



Issue 4

Friday, June 18, 2004

Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans Participate



Ken Dixon

There are two Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans attending this year's Games and both have been busy winning gold medals. Army veterans Johnnie Williams from Tampa, Fla., and Ken Dixon from Decatur, Ga., have enthusiastically awaited their first time participating. Both men were injured in vehicles while serving in Iraq. Williams was injured when the Humvee he was driving, as part of a convoy, was sideswiped by what is believed to have been a civilian-operated vehicle. Dixon was on a night mission when the Bradley vehicle he was riding in fell into a hole.



Johnnie Williams

"The Games represents competition, challenge and fun," Dixon said. "And of course, it's also a chance to win."

Thursday at the air guns event, Johnnie Williams got a taste of this mixture of competition and support, as he found friendly harassment along with tips for improvement came from all directions. Williams' spirit never wavered. "Being an athlete before my injury, I wanted to continue that tradition," William said. Many thanks to all sponsors who helped these two new veterans attend their first national event, and who are also funding future participants from Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Far from Walkn But Life Rolls On

Darwin Holmes set a new record for the 50-yard freestyle swimming competition Wednesday night. All in a day's work — he also holds the national record in the one-mile for push racing, took two silver medals at the Challenged Athletes Foundation triathlon, was named the 2003 winner of the British Endeavor Award, the highest honor bestowed upon an individual by the British Ex-Services Wheelchair Sports Association, currently holds three Guinness World Records for

skateboarding and plans to set three more in 2004.

So what does he do in his *free* time? Holmes visits Shriners Hospitals to talk to children with new injuries or spinal cord diseases. "I show them tricks in my wheelchair like front flips and cartwheels, and get them fired up to get out of their beds and be active," Holmes said. "I also like to do demonstrations at schools. I thought the kids would want to know more about the



Darwin Holmes

See "Life," cont'd on page 2

Wheelchair Games 2004

“Life,” cont’d from page 1

wheelchair tricks, but their most common question is whether I can play duck, duck, goose with them.” Last summer, Holmes started the *Farfrumwalkn (FFW)* organization to increase public awareness regarding spinal cord injuries, and encourage folks to accept them in able-bodied sports like skateboarding and Xtreme football. FFW is currently organizing “Roll Across America,” with plans to

cover as many big city skate parks as possible in three months to promote spinal cord injury awareness. (For more information, go to www.farfrumwalkn.org.) Skateboarding is his passion and Holmes currently skateboards with the best of the best, sponsored by Bob Burnquist and Tony Hawk. Hawk has selected Darwin to be an opening character on the Sony Playstation *Underground Skate 2005* video game.

Holmes served 11 years in the Army 3rd Ranger Battalion, 75th Ranger Regiment, serving in the Gulf War as well as Afghanistan. “The Wheelchair Games are fun,” Holmes said. “You meet new people and get to cheer them on. After all, we’re one big military family. Competing in this event makes you feel whole again. We might be far from walking, but life rolls on.”



What First Timers Have to Say!

The Eastern Kansas Healthcare System in Leavenworth raised money for William Criswell to attend the Games. “I am thrilled to be able to participate. I will pass the word to other veterans to get involved,” Criswell said. He is competing in five events this week — bowling, softball, nine-ball, table tennis and slalom.



“I am enjoying it,” says Freddy Tamez, an athlete with the VA North Texas Health care System in Dallas, Texas. Tamez is competing in three events — archery, nine-ball and air rifles. It’s his first time in St. Louis, and he said, “I couldn’t wait for the Opening Ceremonies!”

DME & Wheelchair Repair

In need of wheelchair repair?

Renaissance Grand Hotel - Landmark Ballroom, Suite 2 - phone (314) 418-5300.

Emergency or after hours contact Beverly Franklin at (314) 226-7935

Has your pick-up or delivery situation changed?

Contact Beverly Franklin (314) 418-5349 or by cell at (314) 226-7935

Ready to return your equipment?

You will be given your DME loan form at the time you pick up your equipment. Please bring this with you when you return the equipment and/or have it attached to the DME upon pick-up. If the DME is not returned, a bill of sale will be created and mailed to your Team Coach. Your deposit will be returned immediately if you return the equipment yourself. It will be mailed to you after the Games if you choose to have it picked up from your room after your departure.

