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Advertising inquiries: Ron Sonntag Public Relations, Patty Johnson, 1-800-969-0200 ext 103, E-mail: patty@rspr.com.

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I want to share some good news with you, our participants and supporters. Despite recession and strains in the economy, Disabled Sports USA (DSUSA) has just completed one of its best years ever, and is prepared to meet the challenges of the second decade of the 21st century.

Among the good news, our 104 chapters are more active than ever, holding thousands of events nationwide in over 30 sports year-round. To support all this good work, DSUSA granted over a half-million dollars in financial support to chapters in 2011, a record amount. Adapt2Achieve, the regional training conference designed to educate chapter leaders in fundraising, social media, administration, volunteer recruitment, and board development, has now been held in all four regions.

Youth development is growing. The DSUSA E-Team for Alpine Skiing, launched last fall, supports new racers striving to make the Paralympic team. It is comprised of the USA’s most promising talent from ages 13-25. Four of the seven current members of the E-Team were recently named to the U.S. Paralympic National Development Team! As we do every December, youth will be preparing for competition including the Paralympics at The Hartford Ski Spectacular.

With the number of wounded increasing from the war in Afghanistan, DSUSA has worked hard to meet the demand for sports rehabilitation at military hospitals and has served 1,100 wounded warriors this year, the highest number of severely wounded we have served in any year since Disabled Sports started serving military warfighters in 1967. We continue to provide wounded service members and their families all programs free of charge, including individualized instruction, adaptive equipment, transportation, event fees, and lodging. Our partners at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center, Brooke Army Medical Center, Naval Medical Center San Diego, and a number of VA hospitals and Warrior Transition Units report that we are making a significant, positive difference in the lives of severely wounded troops and their families.

Financially, DSUSA has become more efficient than ever. Our overhead is the lowest it has ever been – below 10 percent, ensuring that 90 cents of every dollar contributed goes directly to programs. Because of our efficiency gains, DSUSA has not been required to access our emergency reserves during the recession.

All of the successes above have been possible because of a number of factors that began when the recession hit in the fall of 2008. The most important of these is that DSUSA’s board of directors, with staff input, set some very clear strategic direction. The partnerships with our chapter organizations, now over 100 strong, helped immensely in stretching our program dollars to reach their maximum impact. The incredible work of the entire DSUSA staff and volunteers also contributed to our success.

The financial collapse in 2008 was substantial and required us to reassess our capabilities and capacities. We examined who we were, where we were going, and how and what we needed to get there. All of our stakeholders were brought into the discussion. DSUSA’s board of directors and staff held strategic planning sessions in which all opinions were shared and heard. Chapter leaders were included in these planning sessions and all chapters were surveyed on the needs in their respective communities. Participants were also surveyed for feedback in a number of areas.

From this open and inclusive process came some very substantial recommendations, which we have diligently sought to implement since 2009. Since our chapters are our strongest partners, we needed to provide tools for them to become stronger to be able to meet the demands of their communities. We looked to our corporate and foundation partners to make services to our disabled communities more available, and they responded because, as many put it, “DSUSA is making a difference.”

Our results in 2011 are a strong signal that we are headed in the right direction; expanded programs that help build our chapters and more supporters than ever, from chapters to other nonprofits to individual and corporate supporters, all helping to provide lifestyle-expanding adaptive sports opportunities to people with disabilities everywhere in the nation. For this, I thank you all.

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.
DISABLED SPORTS USA THANKS ITS CORPORATE AND COMMUNITY SPONSORS FOR THEIR SUPPORT!

PLATINUM SPONSORS

USA Paralympics

CHARTIS

Bob Woodruff Foundation

WellPoint Foundation

DISABLED SPORTS USA IS A PROUD MEMBER OF THE U.S. OLYMPIC COMMITTEE
Disabled Vets and Elite Athletes Compete at White Mountain Cycling Classic

The second annual White Mountain Cycling Classic, presented by Chartis, was held June 25 at New England Disabled Sports, Loon Mountain, N.H. With funding from Chartis, veterans flew in from different regions of the country to participate in a pre-race camp, becoming familiar with the course and learning tactics from experienced cyclists and representatives from U.S. Handcycling and New England Disabled Sports.

The White Mountain Cycling Classic, the only U.S. Handcycling-sanctioned race in New England, is an inclusive event for all levels of cyclists within the divisions of USA Cycling and U.S. Handcycling. Disabled athletes not only race in their respective divisions but are able to compete with some of the best able-bodied cyclists.

In 2012, the event will expand to two days and will include a hill climb time trial up the challenging Kancamagus Highway.

For more information, contact www.disabledsports.org or www.whitemountaincyclingclassic.com.
The Bob Woodruff Foundation Joins DSUSA as Sponsor

Education, collaboration, investment – these three words are the pillars to the Bob Woodruff Foundation mission. Now partnering with DSUSA, the Foundation continues its commitment to provide resources and support to service members, veterans, and their family members to help them reintegrate into their communities.

The Bob Woodruff Foundation’s sponsorship and generosity will specifically assist DSUSA’s military sports rehabilitation programs that provide free sports programs to severely wounded service members and their families. This includes costs for transportation, special adaptive sports equipment, training from qualified adaptive sports instructors, lodging, meals, and other costs. Their support will also fund vital training on Traumatic Brain Injury and Post Traumatic Stress to DSUSA chapters nationwide.

“We are thrilled to have the Bob Woodruff Foundation’s support to help our efforts to provide high quality sports rehabilitation to our injured military,” said Kirk Bauer, JD, executive director of DSUSA and a disabled Vietnam veteran. “These brave service members, who have made great sacrifices for this nation, deserve every opportunity to participate in sports rehabilitation programs. Participating in sports has been proven to be a highly effective way to rebuild their lives.”

It’s vital to help our nation’s injured heroes, and the DSUSA sports rehabilitation programs assist service members with single and multiple amputations, spinal cord injuries, visual impairment, traumatic brain injuries, and significant nerve and/or muscle damage. With many winter and summer sports offered, such as skiing, snowboarding, cycling, rock climbing, and golfing, DSUSA has helped over 4,900 service members, families, and hospital staff, so they may thrive within the community.

“It is with great anticipation and enthusiasm that we support Disabled Sports USA’s sports rehabilitation and traumatic brain injury awareness programs, especially within these highly populated military communities,” said René Bardorf, executive director of the Bob Woodruff Foundation.

“Furthermore, it is important to highlight DSUSA’s mission of helping service members develop independence, confidence, and fitness through participation in community sports, recreation and educational programs.”

Adapt2Achieve: Midwest Conference


Highlights from this four-day event were 15 presentations on topics ranging from board development and grant writing to social media and understanding Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. These presentations were offered by experts in their respective fields who shared best practices to ensure proven results. Presenters also provided further resources including book titles, websites and journals for participants to further their education. Additional conference highlights were in-depth training from Paralympic Cycling Coach Rick Babington on programming, training and nutrition as well as two sports breakout sessions in kayaking and cycling.

Networking was a common theme. “Disabled Sports USA feels that partnerships and collaboration are paramount to successful adaptive sports programming. The Adapt2Achieve Conference is a perfect venue to network and establish effective community partnerships,” said Kirk Bauer, JD, Executive Director of DSUSA.

Adapt2Achieve conferences are open to DSUSA chapters and representatives from other nonprofits, such as the Veteran’s Administration, Park & Recreation Associations, or other community organizations that provide adaptive sports programming. For more information, visit www.dsusa.org.
DSUSA Chapters Find Adventure on Utah Rivers

THE U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT ISSUES
THE FIRST VIP PERMITS TO ADAPTIVE SPORTS
ORGANIZATIONS
By Pete Winn

In early 2011, DSUSA and six of its chapters entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with the Utah State Office of the U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), which issued VIP river permits to the chapters. These permits were unique – the first ever issued by the BLM specifically to adaptive sports organizations. The chapters that were issued permits included Team River Runner, Colorado Discover Ability, Adaptive Sports of Durango, Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center, Challenge Aspen, and Common Ground Outdoor Adventures.

Team River Runner and Common Ground ran a six-day, all-female Wounded Warrior trip through Desolation-Gray Canyon of the Green River. Challenge Aspen and Colorado Discover Ability ran two overnight Wounded Warrior trips through Westwater Canyon of the Colorado River. Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center and Adaptive Sports of Durango ran a multi-day Wounded Warrior trip on the San Juan River. With some of their local clients, Colorado Discover Ability and Adaptive Sports of Durango went on a one-day excursion on the Colorado River, near Moab, Utah. Many of the trips were partially funded by grants from DSUSA.

The rivers that these DSUSA chapters explored are famous for their scenery and rapids. There were more than 60 participants, including some family members. Participants, staff, and volunteers agree that it was an experience of a lifetime. Chapter members are looking forward to more trips in 2012, and there are plans to expand this program to the Rogue River in Oregon and the Main Salmon in Idaho.

The feedback is all good! Below are comments we have received from our participants.

• “It was tough being in a wheelchair out in the wilderness, but this trip opened my eyes to the possibilities of camping without any modernization. It was amazing to see that I was able to perform even though there were limitations.”

