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The Hartford Ski Spectacular: So Much More Than A Sporting Event

This edition of Challenge celebrates the 25th anniversary of The Hartford Ski Spectacular (The Hartford having been a sponsor for 19 of those 25 years!). Given this milestone, my perspective reflects on the key role this event has played in the development of adaptive sports and in particular winter adaptive sports.

To start, I must go back to the National Disabled Ski Championships. Led by disabled Vietnam veteran, Jack Benedick, the Ski Championships were started in the ’70s and set the mark for high level ski race competitions; first for amputees and then developing for almost every type of disability. Peter Axelson helped to expand disability categories to paraplegics and others who could not walk with his development of the Arroya Sit-Ski, which was demonstrated at the 1980 World Championships in Norway. As the Championships developed, many participants from the DSUSA chapters and other organizations demanded more instruction and beginner ski racing events. As a result, Adaptive Ski Instructor Training and race camps were established.

With that short history in mind, the real story of Ski Spectacular is the key role it played in the development of adaptive winter sports nationally and internationally. It offered training in adaptive skiing and in regional learn to ski clinics offered by DSUSA. This led to the adoption of adaptive ski teaching as a professional certification within Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA) after various meetings between PSIA and a committee of DSUSA pioneers, including Doug Pringle, Katherine Hayes, and Gwen Allard among others. Today, the National Adaptive Academy is recognized and utilized by PSIA, and ski schools across the nation provide adaptive ski and snowboard clinics.

The advancement of adaptive equipment is another area in which Ski Spectacular has distinguished itself. There is probably not a single piece of adaptive ski and snowboard (and some Nordic) equipment that has not been demonstrated and field tested there. The mono-ski was introduced there, as was the bi-ski, first developed by Michael “Milty” Miltner. Also introduced were walkers with skis, ski bras, radio speaker blind guide systems, high-performance outriggers, snowboarding adaptations, and more. Today, snow sports have opened up to almost ANY type of disability.

Another area is in the advancement of Paralympic eligibility classification. This is extremely important because athletes who want to compete at the Paralympics must be properly classified before they can even be considered for the Paralympics. The late Dr. Robert Harney became a nationally and internationally recognized classifier and helped establish a training program for others. Ski Spectacular became the lead training ground and now hosts classifiers from around the world for training and experience.

Now let’s look at the numbers: Over 10,000 hours of adaptive ski lessons and 1,000 hours of training seminars offered; 2,800 instructors provided adaptive ski training; nearly 900 wounded warriors participated; and 16 countries were represented throughout the years.

Disabled Sports USA certainly could not have accomplished all of this without the commitment from the thousands of volunteers who helped make Ski Spectacular one of the nation’s largest adaptive snow sports event! Together, we have been able to witness the most enduring aspect of Ski Spectacular: the effect it has on those who participate. We have experienced the thrill of seeing the first-time skier’s perspective on life changed in one short week. Wounded warriors have spoken of transforming experiences from their first time away from the hospital with their families. My own experience there charges my battery for the entire year! Some even say that the best thing about Ski Spectacular is the ability to network with, and learn from, other like-minded volunteers and participants from around the nation and the world.

As we enter our next 25 years, I can only hope that what has occurred and the progress made continues and we can see lives changed, opportunities opened, and visions expanded from Ski Spectacular.

Kirk Bauer, JD
Executive Director, Disabled Sports USA, Inc.

I hope you will remember Disabled Sports USA in your 2012 giving plans.
You can donate online at www.dsusa.org.

For federal workers, Combined Federal Campaign #10151.
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INTRODUCING THE SOLEUS TACTICAL FOOT, BUILT FOR THE HEROES AMONG US.

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The foot was inspired by Dale Beatty, Military Veteran, bilateral amputee and co-founder of Purple Heart Homes. His organization is committed to no veteran left behind and provides personalized housing solutions for disabled veterans and their families.

Since July 4, 2012, College Park has donated $200 from each Soleus Tactical purchase directly back to Purple Heart Homes. For more information visit phhusa.org or call 860.728.7950.
Adapt2Achieve: Northwest, August 2012

WHAT: The 7th Regional Adapt2Achieve Conference
WHERE: University of Washington, Seattle
WHEN: August 19-22
TOPICS COVERED:
• Insurance and Risk Reduction Training
• Social Media Marketing
• Volunteer Management
• Event Fundraising
• Archery and Rock Climbing

ATTENDEES: 11 DSUSA Chapters; 1 VA Hospital; 6 nonprofits

WHAT THEY SAID:
“After attending the DSUSA insurance and risk reduction session we were able to tighten up our liability and safety procedures to ensure that they were in line with current trends and DSUSA requirements.”
– Laurel Martin, Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra

“We got inspired by the adaptive rock climbing session. We gained much needed information to take the steps to launch a program of our own. The clinic was very well run and most conference participants had to be pulled away at the end.”
– Christine Brousseau, Oregon Adaptive Sports

“There was a great balance to this conference to include classroom sessions and activities. It kept us all moving, engaged and interacting. There were great opportunities to network with other programs in the region. The result of this networking has resulted in discussions with another program attending our next event to learn about adaptive sailing.”
– Bob Ewing, Footloose Disabled Sailing Association

UP NEXT: For more information about the next Adapt2Achieve Conference, contact Rob Mueller, Chapter Services Manager, RMueller@dsusa.org or (240) 268-0237. The conferences are open to DSUSA chapters and representatives from adaptive sports organizations, such as Veterans Affairs, Parks and Recreation Associations or other community organizations.
Winning Big: Paralympian Tatyana McFadden achieved another victory, winning the women’s wheelchair division of the Chicago Marathon in 1:49:52.

She was spurred on by the appearance of a child with spina bifida she has been communicating with. “I dedicated the win to her and her family,” McFadden said. “It’s about inspiring, so that was my theme for the weekend.”

McFadden, a student at the University of Illinois, also won the Chicago Marathon in 2009. At the Paralympics in London, she won three gold medals and a bronze.

The men’s wheelchair division winner was Josh Cassidy of Toronto with a time of 1:32:58.

USOC Coaches of the Year: Paralympic Coach of the Year for 2011 was awarded to Dave Denniston, the resident swimming coach at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Colorado Springs, Colo. Denniston, a 2008 Paralympian, also conducts speaking engagements to share his journey from an able-bodied Olympic hopeful to a Paralympic athlete turned mentor. His experience has allowed him to integrate his team practices with elite able-bodied team practices, helping assist athletes on both teams reach higher goals.

Karate coach Sensei Jeff Kohn has been chosen as the first-ever recipient of the United States Olympic Committee’s newly-created 2011 Paralympic Coach of the Year for Karate. Kohn is the founding director and head instructor of North Shore Dojo in Glenview, Ill. He is Chairman and National Team Coach of the United States Disabled Karate team. Kohn hopes to have karate recognized as an official Olympic and Paralympic Sport.

Living Their Dreams: 2008 Paralympic gold medal winner in sailing, Nick Scandone, is the subject of an inspiring book written by his widow, Mary Kate. She chronicles her husband’s journey as he battled Lou Gehrig’s disease, while never giving up his passion for sailing. At the time of diagnosis, in July 2002, Scandone was given two to five years to live. His remarkable path from the shock of receiving what was basically a death sentence, to turning his love for sailing into a mission to achieve at the elite level of the sport, is told in the just-released book “Nick of Time: The Nick Scandone Story.”

“My hope is that this book will inspire anyone whose life has taken an unexpected turn,” Mary Kate Scandone said.


Over a four-year time span, filmmaker Franklin Martin chronicles the day-to-day struggles of a teenage boy coming to terms with his need for his deceased father’s approval by pursuing his seemingly impossible dream of becoming the first one-armed player in NCAA Division One history.

The film is expected to expand to theaters across the country. For more information, visit www.thekevinlauestory.com.
New England Blind/Visually Impaired Ski Festival

The second annual NEVI Festival held at Sugarloaf Mountain Resort in Carrabasset Valley, Maine, expects more than 40 visually impaired/blind skiers to join in this week-long event Feb. 10-14. This national event is designed to create a unique social, recreational and educational experience for skiers and snowboarders of all levels. Skiers have the opportunity to develop their skiing abilities with their own guides or qualified volunteers. Skills enhancement is available for guides; or parents, spouses or friends who want to learn to guide from certified PSIA adaptive and experienced clinicians.

“Last year we were pleased to host groups from Texas School for the Blind, Perkins School for the Blind as well as individuals and guides from all across the country,” said Bruce Albiston, event co-chair. “We are able to help with transportation from the Portland airport and offer attractive package pricing to encourage people from all over the country to attend this special festival.”

In addition to skiing, participants can enjoy optional evening activities such as snow tubing and snow cat rides and afternoon snowmobiling. Social activities include a pizza party, a dinner banquet, a wine and cheese party, and breakfasts.

“Getting to know others who are visually impaired and having fun with them all week was the highlight last year,” said Scott Anderson, co-chair. “I am looking forward to skiing with even more people this year as the festival grows. We also welcome other adaptive programs to come and share the week with us.”

Advance registration is required. Visit www.nevifest.org or www.facebook.com/NEVIFest.


Adventure Amputee Camp

Adventure Amputee Camp (AAC) offers a traditional overnight camp experience to amputees from ages 8 to 17. Held at the Nantahala Outdoor Center in Bryson City, N.C., July 10-14, the camp is a venue for attendees to gain confidence and explore their potential in an environment of encouragement and acceptance.

Activities such as river rafting, high ropes, and waterskiing are physically demanding and broaden the physical, mental, and emotional resources of the camper. Bowling, crafts, and swimming stimulate campers to cognitively re-assess what is obtainable or imaginable. As one camper said, “This camp showed me a great time. It let me know I could do more things.”

In addition to self-confidence, a strong social network is formed and reinforced in an environment of trust. On a peer-to-peer level, campers have the opportunity to ground friendships in the shared experience of being an amputee. The unique affirmation provided by these relationships allows the camper to develop confidence in his or her ability to participate actively in society.

On an intergenerational level, conversations with volunteers who have amputations further this confidence and heighten personal expectations. By working across both levels, interactions within the AAC community begin to shift connotations of ‘normal’ and uproot insecurities grounded in perceptions of ‘abnormality.’ As AAC grows, activities continue to expand and new opportunities are created for campers to reach new heights.

Applications will be available on the AAC website beginning March 2013. Visit www.adventureamputeecamp.org.
Step up your game

The Wave Sport foot takes patients to a whole new level of athletic ability with its innovative design. The wave spring between the pylon and heel plate provides unmatched energy return and shock absorption. With its full heel plate, it fits easily into a foot shell and can be worn in any standard athletic shoe. From football to basketball to trail-running, the Wave Sport performs in a league of its own.
Blue Dream

(Left) Spc. 4th Class Danielle Green-Byrd landed a big one during the Hamptons outing.

