

National Veterans Wheelchair Games



HOT SHEET

Saturday, July 8, 2006

NOTE TO EDITORS: The 26th National Veterans Wheelchair Games continue end today with events Bartlett High School and the Westchester Lagoon. More than 500 veteran athletes with disabilities (including more than 30 recently injured in Iraq) have competed all week in rigorous athletic events. The Games, a great patriotic, sports, and health/fitness story, are the largest annual wheelchair sports competition in the world! Today's highlights are softball, the motorized wheelchair rally, the Slalom Super G and the closing ceremonies. 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.

MOTORIZED WHEELCHAIR RALLY

8:00 a.m.

Westchester Lagoon

An event for competitors using power wheelchairs, components to the rally include a quiz and poker hand. Each competitor receives a map, instructions and check card at the start. Questions are asked at 10 checkpoints and participants receive a point for each correct answer. One poker card is given at five of the checkpoints. Each competitor gets up to 10 points for the hand received. **Set at picturesque Westchester Lagoon, this is a spirited event, where quiz questions often pertain to the host location of the Games. See how much our athletes know about Alaska!**

SOFTBALL

8:00, 9:30, 11:00 a.m., 12:30, 2:00, & 3:30 p.m.

Bartlett High School

Softball at the Wheelchair Games follows the same rules of official 16-inch, slow-pitch softball except that it is played on a hard surface to accommodate wheelchair movement. Most players use their bare hands rather than softball gloves or mitts. A spirited team event, with good opportunities for participant interviews. The final four teams will be playing for the gold, silver, and bronze medals today, with the Consolation and Championship Games beginning at 3:30 p.m. Celebrate America's true "All Stars" today! If they make the finals, among those to watch are softball greats, Michael Marten (from Great Britain), Trisha Wilson-Sapp, and Wayne Miller, as well as Alaska athlete Larry Crothers from Petersburg.

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SLALOM "SUPER G" (FINALS)

10:00 a.m.

Bartlett High School

This amazing event features the best of the best at wheelchair slalom, competing in the toughest course yet! Winners from earlier slalom events test their mettle event further at this one. Watch these slalom superstars maneuver their way around the steepest ramps and sharpest curves. (Ever see a wheelchair climbs stairs?) Sure to be high-energy *and* high-emotion, with lots of spectator involvement! **If you've seen nothing else, don't miss this event!**

CLOSING CEREMONIES AND BANQUET

7:00 pm

Sullivan Arena

Top VA and PVA leaders address the athletes at tonight's closing event including VA Secretary R. James Nicholson and Acting National Executive Director of PVA Homer Townsend. Alaska Governor Frank Murkowski is also scheduled to attend to greet the athletes. Local competitors and officials from the Alaska VA Healthcare System and the PVA Northwest Chapter, this year's hosts, will hand over the torch to representatives of the Milwaukee VA Healthcare System and the Wisconsin PVA Chapter, hosts of the 2007 National Veterans Wheelchair Games. One special athlete is named the 2006 "Spirit of the Games" winner, but all athletes will congratulate each other on their wins this past week and wish each other well until they meet again next year. An inspiring video highlighting this past week at the Wheelchair Games in Anchorage will close out the evening.

****All events of Saturday provide excellent photo and final interview opportunities!***

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