Wheelchair Repair Hours of Operation

7 a.m. — 7 p.m.
daily through June 19

DME Hours of Operation

June 16 — 18
available by contacting Beverly Franklin at (314) 226-7935

June 19 & 20
8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Today's Schedule

8:00 a.m.	Track Field	IA, IB, IC IV	East St. Louis High School East St. Louis High School
9:00 a.m.	Field Trap Shooting	V Exhibition	East St. Louis High School Winchester Trap & Skeet
9:30 a.m.	Powerchair 220		East St. Louis High School
10:00 a.m.	Field Kids Day Activities	III	East St. Louis High School East St. Louis High School
10:30 a.m.	Powerchair Relay	Exhibition	East St. Louis High School
11:00 a.m.	Field	II	East St. Louis High School
1:00 p.m.	Trap Shooting Field Track	Exhibition IA, IB, IC II – V	Winchester Trap & Skeet East St. Louis High School East St. Louis High School
3:00 p.m.	Trap Shooting	Exhibition	Winchester Trap & Skeet
6:30 p.m.	9-ball	IV-V	America's Center
7:00 p.m.	Slalom Softball	IA, IB, IC Game 5, 6	America's Center America's Center
8:00 pm	9-ball	II – III	America's Center



Veterans History Project interviews conclude this afternoon. Any veterans who wish to record their interviews, which will be sent to the Library of Congress, must do so today. Remember, this historic project is meant to honor our nation's veterans by creating a lasting legacy of their military experience. Regardless of branch or period of service, age, military career or experience, all veterans are invited to share it with our VHP program staff by this afternoon and help make history! Please go to Room 113 to sign up. Thanks to all the veterans who have already participated. Veterans who are volunteers or staff are welcome to sign up as well. Please be sure to keep your appointments!



St. Louis Fun Facts **Did you know?** The 1904 World's Fair in St. Louis introduced and popularized such culinary treats as the ice cream cone, the hot dog, the hamburger and iced tea. The soft drink Dr. Pepper was also first introduced at the 1904 World's Fair.

The soft drink 7-UP was invented in St. Louis in 1929 by Charles Griggs. Originally called Lithiated Lemon, Griggs renamed the drink in 1933 as 7-UP since it has seven ingredients and seven letters in the words.



*Dear Dr. Dan:
here at the Games, I have
encountered
complaints
and concerns
about back
pain. What is
the proper
care for
veterans,
volunteers and staff to prevent
back injuries?*

— Ohmy Akingbak from Omaha

Dear Akingbak:

While the majority of back pain is related to strain from activities,



some of it can be due to just sitting for too long.

Here are a few dan words of advice:

Participants: Try to do pressure reliefs at least once an hour. These are not only for skin protection, but also to help keep you from getting stiff and sore while waiting or watching. Ask for assistance to reposition yourself from volunteers if necessary - they are here to help.

Volunteers: Don't try to lift a person or object that you would not move on your own at home. Get help from others - even if you must come to the medical suite. If you are observing an event, try to move around periodically. This will reduce stress on your spine. If you are standing, try to sit down, or

lean against something to give your back a break.

Staff: Use common sense. Don't move participants without help from others, or with a lift. Bend at the knees, not the waist. Push or pull objects in place of carrying them. Put those backpacks and shopping bags down while watching events - take a load off! Follow the volunteer instructions for repositioning. Take a break - even five minutes can help - and move around. These short breaks can allow you to feel better (and sleep better) at the end of the day.

— Dr. Dan

Dr. Dan Scott is the Medical Director of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games. He specializes in Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the Denver VA Medical Center.

*Photos from
the games*



Archery



Quad Rugby



Handcycling



Softball





Weightlifting



Air Guns



Power Soccer



Scholarship Awarded to California Athlete



Novice athlete Archie Callaham, from Los Angeles, Calif., had a little extra help financing his participation in the Games this year.