(Right) The Dormition of the Virgin Mary Greek Orthodox Church of the Hamptons hosted the Blue Dream Summer Gala celebrating the achievements of Wounded Warriors Through Sports at the Sharing Grounds in Bridgehampton. The event was held Aug. 25. A commemorative plaque was presented by Kirk Bauer, founder of Disabled Sports USA, to members of the Church and Blue Dream Committee. From left to right: Father Alexander Karloutsos; Rosanna Scotto, Fox 5 News Anchor and co-host of Good Day New York; Master Sgt. Kuth Tanner; Kirk Bauer, Angela Giannopoulos, Olga Karloutsos-Palladino, and Bruce Mosler, co-chairs; and Father Constantine Lazarakis. Photo courtesy of John Mindala.

Chartis Golf Event

Mike Smith, president, Global Financial Line, Chartis and wounded warrior retired Lance Cpl Robert Yardaro after a great day of golf.
Hood to Coast


(Bottom Left) Tim Conner handcycles at the Hood to Coast Relay Aug. 24-26.

(Bottom Right) Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Donald Balcom, right, with guide David Loewenstein at the Hood to Coast Relay, Aug. 24-26.

Photo Courtesy of K. Christensen

National Triathlon


Yellowstone

(Top) Seven wounded warriors pay it forward in September when volunteering at Yellowstone National Park with ARCH Venture Partners in the project of rebuilding corrals. This is the fourth year for warrior participation.
Disabled Sports USA, in partnership with U.S. Paralympics, is excited to bring a plethora of programs to athletes wishing to participate in snow sports this winter. Whether you are a weekend warrior or budding Paralympian, there are dozens of opportunities to get involved across the USA.

**ALASKA**
- Jan. 1- April 30
  - Adaptive Nordic Ski Program
  - Challenge Alaska
  - Kincaid Park, Moose Meadows
  - www.challengealaska.org
  - Ongoing
  - Sled Hockey Team
  - Challenge Alaska
  - Alyeska
  - www.challengealaska.org
  - Ongoing
  - Mono-Ski Madness
  - Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
  - Mammoth
  - www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org
  - March 1-3
  - Ability Celebration
  - Alpine Ski, Snowboard, Sled Hockey, Biathlon
  - DSUSA Far West
  - Alpine Meadows Resort
  - www.dsusafw.org
  - March 26-31
  - AASI Adaptive Snowboard Clinic
  - Adaptive Sports Center
  - Crested Butte
  - www.adaptivesports.org
  - Dec. 1-3
  - Tennessee School for the Blind
  - Alpine Ski
  - Challenge Aspen
  - Snowmass Village
  - www.challengeaspen.org
  - Jan. 2-11
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Springs
  - www.steamboatstars.com
  - Jan. 10-13
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Springs
  - www.steamboatstars.com
  - Jan. 28- March 16
  - Military/ Vet Ski Weeks
  - Adaptive Sports Association
  - Durango Mountain Resort
  - www.asadurango.org
  - Jan. 31-July 15
  - Winter Weekly Ski Camp
  - Adaptive Sports Center
  - Crested Butte
  - www.adaptivesports.org
  - Feb. 3-8
  - 13th Annual Expand Your Horizons!
  - Ski Camp
  - Telluride Adaptive Sports Program
  - www.tellurideadaptivesports.org
  - Feb. 10-16
  - STARS and Stripes
  - Alpine Ski, Snowboard, Ice Climbing
  - Adaptive Sports Center
  - Crested Butte
  - www.adaptivesports.org
  - Feb. 22-25
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Springs
  - www.steamboatstars.com
  - March 16-18
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports
  - www.steamboatastrs.com
  - March 28-31
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports
  - www.steamboatastrs.com
  - April 1-30
  - Military/ Vet Ski Weeks
  - Adaptive Sports Association
  - Durango Mountain Resort
  - www.asadurango.org

**ARIZONA**
- Feb. 10-12
  - Lift/able Adaptive Alpine Experience
  - Arizona Disabled Sports
  - Sunrise Ski Park, Greer
  - www.arizonadisabledsports.com

**CALIFORNIA**
- Nov. 23- March 31
  - Youth and Warfighter Sports-Alpine Ski and Snowboard
  - United States Adaptive Recreation Center
  - Big Bear Resort
  - www.usarc.org
  - Jan. 1- Nov. 30
  - Adaptive Sports Eastern Sierra
  - Mammoth
  - www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org
  - Jan. 1- March 31
  - Big Bear Ski clinic
  - San Diego Adaptive Sports Foundation
  - www.sdsaf.org
  - Jan. 23-27
  - Operation Mountain Freedom
  - Alpine Ski, Snowboard, Nordic, Biathlon, Snowmobiling
  - Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
  - Mammoth
  - www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org
  - Feb. 6-10
  - Alpine Ski and Race Camp
  - Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
  - Mammoth
  - www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org
  - Feb. 9-10
  - Adaptive Alpine Level 2 Race
  - Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
  - Mammoth
  - www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org
  - March 1-3
  - Mono-Ski Madness
  - Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
  - Mammoth
  - www.disabledsportseasternsierra.org
  - March 26-31
  - Ability Celebration
  - Alpine Ski, Snowboard, Sled Hockey, Biathlon
  - DSUSA Far West
  - Alpine Meadows Resort
  - www.dsusafw.org
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  - Adaptive Sports Center
  - Crested Butte
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  - Steamboat Springs
  - www.steamboatstars.com
  - March 16-18
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports
  - www.steamboatastrs.com
  - March 28-31
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports
  - www.steamboatastrs.com
  - April 1-30
  - Military/ Vet Ski Weeks
  - Adaptive Sports Association
  - Durango Mountain Resort
  - www.asadurango.org

**COLORADO**
- Nov. 1-April 30
  - REC/Challenge Autism Instructor/ Volunteer/ Intern Training
  - Challenge Aspen
  - www.challengeaspen.org
  - Dec. 7-13
  - Tennessee School for the Blind
  - Alpine Ski
  - Challenge Aspen
  - Snowmass Village
  - www.challengeaspen.org
  - Jan. 2-11
  - Mono Ski Camp & Racer’s Edge Camp
  - Challenge Aspen
  - Snowmass Village
  - www.challengeaspen.org
  - Jan. 10-13
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Springs
  - www.steamboatstars.com
  - March 16-18
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports
  - www.steamboatastrs.com
  - March 28-31
  - STARS Youth Ski and Ride Camp
  - Steamboat Adaptive Recreational Sports
  - www.steamboatastrs.com
  - April 1-30
  - Military/ Vet Ski Weeks
  - Adaptive Sports Association
  - Durango Mountain Resort
  - www.asadurango.org

**INDIANA**
- Ongoing
  - Nordic Skiing
  - Special Outdoor Leisure Opportunities
  - Rum Village Park
  - www.skiskomichiana.org

**ILLINOIS**
- Ongoing
  - Nordic Skiing
  - Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association
  - Lake Bluff and Pleasant Prairie, Wis.
  - www.glasa.org
  - Ongoing
  - Youth Adaptive Ski Program
  - Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association
  - www.glasa.org

**IOWA**
- Jan. 1- Feb. 4
  - Veterans No Boundaries 2013 Winter Program
  - Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation
  - Newry
  - www.maineadaptive.org
  - Feb. 23-25
  - Sunday River Diana Golden Race
  - Alpine Ski
  - Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation
  - Newry
  - www.maineadaptive.org
  - Ongoing
  - Instruction for Veterans
  - Alpine Ski
  - Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation
  - Newry
  - www.maineadaptive.org
  - Ongoing
  - Enhanced Volunteer Training
  - Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation
  - Newry
  - www.maineadaptive.org

**IDAHO**
- Jan. 1-Feb. 28
  - Fresh Tracks Sled Hockey
  - Sun Valley Adaptive Sports
  - Atkinson Park
  - www.svasp.org

**MAINE**
- Jan. 1- April 30
  - Higher Ground Snow Sports
  - Various winter sports
  - Sun Valley Adaptive Sports
  - www.svasp.org
  - Feb. 22-23
  - Adaptive Skiing for Veterans with Disabilities
  - Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall (AWeSOMe)
  - www.awesomemaine.org

**MASSACHUSETTS**
- Jan. 1- April 30
  - Adaptive Skiing for Veterans with Disabilities
  - Adaptive Wilderness Sports of McCall (AWeSOMe)
  - www.awesomemaine.org
MARYLAND
Ongoing
SKI MASH and BARS Adapted Snow Skiing Program
Baltimore Adapted Recreation and Sports
Roundtop Mountain Resort
www.barsinfo.org

MASSACHUSETTS
March 8-10
Warfighter Snowsports Weekend
Alpine Ski and Snowboard
STRIDE Adaptive Sports
Jiminy Peak
www.stride.org

MINNESOTA
Feb. 11-16
Great Lake Mono-Ski/Race Camp
Warfighters and Youth
Courage Center Duluth
www.couragecenter.org

MONTANA
Dec. 10-April 9
Ski Program
Eagle Mount Billings
Red Lodge Mtn Resort
www.eaglemount.us
Feb. 4-7
EMBLEM Winter Sports Camp
Alpine Ski and Snowboard
Eagle Mount Bozeman
Big Sky
www.eaglemount.org

NEW HAMPSHIRE
Jan. 14-18
16th Annual Winter Sports Clinic for Disabled Veterans
Alpine Ski and Nordic
New England Handicapped Sports Association
Mount Sunapee
www.nehsa.org
Jan. 19
Diana Golden/Mills Cup Race
Alpine Ski
Bretton Woods Adaptive Sports & Recreation
www.bwadaptsports.org
Jan. 26-27
AdventureQuest 2013
Alpine Ski
Attitash
www.abilityplus.org
March 20-24
New England Disabled Sports Coalition
Alpine Ski, Snowboard, Snowshoe, Nordic, Biathlon
New England Disabled Sports
Loon, Bretton Woods,
Waterville Valley
www.nedisabledsports.org

NEW MEXICO
Jan. 1-March 30
Adaptive Ski Program
Santa Fe, Sandia Peak, Pajarito Mtn.
www.adaptiveski.org

NEW YORK
Nov. 1
Volunteer Instructor and Coaches Seasonal Training
The Adaptive Sports Foundation, Inc.
Windham Mtn.
www.adaptivesportsfoundation.org
Jan. 1-Feb. 28
Lounsberry Adaptive Ski Program
for Veterans
Holiday Valley Resort
www.lounsburynadaptive.org
Jan. 26
Diana Golden/Mills Cup Race
Alpine Ski
Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports
Greek Peak Resort
www.gpadaptive.org
Jan. 26-31
Winter Challenge
Alpine Ski and Snowboard
Greek Peak Adaptive Snowsports
Norwich
www.gpadaptive.org
Feb. 20-23
Diana Golden Race Camp and Level 1 Race
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Windham Mtn.
www.adaptivesportsfoundation.org

NORTH CAROLINA
Jan. 26
DSUSA Beech Mtn. Resort
Learn to Ski Event
SPARC
Beech Mtn. Resort
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OREGON
March 1-3
Heroes in Sisters
Alpine Ski
Oregon Adaptive Sports
www.oregonadaptsports.org