• “I think the trip brought me out of my comfort zone. It challenged me to try something new, taking control over the boat for a while, and it also allowed me to become less self-conscious and have fun.”

• “This was the first event I have participated in since my injury in 2004. Being in the public or a crowd is usually a problem, but this event and all of the wonderful people made me feel safe and accepted. They didn’t treat me differently.”

• “This program boosted my self-esteem and excitement for life. The rafting inspired me to accept others and work as a team. It also allowed me to experience the wilderness in a non-combative environment, which helped me relax for the first time in years.”

• “The rafting trip made me feel confident and allowed me to relax through positive thinking and task accomplishments.”

• “This was the first time in a very long time that I have challenged myself to this level. I enjoyed being active with a group of people.”
DISABLED SPORTS USA MILITARY PROGRAMS RE-NAMED WARFIGHTER SPORTS

Disabled Sports USA announces a new name for its military sports programs as Warfighter Sports. The Warfighter Sports program will proudly serve the nation’s wounded warriors providing free adaptive sports programming in partnership with the DSUSA chapter network. Warfighter Sports will offer service members opportunities in their home communities, across the USA, with ongoing individualized lesson programs, camps, clinics, competitions, endurance events and much more. Family members are also encouraged to participate alongside their loved ones.

DSUSA partners with its chapter network to offer the majority of experiences for the nation’s wounded military and veterans, which spans more than 20 sports in over 30 states. DSUSA encourages chapters, wounded warriors and caregivers to visit www.warfightersports.org or for more information, contact Julia Ray at jray@dsusa.org.

ABOUT WARFIGHTER SPORTS

Warfighter Sports, a program of Disabled Sports USA, offers sports rehabilitation programs to severely wounded warriors in military hospitals and communities across the U.S. through a nationwide network of over 100 community-based chapters. Since 1967, Disabled Sports USA has proudly served wounded warriors, including those injured in the Iraq and Afghanistan wars, offering more than 30 winter and summer sports at more than 100 events each year. Warfighter Sports rebuilds lives through sports by improving self-confidence, promoting independence and uniting families through shared healthy activities. Contributions cover all expenses for participation, including individualized adaptive instruction, adaptive sports equipment, transportation, lodging and meals for the warrior and a family member. Since 2003, more than 4,800 of the most severely wounded and their families have been served, including those with amputations, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, visual impairments and significant nerve and muscle damage.
ORION

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Distributed by:

SPS
Sochi Rejects Snowboarding in 2014 Paralympics

Snowboarding has been in the Olympic Games since 1998, but Paralympians are denied the chance to compete in the 2014 Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia. Although admission of the sport was supported by the International Paralympic Committee (IPC), the final ruling was made by the Russian National Paralympic Committee.

“It’s hugely crushing to me and everyone involved,” said Brent Kueummerle, who is a competitive snowboarder and coaches the sport at the National Sports Center for the Disabled.

“We’ve been working on this goal for years. From everything we heard, the IPC, the Alpine Sport Technical Committee, where apparently the snowboarding sport will fall under, voted to include us. We had Sochi organizing committee support, but the Russian National Paralympic Committee are the ones who said no. At this point, we really don’t know what the exact reasons were. Nobody has said.”

For a sport to be recognized in Paralympic competition, there are many requirements, including having at least eight countries appearing on the World Cup circuit for at least seven years.

“We had in fact met or exceeded a number of things already. If we don’t get into Russia, we are on track for the 2018 Games in Pyeongchang, South Korea,” Kueummerle said. “Our current international organizing body is the World Snowboard Federation (WSF) and they last year signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the IPC that the WSF would run the World Cup circuit for the next couple of years with input from IPC. But at this point, there is no U.S. team.

“The disappointing part is the athletes who are very active in snowboarding now and would have a chance to medal probably will be past their prime competitive years when Korea happens, and right now, they are the guys and girls who are pushing the sport. So it’s extremely disappointing.”

Snowboarding has been recognized by the United States of America Snowboard Association (USASA), which is a grass roots regional snowboard competition, and there is an active adaptive division within USASA since 2000. Snowboarders in the U.S. have been competing internationally for at least a half-dozen years, traveling to Canada, New Zealand and France for competitions.

Currently, the team that Kueummerle, a Level 3 snowboard instructor, is coaching at NSCD is an officially-recognized team in the U.S. along with the National Ability Center. There are a number of athletes who train at other resorts, notably Park City, Utah, which is a big hub for adaptive snowboarding.

“The NSCD team will be participating in competitions, which is something of the irony of the Sochi decision,” Kueummerle said.

“We are looking at disabled veterans and paralympic grants so injured service members can come and train for free – that is what the program was built around – and we have a number of non-military athletes who are training as well. The NSCD will be hosting a number of learn-to-race camps in Winter Park, Colo., South Lake Tahoe, Calif., Big Bear, Calif., and Stowe, Vt., throughout the season. We will compete locally in Colorado and come back to California in South Lake Tahoe and do a camp and compete in World Cup in France, Spain, Canada, and possibly Italy. I’m looking forward to doing a World Cup here in South Lake Tahoe. Snowboarders will also be competing at the X Games in 2012.”

The decision to exclude snowboarding is hard on Kueummerle, who is 40 years old, and ending his career as a competitor. “I’ve been an amputee since 1995. If snowboarding was in the Paralympics in 1998, I could have been on the podium. In 2000, I wasn’t the best guy out there, but in my late 20s, I was still competitive. But when Korea comes around, I’ll be on the 50 side of 40 and out of the game, except as a coach.

“I never wanted anyone else to go through the fact that there are no opportunities and at this point, there still are no opportunities. It’s still a nagging spot for me, still a nagging spot for a lot of people. We can’t understand why it’s not already there,” he said.

“I haven’t given up on Russia. It’s still three years out. We still have time to change minds. Snowboarding needs to be in the Paralympics.”
WellPoint Offers Disabled Consumers Free Access to Assistive Technology

WellPoint, Inc. (NYSE: WLP) is announcing an alliance with eSSENTIAL Accessibility™ to offer an online solution that assists individuals who have difficulty typing, moving a mouse or reading a web page. With the help of eSSENTIAL Accessibility, WellPoint is taking a major step to enable visitors with physical disabilities to access health plan and benefit information, including an online doctor finder tool as well as claims details and wellness materials.

The launch is part of a Disability Community Involvement Initiative created by eSSENTIAL Accessibility in partnership with leading advocacy groups for the disabled such as The Christopher and Dana Reeve Foundation and March of Dimes of Canada. eSSENTIAL Accessibility is leading this initiative to bridge the digital divide for those with physical disabilities by bringing WellPoint and other global organizations together to connect with and empower people with disabilities in a meaningful way. Using eSSENTIAL Accessibility’s online solution, WellPoint is making assistive technology available for free, extending online access to important health plan information and services for more consumers.

Website visitors simply click on an icon to download keyboard and mouse replacement solutions for free, including a webcam-based hands-free movement tracking system, a page reader, predictive typing and other customizable options. The online tools can be used on a standard PC by people who have dexterity challenges or reading difficulties arising from a variety of conditions, including stroke, paralysis, arthritis, multiple sclerosis (MS), Parkinson’s disease, cerebral palsy, dyslexia and other issues. To see the eSSENTIAL Accessibility online solution in action, visit www.wellpoint.com.

“We are proud to offer this assistive technology to help disabled individuals,” said Lori Beer, executive vice president of WellPoint’s Enterprise Business Services division, and co-chair of ABLE, the company’s resource group for associates with disabilities. “With this online solution, our health plan tools and services are more readily accessible to all consumers. This is one important way we are working to fulfill our mission to improve the lives of the people we serve and the health of our communities.”

According to Linda Jimenez, chief diversity officer and vice president – diversity & inclusion for WellPoint, “We have taken an exciting step forward to help improve access to health plan information for the disabled community. WellPoint is committed to inclusive treatment of people with disabilities; the company has received multiple awards for this commitment, as well as for our business and supplier growth strategies. Most notably, Careers and the disABLED magazine named WellPoint as a Top 50 Employer for the past five years. Last year, the company became a founding partner of the U.S. Business Leadership Network (USBLN) Supplier Diversity Program. WellPoint is ranked number 36 on the 2011 Diversity Inc Top 50 Companies for Diversity® list.

WellPoint Foundation is a supporter of Disabled Sports USA.
The United States Canoe Association (USCA) hosted ParaCanoe National Championships in the disciplines of kayak and va’a (outrigger canoe) in Newago, Mich., on Aug. 9. This was the first year that 500 meter K-1 and V-1 races for men and women paddlers with physical disabilities were offered by USCA since the International Paralympic Committee’s announcement to include ParaCanoe in the 2016 Games in Rio de Janeiro.

Eight paddlers entered the races. Five men and one woman from Michigan’s Mary Free Bed Rehabilitation Hospital amputee population joined an Army Reserve paddler with lower limb amputation from New York State and a Special Olympics paddler with a physical disability from Maryland to complete the field. In a show of support for each other, the paddlers decided to enter both the K-1 and V-1 races. Jan Whitaker, USCA Adaptive Paddling Chairman, USA Canoe/Kayak ParaCanoe coach and President of Cape Ability Outrigger Ohana chapter of DSUSA conducted a solo va’a clinic for the kayak paddlers the day before the sprint races and provided them with V-1s and paddles that CAOO purchased with DSUSA grant funds. Jack Brosius, a former Olympian, shared his coaching expertise and provided one kayak for the races.