Callaham has been awarded this year's Michael Rosenberg Athletic Scholarship, a grant of up to \$1,000 given each year to a first-time National Veterans Wheelchair Games athlete who receives care at a VA facility and who would not otherwise be able to participate in his or her first Games. The recipient is selected each year by the Director of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games and VA's Under Secretary for Health, based on recommendations of a formal selection committee. The selection is based not

on potential to win, but on enthusiasm, a proven record of positive therapeutic performance, and "guts."

The scholarship was established in 2002 by the Honorable Robin L. Higgins, VA's former Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs, in honor of her grandfather, Michael Rosenberg, and her father, Dr. Norman Ross. Rosenberg was a WWI veteran who was a triple amputee. He received care in both military and VA facilities, and bravely supported his family until he succumbed to his wounds in 1933 at the age of only 34. His son, Dr. Norman Ross, went on to serve in the Navy in WWII, and, despite being a disabled veteran himself, received three degrees under the GI Bill. Ross spent his lifetime giving back to society as a teacher and a coach.

An award application was developed and is now included in the Games' registration package. Applications can be submitted by a VA doctor, therapist, or team coach to the National Director of the Wheelchair Games. Now in its second year, there were 16

applicants for the 2004 Rosenberg Athletic Scholarship.

Nominated by his coach, Callaham displays an excellent commitment to bettering himself and the people around him. In addition to showing great patience with others, he is known for his overall understanding and the calming effect he has on fellow veterans and teammates. He is competing this week in power soccer, table tennis, air rifles and bowling, and trained hard every day before arriving in Long Beach. "I am surprised and very honored about this scholarship," Callaham said before the Games. "These Games are a great thing to do, but for me it's not so much about winning – I've really been looking forward to meeting all the other veterans most of all." Congratulations, Archie Callaham – we hope you've enjoyed your first Games!

For more information about the Rosenberg Scholarship or to nominate a deserving individual next year, contact Tom Brown or Judy Stutts (after the Games) at (210) 617-5125.

Prepare Your Luggage for Airport Delivery

Use the Bright Yellow Tags!



To ensure your luggage arrives safely:

- ◆ Complete and attach a **yellow outgoing airport delivery tag** for *each* piece of luggage/equipment to be delivered to the **St. Louis Airport**. Luggage will be picked up outside your hotel room door beginning at **9 a.m.** and concluding at **10 p.m. Saturday**,

June 19, 2004. To avoid the possible rush, you may wish to have hotel staff bring your luggage to the **Landmark Ballroom** prior to closing ceremonies (**6 p.m. - 9 p.m. Friday night.**)

- ◆ Yellow delivery tags must include the **airline name, flight number and time of departure**. Once luggage has been delivered to the airport, volunteers will use this information to sort your luggage. Volunteers will be available at the airport to help locate your luggage and transfer it to the appropriate airline check-in counter.

- ◆ Your carry-on items and personal wheelchair will be transported with you to the airport.

- ◆ All handcycles and sports wheelchairs stored in the Convention Center must also include a **yellow outgoing airline delivery tag**. UPS will deliver items directly to the airport. Cycles and chairs will be checked in on your flight after they clear airport security.

- ◆ Please remove and retain the **UPS number receipt** (located on the right side of the yellow delivery tag). You will use this receipt to identify your luggage at the St. Louis Airport.

- ◆ All **firearms**, including **air rifles**, must be carried in a **locked, hard-shelled carrying case**. These items must also be tagged with the **yellow outgoing airline delivery tag**.

Our Chef's Selections for...



Friday, June 18

Breakfast:

Fluffy Two-Egg Omelet
 Hickory Smoked Bacon
 Home-style Potatoes
 Served with Assorted Juices
 Fresh Muffins, Assorted
 Cereals
 Coffee or Hot Tea

Mealtime Hours:

Breakfast: 6 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.
 Lunch: 11 a.m. – 1:30 p.m.
 Dinner: 4 p.m. – 6 p.m.

Reminder: You must have a meal ticket to enter the dining area.