Pennsylvania
Dec. 15-March 15
Winter Sports Program
Alpine Ski and Snowboard
Two Top Mountain Adaptive Sports Foundation
Whitetail Ski Resort
www.twotopadaptive.org

Pennsylvania
Jan. 1-Feb. 28
Warfighter Sports Development Program
Alpine Ski and Snowboard
Blue Ridge Adaptive Snow Sports (BRASS)
Liberty Mountain
www.brassk.org
Feb. 5-9
Stars of Tomorrow Youth
Cameback Mountain Ski Camp
Adaptive Adventures and Pennsylvania Center for Adapted Sports
www.adaptiveadventures.org

UTAH
Nov. 1- April 1
Ski and Snowboard Military/Veterans Program
National Ability Center
Park City, Deer Valley,
Canyons Resorts
www.discovernarc.org
Dec. 1- April 8
PSIA-AASI training and certification programs
National Ability Center
Park City Resort
www.discovernarc.org
Jan. 1-March 31
Learn-to-Ski Clinics
Common Ground Outdoor Adventures
Beaver Mountain Ski Resort
www.cgadventures.org
Feb. 11-March 18
Youth Learn to Nordic Ski
Common Ground Outdoor Adventures
Beaver Bottoms, Bear River,
Logan Canyon
www.cgadventures.org
March 20-22
Huntsman Cup Nor Am
Alpine Ski
National Ability Center
Park City Resort
www.discovernarc.org

VERMONT
Nov. 1-Dec. 31
PSIA Training
AbilityPLUS
Mount Snow
www.abilityplus.org
Jan. 24-27
AbilityPLUS Race Camp
Alpine Ski
AbilityPLUS
Mount Snow
www.abilityplus.org
Feb. 2
Diana Golden Race
Alpine Ski
AbilityPLUS
Mount Snow
www.abilityplus.org
Feb. 8-12
The Annual Winter Ski Festival
Vermont Adaptive Ski and Sports
Pico Mountain
www.vermontadaptive.org

WASHINGTON
March 17
Bridging the Gap
Instructor Training
Outdoors for All Foundation
Summit at Snoqualmie
www.outdoorsforall.org

WEST VIRGINIA
March 1-31
Warfighter Sports Family Ski Camp
Challenged Athletes of West Virginia
Snowshoe
www.wvsports.org

WISCONSIN
Jan. 1-31
Stars of Tomorrow Youth
Cascade Ski Camp
Adaptive Adventures
www.adaptiveadventures.org
Feb. 8-10
Stars of Tomorrow Youth
Cascade 2 Ski Camp
Adaptive Adventures
www.adaptiveadventures.org

WYOMING
Feb. 21-March 3
Wyoming Adaptive Ski Experience
Teton Adaptive Sports
Grand Targhee/Jackson Hole
www.tetonadaptsports.com

INTERNATIONAL
Jan. 1-April 1
Winter/Spring Certification Trip
Scuba
SUDS Diving Inc.
Caribbean
www.sudsdiving.org

fall 2012 | CHALLENGE MAGAZINE | 17
You stand with your eyes closed, hearing nothing but the pure air as it moves in and out of your lungs. It smells faintly of pine and chills you despite the layers of clothing.

You’re thinking about the day years ago that you opened your eyes to a white hospital room and your disability. Time passed strangely after that day, in moments of fast frustration and dragging weariness, until finally you were moving again. On your shoulders you carried the weight of new routines, new terminology, new difficulty with old tasks.

You open your eyes and see not the white of a hospital room but the white of a snow-covered mountain. At this point you’ve taken lessons, as well as your share of hard falls on the frozen ground. Your fingers and toes are numb with cold, but you’re strapped to the slippery snowboard again. Below you, a scenic vision of powdery slopes is bright with reflected sunlight.

You take one deep, cold breath. Then you release, and stillness turns to exhilarating motion. Your muscles respond on cue. The act of coping, which still lingers in the background day-to-day, blows away with the wintry wind whipping past. There are no heavy thoughts here, only riding, maneuvering downhill, carving turns, and weaving through trees.

Here is what you once feared you’d lost, something timeless and untouchable that the mountain reveals. Here you used your body, changed though it may be, to reclaim something intangibly yours—freedom. This is the moment when the limits imposed by a label are crushed.

And besides that, it’s fun!
“Individuals with mobility impairments often see gravity as a daily obstacle, but with these sports [skiing and snowboarding], gravity truly works in our favor,” said Tim Kroes, Executive Director of the Adaptive Sports Association in Durango, Colo.

In his experience, many people with disabilities struggle to find a true sense of freedom and independence. “The feel of adrenaline and wind in your face draws many participants. After adaptations are made with equipment or technique, the playing field is leveled with able-bodied skiers and boarders,” Kroes said. “These sports allow easy access to fresh air and spectacular mountain scenery.”

Diane Barras, certified OT, member of the U.S. Paralympics Alpine Ski Team, and Program Coordinator for Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation, has heard a few people say snowboarding accommodates their specific disability better than skiing, or that snowboarding puts them at less risk of injury. “It’s more about personal preference,” she said. “The preference for snowboarding doesn’t seem to be limited to a particular age, gender, or other demographics, either.”

Who can do it? “It’s no harder than learning other winter sports. It just takes some time, patience, and desire,” Barras said. “As with everyone learning to snowboard, you will probably spend some time on the snow.”

Travis Thiele, National Ability Center Snowboard Team Manager, said that gravity doesn’t discriminate. “Everyone can go downhill!” In particular, people with body asymmetry are good candidates for adaptive snowboarding, including cerebral palsy, hemiplegia, amputations, visual impairments, and spinal cord injuries.

Similar to sit skiing, sit snowboarding can be done on a mono-board. Sit snowboarding has been around for many years according to Daniel Gale, Executive Director and Co-Founder of Adaptive Action Sports. “One of the true pioneers of sit snowboarding is Jesse Horn,” he said. “These devices are extremely versatile in deep powder snow.” He pointed out, though, that this version of the sport won’t be included in the Paralympics.

Thiele knows of several different ways to sit snowboard. “Freedom Factory has a converter called a ‘Shredder Plate’ that allows one to put a snowboard under a mono, and Hands On Concepts has built boards and binding modeled after our own prototypes that allow a mono to be put on a board,” he said. “There are various teams throughout the world building prototypes of similar devices for sit snowboarding.”

Gale said that for amputees, a general-use athletic leg and foot combo (not a running leg) is best. “Robotic legs are more difficult to set up and use on the snow.”

Look for average return and stiffness in the leg. “You do not want a foot that is too soft or stiff in the toe,” he said. “Although you do want some shock absorption, having too much return or stiffness would result in getting tossed around and having a limited amount of edge response on the snowboard. For a quicker reaction and response time, we recommend to our experienced below knee amputee riders a foot and leg combo with medium stiffness and no extra shock.”

Gale qualified that each experience is unique to the rider, and your trainer should take special care to tailor the experience for you individually. An above knee amputee, for example, would absolutely benefit from additional shock.

Thiele pointed out that in addition to a strong, durable foot with some inline, vertical shock absorption, a new snowboarder also might use tethers or outriggers for learning. No other specialized equipment is necessary. “Any competent adaptive snowboard instructor should be able to allay the client’s fears by having tethers at their disposal and absolute confidence in their ability to use them,” he said.

From gentle slopes to the most advanced, adaptive snowboarders have the potential to take on any hill they choose—if they can put in the practice time to get there. Thiele has athletes doing green, blue,
black and double blacks, powder runs, tree runs, mogul runs, the park, boardercross, halfpipe, and slopestyle. Gale has riders who are very successful in halfpipe, slopestyle, boardercross, and even on steep off-piste or backcountry terrain.

the first lesson

Kroes explained the steps taken by a new adaptive snowboarding student during the first lesson at the Durango Mountain Resort. “We focus on a very personal, relaxed, low-stress atmosphere,” he said.

- Complete a student intake form with details about the disability, activity level, medications, etc.
- Meet the private instructor and one of the program directors.
- Discuss personal goals, physical abilities, concerns, etc.
- Be fitted with equipment and a helmet, borrow any necessary cold weather gear, and move outside to the beginner terrain.
- Get comfortable with the equipment, flat terrain movement, and concepts of the sport.
- Move to a beginner chairlift on easy terrain.
- At any point throughout the lesson, make any necessary adjustments or modifications to the equipment.
- Take warm-up breaks and eat a meal when the student chooses.

Gale stressed that beginner lessons at Adaptive Action Sports are completely tailored to the individual. “Our instructors are trained to move at your speed and pace, applying just enough pressure to keep you progressing,” he said. “The experience is exciting, fulfilling, and oftentimes life-changing.”

Experts urge anyone with a disability to choose an instructor who’s certified in adaptive snowboarding. “Adaptive instructors are trained to notice small details in a snowboarder’s stance or technique due to their individual disability that may be affecting their overall performance, and how to correct those details to improve the end result and experience,” Gale said.

According to Thiele, the difference between an able-bodied instructor and one trained in adaptive snowboarding is specialty knowledge of prosthetics, modifications, boots and bindings, revised teaching techniques and drills, and the presence of “other disabled riders as resources and encouragement to see that it can be done.” He noted that improper setup of the bindings is perhaps the most common mistake of novice snowboard instructors.

Added Barras: “Having someone that fully understands the aspects and demands of snowboarding, along with the available modifications for different physical needs, may make the difference between carving turns and sitting in the snow all day.”

from recreation to competition

You took the lessons, you conquered the beginner slopes and beyond, and you’re sore in places you didn’t know could get sore. Each time you set your boots to the board and let loose into the snow, that initial feeling comes back stronger—exhilaration, tension, satisfaction, and liberation. It’s a combination that pulls you to the mountain again and again.

In fact, you enjoy it so much that you start to wonder…what if? What if you tested your boundaries, learned more, and practiced harder? Could you experience the thrill of competition?

Full-time training programs and camps for adaptive snowboard competition are established or starting up in locations all over the country. The first step, Gale cautioned, is to seek out proper coaching. He said, “A big mistake instructors versus coaches might make is bringing inexperienced riders to competition when they are not ready—opening them up to injury.” He urged snowboarders to get professional insight from trained and experienced coaches before attempting to compete.

“Oftentimes within the first few hours of being on a board, an individual can tell if it’s a new passion or something they enjoyed only trying the one time,” he said. “If they love the sport like we do, we’ll invite them continued on next page >>
to participate in one of our intermediate camps that has a competition component. After additional training they would be given the opportunity to test their skills against other intermediate adaptive snowboarders.”

Next, if they want to continue to improve their skills and compete, they’ll be invited to participate in additional race development programs. He said, “Over the course of a year or two, they would be introduced to and encouraged to attend the full schedule of competitions to gain more experience.” Then if they prove successful in competition, they’ll be invited to train with the Elite Team and coaches of Adaptive Action Sports.

Adding that race boards and gear are very specific to competitive snowboarding, Gale said, “Like any sport, the more skilled you become the more crucial it is to have high performance gear that can keep up.”