Michael Adams from Maryland enjoyed the competition and the camaraderie. He was a pioneer paddler, leading the way for other Special Olympians with physical disabilities, proving that they have a place in an open competition such as USCA Nationals, to complete their ability.

Sierra Miller, new to kayak competition, ran unopposed in the women’s K-1 division taking the gold medal. She was very proud of the fact she finished ahead of two of the male K-1 paddlers. Her mother, an Iraq war veteran, was thrilled by her performance.

Derrick Mertowski captured the gold in both the men’s V-1 and K-1 classes. Derrick had previously qualified for USA Canoe/Kayak’s ParaCanoe team selected to compete in the 2011 International Canoe Federation’s World Sprint Championships in Szeged, Hungary. Three days after competing in Newago, Derrick traveled to Hungary where he placed 5th in a field of 14 countries entered in his division.

John “Chris” Vansanden had participated in Extremity Games 3 placing fourth in the kayak competition.

Complete numerical results may be found on USCA’s website, but sports results are far more than numbers recorded on a page. As John King, prosthetist from Mary Free Bed Hospital, noted, “Kayaking and kayak competition represent excellent forms of physical activity. For the amputee population it minimizes stress on lower limb amputations while providing an excellent cardiovascular workout. While paddling in decked kayaks, the amputee experiences a form of body image restoration as their injuries are not visible to the public. A rewarding component of these competitions remains the camaraderie shared by the competitors. This is true among the broad spectrum of athletes with physical disabilities. Engaging conversations, smiles and laughter remain a hallmark of these gatherings. Just being involved in the event, win or lose, becomes its own reward.”

The next stop on the road to Rio will be determined by athletes with physical disabilities, coaches, physical therapists, prosthetists, parents and other people interested in recruiting, training and funding equipment and athletes in all the ParaCanoe disability categories (Legs-Trunk-Arms, Trunk-Arms, Arms). The Paralympic opportunity is now a reality. USA Canoe/Kayak (www.usack.org) needs your help in paving the road to Rio. For more information, click on ParaCanoe under “Disciplines” on the following websites: International Canoe Federation (www.canoeicf.com) and USA Canoe/Kayak (www.usack.org).
The Motionfoot™ is a revolutionary new product from Motion Control, Inc. that provides unique new features in a prosthetic foot, to improve the comfort and naturalness of walking and using an artificial foot. These features include:

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A member of the U.S. Adaptive Ski Team, Patrick (Pat) Parnell has his sights set on being a National Champion and competing in the 2014 Paralympics in Sochi, Russia. Pat is a native of Columbia, Conn., and is currently a freshman at Colby-Sawyer College in New Hampshire, majoring in environmental studies.

Now that you’re in college, how do you balance school and training?
PP: “Once winter comes around, I will be skiing on the weekends with Jason Lalla (1998 Paralympic Gold Medalist—Nagano) and during the week with my college team. Skiing for my school allows me to train and stay in shape while still having time for my studies.”

How has DSUSA helped you in your ski career?
PP: “DSUSA has been an integral part of my career. I have been to four The Hartford Ski Spectaculars, and there I get to ski with top skiers from around the country, which has helped me improve to the level where I am at today. I learned was that I had to approach steep runs aggressively and with a strong edge.”

Where has been your favorite place to ski and what do you never forget to bring during your travels?
PP: “Skiing this past summer in New Zealand was a great experience but my all-time favorite destination has been Alyeska, Alaska. The mountain scenery there is amazing and the skiing was first-class. One thing I would never leave home without is my cell phone. My friends and family are so supportive so I keep in touch and send them my results while I am away.”

What is your favorite race event?
PP: “The slalom is my favorite event as it is my strongest and I like how it is rhythmical. I like skiing everything; steep runs, powder, trees, moguls and the (terrain) park with my friends.”

How do you train in the off season?
PP: “My training involves riding the resistance bike, lifting weights, working out my core and stretching. Hiking is really fun and recently my college took a school trip up to the White Mountains. I did the entire hike on crutches!”

Do you have any tips and suggestions for up and coming adaptive athletes?
PP: “Perseverance is vital. There will always be obstacles, but to push through them and overcome them is what really matters.”

Seven years ago, the Pennsylvania Center for Adapted Sports, a chapter of DSUSA, introduced Stephanie Jallen to skiing. She continued training at the National Sports Center for the Disabled, a chapter of DSUSA. Now 15 years old, she is a member of the U.S. National Alpine Ski Team, determined to compete in the 2014 Paralympic Games in Sochi, Russia.

What are your goals/aspirations in skiing?
SJ: “I want to do well in the World Cup and keep pushing to be the best I can be. For the past seven years, I have had the goal of skiing in the Paralympics.”

Who have been your strongest influences throughout your career?
SJ: “Mau Thompson was my first coach. She taught me how to ski and to be an athlete, but equally important she taught me how to be independent and how to present myself in a professional manner. Ernie Baul is my personal trainer. He has made me incredibly stronger and improved my overall athleticism that has greatly improved my skiing. My mom has always been the spine of my career. She created the Stephanie Jallen Paralympic fund (nonprofit) and has been raising money to provide the resources I need to reach my goals.”

Where are your favorite places to ski?
SJ: “I like Camelback in Pennsylvania as it is my home mountain where I learned to ski but my favorite ski areas are Winter Park, Colorado, and Mt. Hood, Oregon. Mt. Hood was great since I got to ski there in the summer with able-bodied skiers. I’m really looking forward to skiing in Austria in October.”

How has your training changed now that you are training with the U.S. Adaptive Ski Team?
SJ: “I train with a larger group of skiers and the expectations are greater. There is also a lot more traveling involved, which can be hard at times but definitely worth it because it gets me closer to reaching my goals. I am lucky because my school accommodates my ski schedule. I take coursework with me while traveling and when I get back I take a bunch of tests within five days of my return.”

Do you have any advice to give up and coming adaptive athletes?
SJ: “The harder something is, the more it should push you to achieve it. Taking the extra step, striving to be better and to overcome will make you stronger.”
WHAT TYPE OF ACTIVITY IS RIGHT FOR ME?

The following is an outline to the types of camps and clinics you can expect to see this winter. The full calendar of opportunities is on the DSUSA website under Event Calendar. Visit www.dsusa.org for more information.

LEARN TO SKI, SNOWBOARD, NORDIC, AND MORE.

As the name implies you will find many chapters that offer special events that help introduce those completely new to the sport. In addition, if you visit the website of the chapter nearest you, many will offer individual or group lessons at a greatly discounted rate.

EMERGING ATHLETE CAMP OR LEARN TO RACE

These camps are designed for the mid-level to advanced athlete who can comfortably handle blue/black terrain. Coaches will teach skiers about race technique, running gates and the Paralympic pipeline. Disabled Sports USA is supporting an emerging athlete camp in each Alpine region of the USA this winter, in partnership with U.S. Paralympics. Not sure if these are for you? Visit the Disabled Sports USA Alpine Ski and Racing Q&A on our website at http://www.dsusa.org/PDF-files/skispec/QandA.pdf.

DIANA GOLDEN RACE SERIES (OR LEVEL I RACE)

The Diana Golden race series provides entry-level disabled races and are usually conducted on a “NASTAR” style course, in a Giant Slalom format. The series, primarily occurring in the Northeast provides young disabled athletes the chance to compete in an entry level race. There are no pre-requisites to participate and no license is required.

NORAM (IPC) RACE SERIES

NorAm races are for advanced skiers vying for a place on the U.S. Adaptive Ski Team. As in non-disabled races, there are both speed and technical events over 5 disciplines – Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super G, Downhill and Super Combined. All participants must have USSA and IPC licenses, as well as be medically classified. Athletes may secure their classification annually at The Hartford Ski Spectacular - http://www.wix.com/disabledsportsusa/ski-spectacular. For more information on licensing and qualification standards, visit www.usparalympics.org.

INSTRUCTOR EDUCATION

Disabled Sports USA is proud to offer the Bridging the Gap: from recreation to competition instructor training seminars. The goal of this training is to give adaptive ski instructors a better understanding of ski racing and the benefits of incorporating it into their lessons. In addition, Disabled Sports USA annually hosts the PSIA-AASI National Continuing Education Academy at The Hartford Ski Spectacular. Instructors looking for additional training, CEUs, and looking to take their adaptive exam should visit their respective program calendar on their regional PSIA-AASI website.

WINTER GRANTS TO DISABLED SPORTS USA CHAPTERS

2011 saw Disabled Sports USA grant over $500,000 to its chapter network. DSUSA is thrilled to once again be providing financial support to chapter events and programming this winter, in large part thanks to its national partner U.S. Paralympics. We are committed to providing development opportunities for athletes of all abilities, and provide a seamless pipeline to the Paralympic Games.

