

week, telling them that you are here and referring them to the Web site for your release and photo, if we have one. We will select the best digital photo we have of you as you ski, to be attached to your news release on the Web site. We will also give you a single copy of that photo at the end of the week, but you can certainly download and print more.



Unfortunately, we usually have no way of knowing if your newspaper decides to print an article about your participation in the Clinic or when it will appear. Therefore, an envelope will be enclosed in your packet at the end of the week and we hope you will send us a copy of the article for our files. This helps us know when our efforts are successful.

Despite our best efforts, we can never guarantee that any newspaper will print an article. It often depends on the size and type of media market where you live. Please feel free to send another copy of your news release to your local newspaper when you get home. Sometimes, it just takes getting it into the right person’s hand to generate interest and get the article printed.

Thank you for helping us tell your community about your participation in the Winter Sports Clinic this week!

Goal Ball Bounces onto the Scene Once Again at the Clinic



The Clinic’s annual goal ball tournament will be held tonight in the conference center ballroom. This sport began as early as 1946 when it was part of the rehabilitation activities for blind veterans of World War II. It was first introduced to the world during the Paralympics in Toronto in 1978. Since then, the sport of goal ball has grown throughout the world.

The game at the Clinic allows four blindfolded players to compete against another team. A rubber ball with bells inside is used for auditory tracking. There are three members of each team on each end protecting the goal line. Each team has one center and two wings. The game is 14 minutes long, comprised of two seven-minute halves. Each player must wear a blindfold, regardless of the degree of visual impairment. Each player has the option to wear elbow pads, kneepads, hip pads and face protection. Players pass the ball to the other team quickly

to try to keep the other team from getting it. Players are not permitted to communicate with other teammates at any time during play.

Goal ball benefits visually impaired and sighted veterans alike, as it promotes teamwork and cooperation among teammates. It also promotes awareness of the accomplishments of the visually impaired.

Come take part in the tournament tonight from 7–8:30 p.m. in the conference center ballroom. You’ll be glad you did!



Secretary Jim Nicholson speaks with Clinic volunteers during registration. Left to right: Ian Goldspink from Santa Cruz, Calif. (seated), Mike Tadych from Grand Junction VA Medical Center (standing) and Thirza Thompson from the VA Medical Center in Kansas City.



Veterans line up to register Sunday morning.

REGISTRATION



Ronald Clark of Atlanta, Ga., is assisted by Penny Schuckers from the Connecticut VA Health Care System.



Joey Avellone of Belleville, Ill. is assisted by Laura Allen from the Fresno VA Medical Center.



Sean Halsted from Seattle, Wash., goes through registration with Colleen Rosales a volunteer from Los Angeles, and Denise Gunter from Highlands Ranch, Colo.



Don Peters II of Anchorage, Alaska speaks with Kendra Betz from the VA Puget Sound Health Care System.



Town Hall Meeting Tonight

Representatives from VA will conduct a town hall meeting tonight in the Max Park



**Hear Ye,
Hear Ye!**

Room at the
Wildwood
Lodge from
6-7:30 p.m.

Benefits counselors will be on hand to answer your questions about VA benefits available to you. A special emphasis of the meeting will be to discuss the new Traumatic Servicemembers' Life Insurance program that became effective Dec. 1, 2005. Other topics of discussion include adaptive housing benefits, VA's loan guarantee program and health benefits.

Look for the VA benefits booth in the conference center Tuesday and Wednesday if you have any further questions. The counselors are looking forward to meeting you!



More than 140 veterans registered for the Clinic this year for the first time. Most of those new participants have never recorded their military history for the Veterans History Project (VHP). If you are one, or if you've just never taken the opportunity to participate in the VHP before, sign up now to have your story become part of this exciting project, a collaboration between the Department of Veterans Affairs and the Library of Congress. Interviews are taking place in the Janss Auditorium, on the second floor of the Snowmass Conference Center, from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. today through Thursday, and from 8 a.m. to noon on Friday. Stop by to sign up for an appointment. By participating in the VHP, who will make history come alive.



For your reading pleasure...

Zodi Yak

Preparer of horror-scopes and predictor of your future

Aquarius (Jan. 20- Feb. 19)

You will add excitement to a sled hockey game this week. Hit 'em with your best shot!