**paralympic bound**

“The sport is being recreated from scratch as we speak,” said Kevin Jardine about para-snowboarding, the name for competitive adaptive snowboarding in the 2014 Paralympic Winter Games in Sochi, Russia. Jardine is the U.S. Olympic Committee’s High Performance Director of Paralympic Alpine Skiing.

“The athletes will race the course one at a time. Classifications will be established this season and used in the future.” He added, “There is a ton of uncertainty in snowboarding right now.”

The upcoming Paralympics will be the first to include para-snowboarding. The surprise announcement on May 2, 2012, that para-snowboarding would be a Paralympic medal sport with men’s and women’s standing events, meant many adaptive snowboarders finally would have a chance to realize their dreams.

The announcement made history, and took a great deal of work to initiate. Support for the sport grew to include everyone from passionate adaptive snowboarders to gold-medal Olympians, and efforts included everything from a Change. org petition drive to an aggressive video titled Dear Sochi (Fiat Lux Productions LLC, http://vimeo.com/31815545).

“The athletes are very excited to be included in the Paralympics in Sochi,” Jardine said. “We have some of the most talented riders in the world, and we have some very strong medal hopes.”

The only snowboard event that will be held is the Stand-Up Boardercross for Men and Women with six medals to be won—three for men, three for women. Boardercross can feature straight jumps (kickers), angle jumps (spines), mogul bumps, banked corners, and huge turns.

The International Paralympic Committee will host World Cups for qualifying. “In the U.S., we will be hosting two NorAm events and a National Championship. U.S. athletes must finish first, second, or third in a NorAm to be considered for entry by the U.S.,” he explained. “We can field a maximum of five athletes in both the men’s and women’s events.”

In the IPC press release announcing the inclusion of para-snowboarding, the president of the World Snowboard Federation, Gunnar Tveit, is quoted: “Knowing that the riders will have the chance to compete in the sport they love in 2014 is rewarding not only because the athletes will be recognized for their hard work but also because the inclusion of Para-Snowboard in the Sochi 2014 Winter Games will provide an unprecedented level of exposure to the sport.”

The future of adaptive snowboarding has already begun. The sense of freedom, the thrill of competition, the sweat of training, and the power of victory—they wait for you on the mountain.
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FROM THE OPENING CEREMONY WHERE 4,200 PARALYMPIANS FROM 166 COUNTRIES ENTERED THE OLYMPIC STADIUM TO THE CLOSING CEREMONY 12 DAYS LATER, THE 2012 PARALYMPIC GAMES IN LONDON FINISHED AS THE BIGGEST, BRIGHTEST YET.

BY CYNTHIA MARSH
On Aug. 29, the London 2012 Paralympic Games Opening Ceremony, themed “Enlightenment,” was narrated by Stephen Hawking, noted British theoretical physicist who has motor neurone disease. Hawking took the audience on a journey of discovery through the realm of ideas, science, and creativity. The spectacle included singers, dancers, acrobats, a light show, and the parade of athletes. For the first time, the 3.5 hour performance was televised by the BBC in its entirety. The British Royal Family in attendance included Queen Elizabeth escorted by her son Prince Edward, and Prince William and Duchess Kate.

The closing ceremonies in front of an audience of 80,000 and an estimated 7.7 million television viewers, was even more dazzling with disabled aerial performers from Circus Space and The British Paraorchestra. Musical guests Coldplay, Jay Z, and Rihanna had the audience rocking. After the Paralympic flag was passed to the Mayor of Rio de Janeiro, whose city will host the 2016 summer Paralympics, performers from Rio put on a performance fusing hip-hop freestyle and samba, performed by disabled and nondisabled dancers.

But it was the Games that were the main event with World and Paralympic Records broken in nearly every sport. In the race for overall medals in the Paralympics, China finished with 231 to lead all countries. Britain had 120, followed by Russia with 102. The U.S. had 98 medals, fourth in the overall medal count.

**HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE GAMES**

Winner of 5 gold medals, 2 silver, and 1 bronze, Jessica Long is tied with two others for Top Paralympic Medalist. She was joined by Australian swimmers Jacqueline Freney and Matthew Cowdrey.

Six-time Paralympian Allison Jones is only the second female athlete in U.S. Paralympic history to win a gold medal in both the summer Paralympic Games (cycling) and Winter Paralympic Games (alpine skiing).

Nick Taylor and doubles partner David Wagner pulled off a record-setting performance in wheelchair tennis when the duo won their third consecutive gold medal in the men’s quad division.

Exactly one year after Navy Lt. Brad Snyder was injured on a deployment in Afghanistan, he won his second gold medal of the Games in the men’s 400m freestyle.

U.S. Men’s first wheelchair basketball medal since 2000.

Jeff Fabry won the first U.S. gold medal in archery since 1984.

The U.S. Rugby team finishes the Games with their third consecutive Paralympic medal. Team motto: Together As One.

80,000 fans fill Olympic stadium to watch Richard Browne, Blake Leeper, Jerome Singleton, South Africa’s Oscar Pistorius, and Britain’s Jonnie Peacock race in the T44 100m. The gold went to Peacock and silver to Browne.

Oscar Pistorius makes history by competing in both the Olympics and Paralympics. Wins 2 golds and a silver at the Paralympics.

Shirley Reilly captured gold in the Women’s Marathon the final day of the 2012 Paralympic Games. Centered around The Mall near Buckingham Palace, the streets were lined with spectators for miles.

Tatyana McFadden and Hannah McFadden became the first siblings to ever compete in a final (T54 100m) for Team USA in a Paralympic Games.

First time Paralympians who won medals included: Victoria Arlen, Chuck Aoki, Joe Berenyi, Richard Browne, Monique Burkland, Chad Cohn, Zena Cole, Dartanyon Crockett, Joe Delagrange, Megan Fisher, Jen French, Michelle Gerlosky, Nate Hinz, Trevor Jenifer, Anna Johannes, Rob Jones, Kaleo Kanahele, Sam Kavanagh, Blake Leeper, Raymond Martín, Oksana Masters, Rebecca Meyers, David Prince, Adam Scaturro, Ian Silverman, Brad Snyder, Matt Stutzman, Shaquille Vance, Mallory Weggemann.

Navy Lt. Brad Snyder served as the U.S. flag bearer for the closing ceremony

The United States Olympic Committee named Jessica Long, Paralympic SportsWoman of the Year; Raymond Martín, Paralympic SportsMan of the Year; and the Men’s Quad Doubles Wheelchair Tennis Team, Paralympic Team of the Year.
ARCHERY
Jeff Fabry, ARW1
Gold. Men’s Individual Compound
Matt Stutzman, ST
Silver. Men’s Individual Compound Open

CYCLING
Monica Bascio, H3
Silver. Women’s Individual H3 Time Trial, 33:39.26
Silver. Women’s Individual H1-3 Road Race, 1:42:07

Joe Berenyi, C3
Gold. Men’s Track Cycling, Individual C3 Pursuit, 3:37.912
Silver. Men’s Individual C3 Time Trial, 23:31.73 (World Record)
Bronze. Mixed Team Track Cycling [Team Event], 52.749

Kelly Crowley, C5
Bronze. Women’s Individual C4-5 Road Race, 1:48:34
Bronze. Women’s Individual C5 Time Trial, 25:14.51

Muffy Davis, H2
Gold. Women’s Individual H1-2 Time Trial, 31:06.39
Gold. Women’s Individual H1-3 Road Race, 1:41:34
Gold. H1-4 Mixed Relay [Team Event], 30:07

Megan Fisher, C4
Gold. Women’s Individual C4 Time Trial, 26:04.39
Silver. Women’s Track Cycling, Individual C4 Pursuit, 4:07.147

Allison Jones, C2
Gold. Women’s Individual C1-3 Time Trial, 26:58.54
Bronze. Women’s Track Cycling, 4:27.793
Bronze. Women’s Individual C1-3 Road Race, 1:29:11

Sam Kavanagh, C4
Bronze. Team Track Cycling [Team Event], 52.749

Oscar Sanchez, H4
Gold. H1-4 Team Mixed Relay [Team Event], 30:07
Bronze. Individual H4 Time Trial, 25:35.26

Jennifer Schuble, C5
Silver. Women’s Track Cycling, C4-5 500m Time Trial, 37.941
Bronze. Team Track Cycling [Team event], 52.749

Matthew Updike, H2
Gold. H1-4 Team Mixed Relay [Team Event], 30:07

JUDO
Myles Porter, B3
Silver. Men’s 100kg

Dartanyon Crockett, B3
Bronze. Men’s 90kg

continued on next page >>
ROWING
Rob Jones, TA
Oksana Masters, TA
Bronze. Trunk and Arms Mixed Double Sculls

SAILING
J.P. Creignow, TPB
Jen French, TPA
Silver. SKUD-18 Event (two-person keelboat)

SWIMMING
Victoria Arlen, S6
Gold. Women’s 100m Freestyle, 1:13.33
Silver. Women’s 400m Freestyle, 5:20.18
Silver. Women’s 50m Freestyle, 35.32
Silver. 4x100m Freestyle Relay [Team Event], 4:24.57
Kelley Becherer, S13
Gold. Women’s 50m Freestyle, 27.46
Gold. Women’s 100m Freestyle, 59.56
Bronze. Women’s 200m IM, 2:30.36
Bronze. Women’s 100m Breaststroke, 1:21.50
Tucker DuPree, S12
Silver. Men’s 100m Backstroke, 1:01.36

Jessica Long, S8/SB7/SM8
Gold. Women’s 100m Butterfly, 1:10.32, Paralympic Record
Gold. Women’s 400m Freestyle, 4:42.8, World Record
Gold. Women’s 100m Freestyle, 1:05.63, World Record
Gold. Women’s 100m Breaststroke, 1:29.28, Paralympic Record
Gold. Women’s 200m IM SM8, 2:37.09, Paralympic Record
Silver. Women’s 100m Backstroke, 1:18.67
Silver. Women’s 4x100m Freestyle Relay [Team Event], 4:24.57
Bronze. Women’s 4x100m Medley Relay [Team Event], 4:54.13

continued on page 30 >>
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FREEDOM INNOVATIONS
SWIMMING (continued)

Rebecca Meyers, SM13
Silver. Women’s 200m IM, 2:30.13
Bronze. Women’s 100m Freestyle, 1:01.90

Roy Perkins, S5
Silver. Men’s 50m Butterfly, 34.57
Silver. Men’s 100m Freestyle, 1:14.78
Bronze. Men’s 50m Freestyle, 33.69
Bronze. Men’s 200m Freestyle, 2:43.14

Susan Beth Scott, S10
Silver. Women’s 4x100m Freestyle Relay [Team Event], 4:24.57
Bronze. Women’s 400m Freestyle, 4:37.23
Bronze. Women’s 4x100 Medley Relay [Team Event], 4:54.13

Ian Silverman, S10
Gold. Men’s 100m Freestyle, 40.91

Elizabeth Stone, S9
Bronze. Women’s 100m Butterfly, 1:10.10
Bronze. Women’s 100m Backstroke, 1:12.28