Warfighter Sports Winter Program

Severly wounded warriors and their family members interested in snow sports can hone their skills this winter with free SkiTour events as part of the Warfighter Sports Series conducted by DSUSA and its chapters. Whether it’s learning to ski, snowboard, Nordic or biathlon, race training for those with Paralympic goals, or training weekly at your local mountain, the 2011-2012 SkiTour provides opportunities for those with all interest levels and abilities.

Last year’s military SkiTour calendar included more than 80 winter sporting events hosted by our nationwide chapter network, and this season positions itself to be just as active. All Warfighter Sports events are provided free of charge to warfighters and their family members including individualized adaptive instruction, adaptive equipment, transportation, event fees and lodging where applicable.

To view the full winter military calendar and learn more information about Warfighter Sports visit www.warfightersports.org.
Nordic (Cross-Country) Skiing Is For All Ages and Abilities

DO YOU YEARN TO TAKE PART IN A WINTER SPORT THAT GETS YOU OUT IN THE FRESH AIR AND BEAUTIFUL SNOW COUNTRY, BUT ALPINE (DOWNHILL) SKIING IS A LITTLE TOO THRILLING FOR YOUR TASTE? THEN CONSIDER THE SPORT OF NORDIC.

As its name suggests, Nordic skiing was developed in Scandinavia more than 4,000 years ago as a means of transportation over snowy and icy terrain. Today, Nordic skiing is a fast-growing snow sport with more than 4.5 million participants, including those with limb loss, vision impairment, spinal injuries, cerebral palsy, multiple sclerosis, stroke, and brain injury.

“Adaptive Nordic skiing can be whatever you make of it,” said Maggie Palchak, trainer and Paralympic Sport Program Director at Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra, Mammoth Lakes, Calif., a chapter of Disabled Sports USA. “You can go for the equivalent of a casual stroll through the woods or an all out marathon run. The first time recreational skier with minimal fitness experience can still have a splendid time out on cross-country skis.

“Nordic skiing can be adapted to suit a variety of physical abilities and disabilities. An individual can ski standing up with two skis and two poles, one pole or no poles. If an athlete has balance issues, a snow slider (similar to a walker on skis) can be used. There are also sit down rigs for Nordic skiing which can accommodate athletes with spinal cord injuries, lower limb deficiencies or balance issues,” she said.
THE CLASSIC STYLE OF NORDIC SKING

Stand-up Nordic skiing falls into two classifications, classic and skate.

In classic skiing, the athlete skis in or out of a groomed track with the skis and arms moving in a parallel motion fore and aft with arms and legs moving diagonally with respect to each other (similar to walking or jogging).

Ellen Adams, program director, National Ability Center (NAC), a chapter of Disabled Sports USA, explained the techniques and requirements for those who can do stand-up classic skiing.

“Stand-up Nordic skiing requires the ability to balance and shuffle forward,” she said. “When done properly on flat terrain, it doesn’t require much more strength than walking. A fluid stride with a controlled arm swing/poling motion will result in forward motion. Skiing on undulating or hilly terrain is more challenging, and requires coordination and some strength, especially in the core and thighs to maneuver up and down slopes.

“As a stand-up Nordic skier progresses, what was at first a shuffling motion becomes more fluid and, ultimately, a kick and glide motion. The skier remains in an athletic stance, balanced over the center of the ski. When approaching an uphill grade, the skier moves the center of gravity slightly back onto the heels of the ski, allowing the ski to grip the snow. When approaching a downhill, the skier moves over the center of the ski, bends a little at the waist and pushes the tails in to a wedge shape, creating more friction and slowing the skier down.”

FALLING HAPPENS

“A beginning skier is likely to fall, and it is helpful to learn how to get up before doing much else,” Adams said. “First, if the skier has any control going into the fall, they should try to fall with skis parallel to each other. Before trying to get up, the skier should make sure the skis are parallel, across any incline; placed at a 90 degree angle to the fall line. Keep the feet comfortably apart, and put both poles on one side of the

Continued on next page >>

Cross-Country on a Sit-Ski

“You don’t have to be in great physical shape to try Nordic sit-skiing,” said Matt Feeney, program director, Adaptive Adventures, Colorado, a chapter of Disabled Sports USA. “I think this may be one of the myths of Nordic or cross-country skiing from a seated position. It looks quite daunting, and some people assume that it’s for “animals” only, but with the right equipment and wax (very important) anybody with moderate strength can enjoy the sport. As with downhill skiing, you don’t start out on black diamond runs; you progress from flat terrain to more challenging terrain as you get more comfortable with the equipment, technique and your surroundings.

“The motion in Nordic sit-skiing is very important; it’s what gets you from A to B,” he said. “Nordic skiers propel themselves with lightweight poles, extending the arms forward, placing the tips of the poles in the snow (on both sides of the sit-ski) and pushing the sled forward in a single motion that is repeated to sustain that motion.

“As with stand-up, Nordic sit-skiers are looking for a good glide on the snow, so having the right wax can be very important as well. If the sit-ski is not gliding on the snow, in other words, the skier seems to be coming to an abrupt stop after a push, then Nordic skiing can become quite daunting. Most Nordic centers can tell you the snow temperature and appropriate wax for the day, so you don’t feel like you have sandpaper under your skis,” Feeney said.

Going up and getting up on a sit-ski

Ascending an incline can be challenging depending on the steepness, length and variations in terrain. Feeney recommends using shorter, ‘choppy’ strokes as the ski will not be able to glide going uphill. Look ahead when skiing to anticipate any upcoming changes in terrain and use as much momentum as possible going into an incline.

“Getting up from a fall can also be a little challenging for the beginner,” he said. “It is recommended that you always ski with someone who can assist you if need be. Most Nordic sit-skis sit fairly low to the ground, so if you tip over you can usually just use your arm (that’s closest to the snow) to push off and right the sled. Of course, there may be different situations that require you to unstrap from the rig, put the skis back on the snow and transfer back in, which may take a little practice.”

Preparing for a first Nordic skiing experience is simple. Feeney advises: “Just keep an open mind. Most people that enjoy Nordic skiing often lead active lifestyles and are reasonably fit. Handcycling is excellent cross-training, and people who handcyle generally do well in Nordic skiing. One of the first questions I would ask someone Nordic skiing for the first time is if they participate in any other sports. It certainly doesn’t hurt to be athletic.”

Dry land training

“Handcycling is excellent dry land training,” he said. “Some members of the U.S. team also attach wheels to their sit-ski rigs and push around during the off season. Actually, just about any kind of physical activity is good dry land training.”
DSUSA Chapter Events-Resources

Many DSUSA chapters offer beautiful settings for Nordic skiing as well as offering instruction, competitions, and events that appeal to any ability. Here is a sampling of what some chapters are doing. (Note: This is not an all-inclusive listing.)

Adaptive Adventures
4840 Pearl East Circle - 201W
Boulder, CO 80301-2486
(303) 910-9831
matt@adaptiveadventures.org

2616 Wilmette Avenue
Wilmette, IL 60091
(312) 310-2770
joel@adaptiveadventures.org
www.adaptiveadventures.org

Challenge Aspen
Challenge Aspen’s Estes Park Nordic Ski & Snowshoe Adventure for wounded military from Brooke Army Medical Center and their families will be Jan. 30-Feb. 3. For more information, visit www.challengeaspen.org/veterans_winter_camps.cfm.

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra Paralympic Sport Mammoth Lakes announces its third annual Nordic Camp, coached by USOC and USPC coach Jon Kreamelmeyer and Paralympic medalist Candace Cable. The camp offers skills training and touring opportunities in the Eastern Sierra at Tamarack Cross Country Ski Center in Mammoth Lakes, Calif., Jan. 6-8. For more information, contact Maggie Palchak at mpalchak@disablesports-easternsierra.org.

Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Assoc.
The Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association (GLASA) will be partnering with Central Cross Country for Nordic clinics Feb. 6, 1-4 p.m., at the RecPlex, Kenosha, Wis. For more information, contact Keri Schindler, Kschindler@glasa.org.

Maine Handicapped Skiing
Maine Handicapped Skiing has been providing lessons and programs in Nordic skiing for more than a decade, free of charge. Equipment and instructors will be at numerous locations throughout the season for lessons and demos. For more information, visit www.skimhs.org, e-mail info@skimhs.org, or call (800) 639-7770.

National Ability Center
PO Box 682799
Park City, UT 84068
(435) 649-3991
info@discovernac.org
www.discovernac.org

New England Disabled Sports
New England Disabled Sports, Loon Mountain, N.H., offers Nordic and biathlon. For more information, visit www.nedisabledsports.org or call (603) 745-6281, ext. 5663.

Northeast Passage
Since 2007, with support from U.S. Paralympics, Northeast Passage, Durham, N.H., has been providing instruction, adaptive equipment, coaching, and elite athlete development. Region-wide collaboration between Northeast Passage, the New England Nordic Ski Association (NENSA), Nordic ski clubs and centers, and other adaptive sports organizations have led to comprehensive programming and entrance into competitive races and events. The Northeast Passage Adaptive Nordic Ski Team competes locally and nationally. Athletes can attend Northeast Passage’s annual snow training camp to focus on skill development with access to the Northeast Passage coaching staff and U.S. adaptive team development coaches. For more information, contact Nordic ski coach Cathy Thompson at (603) 862-0070 or visit www.nepassage.org.

