


National Veterans Wheelchair Games



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Celebrate Independence Day with National Veterans Wheelchair Games

Games Kick-Off
July 4, 2010 at 11:30 a.m.
Civic Center Park, Denver

Opening Ceremonies
July 4, 2010 at 7:30 p.m.
Civic Center Park, Denver

Denver, Colo. – The National Veterans Wheelchair Games commence July 4, in celebration of our nation's independence. The Games Kick-off and Opening Ceremonies signify the beginning of a weeklong sports event highlighting the camaraderie, competition and courage of the Veteran athletes. Presented by the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) and Paralyzed Veterans of America (PVA), the National Veterans Wheelchair Games is celebrating its 30th year here in Denver.

With more than 600 Veterans registered to compete, the National Veterans Wheelchair Games is the largest annual wheelchair sports competition in the world. Athletes come from across the United States, Puerto Rico and Great Britain, and include former servicemen and women who have served from World War II to Operations Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom, from every branch of military service. Among the featured 17 competitive events are quad rugby, handcycling, power soccer, basketball, weightlifting, track, field and softball.

The day begins with the Games Kick-off at 11:30 a.m. in Civic Center Park attended by Senator Michael Bennet and Congressman Ed Perlmutter. The Kick-off will include a demonstration of quad rugby, with Veteran athletes competing against several members of the U.S. Olympic National Team, including Javelin-Thrower, Dana Pounds-Lyon and Fencer Jason Pryor. Greg Hollenback of 630 AM-KHOW will provide play-by-play announcements, and Bill Hanzlik of Altitude Sports will serve as Emcee of the event.

At 6:57 p.m. a flyover will begin the Athletes' Parade, where the 600 Veteran athletes will parade down 14th Street to Civic Center Park, identified by state or national flags representing 44 of the United States, Puerto Rico and Great Britain, escorted by Navy, Information, Operations Command. Opening Ceremonies begin at 7:30 p.m. and include torch lighting ceremony signifying the beginning of the Games. Top VA and PVA leaders will address the athletes, including VA Secretary Eric K. Shinseki and PVA National President Gene A. Crayton. Local radio host Rick Crandall will emcee the event.

Sports competitions will take place July 5-9, 2010 with events being held at Brunswick Zone, Invesco Field at Mile High Stadium, Family Shooting Center, Cherry Creek Reservoir, the Colorado Convention Center and other area venues. For more information, please visit www.wheelchairgames.va.gov.

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About VA: *The Department of Veterans Affairs is a world leader in rehabilitation, with recreations therapy programs at each of its medical facilities. VA's goal is to provide excellence in patient care, Veterans benefits and customer satisfaction. VA employees continue to offer their dedication and commitment to help Veterans get the services they have earned. To learn about VA and programs for Veterans, visit VA's web site at www.va.gov.*

About Paralyzed Veterans of America: *Sixty-three years ago, Paralyzed Veterans of America was founded by a band of spinal cord injured service members who returned home from World War II to a grateful nation, but also to a world with few solutions to the challenges they faced. These Veterans from the "Greatest Generation" made a decision not just to live, but to live with dignity as contributors to society. They created an organization dedicated to Veterans' service, medical research and civil rights for people with disabilities. And, for more than six decades, Paralyzed Veterans of America and its 34 chapters have been working to create an America where all Veterans and people with disabilities, and their families, have everything they need to thrive. (www.pva.org).*