



HOT SHEET

Thursday, July 6, 2006
Kids Day at the Games!

NOTE TO EDITORS: The 26th National Veterans Wheelchair Games take place all this week (through July 8) at the Egan Convention Center, Bartlett High School, Sullivan Arena, and other area venues. More than 500 disabled veteran athletes (including more than 30 recently injured in Iraq) register today for the six-day event. The Games, a great patriotic, sports, and health/fitness story, are the largest annual wheelchair sports competition in the world! Today's highlights include Kids Day, field, track, power chair relay, basketball and the block party. For more information or to arrange for interviews or media opportunities, call the National Veterans Wheelchair Games Media Center (at the Hilton Hotel) at (907) 257-6768; or (907) 257-6769. For continuing updates throughout the week, visit the Games web site at www.wheelchairgames.org.

FIELD EVENTS

9:00 & 10:30 a.m., 12:00 p.m.
Park Strip, 9th and L Street

Field events include javelin, shot-put, discus and club throw (a unique field event specifically designed for higher-level quadriplegic athletes). All events are performed from the wheelchair (or a special stool-type competition chair) in a stationary, stabilized position. **Good photo/interview opportunities, with a variety of field events available in one location at one time. Watch Alaska favorites, George Guilford in shot-put, and Michael Mueller in three field events, along with 2005 gold medalists Ray Brown and Puerto Rico favorite James Torres.**

KIDS DAY ACTIVITIES

10:30 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Bartlett High School

Area children (many with physical disabilities) will participate in both educational and athletic events, with a "closing ceremony" where veteran athletes present the children with their own medal for participating in the program. Under the guidance of experienced athlete mentors, the children will enjoy both educational and interactive activities. This is a wonderful opportunity to introduce the wonderful world of adaptive sports and recreation to children with physical disabilities. **We welcome you to come and cheer on the children, as they cheer for the vets!**

TRACK EVENTS

2:00 & 4:00 p.m.
Bartlett High School

You've got to see this! Wheelchair track events are run as finals on a hard-surface track with a minimum of six lanes. Front casters of the wheelchair constitute the starting and finishing points. Watch competitors from novice to world class run both short and longer distance heats.

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National Veterans Wheelchair Games



HOT SHEET, continued
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TRACK EVENTS (continued)

Wheelchair track provides excellent photo and interview opportunities, as athletes of all ages and abilities compete in the latest, brightly-colored racing wheelchairs and attire. Watch for 2005 gold medalist Holly Koester, along with novices Buddy Hayes and Alaska veteran Latseen Benson as they give it their all!

POWER CHAIR 220

3:30 p.m.
AFS/Sullivan

A fun track event only for motorized wheelchair users to see whose chair goes the fastest.

POWER CHAIR RELAY (Exhibition)

4:00 p.m.
AFS/Sullivan

This relay event allows motorized wheelchair-users to participate in an exhibition relay race. Each team has three athletes that each use different types of power wheelchairs: hand control, head/chin control and mouth control. Watch them team up to beat the competition in this sure-to-be-fun, second-year exhibition today! Alaska veterans Vern Bussing, Susan Macauley and Tracy Durant will all participate in this exhibition event today.

BLOCK PARTY

5:30 p.m.
Town Square

The evening will kick off with our emcee, Jim Henderson, sharing fun and unusual facts about Alaska, as well as entertainers Hobo Jim, Alaska's official state balladeer, and Tommy Rocker direct from Las Vegas! We'll have Alaskan native crafters exhibiting their handmade artwork, live bald eagles, reindeer, owls, golden eagles or hawks, costumed critters, a four-time Iditarod dogsled race champion with dogs and puppies, and also Alaskan beer. **Don't miss this party!**

***BASKETBALL**

7:30 & 9:00 p.m.
Sullivan Arena

The rules for wheelchair basketball are essentially the same as the rules of the National Collegiate Athletic Association, with the wheelchair considered part of the player's body in determining physical contact fouls. Three levels of player classification are used to achieve team balance, and players are allowed two pushes between dribbles. This is a fast and furious competition. **Don't let the wheelchairs fool you—this is hard-core, spirited, exciting basketball with lots of crashing wheelchairs and occasional collisions!** Games 7-10 are tonight, with the finals tomorrow evening. Army veterans Trisha Wilson-Sapp and Orlando Perez, the 2005 Spirit of the Games Award winner, are always players to watch at this exciting event.

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