Sports Association
The Sports Association, a chapter of DSUSA in Wallingford, Conn., will be offering adaptive Nordic skiing this winter. Dates are dependent on winter conditions. For more information, contact Todd Munn at (203) 284-2772.

Stowe Tour de Snow
Showcasing Nordic skiing is the Stowe Tour de Snow, Sunday, Jan. 15. Experienced athletes will enjoy the terrain, and those new to the sport can experiment with Nordic skiing. Stowe Tour de Snow starts at the top of the 5.3-mile Stowe Recreation Path, where participants ski, walk, snowshoe or run along the hard-packed groomed surface, stopping at stations to participate in family-friendly activities.

Miss Wheelchair Maine, Monica Quimby, will also be on hand to demonstrate her skills as an accomplished Nordic skier.

Cost is $5 per person. For questions or to reserve equipment, contact Pascale Savard by Dec. 18 at pascale@stowe.nu. For more information about the event, visit www.stowetourdesnow.com.

Telluride Adaptive Sports Program
Telluride Adaptive Sports Program offers Nordic skiing for all ability levels and is a Cross Country Ski Association (CXC) Opportunity Center. Whether a beginner or a seasoned cross-country skier after a Nordic experience on the track or in the backcountry, Telluride has many choices. For more information, contact Tim McGough at (970) 728-3865 or programs@tellurideadapivesports.org.

THE ‘MAKE LIKE A BUG’ METHOD
“It is important to protect wrist and shoulders in a fall, and this can be done by drawing the arm into the body rather than trying to “break” one’s fall with outstretched arms,” said Palchak. “The simplest way for a stand-up skier to get up from a fall is to ‘make like a dead bug’ by rolling onto their back with all limbs in the air. They can then take off their poles, grab the tips of their skis and roll over in one smooth move until their skis are underneath them and they can stand up.

“There is also the option of stepping out of one’s skies, standing up and stepping back into the skis. Sit-down skiers can generally roll to their side and push themselves back up to an upright position,” she said.
SKATE SKIING

“Skate skiing is done on groomed or smooth surfaces (not in tracks), and the motion is similar to an ice skater,” explained Palchak. “The athlete again maintains an athletic, flexed stance balanced over the ball of the gliding foot and glides each ski forward in a toes pointed out (herringbone) manner.”

USING POLES

“All poling in skating is ‘double poling’ meaning both poles are planted at the same time as opposed to the diagonal/alternate poling motion in classic skiing,” said Palchak. “In both skate and classic skiing there are a variety of poling techniques to be used as one progresses. Sit-down skiers use double poling techniques and whatever core muscles they have available to propel themselves up and down the trails.”

Limitless Benefits

“The obvious benefit is fitness. It’s an activity that promotes good health and exercise,” said Maggie Feeney, Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra. “Nordic skiing also offers an individual the opportunity to push their own limits of their physical body in a majestic outdoor environment. Best of all, there are no lift lines or snowboarders running over your ski saying ‘sorry bro!’”

Palchak concurs the benefits are ‘limitless!’

“Nordic skiing is one of the ‘silent sports.’ You can take it almost anywhere with friends, your dog or solo,” she said. “You can use a groomed Nordic ski facility or just take off through the woods. All ages can enjoy Nordic skiing as a peaceful or a vigorous and competitive sport. It allows athletes to get places and see things they could not otherwise see – this is especially true for wheelchair users. This sport allows for improvement of cardiovascular systems, endurance, balance, muscle strength and more. Nordic skiing offers fabulous wildlife viewing opportunities as well as access to splendid vistas. It can be a great option for families to get out and exercise together, and it is also a great solo, mind clearing endeavor.”

Advises Palchak: “Don’t delay. Try it now and you will be hooked!”

Experts Dress for the Trails

“The air temperature is often low, so while you need to dress warmly, your body is generating more heat from exercising so you have to find a balance between staying warm and overheating. Thin layers of breathable clothing work best. Any warm footwear will work… the lighter, the better.”

– Matt Feeney
Adaptive Adventures

“On top, the skier should wear lightweight layers, including an under layer, possibly a fleece, and a shell. Pants should be comfortable and moisture wicking with a bit of stretch. A hat and a pair of gloves completes the outfit.”

– Ellen Adams
National Ability Center

“Dress in layers of athletic clothing – synthetic fabric, stretch, wind/weatherproof as appropriate. Use sun and eye protection. Nordic ski boots are required for stand-up skiers. There are several types of Nordic boot and binding systems. Sit-down skiers should wear warm, lightweight weather appropriate footwear. Weather appropriate, wicking, stretch clothing in layers is optimal.”

– Maggie Palchak
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra
Going Up

The terrain a cross-country skier encounters is level and gently rolling, but the occasional rise or small hill needs to be ascended. To do this, a skier will take shorter, quicker steps and poling action to ascend an incline. Stand-up skiers also have the option of using a herringbone step to climb steeper hills.

Dry Land Training

“Roller skiing is the most sport specific dry land training practiced by elite athletes. This is available to both stand-up and sit-down athletes. Cycling is another common cross training sport as are hiking and running,” Palchak said, adding this tip. “Practice standing and balancing over one foot at a time, and keep an open mind because those skinny skis seem darn slippery the first time you put them on!”

Equipment Round-Up

Adaptive equipment for the sport is available for both stand-up and sit-skiers and can be modified to accommodate nearly every ability. A typical set of Nordic equipment includes skis, bindings, boots and poles. Nordic skis are shaped very differently than Alpine skis. They are lighter weight and much skinnier. In addition, they have more camber (flex) and reverse sidecut. Poles are light and taller than Alpine poles.

Sit-skis have a seat balanced over a frame with two cross-country skis about 12 inches apart. The skier sits with legs extended in front, supported by a footrest. Legs can be strapped to the sit-ski for additional support. Sit-skiers can also be pulled via tethers.

Some sit-ski manufacturers include Hall, Kiwi, Sierra and Praschberger.

As with downhill skiing, visually-impaired skiers can travel with a guide who will call out directions and warn of obstacles. For those who have limited ability to ski upright, walkers are an option. The walkers have two cross-country skis on the bottom to help the skier balance during a self-propelled movement. A seat sling is provided for resting.
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Tee it up for the Troops (TIUFTT) was launched in 2005 as a single golf tournament, designed to help veterans and their families by raising scholarship funds. The heart and soul of Tee it up for the Troops is James “J.B.” Ball, who created the organization to honor a request from his son, Tyler, who was stationed in Iraq at the time. Tyler suggested his family do something for the soldiers and their families back home who were in need.

Today, because of J.B. Ball, board members and volunteers, TIUFTT has grown into a nationally-recognized organization that has distributed nearly $4 million to various programs and organizations that help injured military veterans – from World War II to the current conflict. The “fun” in the fundraising comes from participants enjoying a day on the links, making new friends and connecting with old ones, and for the wounded, finding another outlet for rehabilitation.

“There were a lot of times my wife, Laurie, and I spent on bended knee praying for the day Tyler would come home,” J.B. said. “We wanted God to take care of Tyler, and in turn we would try to take care of some of the others that come home wounded.”

Because he and his sons shared many good times on the golf course, Ball used golf as the means to raise funds and Tee it up for the Troops was launched.

The first scheduled event, the National Day of Golf, was held seven years ago the Friday before September 11 and has continued since. “It’s a day to go out and enjoy the freedom we have in this country. We get a chance to walk some of the most beautiful real estate in the world on the golf course and we don’t have to go through a checkpoint to do it. Whether you make a donation or not, we don’t care. What we want you to do is to remember and to thank those that are currently serving and those who have done so in the past,” Ball said.

Golfers who participate in the National Day of Golf typically donate 10 percent of their green fees. “We thought if we could get a million golfers out on the golf course at $5 each, we could have an impact, we could change some lives. But even a donation of $1 or $2 is terrific,” Ball said. “Just go out and enjoy the day and show that there are enough people around you to say thank you to the military and keep the cause front and center.”

Helping spread word of the event nationally is the Club Managers Association of America. “They have been very supportive of what we’re doing,” Ball said. “The response from clubs across the country is overwhelming. Many said they weren’t able to do the event initially, but they wanted to help. That first year, clubs from 16 states sent something for the silent auction. They told us, ‘as you grow, we’ll grow with you.’ Currently there are 25 states that have full tournaments on the National Day of Golf; California is the first established chapter outside the state of Minnesota.”

Since its first event, TIUFTT has raised nearly $4 million, the majority from individual donations. “There have been some great organizations that supported us, such as Bridgestone Golf,” said Ball. “They have donated golf balls to us from the beginning, probably in
excess of $100,000. Our largest single contributor is PGA golfer Hunter Mahon, who donated $50,000 from the Ryder Cup when he qualified for that event and $50,000 from the Presidents Cup. TIUFTT matched his donations, and on behalf of Hunter and Tee it up for the Troops, $10,000 was given to 10 different organizations.

“We have pledged to be good stewards of the money and to reach out to other organizations that change lives. We’re a bit unique in that you don’t often find a nonprofit organization that is trying to support other organizations. We hope that we can do it for many years to come,” he said.