Pisces (Feb. 20- March 20)

Can't decide what activities to do first? Don't get discouraged, Pisces, you have all week to try them all. Maybe scuba would be a good bet for this water sign.

Aries (March 21-April 19)

An Aries will be airborne today, taking a gondola ride up Aspen Mountain. Enjoy the journey.

Taurus (April 20-May 20)

Don't be bullheaded. The yoga warm-up is a great way to begin this mountain day. (You might also try the yoga cool-down at day's end!)

Gemini (May 21-June 20)

Geminis are known for their perpetual youthfulness. Today, those childlike energies will become apparent when you feel the crisp mountain air on your face. (Just be sure it's not the crisp mountain snow.)

Cancer (June 21- July 22)

Cancers are known for their cautiousness, but you can't resist the mountain's challenges. Conquer them today! (And tomorrow, and the next day...)

Leo (July 23-Aug. 22)

Yes, Leo, we did notice how your new ski attire brings out the color in your eyes! (As always, you look like the Leader of the Pack!)

Virgo (Aug. 23- Sept. 22)

Don't start out with golf today; you may get hit by a flying golf ball. Push your limits on the mountain instead – and have fun skiing!

Libra (Sept. 23-Oct. 23)

We know you're a charmer, Libra, but try not to play cupid with real arrows in archery at the Basalt Trap Club! Shoot for the bullseye.

Scorpio (Oct. 24-Nov. 22)

You will discover one of your secret talents in the snow today. But try tackling the downhill slopes first, wild guy.

Sagittarius (Nov. 23- Dec. 21)

You are a very straightforward person. Don't get carried away and fly straight forward down the steepest slopes.

Capricorn (Dec. 22- Jan. 19)

Goats and rams have much in common. Soon, you will meet an Aries who will become your new favorite ski buddy.

For Third Edition; Tuesday, April 4th, 2006



Medical Assistance

Bedford A Conference Room

A medical room is available each day during Clinic operation hours (from approximately 8 a.m.–9 p.m.) for non-emergent care. The Bedford A Conference Room is located one level below the mall, across the street from the Mountain Chalet Hotel. There is stairway access from the mall next to Christy Sports. For wheelchair access, please use the elevator above the main bus terminal (at the far end of the mall) to get to the medical room level.

Transportation to Bedford A Conference Room

Van transportation is available from the Silver Tree Hotel to the Medical Room. Catch the medical van in front of the hotel, or call the Medical Room for transportation.

After Hours Medical Help

Call the Medical Room for recorded instructions on how to contact the on-call medical provider, or dial the hotel operator.

Medical Room Phone — (970) 923-8330

(extension 8330 on conference center phones)
For life threatening emergencies, dial 911.



Wheelchair & Prosthetic Repair

Conference Center, Sinclair Room
6:30 a.m. to 8:45 a.m.
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.
4 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

For assistance in between those hours, call:
Wheelchair Repair (Don at 300-8006)
Prosthetic Repair (Joe at 300-8024)

Please do not call after 6 p.m. unless it is an emergency.



6 - 7:30 p.m. - CEU Educational Workshop: “The Magic of ‘Rock n’ Roll’; Music in any Recreational Setting” — Presented by, Cristal L. McGill, Ph.D., Kearns Room, Conference Center.

7:30 – 9 p.m. - CEU Educational Workshop: “Yoga: A powerful tool to use with veterans” — Presented by, John C. Dozois, Kearns Room, Conference Center.



The Menu for Today

Monday’s Meal Schedule

Conference Center Ballroom

6:30 to 8:45 a.m.	Breakfast
11 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Lunch
5 to 6:15 p.m.	Dinner

Breakfast Buffet

Fresh Sliced Fruit
Oatmeal with Brown Sugar, Raisins, Sliced Bananas & Skim Milk in a Carafe
Breakfast Breads, Muffins and Biscuits
Breakfast Sausage, Thick-Sliced Ham
Potatoes
Fresh Ground Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Herbal Teas and Assorted Chilled Juice
Omelet Bar with Cooked-to-Order Omelets to include Ham, Cheese, Asparagus, Mushrooms, Roasted Peppers, Fresh Tomatoes, Green Onions, and Salsa

