



Daily Champion

Issue 4

Wednesday, June 13, 2001

Outnumbered? No Problem for These Ladies

By Susan Dekeyser

Alexandria, La., VA Medical Center

Of the 487 participants in this year's Golden Age Games, only 30 are women. But these women are not at all daunted by competing alongside men. In speaking with four women, who are not only veterans of the United States military but also veterans of the Golden Age Games, here's what they had to say.

Joyce Schondell, 64, of Columbia, Mo., is participating in the Golden Age Games for the third year. A former Marine, Schondell had heard about the Games for several years before finally joining the team from Columbia. She comes to the Games mainly for table tennis, but also competes in horseshoes and bicycling.

"This is like old home week," said Schondell. "I feel like the other athletes are part of my family to meet up with each year."

One of the eight competitors here from Columbia, Schondell was cheered on during the horseshoes competition by teammates Helen Mackey and Raymond Holtwick. She gives a lot of credit to the team's coach, Rudy Kelley. "Without Rudy, we would not be here," she said. "I just wish that we could get more women here."

Teammate **Helen Mackey**, 77, an Army Air Corps veteran from Mountain Grove, Mo., competed in swimming on Monday, and was anxiously awaiting those results to see how she did. Speaking about her friend, Mackey said, "Joyce is just fun to be with. And fun is what it's all about!" Mackey will also be competing in the dominoes competition.

Enjoying the Games for her ninth year, **Martha**

Halcomb, from Largo, Fla., learned how to pitch horseshoes from a friend, and he got her started in competition. Soon after, that same friend convinced her to travel to the Golden Age Games. She has been coming ever since. "I do the same events every year—bowling, horseshoes and pentathlon," she said.

In Monday's pentathlon competition, Halcomb won a gold medal. "I improved this year in everything except the softball hit," she said. "It's hard to hit that ball off the tee!"

Halcomb will be having cataract surgery when she returns home from the Games. Before coming to Duncanville, she consulted with her doctor on how to get the best aim in the marksmanship portion of the pentathlon. His advice must have been good, because she "got one bull's eye and four in the number two" on the target.

"I look forward to the Games each year and I can't wait to go back to California next year," Halcomb said. "The group is close-knit, like a second family."

Halcomb has medals from the past nine years displayed in her home. The memorabilia she has collected from each of the past Games have been placed in a scrapbook maintained by the Women Marines organization for entry in their scrapbook competition.

When the team returns to Bay Pines, Fla., the VA Medical Center will host a celebration recognizing their accomplishments at this year's competition, giving them a chance to share their photographs and medals with those who were not able to travel to the event.

Phyllis Hundemer, 68, of Tampa, Fla., a

(continued on page 2)

Women (cont.)

teammate of Halcomb, is attending her 11th Golden Age Games. They are both part of the Bay Pines team, which includes eleven members, two coaches, and “one all-around helper” who, according to Hundemer, “we couldn’t do without.”

Three of the eleven Bay Pines competitors are women. Hundemer has seen a dramatic change in the number of women competing in the Games. “My first year, there were only a handful of women competing,” she said. “This year the number has really increased.”

“Phyllis and I get along so well,” Halcomb added. “She really was a big help to me my

first year. We usually room together.”

Camaraderie is the overwhelming feeling present when visiting with these amazing women veterans and watching their events. But these women are not unaccustomed to being in male-dominated situations, so a sense of competition is also present.

During the horseshoe competition, for instance, Schondell offered encouragement to her challenger and they exchanged heartfelt congratulatory hugs afterward. But as she walked away, she informed her teammates that her score was “better than even some of the men—I’m bringing back a gold!”

Announcements

Attention all coaches! Please report to the Command Center before the end of **today** to verify all return flight information, including: airline, date, time and flight number.

How did you do? Results from the events are now being posted in the cafeteria. This is the only place where results will be posted.

Where’s the Major? Many of you have noticed that Major James Meadows, a big supporter of the Games for the past few years, is not here cheering you on from the sidelines this year. Although he is unable to be here, he’d like to hear from you. You can send him an e-mail message at jmeadows@webster.edu.

Check your e-mail Laptop computers with Internet access are available in Room 908 of Building #9. The room is open from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. for athletes and staff to check messages and communicate with family and friends back home.

Overheard...

Seems some of the participants in the horseshoes competition were a bit surprised by how heavy the horseshoes were. “Did they leave the horse attached?!” one competitor wondered aloud.

Birthdays

If you see any of these athletes this week, be sure to wish them many happy returns!

June 9 – Haskel Russel, San Antonio, Texas, 65

June 10 – Arturo Casillas, San Bernardino, Calif., 65
Kenneth M. Clark, Fort Worth, Texas, 58
Dorothy H. Davis, Barstow, Calif., 84
Lawrence L. Laible, Topeka, Kan., 69
Fredrick D. Stanberry, Englewood, Calif., 69

June 11 – Donald E. Farleo, Binghamton, N.Y., 64
LeLon P. Hicks, Fresno, Calif., 66
Marilyn C. Miller, Northgate, Calif., 62

June 14 – Baldy G. Salmon, Visalia, Calif., 71
Robert F. Samuels, St. Louis, Mo., 77

June 15 – David C. Briggs, Sun Valley, Calif., 78
Edwin F. Duing, Desoto, Mo., 69
Robert J. Forquer, Canandaigua, N.Y., 64



• Today's Schedule •

8:30 – 10:00 a.m.