A SOLID RELATIONSHIP BEGINS WITH DSUSA

In the process of reviewing organizations that are doing the right thing from day one and making a difference, we reached out to DSUSA because we witnessed some of the activities they do for the disabled in skiing, marathons, and cycling. We thought we could help with golf events.”

Ball recalled his first meeting with DSUSA’s Executive Director Kirk Bauer. “I happened to be walking the Halls of Walter Reed when I recognized Kirk doing the same. I introduced myself and explained about Tee it up for the Troops and how we’d like to be more involved with DSUSA. Kirk took the time right there standing in the hallway of Walter Reed to talk to me about it. This turned out to be a very good relationship with DSUSA as well as a terrific friendship with Kirk. We’ve done the Bataan Memorial Death March together, we’ve golfed together, and we’ve done the DSUSA galas.

“Through Kirk, we’ve been able to get into the hospitals more effectively and meet some of the individual warriors. When we want to engage wounded warriors for an event, we know we can count on Kirk to help.”

MORE THAN A GAME: GIVING TO OTHERS

Ball emphasized that playing at TIUFTT events is inclusive for all veterans, no matter the era.

Continued on next page >>
We want to thank all veterans that have served. It’s not just about inviting golfers from every generation to participate, but it’s reaching out to other organizations that are supporting those who serve and have served. We now contribute to the ground transportation for the honor flights to honor World War II and Korean veterans traveling to the Washington, D.C., memorial.

“We helped sponsor a Vietnam Vets ‘welcome home’ event here in Minnesota. We had more than 5,000 Vietnam vets at the state capital and some of them in over 40 years had never heard anyone say thank you, so there was a lot of emotion that weekend to witness. The Vietnam Vets that I have met over the years are some of the first people to step up to the tee in support of the mission of TIUFTT. They’ve been there since day one and do not want the troops today to have the same reception they received upon their homecoming,” he said.

“We also became involved with service dog organizations, PawPADs and Puppies Behind Bars. Recently, a black Lab named Birdie came through with flying colors on her first night with a Marine recovering at Bethesda Naval Hospital. The Marine could not sleep through the night, waking every half hour. But with Birdie’s calming influence, he was able to sleep for over five hours straight. Interacting with Birdie, also helped him interact with family members, particularly a young daughter.”

“Fast forward a year and Kirk Bauer invites me to the DSUSA golf outing at the Army Navy Country Club. I’m walking across the parking lot, and I see a young man who looks to be about 180 pounds and in great shape. We looked at each other and I recognize him as the young soldier. He had improved so much he was now in front of television cameras for DSUSA. He said, ‘J.B., I want to thank you. I might not be standing here today if I had not made that trip to Minnesota; whatever you need, whenever you need it, just call me.’

That’s one of many touching stories J.B. Ball has heard. He says: “We haven’t done our job if they don’t leave here asking, ‘can I come back?’”

“Since he’s been home from Iraq, Tyler has volunteered every year for TIUFTT, but golfed in only one TIUFTT golf event. He prefers helping with the bag drop, setting up tee box signs and volunteer stations, driving the beverage cart, and personally greeting the veterans who are teeing off. By not playing, I can greet 150 veterans in the morning and 150 golfers in the afternoon and interact with some of the volunteers. I would rather do that than play golf,” he said. “Since I’ve met the individual warriors and veterans and warriors across the country, I don’t think I’d ever be able to walk away from being involved with TIUFTT.”
Virtual Wii-habilitation Assists Disabled Snowboarders

As adaptive snow sports centers and programs are on the rise in the United States, the connection between adaptive sports and physical therapy is becoming stronger and more present. Physical therapists are becoming integral components in adaptive sports programs, while adaptive sports are seen by therapists as effective transitional buffers for individuals with disabilities leaving rehabilitation programs.

By Mary Ann Cozza and Brendan Sullivan

Benefits of Adaptive Snow Sports

The benefits of adaptive snow sports are powerful. They allow people with disabilities the opportunity to enjoy a certain measure of freedom, mobility, and the outdoors with the aid of specialized equipment and trained instructors. Individuals that participate in adaptive sports experience a sense of fulfillment, success, and independence that they might have otherwise been lacking. The activities also encourage socialization and ignite a competitive spirit.

Similarly, physical therapy promotes mobility, independence, and healing and is often an integral part of adaptive sports programs. Physical therapist Brendan Sullivan sees the cross-over between physical therapy and adaptive sports in his own practice saying, “The trend in physical therapy right now is functional training. For athletes, this translates into sport specific exercises that lead an individual back to their desired sport.”

Yeshayahu Hutzler, president of the International Federation of Adapted Physical Activity, extols the benefits of physical therapy and adaptive sports saying, “Physical activity has very tangible outcomes. When mastery and success are accomplished through learning a new motor skill, such as swimming, riding, cycling, batting, etc., or through increasing the strength needed to push the body away from the floor, thus initiating modes of locomotion, individuals of all ages and abilities gain confidence in their body and consequently their life.”

Virtual Rehabilitation

To facilitate the bond between physical therapy and adaptive snow sports even more, Sullivan has turned his attention to technology. He uses gaming systems in a virtual reality-augmented therapy program to rehabilitate athletes not just for regular life, but also for a better transition back into their chosen sport.

“What I’ve consistently heard from patients, specifically snowboarders recovering from injuries, is that traditional therapeutic exercise did not prepare them for the rigors of their sport nor did it challenge them on an emotional level,” Sullivan said.

When he introduced the Nintendo® Wii gaming system into his private practice in 2009, his patients immediately responded with positive feedback.

“My patients find the experience of playing motion controlled video games both immersive and enjoyable,” he said.

Virtual rehabilitation offers several benefits over conventional therapy, according to Burdea in a 2003 keynote address at a workshop on virtual rehabilitation. It is entertaining and motivates patients. It also provides actual outcome measures, such as limb velocity or range of motion, to prove the value of therapy.

Sullivan primarily uses virtual rehabilitation to prepare persons with disabilities or injured athletes for snowboarding. “It is an evaluative tool rather than a simple piece of equipment. The technology is not intended to teach someone how to snowboard. What we’re trying to do is to take into account all of the variables that someone fundamentally needs to start snowboarding,” he said.

“When paired with good instruction, this technology can help determine any underlying weaknesses that require skilled therapy and/or further modification to adaptive snowboard equipment.”

Future Plans

Although Sullivan’s patients enjoy their therapy sessions with the Nintendo® Wii, it soon became clear that that system wasn’t challenging enough. Today, he is working with a physician and a technology developer to reconfigure the Nintendo® remote controller into a balance board that more closely mirrors the physical demands, such as twisting, pivoting, and tilting, required of snowboarders returning to the slopes.

As Sullivan goes on to explain, “A gaming company’s primary goal is to sell games and accessories, not necessarily to meet the needs of the adaptive community.” To meet the needs of those people, Sullivan hopes his modified gaming controller, the Adaptive Snow-Balance board™, can fill the gap between virtual rehabilitation gaming technology and adaptive snowboarding.

To Sullivan, the blending of technology, physical therapy, and adaptive sports is a natural step and one that he will continue to use in his own practice.

“Using virtual rehabilitation as a precursor for adaptive sports is a great way to prepare persons with disabilities or injured athletes for the rigors, both mental and physical, of returning to a sport,” he said. “The more prepared one is, the greater chance of success and consequently greater healing, I believe.”

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Adaptive Action Sports Launches A.S.X. Training and Race Series

With the expectation that adaptive snowboarding will be included in the 2018 Paralympics in South Korea, competitive snowboarders have six years to prepare to compete for a spot on the U.S. Para-Snowboard Team.

To provide a training ground and competition opportunities for adaptive athletes to hone their snowboarding skills, Adaptive Action Sports, Inc. (AAS) is initiating its A.S.X. (Adaptive Snowboard BoarderX) training and race series.

In December, AAS kicks off the first series with four, four-day Learn-to-Ride-and-Race camps, each followed by an open race. The training camps are built on AAS’ experience in conducting or coordinating more than four dozen Action Sports events since 2005. Each camp is designed to provide ten participants with individualized, on-snow training based on a pre-camp assessment of their current skill levels and their specific goals, whether these goals are for recreational purposes or the Paralympics.

Each camp will be instructed by an experienced adaptive snowboard instructor, assisted by a team of AAS’ newly-credentialed Level 1 Adaptive Snowboard Instructors. The ratio of camp participants to AAS staff, coaches, and instructors will remain 1:2. The training camps will end on the fourth morning with an amateur-level competition.

Immediately following the close of the training camps, AAS will hold its A.S.X. champion race series. Registration will be limited to intermediate and advanced riders. Cash purses will be offered.

The concept for the A.S.X. series was planted last summer when AAS was invited to host one of three cash prize adaptive skateboard competitions sponsored by Shoe City. The AAS event, with cash awards and prizes valuing more than $3,000, was held at Summer X Games 17.

AAS plans to replicate its 2011-12 Snow Series with a 2012 summer A.S.X. (Adaptive Skateboard X Series). Both A.S.X. series will be annual events.

