



Athlete Profile (Local)

Robert Schuler
Combat Army Veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom
28 years old
Colorado Springs, Colorado

When Robert Schuler left with his family for a day at the beach while stationed in Hawaii, he never thought that riding a wave on a boogie board would cause him to become a quadriplegic, but it did.

Just seven short months after returning home from a 15-month tour in Iraq, Schuler's fifth vertebra was crushed by a wave. It would have been understandable for Schuler to give up after such a freak accident, but instead he relied on the same resolve that got him through Iraq – determined to continue living his life to the fullest.

In 2009, a little more than a year after his accident, Schuler had built up enough courage to attend his first National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Spokane, Wash. Competing in sports with other injured Veterans opened his eyes to a whole new world of activity. Like many of the young Operation Iraqi Freedom Veterans who compete in the Games, Schuler was immediately drawn to the sport of quad rugby.

Schuler has taken the skills he learned at the Games and applied them to his everyday life, and is now a member of the Denver Harlequins quad rugby team.

This summer, he's ready to see what he can do on his home turf in Denver, with all of his family and friends in the stands ready to cheer him on.

"The National Veterans Wheelchair Games are truly inspirational," said Schuler. "It is amazing to see fellow Veterans with similar injuries come out to participate – from the newly injured guys like me to those who have been doing it for 12 years or more."