Brad Snyder, S11
Gold. Men’s 400m Freestyle, 4:32.41
Gold. Men’s 100m Freestyle, 57.43
Silver. Men’s 50m Freestyle, 25.93 (Personal Best)

Mallory Weggemann, S8
Gold. Women’s 50m Freestyle, 31:13
(Paralympic Record)
Bronze. Women’s 4x100m Medley Relay [Team Event], 4:54.13

Justin Zook, S10
Gold. Men’s 100m Backstroke, 1:00.01
(Paralympic Record)

TRACK & FIELD

Richard Browne, T44
Silver. Men’s 100m, 11.03

Jeremy Campbell, F44
Gold. Men’s Discus, 60.05m

Zena Cole, F51
Bronze. Women’s Discus (F51/52/53), 5.25m

Jessica Galli, T53
Bronze. Women’s 800m, 1:53.12

Joshua George, T53
Bronze. Men’s 800m, 1:41.50

Elexis Gillette, F11
Silver. Men’s Long Jump, 6.34m
April Holmes, T44
Bronze. Women’s 100m, 13.33 (Seasonal Best)

Blake Leeper, T43
Silver. Men’s 400m, 50.14
Bronze. Men’s 200m, 22.46

Angela Madsen, F56
Bronze. Women’s Shot Put (F54/55/56), 8.88m

Raymond Martin, T52
Gold. Men’s 100m, 17.02
Gold. Men’s 400m, 58.54
Gold. Men’s 800m, 2:00.34
Gold. Men’s 200m, 30.25

Tatyana McFadden, T54
Gold. Women’s 400m, 52.97
Gold. Women’s 800m, 1:47.01
Gold. Women’s 1500m, 3:36.42
Bronze. Women’s 100m, 16.15

continued on page 32 >>
Össur congratulates all Team Össur athletes and Össur Ambassadors on their inspiring performance at the Paralympic Games in London: 5 gold medals, 6 silver medals, 9 bronze medals and 6 world records.

To learn more about Össur technology, call 1-800-233-6263 or visit www.ossur.com.
**Track & Field (continued)**

Kerry Morgan, T52  
Bronze. Women’s 200m, 36.49  
Bronze. Women’s 100m, 20.68

Paul Nitz, T52  
Bronze. Men’s 100m, 17.99

David Prince, T44  
Bronze. Men’s 400m, 50.61

Shirley Reilly, T54  
Gold. Women’s Marathon, 1:46:33  
Silver. Women’s 5000m, 12:27.91  
Bronze. Women’s 1500m, 3:37.03

Scot Severn, F53  
Bronze. Men’s Shot Put (F52/53), 8.26m

Jeff Skiba, F44  
Silver. Men’s High Jump, 2.04m

Shaquille Vance, T42  
Silver. Men’s 200m, 25.55

**Women’s Sitting Volleyball**

Silver to team members:  
Allison Aldrich, D  
Monique Burkland, D  
Heather Erickson, D  
Michelle Gerlosky, D  
Katie Holloway, D  
Kaleo Kanahele, MD  
Kendra Lancaster, D (Team Captain)  
Brenda Maymon, D  
Nichole Millage, D  
Kari Millier, D  
Lora Webster, D

**Men’s Wheelchair Basketball**

Bronze to team members:  
Eric Barber, 1.0  
Joseph Chambers, 4.0  
Nate Hinze, 4.5  
Trevor Jenifer, 2.5  
Jeremy Lade, 2.5  
Ian Lynch, 1.0  
Jason Nelms, 2.5  
Paul Schulte, 3.0 (Team Co-Captain)  
Matt Scott, 3.5  
Joshua Turek, 3.5  
William Waller, 3.0

**Men’s Wheelchair Rugby**

Bronze to team members:  
Chuck Aoki, 3.0  
Andy Cohn, 2.0  
Chad Cohn, 1.0  
Joe Delagrave, 2.0  
Will Groulx, 2.0 (Team Captain)  
Derrick Helton, 2.0  
Scott Hogsett, 1.0  
Seth McBride, 2.0  
Jason Regier, 0.5  
Adam Scaturro, 1.5  
Nick Springer, 2.0  
Chance Sumner, 3.0

**Men’s Wheelchair Tennis**

Nick Taylor  
David Wagner  
Gold. Men’s Quad Division Doubles

David Wagner  
Silver. Quad Singles

Nick Taylor  
Bronze. Quad Singles

**Active Duty and Military Veterans**

*Indicates Active Duty

**Archery**

Army Pvt. 1st Class Dugie Denton  
Army Staff Sgt. Jerry Shields  
Army Staff Sgt. Russell Wolfe

**Cycling**

Army Cadet Jennifer Schuble  
Navy Lt. Commander Steven Peace  
Marine Corps Sgt. Oz Sanchez

**Rowing**

Marine Corps Sgt. Rob Jones

**Shooting**

Army Staff Sgt. Eric Hollen  
*Army Sgt. 1st Class Josh Olson

**Sitting Volleyball**

Army Sgt. Kari Miller

**Soccer**

*Marine Corps Cpl. Rene Renteria  
Army Sgt. Gavin Sibayan

**Swimming**

*Navy Lt. Brad Snyder

**Track & Field**

Marine Corps Pvt. 1st Class Angela Madsen  
Army Staff Sgt. Centra ‘CeCe’ Mazyk  
Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class Christopher Clemens  
Army Spc. Scot Severn  
Army Spc. Scott Winkler

**Wheelchair Fencing**

Air Force Sgt. Mario Rodriguez

**Wheelchair Rugby**

Navy Petty Officer 2nd Class Will Groulx
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BY CYNTHIA MARSH

THE HARTFORD SKI SPECTACULAR OFFERS INSPIRATION FOR ALL TO SEE THAT PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES CAN DO ANYTHING. THIS YEAR, THE HARTFORD SKI SPECTACULAR CELEBRATES 25 YEARS AS THE NATION’S LARGEST WINTER SPORTS FESTIVAL FOR THE PHYSICALLY DISABLED.

Children and teens, wounded warriors, potential Paralympians, and others wanting to heal through outdoor recreation come to this event to learn to ski alpine, Nordic, and biathlon, snowboard, hone their racing skills, and until four years ago, watch elite skiers compete in slalom and giant slalom, and more. The slalom and giant slalom races are now held the week following Ski Spectacular at Copper Mountain.

Ski Spec also is a venue for those who want to make a difference for the disabled with sports education, adaptive equipment displays and demonstrations, continuing education for instructors and coaches, and networking opportunities. In an informal atmosphere, coaches, instructors, program directors, and DSUSA chapter executives are able to share information on state-of-the-art equipment, event organization, fund raising, procedures, and programs.
SETTING STANDARDS FOR ADAPTIVE SKIERS

The pioneers of the event, Kirk Bauer and Doug Pringle, were keen on standardizing adaptive teaching methodologies and adaptive skiing protocols nationwide. In the early years, Ski Spec became a building block for that. Bauer and Pringle pushed for certification and examiner training from the Professional Ski Instructors of America (PSIA); a stepping stone to acceptance of adaptive skiers at ski hills across the country. Bauer and Pringle became the first adaptive certified instructors; Pringle became an adaptive skiing representative on the PSIA board.

Having a standardized protocol helped ski areas become more open to adaptive lessons. Early on, ski areas were reluctant to do so because of risk management issues. But with teaching manuals and an excellent safety record, there became a willingness to expand skiing opportunities. “It made what we do more acceptable in the industry because there were established standards,” Pringle said.

Ski Spec now hosts classes in the latest adaptive skiing methods for instructors and volunteers from local disabled skiing programs throughout the nation. The only program of its kind, the Instructor Academy is sanctioned by the Professional Ski Instructors of America/American Association of Ski Instructors.

Hand-in-hand with instructor training and development were the efforts of Peter Axelson, a paraplegic who invented the Arroya sit-ski in 1979. Axelson established Beneficial Designs, a company which develops assistive and adaptive technology, performs rehabilitation research, contract design, legal consultation, standards development, and serves as a rehabilitation information resource. Axelson worked tirelessly with the U.S. Forest Service, the U.S. Access Board, and others to make ski areas more accessible in terms of operation and to make equipment compatible with chair heights, approach paths, loading areas, lift load points, chairlift exit ramps, seat thickness, seat angle, and even evacuation procedures. His architectural standards for ski facilities were the building blocks for standardization to become adapted.

Every year The Hartford Ski Spectacular serves as a meeting ground for adaptive sports equipment manufacturers, chairlift manufacturers, ski area operations, skiers with disabilities, adaptive sports program directors, and federal organizational representatives who participate in discussion on program guidelines for operating on public lands.

RACING COMPETITION AND HEROES

As the interest in learning how to ski grew, there were a number of individuals interested in competition. Ski Spec organizers recognized this need so learn to race clinics were added to the learn to ski clinics. Ski Spec hosts the first ski races of the season in which the U.S. Adaptive Ski Team participates.

The U.S. Adaptive Ski Team’s participation at Ski Spec provides a thrilling experience for observers. These elite athletes also serve as role models to those with disabilities and are heroes to disabled children who yearn to see a disabled athlete on the level of a Michael Jordan. At Ski Spec, youth can see champions such as Chris Devlin-Young, Monte Meier, Chris Waddell, and Sarah Will, to name a few, and meet them, watch them race, and be inspired that they can achieve greatness too.

Competitive ski racing got its push from Jack Benedick, a Vietnam vet who lost his legs in a landmine explosion. He learned to ski as part of his rehabilitation. Often referred to as Action Jackson, Benedick was a leader in the development of competition for disabled skiers. He worked with the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Association to create a U.S. Adaptive Ski Team and lobbied the International Ski Federation to accept adaptive skiing. A holder of the Paralympic Order for his contributions, he was a silver medal winner in the combined at the 1984 Paralympic Games. Benedick was inducted into the U.S. Ski and Snowboard Hall of Fame in 2009 and the National Disabled Ski Hall of Fame in 1996.

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YOUTH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS

The development of the youth program is another aspect of Ski Spec that continues to expand by serving as a transition from recreational skiing to competition. The first year, a silent auction raised $5,000 to bring in five children. This year, with funding, 27 youth will be able to participate with the goal of being future Paralympians. Participation in the National Race Festival enables aspiring young racers to advance their skills alongside the best disabled racers and coaches in the country, including the U.S. Adaptive Ski Team.

Scholarships this year also will benefit 15 wounded warriors.

GIVING BACK

Ski Spec wouldn’t be what it is today without the efforts of hundreds of volunteers – thousands over the years – who take time out of their personal lives to help others. Many of the volunteers return year after year. They often come in groups, such as from United Airlines, a company which was involved in Ski Spec in its earliest years. Some volunteers arrive as special guests and continue to come back again to help others. One such person is Ralph Greene, now a Paralympian who mentors developing skiers. Of the 9/11 group, the Sarubbi and Westman families run the week-long soup kitchen. Many individuals come because they love the sport of skiing and want to help others learn and enjoy the sport. It’s truly a rewarding experience for all.