To apply for a spot in the A.S.X. snowboard camps or to register for the open A.S.X. race, contact AAS at info@adacs.org.
The Adaptive Sports Center Turns 25

The Adaptive Sports Center (ASC) in Crested Butte, Colo., will celebrate 25 years of outdoor adventure activities for people with disabilities in February. To commemorate this milestone, the ASC is extending a special promotion to current and new participants: 25 percent off individual ski or snowboard lessons from Feb. 1-17. Advance reservations are recommended, and specialized activities, such as camps, Nordic skiing, ice climbing, and hut trips, are excluded.

Other camps this season include:
High Adventure Camp for Teens with Amputations and Limb Differences, Jan. 4-7; Big Mountain Monoski Camp, Feb. 4-6; Spring Break Siblings Camp, March 12-16; High Adventure Weekend: Ladies Getaway, March 17-19; and Backcountry Hut Trip, April 11-12.

For more information about camps and other programming, visit www.adaptivesports.org, email info@adaptivesports.org, or call (970) 349-2296.

SPARC Co-Sponsors DSUSA Learn to Ski 2012

Sports, Arts, and Recreation of Chattanooga (SPARC) will once again be a co-sponsor for the 31st annual adaptive snow skiing event DSUSA Learn to Ski. It will take place at Ski Beech Mountain Resort in Beech Mountain, N.C., Jan. 16-20.

The Learn to Ski event is part of the SkiTour, which offers individuals learning, racing, and competitive opportunities. The goal is to provide a centralized resource for participants, competitors, parents, and instructors.

For more information, e-mail Al Kaye, M.S., CTRS, at akaye@covhlth.com or call (865) 541-1353.

NEDS Fishing Program and Other News

Disabled veterans fished the Atlantic Ocean for the New England Disabled Sports Fishing Program this season. They were welcomed aboard The American by the Military Liaison and Fishing Program Coordinator, Todd Rohr.

A group of athletes from NEDS and Wounded Warriors participated in the New Hampshire Highland Games in a stone throw. This was the first time that disabled athletes participated in Highland Game competitions, and the International Scottish Highland Game Committee is going to request an international mandate to include Highland Game events for disabled athletes.

Along with this, NEDS added scuba diving, surfing, and adaptive golf to its list of recreational activities this summer. NEDS received a $10,000 donation from Olympic Gold Medal winner Bode Miller’s Turtle Ridge Foundation. This contribution supported the purchase of a SoloRider golf cart, and it helped make the adaptive golf program accessible to students with ambulatory disabilities.

The NEDS Equipment Demonstration Program will introduce the latest technology in adaptive equipment at the Ski Spectacular in Breckenridge, Colo., and venues in the Northeast. During the winter months, NEDS will be organizing biathlon events, and the Wounded Warrior weekend will be held March 22, 23, and 24.

NEDS is also in the process of hiring a new race coach. This person must be available four days per week, and he or she will need to work full time during vacation weeks. The new coach will help athletes train for an entire season and take their skiing to the Paralympic level. NEDS is also looking for a former U.S. Disabled Alpine Ski Team member to head this program.

For more information about events and programs, visit www.nedisabledsports.org or call (603) 745-6281, ext 5663.
Outdoor Adventures in Logan, Utah

Common Ground Outdoor Adventures in Northern Utah provides year-round outdoor recreational opportunities for youth and adults with disabilities. Upcoming winter and spring trips include climbing, white-water rafting, adaptive skiing, canoeing, and camping trips to National Parks in the West. Each trip is adapted to meet the needs of all abilities, and accessible airport shuttles are available from Salt Lake International Airport to Logan, Utah. Equipment, meals, and transportation from Logan are included in the cost. Scholarships are available to individuals who are low income.

Upcoming events include:

December 2011 – March 2012: Winter programs include rock climbing at our local indoor facility, the Rock Haus, snowshoeing and cross-country skiing through the mountains of Cache Valley, and ice fishing at various lakes in the Valley. Adaptive equipment for all abilities. All events will start as soon as the weather permits.


February 2012, Dogsledding trip, Jackson Hole, Wyo.: Snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, and dogsledding with the Jackson Hole Iditarod. Accommodations at Teton Science School in Teton National Park.

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

Leaps of Faith Organizes Water Sports for Wounded Warriors

After three weeks of rain and Hurricane Irene, 14 female OIF/OEF Wounded Warriors from all over the country participated in a water sports program, Sept. 22-24. Attendees enjoyed water skiing, wake boarding, tubing, kayaking, golfing, and more. There were also special group therapy sessions for bonding and healing.

On Sept. 23, the group traveled to New York City and visited Ground Zero. Saturday night ended with a banquet; Army veteran Tamara Jenkins sang “Amazing Grace.” Medals were also awarded to participants of the water sports events.
Recreation and Rehabilitation with Higher Ground

Higher Ground, a division of Sun Valley Adaptive Sports, is preparing for another season of Winter Sports camps. The weeks’ activities focus on injured veterans and their caregivers and include skiing, snowboarding, Nordic skiing, snowshoeing, snowmobiling, and ice skating. Veterans and spouses receive private instruction from trained professionals, who provide adaptive teaching techniques based on each veteran’s cognitive and physical challenges.

Higher Ground facilitates a change in perspective and helps participants learn recreational skills to reintegrate into their communities. It serves veterans with traumatic brain injuries, post-traumatic stress disorder, polytrauma, blindness, and mental illness.

After a day of skiing, a participant said, “Today, I learned that my physical barriers never actually existed. At the camps, I didn’t have to face stress or limitations. I found a release. I discovered a side of me that I thought I had lost and was unable to find on my own.”

2012 winter dates can be found at www.hgvets.org. For more information or to apply to the program, e-mail Bert Gillette at bert@svasp.org or call (208) 726-9298, ext. 104.

The Unrecables Kick Off the Ski Season

The Unrecables celebrated the new ski season at the Snow Gala at Castaway Restaurant in Burbank, Calif., on Nov. 5. John Melville and Sigrid Noack were named the 2011 Man and Woman of the Year at the event. The Snow Gala is hosted annually by the Los Angeles Council of Ski Clubs.

The Mammoth Mountain ski trip schedule is posted on The Unrecables website, www.unrecables.org. Newsletters, trip forms, and a membership application are available to download from the site.

Monthly social hours are held on the second Tuesday evening at 6:30 p.m. at Mi Ranchito Family Restaurant in Culver City, Calif.

For more information, e-mail info@unrecables.com or visit www.unrecables.org. The chapter is also on Facebook.

Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association (GLASA)

Great Lakes Adaptive Sports Association, in partnership with Adaptive Adventures hosts a Midwest Adaptive Ski and Ride program on a variety of dates in January and February. GLASA’s program is based at Wilmot Hill, Wis., and offers adaptive ski and snowboard opportunities to youth, adults and injured service members with physical or visual disabilities.

Participants will learn how to move about the base of the snow, gliding, sliding, cutting and carving. We work on lots of skills at the base of the hill and on the smaller “bunny hills” until the skiers/boarders are comfortable and confident to use the lift. As participants get better, they will start to work on some higher level skills including how to ski a NASTAR race.

Cost is $25/person for a session which includes equipment, lift ticket and instruction.

Anyone with a physical disability or visual impairment can participate; prior experience is not necessary. For more information, contact Keri Schindler at kschindler@glasa.org or Joel Berman at joel@adaptiveadventures.org.
Winter Adventure for Military Teens in New Hampshire

Northeast Passage and the Cooperative Extension at the University of New Hampshire are offering two overnight White Mountain Winter Adventure Camps for military teens around the country, Jan. 6-9 and Jan. 20-23. The camps are designed for teens, ages 14-18, with physical or developmental and cognitive disabilities who have a parent serving in the military.

Activities include alpine and Nordic skiing, dogsledding, skating, snow tubing, snowshoeing, and snow shelter building. The $20 registration fee includes lift tickets, lessons, equipment rentals, food, and lodging at the Appalachian Mountain Club’s Highland Center Lodge in Bretton Woods, N.H. There are no additional fees, and transportation assistance is available, including airfare for teens and a companion.

For more information, visit www.nhomk.com or contact Charlotte Cross at (603) 862-2495 or militaryteen.camp@unh.edu to sign up.

Winter Sports in Telluride, CO

The Telluride Adaptive Sports Program (TASP) hosts a variety of camps and offers a wide range of winter activities:

Jan. 29-Feb. 3, 12th annual Expand Your Horizons! Ski Camp: This camp focuses on individuals with physical disabilities who feel comfortable skiing at an intermediate or 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 the Telluride Level 1 NASTAR course. All participants have the opportunity to ski a variety of trails. There are also buddies available to help participants hike to previously inaccessible terrain. People are able to join HeliTrax, Colorado’s only full-time heli-ski operation, for a day of helicopter-assisted backcountry skiing. This is for an expert skier, and an additional fee is required. TASP continues to be the only adaptive ski camp in the country to offer this level of skiing. The camp costs $975 and includes lodging, equipment, lift tickets, coaching, video analysis, most meals, and some après ski events.