Lunch Buffet

Potato Salad, Tossed Salad
Hot Turkey Sandwiches, French Dip
Sandwiches, Potato Chips
Brownies & Blondies

Dinner Buffet

Caesar Salad with Croutons and Grated Parmesan Cheese
Spinach Salad with Red Pepper and Feta Cheese with Oregano Dressing
Penne Pasta with Meatballs and Marinara Sauce, Meat Lasagna
Zucchini with Red and Yellow Peppers
Italian Bread with Butter

Complimentary massages are available by calling and scheduling an appointment. Massage is located in the lower level lobby of the Silvertree Hotel in the Cabaret Room. Appointments can be made by calling (970) 361-6829.

Complimentary Massages





Today's Schedule

Monday, April 3, 2006

6 - 8 a.m.	Late Registration: Host Room
6:30 - 8:30 a.m.	Breakfast: Conference Center Ballroom
7 - 8:30 a.m.	Yoga Warm Up: Max Park Room, Wildwood Lodge
8 - 11:30 a.m.	Snowmobiling: T Lazy 7 Ranch
8:30 - 11:30 a.m.	Skiing Downhill: Moonshine, Wildcat, Slider
8:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	The Hot Springs, Glenwood Springs
9 a.m. - 3 p.m.	Cross Country Skiing, Snowshoeing (Top of the Village Lunch provided by Elks BBQ)
9 - 11 a.m.	Wheelchair Fencing: Conference Center Ballroom
9 - 11 a.m.	Scuba Diving: Pool, Silver Tree Hotel
9 - 11 a.m.	Sled Hockey: Aspen Ice Rink
10 a.m. - Noon	Rock Climbing: Conference Center Circle
10:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Gondola Trip to Aspen, Lunch at Elks Lodge
11:15 a.m. - 1 p.m.	Lunch: Conference Center Ballroom
11:30 a.m. - 4 p.m.	Shooting Sports/Archery: Basalt Trap Club
12:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Skiing Downhill: Rock Island, Granite, Sneaky's
1 - 3 p.m.	Rock Climbing: Conference Center Circle
1:30 - 3:30 p.m.	Adaptive Golf: Conference Center Ballroom
2 - 4 p.m.	Scuba Diving: Pool, Silver Tree Hotel
3 - 4:30 p.m.	Yoga Cool Down: Max Park Room, Wildwood Lodge
4:30 - 5:15 p.m.	Ski Instructor Meeting: El Dorado Room, Silver Tree Hotel
4:30 p.m.	Team Leader Meeting: Stonebridge Inn Council Meeting Room
5 p.m.	Coaches Meeting: Max Park Room, Wildwood Hotel
5 - 6:15 p.m.	Dinner: Conference Center Ballroom
6 - 7:30 p.m.	VA Informational Meeting: (Adaptive housing, Compensation/pension, Claims, POA) Max Park Room, Wildwood Lodge Presented by the Denver Regional Office
6 - 7:30 p.m.	CEU Educational Workshop: "The Magic of 'Rock n' Roll'; Music in any Recreational Setting Kearns Room, Conference Center Presented by Cristal L. McGill, Ph.D.
7 - 8:30 p.m.	Goal Ball: Conference Center Ballroom
7:30 - 9 p.m.	CEU Educational Workshop: "Yoga: A powerful tool to use with veterans" Kearns Room, Conference Center Presented by John C. Dozois



The Public Affairs Team will be preparing news releases, writing articles for the daily

SkiGram, and working with both local and national media to publicize the events of this week.

If you have ideas for news stories, photographs or something you'd like to see in the *SkiGram*, please stop by the Media Center located in the Erickson Room of the convention Center. We'd love to hear from you!

SkiGram on the Web



Share this newsletter (in full color) with

your friends and family. It is located on the Web at:

www.wintersportsclinic.org

If you have misplaced an item, check Lost and Found, located in the Sinclair Room (Host Room).



Yoga Sessions

Prepare yourself for your day on the slopes at the daily warm-up and cool-down yoga sessions held Monday through Thursday. Sessions will be held at 7 - 8:30 a.m. and 3 - 4:30 p.m. in the Max Park Room at the Wildwood Lodge. Come to yoga and work on those forward bends!



Partly Sunny
Low 24° - High 54°