UNIVERSAL INCLUSION

Ski Spec has a long history of reaching outside of DSUSA Chapters to survivors from war, terrorism, crime, or natural disasters. Beginning in 1983 British veterans from the Falklands War and Russian soldiers from the Afghanistan War were invited to learn to ski. This was followed by landmine survivors from around the world including Jordan, Bosnia, Croatia, and the U.S., the injured from the Oklahoma City bombing, Columbine school shooting, Haitian earthquake, and the British Limbless Ex Services Men’s Association (BLESMA). In 2001, special guests were 9/11 New York City firefighters and 1st responders and their families; 11-year-old future Paralympian Caitlin Sarubbi, whose father is a firefighter, skis for the first time. Since 2002, wounded military from the Global War on Terrorism have been guests. In 2011, 179 wounded warriors and their families attended joined by more than 800 participants from 41 states and seven foreign countries.

BEGINNINGS

While Ski Spec has served thousands of individuals during its storied history, the beginnings of ski gatherings for the disabled goes back much further when post WWII, disabled members of the famed 10th Mountain Division wanted to resume the activity they had so much passion for. A key figure in helping them was 10th Mountain Division veteran Jim Winthers, the ski school director at Donner Ski Ranch in Northern California. Winthers taught his army buddies how to ski using outriggers, a technique he observed in Europe. This invention helped popularize the sport and several amputee ski clubs were formed in the United States.

A little more than a decade later, veterans from Vietnam were returning to the states for rehabilitation. Winthers, working through Letterman Army Hospital in San Francisco, and Fitzsimmons Army
Hospital in Denver brought many newbies to the sport. His suggestion that they could ski was often met with skepticism but somehow Winthers got them on the hill. He also was the one who visited Bauer and Pringle in their hospital beds. Bauer and Pringle both became members of the U.S. Disabled Ski Team.

Now they, and other Vietnam vets who benefitted from adaptive skiing, visit their injured brothers and sisters at Walter Reed, Brooke Army Medical Center, San Antonio Military Medical Center, and the Naval Medical Center San Diego to urge them to try it too.

The benefits of recreation to rehabilitation are documented, no matter what the career path for these injured military might be. It is more than just part of their rehab. It’s common ground for people with physical disabilities to enjoy healthy outdoor recreation and celebrate what they could instead of couldn’t accomplish.

“As a child) seeing and interacting was a long shot dream, but being there and getting that extra push from the Paralympians, volunteers, coaches …they instilled in (me) that (I) could be a Paralympian.”

Angali Forber-Pratt: Paralympian; DSUSA Athlete Representative

“The Hartford Ski Spectacular has been the beginning of so many dreams for the past 25 years. To allow the mix of young athletes with past and current Paralympians allows them to see that their dreams are real.”

Ray Watkins: National Ability Center, Program Manager and Head Coach Alpine Ski Team; Paralympic Alpine Skiing, National Team Staff

While there are many dedicated individuals associated with Ski Spec, they are too numerous for the space we have here. However, we would be remiss if we did not include Hal O’Leary and Dr. Ben Allen.

In 1970, O’Leary was a ski instructor at Winter Park Resort when he volunteered to teach 23 amputees from Children’s Hospital of Denver. With virtually no adaptive ski programs or equipment to rely on, O’Leary created his own equipment and taught himself to ski on one leg using outriggers. His method using smooth Christy turns, created a whole new system of skiing for people with disabilities. His efforts have grown into the largest adaptive ski program in the world, the National Sports Center for the Disabled. O’Leary has set up programs for disabled skiers on four continents and coached two Paralympic teams. He also authored “Bold Tracks,” the definitive manual on teaching adaptive skiing.

Dr. Ben Allen was a protégé of Jim Winthers and became among the first certified amputee ski instructors. Allen left the Western ski scene to attend Tufts University Medical School in Boston. While at Tufts, he established the first official disabled ski program in the East, known as the Haystack Chapter of the National Inconvenienced Sportsman’s Association, now known as the New England Handicapped Sports Association.

JIM WINTHERS MEMORIAL AWARD

To honor Jim Winthers, the Jim Winthers Memorial Award was established to recognize the lifetime contributions and significant achievements in furthering the mission of DSUSA and adaptive skiing.

Editor’s Note: Thanks to Doug Pringle and Kathy Laffey for their recollections in preparing this article. There were many other dedicated individuals who contributed to the adaptive skiing movement. More extensive coverage can be found in the online Challenge Magazine at www.dsusa.org.

“(As a child) seeing and interacting was a long shot dream, but being there and getting that extra push from the Paralympians, volunteers, coaches …they instilled in (me) that (I) could be a Paralympian.”

Angali Forber-Pratt: Paralympian; DSUSA Athlete Representative
Nordic Skiing and More in Telluride

The Telluride Adaptive Sports Program (TASP) offers Nordic skiing for all ability levels. TASP is the only CXC Opportunity Center for sit-down Nordic skis in Colorado. If you are a beginner or a seasoned cross-country skier after a Nordic experience on the track or in the backcountry, Telluride offers many choices. For more information, contact Tim McGough at (970) 728-3865 or programs@tellurideadaptivesports.org.

Other TASP activities include:

13th annual Expand Your Horizons! Ski Camp, Feb. 3-8 (travel dates Feb. 3 and Feb. 8). Designed for those comfortable skiing at an intermediate to advanced level, the camp includes individual coaching from some of the top PSIA instructors in the adaptive snowsport industry, video/movement analysis, and training and racing on Telluride Level 1 NASTAR course. All participants will have the chance to ski anything from groomers to bumps to powder to “hike-to” terrain. TASP provides buddies to help the participants “hike” up to previously inaccessible terrain. Participants will also have the opportunity to join HeliTrax for a day of helicopter-assisted backcountry skiing (expert ski level and additional fee required). Cost for the camp is $975 and includes lodging, equipment, lift tickets, coaching, video analysis, most meals, and some après ski events.

Winter Veterans Adventure Week, March 3-8 (travel dates March 3 and March 8). This camp is subsidized for recently injured service members of any snowsport ability from the never-ever to the advanced skier or snowboarder. While in beautiful Telluride, participants will enjoy individualized attention from trained snowsport instructors with the option of video analysis, race training and a variety of other activities. Lodging, après ski events, and most meals will be included.

Other winter activities include: adaptive ski and snowboard lessons for individuals of all ages and ability levels; Nordic ski lessons for both stand-up and sit-down skiers on groomed tracks or backcountry powder; snowshoeing; backcountry skiing/riding for intermediate to advanced ability levels; helicopter-assisted skiing for advanced skiers/riders; and ice climbing for all ability levels.

For more information or to register for any of these events or activities, contact Tim McGough, Program Director, at (970) 728-3865, email programs@tellurideadaptivesports.org, or visit www.tellurideadaptivesports.org.

ASA Learn to Ski/Snowboard Scholarship Opportunity

The Adaptive Sports Association (ASA), Durango, Colo., is accepting applications for its learn to ski/snowboard scholarships. From mid-January through mid-March, four to six scholarship recipients will come to ASA’s Durango Mountain Resort (Purgatory, Colo.) for five nights lodging, four days on the slopes with private ski, snowbike, or snowboard instruction. Instruction is personalized to an individual’s own pace without pressure. The scholarship also includes airfare, lift tickets, equipment, meals, and ground transportation.

Scholarships are open to anyone with a physical disability but have a focus on injured military/vets, and individuals with MS, spinal cord injuries, amputations, and visual impairments. The application deadline is Dec. 15, 2012.

ASA has offered these very successful scholarship programs for almost 30 years with the goal of increasing independence and self-confidence through recreation and self-discovery. The personal focus of the program lends itself to building a support network and lifelong friendships.

To take advantage of this opportunity, visit www.asadurango.org and click on Scholarships, contact ASA at (970) 259-0374, or e-mail annmarie@asadurango.com.
National Ability Center’s Winter Season

The National Ability Center has plenty of opportunities for people of all abilities to enjoy the winter season to the fullest. Partnering with Park City Mountain Resort, one of the nation’s most family-friendly and picturesque ski resorts, the National Ability Center has a world-renowned ski and snowboard program that provides disabled skiers and snowboarders the opportunity to independently enjoy the mountain with their friends and family.

Every National Ability Center instructor is specially trained in three-track, four-track, mono-ski and bi-ski adaptive techniques, as well as guiding and teaching skiers who have visual impairments and cognitive and developmental disabilities.

A full-day lesson at Park City Mountain Resort includes seven hours of private instruction, lift ticket, buddy ticket, adaptive equipment and supervised lunch. Adaptive equipment is provided for those who enroll in any lesson. The equipment is also available to rent on a daily basis.

In addition to alpine skiing and snowboarding, participants can also take part in the sport of biathlon, Nordic skiing and snowshoeing. A ski vacation with the NAC can also include on-campus lodging, indoor climbing and a variety of activities with our Equine Center.

For more information on winter programs at the National Ability Center or to sign up for Holiday Family Camp or Winter Camp Extreme for teens with physical disabilities, please visit: www.discovernac.org or call (435) 649-3991.

Outdoor Adventures in Logan, Utah

Common Ground Outdoor Adventures in Northern Utah provides year-round outdoor recreational opportunities for youths and adults with disabilities.

Upcoming winter and spring trips include rock climbing, whitewater rafting, adaptive skiing, canoeing, and camping trips to National Parks in the West. All trips are adapted to meet the needs of all abilities and accessible airport shuttles are available from Salt Lake International Airport to Logan, Utah. Equipment, meals (during trips), and transportation from Logan are included in the cost. Scholarships are available to persons who are low income.

For more information or to sign up for activities, call (435) 713-0288, email programs@cgadventures.org, or visit www.cgadventures.org.

Contact Common Ground for exact dates and costs for these upcoming events.

January-March: Adaptive Alpine Ski Program at Beaver Mountain ski resort in Logan twice a week through the winter months. For people of all abilities.

February: Dogsledding trip to Jackson, Wyo. Twenty people head to Jackson to stay at Teton Science School in Teton National Park for a weekend of snowshoeing, cross-country skiing and a half-day dogsled trip with Jackson Hole Iditarod Dogsled Tours.

Winter yurt trip. Camping in a tent-cabin combination at Beaver Mountain ski resort. Alpine skiing, snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, or just hanging out and enjoying the experience.

December 2012-March 2013 Winter Programs. Rock climbing in our indoor facility, the Rock Haus. Other day activities include snowshoeing and cross-country skiing throughout the mountains of Cache Valley, and ice fishing at various lakes and reservoirs. Adaptive equipment is available to meet the needs of all abilities. All outdoor winter activities will start as soon as weather permits.

