

Competitor Profile

Houston Brumit – Making Friends, Competing Well, Having Fun!

He may be small in stature, but he's very long on spirit. He's spry, he's witty and he's always full of energy. His smiles are frequent and his words, friendly. A native Texan (as his name implies) he's Houston Brumit, one Golden Age Games athlete named to receive the George Gangi "Most Inspirational Athlete" award for his athletic excellence, sportsmanship and spirit. Though he received the award in 1999, Brumit's champion qualities still shine today.



An 84-year-old WWII Army veteran, Brumit has competed in the Games steadily since 1993, after hearing about the event from a national Games official at his local VA medical center in Bonham. "The first time I went, I thought it was terrific," Brumit says. "I liked the challenge, and I won a gold medal that first year in the pentathlon. But one of the things I really liked was meeting the people and building friendships. It was just an opportunity of a lifetime."

Brumit comes to the Games each year with a team from Bonham and, while he loves the camaraderie of the Games, he also takes the competition quite seriously. He trains during the year, practicing basketball at a nearby college gym, and field events at his home in Denison. He also rides his bicycle regularly, though he admits that he also goes on a "crash course" just before the Games. A long-time participant in the Texas Senior Games, he's brought back medals in track, field, swimming, the pentathlon and several other events. Last year, he won a bronze medal in air rifle, and this year will compete in golf, bicycling, bowling and horseshoes. Active in sports all his life, Brumit played football in high school, was a sprinter in track, and also played basketball, softball, and "whatever else I could get into," he says. He credits those activities with helping him maintain excellent physical fitness and keeping him healthy today. "My health has always been good, but staying active also gives you a better frame of mind," he says. "Your mind-set is much, much better, and it gives you a better attitude and disposition. Then, too, I like to have fun!"

While he calls himself "very competitive," and certainly enjoys winning medals, that isn't the most important thing for Brumit. "I try to tell others who may get on the down side if they didn't do that well at their events, 'look, guys, it's for fun, and we're all winners because we're involved and we're *participating!*'"

Asked what he would advise potential Golden Agers who have not yet tried the Games, Brumit says, "It can change your outlook on life. Watch the others participate, observe them, talk with them, blend in and be a part of it. Let the Games excite you. Carry on a little foolishness (if the coaches will let you get away with it) and have *fun!*"