Billiards (Nine-ball)

DHS Main Gym #5*

all ages, wheelchair/visually impaired

10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Billiards (Nine-ball)

(all events for ambulatory

(65-69; 80+)

competitors after 10:00 a.m.)

1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Billiards (Nine-ball)

(70-74; 75-79; 55-59; 60-64)

9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m.

Bowling (all divisions)

AMF Spare-Time Lanes,

Arlington

7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

Dallas Stars

Dr. Pepper/Stars Center,

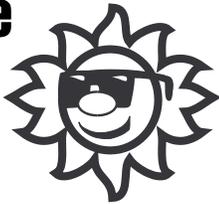
Hockey Clinic

Duncanville

**Duncanville High School*

Medal presentation ceremony daily at 4:30 p.m. in DHS Auditorium #11

Beat the Texas Heat



It's hot out there, so it's important to take precautions to protect yourself from the effects of that strong Texas sun when you're participating in outdoor events. Here are some tips to keep in mind:

- Drink plenty of water both before and during your event.
- Wear sunscreen and a hat whenever possible.
- Stay in the shade as much as possible before your event.
- Bring a towel to dry off and a clean shirt to change into so that you can stay dry.
- Wear loose, light-colored clothing, preferably cotton.

Golden Age Games on the Web

Do you have family and friends who couldn't make the trip to Texas with you? If they have Internet access, they can keep up with the week's activities by visiting the Golden Age Games Web site at www.va.gov/vetevent/gag/2001.

They'll find daily news about the Games, a Games schedule, event results, athlete profiles, a photo gallery and more. Coverage is provided daily throughout the Games, so your family and friends can visit each day for something new. Check it out yourself on the computers in Building #9 (Room 908) at the high school.

Learn to Speak 'Texas'

Here's our last lesson on how to speak like the natives. Now you can talk like a true Texan!

Ahs - the organs of sight

"That book opened mah ahs to a lot of thangs."

Bah - short for "goodbye"

"Well, Ah'll see yawl later. Bah."

- from *The Illustrated Texas Dictionary of the English Language*, by Jim Everhart

Golden Quotables...

“The Golden Age Games is an impetus to keep striving for a healthier way of life. Much of the credit should go to the volunteers who see to it that the athletes have plenty of water in this hot weather, and are truly concerned about our health out there while we are competing.”

—*Andrew Onifer, Bonham, Texas*

“To again be with some of those who served with me in the Korean War is the epitome of my military service and good American citizenship. This will be my first time being together with those that can understand what the good life is all about, as well as our freedom.”

—*Lawrence Gregory, Newark, N.J.*

“Participating in the National Veterans Golden Age Games has made me aware of how important it is to be healthy and active. I feel privileged to have been chosen to represent the Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System in these Games. I enjoy seeing old friends and making new ones each year.”

—*Donald Jones, Tallassee, Ala.*

“I have competed in the Games since 1995, and each year I return home feeling better about myself. I look forward to the competition and renewing old friendships. It keeps me young.”

—*Victor Benson, Sandusky, Ohio*

“At my age, it is sometimes difficult to find a reason to continue serious physical training. The thought of receiving less than a gold medal in our Golden Age Games gives me the necessary motivation I need to really push just a little harder.”

—*James Skinner, St. Petersburg, Fla.*

“I consider it a privilege and an honor to participate in the Games. To interact with like spirits and seek growth in our journey through life is wonderful. The exhilaration of competition, travel and social intermingling is also wonderful.”

—*Lee Williams, Antioch, Calif.*

“I will have nearly 51 years in a wheelchair, so every year I feel blessed in still being able to compete. I love these Games, and it gives me a rush to compete again.”

—*James Hauck, Des Moines, Iowa*

Medical Assistance



The medical suite in the east cafeteria (Building #10) is open from 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. For overnight medical needs, a medical suite at the Ramada Inn in Duncanville is staffed from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m. Nurses are available for overnight medical assistance at the Motel 6 in Duncanville and the Quality Inn & Suites in Grand Prairie.

On the Menu...



Breakfast (6:30-9:00 a.m.):

Frittata, Breakfast Casseroles, Omelets; Cereal, Oatmeal; Pancakes, French Toast; Breakfast Breads; Assorted Fruits; Beverages

Lunch (11:00 a.m.-1:30 p.m.) & Dinner (4:00-6:30 p.m.):

Assorted Salads; Chicken Tortilla Soup with Avacado & Cheese; Hot Ham & Swiss Sandwich, Greek Gyro, Panther Burger, Grilled Chicken Club Sandwich; Filet Mignon Wellington, Grilled Southwest Chicken Breast; Roasted Salmon with Olive Mustard Sauce; Japanese Stir Fry Station; Italian Pasta Station; Assorted Vegetables; Breads and Rolls; Desserts; Beverages