Big Mountain Monoski Camp

Adaptive Sports Center, Crested Butte, will hold a monoski camp March 9-11 on Big Mountain. Monoskiers will ski the Headwall and North Face with the highest level instruction. Skiers will explore a variety of terrain and be pushed to take their skiing to the next level. Price is TBD. More information is available at (970) 349-2296 or www.adaptivesports.org.
Challenge Aspen Camps for Recreational and Wounded Warriors

REC (Recreational, Education and Cultural) Camps

17th Annual Mono-Ski Camp, Jan. 2-7. Learn how to carve the perfect turn, ski bumps and improve racing skills with instruction from PSIA instructors. Meet new friends in a fun-filled week of activities, including an on-hill BBQ, race day on a NASTAR course, a celebration banquet and video analysis.

17th Annual Visually Impaired Ski & Snowboard Festival, Feb. 18-22. For all levels of skiers and snowboarders with visual impairments to improve skiing or riding skills. With the option to join race clinics, try moguls and ungroomed terrain, there will be lessons to suit every level. Instruction from PSIA adaptive-certified instructors and volunteer guides.

Learn to Sit-Ski Camp (never-ever & beginner sit-skiers), March 4-9. Gain skiing skills in a one-on-one lesson setting with expert instruction from PSIA adaptive-certified instructors. Activities include an après-ski kick-off event and a celebration banquet.

Champ Camp (Autism specific), March 12-16 (Session 1); March 19-23 (Session 2). Whether a never-ever or an advanced skier or snowboarder, Champ Camp invites athletes on the Autism Spectrum to participate in ultra-structured winter group camps.

Athletes will have the opportunity to make friends and build life skills – all while shredding the snow on Colorado’s world-class ski mountains. Special attention will be placed on preparing the athletes well before arrival, tailoring daily schedules based on individual needs, and planning events to foster relationship building and communication skills.

Camps for Injured Military

Women’s Mountain Retreat, Dec. 12-17. Recognizing the specific needs of newly injured service women, C.A.M.O. offers a specifically-designed program that includes both daily snow sports and wellness activities in a fun, retreat-style setting.

Mono-Ski Camp, Jan. 2-7. Catering to injured service members with physical disabilities such as paraplegia, double and single leg amputations, the mono-ski camp provides skill-based instruction for all levels of mono-skiers from beginner to advanced.

Racer’s Edge Camp, Jan. 6-11. In collaboration with The Paralympic Alpine Development Program, participants will receive instruction and coaching on alpine skiing race techniques from the coaches of The Paralympic Alpine Development Program. Any athlete, male or female, who wants to learn to race, or is a seasoned competitor wanting to hone his or her skills, is encouraged to attend. Qualified categories include: sitting, standing, and visually impaired.

Operation X, Jan. 23-28. Taking advantage of its Aspen/Snowmass location, C.A.M.O. introduces a group of wounded warriors from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center to an array of exhilarating winter sports as guests of honor at the ESPN Winter X Games at Buttermilk Mountain.

Estes Park Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Adventure, Feb. 3-8. Exploring one of America’s most inspirational parks, a group of wounded military members and veterans from Brooke Army Medical Center, plus their families, enjoy a week of cross-country skiing and snowshoe day outings in Rocky Mountain National Park.

Visually Impaired Ski & Snowboard Festival, Feb. 4-8. Utilizing professional ski/snowboard instructors and adaptive guides, the Festival provides injured military personnel with visual impairments and traumatic brain injuries their first experience of skiing and/or snowboarding in a safe and fun environment.

Learn to Sit-Ski Camp, March 3-8. Teaching the introductory skills necessary for beginner sit-skiers, the camp provides one-on-one professional instruction in a fun camp setting.

Wilderness Back-Country Hut Trip, March 17-23. Providing the experience of a lifetime, the back-country hut trip takes a group of newly injured soldiers into the wilderness with experienced guides for three days at The Harry Gates Hut, part of the Tenth Mountain Hut System in the White River National Forest.

Walter Reed NMMC Spring Camp, March 27-31. Offering a fabulous introduction to snow sports and adaptive recreation in the Rocky Mountains, C.A.M.O. will welcome a group of newly injured patients from Walter Reed National Military Medical Center for spring skiing and snowboarding at Snowmass Mountain.
NSCD Names Becky Zimmermann CEO

Becky Zimmermann is the new CEO of the National Sports Center for the Disabled (NSCD). Becky has served as a NSCD volunteer and member of the Board of Trustees for over a decade. As the new leader of the organization, she brings experience in operations, marketing, finance and the resort industry. Prior to joining NSCD, she was the president of Design Workshop, Inc. (DW), an international land planning and urban design firm. A Colorado native, Zimmermann holds an MBA from the University of Colorado and a bachelor’s in business and journalism from Trinity University, San Antonio. She is a member of the Young Presidents Organization and the Urban Land Institute. She enjoys skiing, hiking and gardening.

Steamboat STARS is hosting a new veteran’s-only camp, Steamboat STARS and Stripes Heroes Camp, Jan. 25-28, in Steamboat Springs, Colo. In partnership with Steamboat Ski and Resort Corporation, STARS will provide three days of lessons, lift tickets, lodging, and meals for participants and one guest at no charge. Participants will learn how to ski or ride through the help of qualified instructors that will ensure each individual is able to reach their highest potential on the slopes. Grant funding for this program is administered by Disabled Sports USA and awarded by U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, through funding provided by Veterans Affairs. The grants are provided to facilitate the growth of Paralympic Sport programming for disabled veterans, and disabled members of the Armed Forces. For information or to register for the camp, email Craig Kennedy, craig@steamboastars.com.

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USARC Snowboarding and Skiing

The United States Adaptive Recreation Center (USARC), Big Bear Lake, Calif., offers skiing and snowboarding lessons daily on Bear Mountain from December through March (some exceptions on holidays and special events). Lessons are available on a reservation basis only and individuals can select from either a full-day or half-day lesson. Lessons are also available at discounted rates for groups of ten or more from facilities/organizations serving people with disabilities. For ambulatory participants, snowshoeing is also available when conditions permit.

When scholarship funding is available, lessons are at no charge for wounded service men and women (restrictions apply). For those with Paralympic aspirations, or those who desire higher-level skill development, during select winters the USARC hosts “Learn to Race” alpine training camps, or a “Weekend in the Park” terrain/freeride camps.

For reservations and information, please contact the USARC at (909) 584-0269 or mail@usarc.org.

Correction: In the summer issue of Challenge, the photo on page 39 should have been attributed to Marshall Richter/U.S. Adaptive Recreation Center.

Unrecables Ski Schedule


Those interested in joining should email info@unrecables.com. Monthly Social Hours are held on the second Tuesday evening of the month, 6:30 p.m., at Mi Ranchito Family Restaurant, Culver City, Calif. For more information, email info@unrecables.com, or visit our web site www.unrecables.org.

Baltimore Adapted Recreation and Sports

Baltimore Adapted Recreation and Sports (BARS) is celebrating its 21st year as a chapter of Disabled Sports USA and has now also joined the network of Paralympic Sport Clubs as Paralympic Sport Club Mid-Atlantic. BARS offers year-round adapted sport and recreation programs to individuals of all ages with disabilities from Maryland and the surrounding states.

BARS programs vary depending on the season and are completely staffed by volunteers. All necessary equipment and training for the programs is provided.

Winter events include:
- Adapted snow skiing/boarding lessons at Roundtop Mountain Resort, Lewisberry, Pa. Reservations required.
- SKI MASH 2013 at Liberty Mountain Resort Feb. 21-22.

Lessons, ski discounts for family members and friends and social activities will be arranged. The hotel is at the base of the mountain, so no driving is necessary once you arrive.

Grant funding for these programs is administered by Disabled Sports USA and awarded by U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, through funding provided by Veterans Affairs. The grants are provided to facilitate the growth of Paralympic Sport programming for disabled veterans, and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

For reservations for adapted lessons or to receive a registration packet for SKI MASH, contact Pamela Lehnert at Pam4bars@aol.com, call (410) 322-5629, or visit www.barsinfo.org. BARS is also on Facebook.
Year-Round Cross Training and Paralympic Sports Camps at DSES

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra (DSES) Paralympic Sport Mammoth Lakes is launching a year-round cross training program. The goal is to offer military and civilian athletes year-round cross training opportunities for therapeutic recreation and fitness, to bring Paralympic sports to a greater number of athletes, and to bring these athletes to multiple events throughout the year, increasing skill and fitness level. Winter training includes Nordic skiing and biathlon; summer training continues with a cycling program.

Daily Nordic ski lessons are available through DSES beginning in December and continuing through April. Camps throughout the winter – including a three-day Nordic ski camp in January and a five-day biathlon camp in March – enhance this daily programming. (See winter schedule below.)

From June through October, DSES sponsors weekly cycling rides to promote ongoing skill, endurance and strength training and enhance overall health and well-being. DSES also hosts a variety of events throughout the summer that complement these weekly rides. In June is the wounded warrior event: Operation High Altitude. This five-day camp includes multiple sports including biathlon simulation training with head-to-head competitive opportunities, and cycling through the beautiful Sierra Nevada Mountains. In July, DSES hosts the Sierra Cycle Challenge Fundraiser Ride. Athletes are invited to participate in this three-day 150-mile cycling event to continue cross-training and building cardio endurance and strength.

The last camp of the season in August is Pedal-Paddle, a three-day event that includes camping, kayaking, cycling, and fishing. It is open to civilian and military athletes. Our final event of the season is the High Sierra Fall Century, held in September, which draws over 700 cyclists from around the country. This ride boasts 35-mile, 50-mile and 100-mile ride options. DSES will offer three scholarships to eligible wounded warriors. (Eligibility is determined by continued participation in this cross-training program). The Paralympic cross-training program will finish out the year in October with the Bishop Fall Cycling Series weekly rides.

The Paralympic Sports Camp Schedule also includes:

- **Nordic Ski and Race Camp, Jan. 18-20.** Paralympic athlete Candace Cable and a U.S. Paralympic Team Nordic coach will help host.
- **Wounded Warriors Camp, Operation Mountain Freedom, Jan. 28-Feb. 1.** Five days of alpine skiing, snowboarding, Nordic skiing, biathlon training, and more.
- **Alpine Ski and Race Camp, Feb. 6-10.** Coaches such as Barrett Stein and Paralympic medalist Chris Waddell come to train athletes of all ages and skill levels.
- **Mono-Ski Madness with Bill Bowness, March 1-3.** Ski and race with Paralympic medalist and coach extraordinaire Bill Bowness on Mammoth Mountain.
- **Grant funding for Operation Mountain Freedom, Alpine Ski and Race Camp, and Mono-Ski Madness** are administered by Disabled Sports USA and awarded by the U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, through funding provided by Veterans Affairs. The grants are provided to facilitate the growth of Paralympic Sport programming for disabled veterans and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

**Biathlon Camp and Mammoth Lakes Biathlon, March 20-24.** Paralympic athlete Candace Cable and a U.S. Paralympic Team Nordic coach will help out with this five-day camp, which includes entry into one of the largest biathlon events in North America. This event is put on in collaboration with Mammoth Biathlon and is open to biathletes from beginners to elite athletes. Camp participants are trained in Nordic skiing, target shooting, and biathlon tactics in preparation for this event.