Lunch:

Everyone must eat at the BBQ at the Track & Field Event (East St. Louis High School)

Dinner:

Mixed Field Greens with Dressing
 Herb Roasted Chicken Breast
 Au Gratin Potatoes
 Green Beans with Almonds
 Roll
 Chocolate Cake
 Iced Tea or Lemonade

No Gold but They've Struck it Rich

Eighty athletes drive the first power relay exhibit. After talking with competitors last year, Doug Conyers, National Veterans Wheelchair Games Official, realized how excited people were about participating in a relay.

With 20 years of experience, Doug said, "The Power 220 just wasn't enough, we needed something else." This relay will consist of three legs, two 200 meters with a 400 meter anchor.



"We will all see just how fast my chair can go," said Ben Brown, Air Force Veteran from Los Angeles, CA. "This is also a great opportunity for me to advertise for the maker of my chair."

With this type of turnout we look to make this a competitive medal event in one to two years."

Watch for this new event Friday, June 18, 10:30 a.m. at East St. Louis High School.

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Air Guns	All	11:00 a.m.
Motor Rally	Motorized	11:00 a.m.
Handcycle	All	11:00 a.m.
Archery	Recurve	11:00 a.m.
Archery	Compound	11:00 a.m.
9 Ball	IV-V	2:30 p.m.
Slalom	IA-B-C	2:30 p.m.
9 Ball	II-III	4:00 p.m.

Attention Athletes!

Please check your hotel billing information tonight by viewing your charges on the menu of your television in your room. Ensuring your charges are accurate now will expedite your check out process from the hotel.

Today's Weather



68° / 86°

Medical Assistance

Convention Center: Medical suite — America's Center, Rooms 116-117 7 a.m. until approximately 10 p.m.

Hotel: Medical support — Renaissance Grand, room 1531 from 7 a.m. to 10 p.m. A Games physician and registered nurse are on call each night (for participants only) at the hotel, call the hotel operator. In the event of a life-threatening emergency, ask the hotel operator to call 911.

Events: Medical staff are at each Games venue, look for the white cross on their shirts.

Medical personnel can care for minor injuries only. Severe injuries/illnesses will be referred to the St. Louis VA Medical Center.



Kids Day

Kids Day at the Games Come Watch Us Play!

Come to Kids Day where local children, including those with physical disabilities, will learn from some of the best wheelchair athletes competing in this year's National Veterans Wheelchair Games.

Kids Day session is from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the track and field area of the East St. Louis Sr. High School. The Kids Day evening session will be from 7 to 8:30 p.m. at the slalom and softball events at the America's Center.

Kids Day provides an opportunity to introduce the wonderful world of adaptive sports and recreation to children with physical disabilities and able-bodied children alike. Athletes helping out this year include: Joey Avellone, Lisa Bard, Ken Dixon, Ken Force, Larry Foster, Gil Garcia, Bobby Jackson, Holly Koester, Ruth Kult, Ken Medieros, Wayne Miller, Chris Rasmussen, James Torres, Darrel McCauley, Steven Ray, Tricia Sapp and Charlie Wittwer.

Thanks to all our veterans from all branches, eras and locations who are serving as role models for area children at Kids Day this year. Everyone is invited to come cheer for the participating children from St. Louis!

Agenda Includes:

- ◆ Intro to Wheelchair Games and Wheelchair Sports
- ◆ Events Display and Instruction
- ◆ Watching Live Competition
- ◆ Interacting with the Athletes
- ◆ Attending the Kids Awards Ceremony



Don't Forget!

This morning (8 a.m.) is the Last Call For Nominations

If you're reading this at breakfast, it's not too late to drop off your nominations for the 2004 Spirit of the Games award. Hustle yourself on over to the Command Center and drop them off by 8 a.m. so they can be considered for this year's award.



Time	Departure Site	Ramps	Venue/Destination
6:00 a.m. - Noon	Washington Street Side	1 & 2	East St. Louis High School
6:00 - 8:30 a.m.	7th Street Side	3 & 4	Trap Shooting - Olin
9:00-10:30 a.m.	7th Street Side	3 & 4	East St. Louis High School
11:00 - 2:00 a.m.	7th Street Side	3 & 4	Trap Shooting - Olin

Newsletter printing costs donated by Pfizer

