

National Veterans Wheelchair Games



Athlete Profile (Local)

Brent King – Sitting Down But Not Sitting Still

Army veteran Brent King of Cheney, Washington, has a sense of humor that is contagious, forcing you to laugh along with him. Each sentence seems to end in laughter – or at least a subtle chuckle.

King enlisted in the Army while still in high school and received a full-ride ROTC scholarship to Eastern Washington University where he graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in criminal justice.

In 1994, King was participating in the Best Ranger Competition, a grueling obstacle course held each year at Fort Benning, Georgia, to determine the best two-man team from the United States Armed Forces. While he was practicing on a rope climb, King fell 22 feet, breaking his back. "I wish I had a better story, but that's how it happened," he says.

After a six-year hiatus from competing, King, 38, is returning to the National Veterans Wheelchair Games this July, taking place in nearby Spokane. His first Games were in Atlanta in 1995, and he went at the insistence of the Chief of Prosthetics at the Spokane VA Medical Center, one of the hosts of this year's Games and the facility where King receives care. King's athleticism has stayed with him though, as he went on to win several gold and silver medals over the coming years.

These days, King is a busy man. He and his wife of more than 10 years have twin 7-year-old children, a boy and a girl. "It's a contest to see who tires who out first," he chuckles.

If the twins aren't enough to keep him busy, King is also a general contractor and mortgage broker and the Vice President of the Northwest Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, the other co-host of this year's Wheelchair Games. An avid hunter, he is also a member of Safari Club International, and has even ventured to Africa for a hunting safari.

Over the years, King has watched the Wheelchair Games expand and include many new competitions that encourage others to attend. "There are more events than when I started," King said. "You get to see every sporting event that is open to wheelchairs." Ultimately, King's hope is that participating in the Wheelchair Games will awaken a desire for a newly injured veterans to keep going. "We have a lot of kids here, a lot of newly injured that we need to get out there," he said. "These are all your brothers-in-arms and we are here to support you."

"We may have to sit," he reminds others, "but we don't have to sit still."