For information on any DSES activity or Paralympic sports at Mammoth Mountain, contact Maggie Palchak at mpalchak@disabledsportseasternsierra.org.

Correction: In the last issue of Challenge Magazine, several coaches were named as being at the Paralympic Sports Camps. Some of these coaches are not confirmed yet. Challenge Magazine apologizes for the discrepancy.
Cannonsburg Challenged Ski Association

Cannonsburg Challenged Ski Association (CCSA), Ada, Mich., offers weekly lessons from Jan. 6-Feb. 21. Time slots are 6-8 p.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays 1-3 p.m., 2-4 p.m., and 3-5 p.m.

PSIA adaptive trained staff teach CCSA volunteers who stay with their students for a two-hour lesson over a seven-week period. This gives students the opportunity to develop a strong bond with their instructor and become more proficient at skiing while having fun at the same time.

Register for lessons online at www.skiccsa.org.

Volunteers are also needed. Contact Valerie at info@skiccsa.org or visit the website.

An Adaptive Downhill Ski Clinic will be Jan. 19. Co-sponsored by Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital, it is an opportunity for their patients and others in the community to ski with CCSA trained staff and adaptive equipment. For many, it is their first time to experience the joy of downhill skiing.

In 2013, CCSA will celebrate its 30th anniversary. It has provided more than 2,000 disabled individuals the opportunity to experience downhill skiing.

CCSA services all disabilities: autism, developmental, visual impairments, hearing impairments, traumatic brain injury, amputations, spinal cord injuries, strokes, and others from ages 6 and up.

The 10th Annual Great Lake Mono-Ski and Race Camp

The Great Lake Mono-Ski and Race Camp will be held Feb. 11-16 at Spirit Mountain in Duluth, Minn. It is the largest mono-ski camp in the Midwest for youth and adults with disabilities.

Within this event will be a three-day mono-ski camp, a two-day race camp, and a one-day Learn to Ski Clinic. The mono-ski camp will include equipment set-up, equipment demos, teaching, movement analysis, personal skiing development, and race techniques. The optional race camp is specifically for athletes wanting to improve their skills in all disciplines of adaptive ski racing. The Learn to Ski Clinic is specifically designed for veterans who want to try any form of adaptive skiing at a beginner level. Also included is a pizza party and social at The Edge Waterpark Resort and a banquet with a medal ceremony for skiers of all abilities.

This ski and race camp is for youth participants, and enjoy a beautiful view overlooking Lake Superior.

Event instructors and coaches are from the U.S. Alpine Development Team and DSUSA chapters Adaptive Adventures, Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, Crested Butte Adaptive Sports Center, and Courage Center Alpine Skiers.

Funding is available to help pay for any military veteran with a physical disability to attend any part of the camp. For more information about this event, contact Mark Hanna, Program Coordinator for Courage Center Duluth at (218) 726-4834, or email Mark.Hanna@CourageCenter.org, or visit our website; www.couragecenter.org/ContentPages/monoskimadness.
UCO to Host Events at Bart & Nadia Sports & Health Festival

The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) will participate in the upcoming Bart & Nadia Sports & Health Festival in Oklahoma City Feb. 15-17 with special events occurring throughout the festival.

The Bart & Nadia Sports & Health Festival encourages families to take ownership of their health through activities that embrace Olympic and Paralympic ideals with an emphasis on sports, nutrition, and wellness.

UCO will host the 2013 International Paralympic Committee Powerlifting Nationals. Spectators attending the IPC Powerlifting Nationals will see Mary Stack, a 2012 London Paralympic athlete, compete.

Athlete registration forms for the event will be available online in December at www.ucotrainingsite.com.

UCO will also host a sitting volleyball demonstration by members of the 2012 London Paralympic Games silver medaling U.S. Women’s Sitting Volleyball Team and the U.S. Men’s Sitting Volleyball Team.

Participants can watch the teams scrimmage, learn the sport of sitting volleyball, and take photos with and get autographs from the athletes.

The event is free and open to the public.

For more information about UCO’s events, contact Leigha Pemberton, UCO’s sport programs coordinator, at (405) 974-3160 or lpemberton@uco.edu.

For more information about the festival, visit www.bartandnadiafestival.com.

Higher Ground Therapeutic Recreation for Military

The mission of Higher Ground (HG) is to provide the highest quality therapeutic recreation services to veterans with disabilities and their supporters through the use of efficacious practices, collaboration with fellow service providers, and a sustainable continuum of care. HG is recognized as one of the premier rehabilitation programs in the country by the Department of Defense, military medical centers, and veteran service organizations.

Winter offerings include five inspiring weeks in the tranquil mountains of Sun Valley, Idaho, for skiing, snowboarding, relaxation, and camaraderie. Groups at each event are typically small, serving 8-10 injured service members and their supporters, all expenses covered. Days include individualized ski and snowboard instruction, sled hockey, swimming, and other therapeutic, fun-filled activities. The HG program offers female and male specific events, as well as couples-focused to optimize therapeutic opportunities. Upon the successful conclusion to his first week of skiing with the Higher Ground program, one injured service member commented, “Being successful at things I was told I couldn’t do has re-instilled a positive attitude. I will bring this home to my family.”

Contact Bert Gillette, bert@svasp.org for male veterans, and Kirstin Webster, kirstin@svasp.org for female veterans, to apply for an event, or to get involved in HG’s programming.
Leaps of Faith Disabled Skiers Gears up To Hit the Slopes

Leaps of Faith Disabled Skiers, based in Sandy Hook, Conn., invites individuals with any and all disabilities to hit the slopes this winter for adaptive skiing at Mt. Southington, which is centrally located in Plantsville, Conn. Both beginner and advanced snow ski classes with certified instructors are offered. All adaptive equipment will be provided by Leaps of Faith.

Leaps of Faith Disabled Skiers’ Adaptive Snow Ski clinics are scheduled for Jan. 29, Feb. 26, and March 12. No experience is necessary to participate in a clinic, but advance registration is required. Clinics are open to children, adults and veterans. To learn more about Leaps of Faith Disabled Skiers, visit http://leapsoffaithwaterskiers.com or contact Joel Zeisler at (203) 426-0666.

Fun in Southern Vermont with the Bart Center

The Bart J Ruggiere Adaptive Sports Center offers adaptive ski lessons at Bromley Mountain from December to mid-April. Bromley is Vermont’s Sun Mountain, the only mountain in Vermont with Southern exposure. With sun all day long, even the coldest days feel warm. Lessons are offered morning, afternoon, or all day, seven days a week. Opportunities are available for all levels from never been on skis through advanced. The lesson includes lift ticket and any adaptive equipment needed. Reservations are required.

Upcoming events include:
- 8th Wounded Military Hero’s Weekend, Jan. 25-27. Skiing, snowboarding, competition and camaraderie; lessons and adaptive equipment provided.
- Bart Center 10th Anniversary Celebration, March 2-3. Skiing, snowboarding, races, and fun. Post snow season, kayaking and cycling is offered.

For more information on Bart Center lessons and activities, visit www.bartcenter.com, call (802) 824-5522, ext. 430, or email bartcenter@comcast.net.

Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation

Maine Adaptive will host adaptive alpine skiing, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing and snowboarding lessons and programs most days, January through March. All Maine Adaptive lessons and programs are free of charge.

Other events include:
- Maine Adaptive Monoski Camp, Jan. 22-24, Sunday River Resort. Seated skiers of all abilities with the goal of skiing independently are welcomed to take advantage of Maine Adaptive’s extensive resources, as well as to network and share with many of our partners. The three-day camp will consist mostly of alpine ski lessons and equipment demos.
- Veterans No Boundaries Winter Program, Feb. 1-4, Sunday River Resort. For disabled veterans and active duty personnel as well as their families, the program includes alpine and Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, biathlon, and snowmobiling.
- New England Blind/Visually Impaired Ski Festival, Feb. 10-14, Sugarloaf. Skiers will have the opportunity to develop their skiing abilities on all levels of terrain with their own guides or qualified festival volunteers. Skills enhancement will also be available for guides from Certified PSIA Adaptive and experienced clinicians.
- 28th Annual Ski-A-Thon, March 23, Sunday River Resort. Over 100 teams of five will submit pledges they raise during the previous weeks and months, and participate in activities and races throughout the alpine resort and cross-country center at Sunday River. The event typically raises over $300,000. Grant funding for these programs is administered by Disabled Sports USA and awarded by U.S. Paralympics, a division of the U.S. Olympic Committee, through funding provided by Veterans Affairs. The grants are provided to facilitate the growth of Paralympic Sport programming for disabled veterans, and disabled members of the Armed Forces.

For more information about Maine Adaptive Sports & Recreation or becoming involved as a participant or volunteer, contact Maine Adaptive at (800) 639-7770, email info@maineadaptive.org, or visit the website www.maineadaptive.org.
Introducing XT9air Knee for High Impact, High Activity

K12 PROSTHETICS introduces the next step in energy storing prosthetic knees – the XT9air, the most advanced carbon fiber prosthetic knee frame ever made. Designed for high impact, high activity use, the knee has all the functional features of the original XT9 ESPK plus:

- Full range pneumatic adjustability
- Proprietary anti-rotational pylon adaptor
- Index rotating pyramid or low profile threads
- Proprietary 3DHR Molding Process
- Waterproof

For more information: www.k12prosthetics.com.

Introducing the Soleus Foot, Tactical Edition

College Park redesigned the Soleus foot in a new limited edition, the Tactical Soleus. The Tactical Soleus removes unnecessary weight while retaining superior strength. College Park is donating $200 for every Tactical Soleus sold to Purple Heart Homes, an organization committed to providing housing solutions for disabled veterans. The Tactical Soleus is engineered and manufactured in the U.S.A. and custom built for the heroes among us. Visit www.college-park.com/tactical.

New Triton Low Profile (LP) Foot from Ottobock

The Triton Low Profile (LP) Foot is designed for above- or below-knee limb loss with lower clearance (2.5 in.). The Triton LP offers the same smooth rollover and robust function as the original Triton. Features include water resistance, a weight limit up to 330 lbs., and a split toe design for stability and control for active lifestyles. For more information: www.ottobockus.com.

Endolite Elan Hydraulic Ankle

The élan is a revolutionary biomimetic microprocessor controlled hydraulic ankle. It is designed to adapt dynamically to provide assistance when walking on a variety of surfaces and changing gait speeds. The élan offers users patented microprocessor controlled assist and brake modes for optimized momentum and stability to perform daily routines with less effort, conserving more energy to get busy living.

Aqualine Waterproof Prostheses from Ottobock

The Aqualine components are perfect for use as a shower leg or for other water activities, accommodating below-knee or above-knee users, and weights up to 330 lbs. The system includes specially modified adapters, pylons and a tube clamp along with the waterproof knee and foot. For more information: www.ottobockus.com.
Technology moves fast.... so do you

Endolite presents the latest in advanced microprocessor technology-

**ORION**

&

**élan**

from quick and easy programming to microprocessor controlled hydraulics that rapidly select the support you need so you can get busy living

To learn more, visit endolite.com or contact your local practitioner