Feb. 19-24, Winter Veterans Adventure Week: This camp is geared toward recently injured service members of any snowsport ability. Participants enjoy individualized attention from highly-trained snowsport instructors with the option of video analysis, race training, and a variety of other activities. Lodging, après ski events, and most meals are included.

Daily activities available in Telluride 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 and riding for intermediate to advanced levels.
- Helicopter-assisted skiing for advanced skiers and riders.
- Ice climbing for all ability levels.

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

The 11th annual Michigan Adaptive Sports’ (MAS) Sports-Tacular event was held Sept. 9-11, at Camp Dearborn in Milford, Mich. The event hosted nearly 25 participants, the most the Sports-Tacular has ever seen. They were greeted by rain as they registered for two nights of camping in accessible and permanent family tents. Each tent was equipped with six cots, electricity, and a kitchenette.

The purpose of Sports-Tacular is to introduce people with disabilities to a variety of adaptive sports and provide resources and additional skill-specific instruction. An inclusive camping weekend also provides participants and families with an opportunity to connect with nature and one another.

MAS and Michigan Adaptive Sports Coalition volunteers and organizations offered eight sport clinics: tennis, basketball, rugby, kayaking, hand cycling, fishing, adaptive aquatics, and golf. Participants and families also had the opportunity to watch a brief wheelchair basketball and quad rugby demonstration by athletes. For families with non-participating children, the campground offered activities such as paddle boating and mini golf. A disc jockey provided live entertainment during the Saturday night social event, and there was a moonlight cruise for all participants.

Michigan Adaptive Sports also hosted three adaptive kayaking and water-skiing clinics prior to the Sports-Tacular event. Volunteers and participants are now gearing up for the ski season, where the group will host four learn-to-ski clinics at Pine Knob in Clarkston, Mich., and two weekend ski trips to Schuss Mountain and Crystal Mountain, both located in Northern Michigan.

For more information about winter events, visit www.michiganadaptablesports.org.

UCO Plans to Host Two Camp Programs

The University of Central Oklahoma (UCO) is planning two camp programs for disabled athletes, the Center of Excellence and the Central Command Program. These camps focus on military veterans and involvement in Paralympic sports.

The Center of Excellence is a three-day camp in Edmond, Okla., for wounded warriors who have shown great skill and athletic potential in archery, powerlifting, and cycling. The archery camp will be held June 4-7, 2012. Individuals can participate in the powerlifting camp March 15-18, 2012, and June 10-12, 2012. The cycling camp is tentatively scheduled for April 12-15, 2012.

For more information, contact Kimo Aweau at kaweau@uco.edu.
MHS Celebrates 30th Ski Season with New Programs

To celebrate its 30th anniversary this winter, Maine Handicapped Skiing (MHS) will continue to expand and adapt to the needs of people with disabilities and launch a variety of programs, events, and initiatives.

MHS has become the Maine Sport Club of U.S. Paralympics this summer. Due to several grants and donations, equipment and instructors will be located at numerous new locations for alpine and Nordic skiing lessons and demos.

MHS is also partnering with schools, districts, and universities. New training programs have been developed for December and January with the University of Maine at Farmington, Gould Academy, and the Colby College Ski Team. MHS is also working with several local school districts to help teachers and specialists adapt physical education curriculum and winter sports for students with disabilities.

The MHS Alpine Race Team and the Seventh Annual Veterans/No Boundaries winter program, Feb. 3-6, are looking forward to a successful season. MHS is also a sponsor of the New England Visually Impaired Ski Festival at Sugarloaf Mountain Resort in Carrabassett, Maine, on February 12-16. Visit www.nevifest.org for more information. MHS is hosting several winter camps with other organizations, including Camp No Limits and the New England Blind Athletic Association. MHS will also host its first multi-day monoski camp in January at the Sunday River Ski Resort in Newry, Maine.

The 27th Annual MHS Ski-A-Thon will serve as a culmination to the season. Also, a fundraiser on March 24, at Sunday River, will be a special occasion, with a fundraising goal of $350,000 or more.

With broader offerings, a sharper message, and customized programs, MHS hopes to attract more participants and volunteers. It plans to continue capacity building and quality improvement efforts within the core lesson program to deepen the sports and recreation experience for participants.

MHS has provided adaptive alpine skiing instruction at Sunday River since 1982. The organization currently serves 400 children and adults with physical disabilities. MHS has also offered lessons and programs in Nordic skiing and snowshoeing, as well as many summer activities, for over a decade. These lessons and programs have remained free throughout MHS’ history.

To learn more about MHS or to get involved this winter, visit www.skimhs.org.

Welcome Ski Apache!

The Ski Apache Disabled Skier’s Program (SADSP) has recently become a DSUSA chapter, but they have been assisting disabled skiers since 1976, when three disabled Vietnam vets learned to ski using adaptive ski equipment. Today, SADSP works with individuals, schools, rehabilitation centers, military groups, and occupational and physical therapy programs.

Ski Apache is located on the flank of 12,000' Sierra Blanca Peak, the highest mountain in southern New Mexico. Sierra Blanca and the Sacramento Mountains are part of the homelands of the Mescalero Apache and the tribe has operated the ski area since 1963.

Ski Apache’s moderate winter climate is perfect for beginner and novice snow sports as there is always freshly groomed man-made snow, minus the freezing days. PSIA-certified instructors are on call to help or guide any person with a permanent disability, regardless of physical or financial limitations. More experienced adaptive skiers will enjoy the challenge of blue and black terrain January through March.

Upcoming events include the 26th annual Silent Auction at the Inn of the Mountain Gods Convention Center, Jan. 28, 6 p.m. – 9 p.m.; and the annual Challenge Race, Feb. 29-March 1.

For more information, visit www.skiapachedisabledskiersprogram.com.

Ski Apache writes they look forward to joining the DSUSA family and sharing ideas with other chapters to continually provide quality winter and summer programs for persons with disabilities.
Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra Alpine Ski & Race Camp

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra, Paralympic Sport Mammoth Lakes, will host its third annual Alpine Ski & Race Camp, Feb. 3-5, at Mammoth Mountain Ski Area in Mammoth Lakes, Calif.

This Paralympic Outreach Camp offers athletes of all ages and skill levels the opportunity to hone their skiing and racing skills on the 11,053-foot Mammoth Mountain. Coaches, such as Barrett Stein and Paralympic medalist Chris Waddell, train athletes ages 7-50 to improve their skills. It is the perfect opportunity to get involved with the growing adaptive alpine racing scene on the West coast and to ski with some of the best athletes.

For more information, contact Maggie Palchak at mpalchak@disabledsportseasternsierra.org.

Teton Adaptive Sports Offers All Mountain Ski Camps

Teton Adaptive Sports is partnering with Adaptive Adventures, Grand Targhee Resort, and Jackson Hole Mountain Resort to offer two all mountain adaptive ski camps in the 2011-12 ski season.

The All Mountain Ski and Ride Camp at Grand Targhee, Feb. 24-27, targets intermediate and experienced skiers and riders. The Steep and Deep Camp at Jackson Hole is an instructional-based opportunity for advanced adaptive skiers to develop their skills and push their limits on challenging terrain. It will take place Feb. 29-March 3. There are reserved spots for Wounded Warriors at each camp.

Last year’s camps offered great ski conditions, with over 600 inches of snow at the end of the season. A highlight of the Steep and Deep Camp was the presence of the World Champion and Paralympic medalist, Chris Devlin-Young. His high-level skiing and coaching were a tremendous addition and learning opportunity for attendees. While at Jackson Hole, Devlin-Young completed the first unassisted sit-ski descent on Corbet’s Couloir. Accomplished athletes, great coaching, and ideal snow conditions made the camp a success. Sit-skier Steve Ellefson said, “This was the most exceptional ski camp ever.”

Adaptive lessons in all disciplines and for all abilities are available at Grand Targhee Resort and Jackson Hole Mountain Resort.

For more information, e-mail Kurt Henry with Teton Adaptive Sports at tetonadaptive@aol.com or call (307) 699-3554.

Winter and Spring in Southern Vermont with the Bart Center

The Bart J. Ruggiere Adaptive Sports Center offers ski lessons at Sun Mountain’s Bromley Ski Resort in Peru, Vt., and has the latest adaptive equipment and skilled trainers.

The Bart Center will hold its seventh Wounded Veterans Weekend, Jan. 27-29. It is an opportunity to relax and learn to ski or snowboard. The Bart Center is able to accommodate novice or experienced groups and individuals, and participants can bring family and friends. The Bart Center has opportunities for lessons every day.

In the spring, kayaking and cycling are offered in southern Vermont. Reservations are required for all activities. For more information, visit www.bartcenter.com, e-mail bartcenter@comcast.net, or call (802) 824-5522, ext 430.
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For more information, visit http://www.college-park.com/prosthetics/celsus

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Balance Knee offers less active users a balance of stability and security, providing superior adjustability and durability accommodating all single-speed ambulators. The four-bar geometric design is easily adjusted, optimizing the required balance between stability and walking dynamics.
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• Self-adjusting friction maintains constant friction, preventing terminal impact from building over time.
• Adjustable stance control balances stability and swing initiation.
For more information, visit www.ossur.com or call (800) 233-6263.

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