

Athlete Profile (National)

Jeff Snover – Get Out and Give It Your All

Jeff Snover, 41, of Augusta, Georgia, is one of the National Veterans Wheelchair Games competitors with many years of service to his country – more than 18, to be exact. Snover served in the Army as a Chief Warrant Officer in Korea as well as in Iraq, where he saw combat. He returned from Iraq unharmed, but was seriously injured only three months after returning home. While cutting down a tree, it suddenly fell on top of him, causing damage to his spinal cord.

Although he is classified as a paraplegic, Snover's injury has not stopped him from staying mobile and competitive. In July, he is joining more than 500 fellow veterans to compete in the 28th National Veterans Wheelchair Games in Omaha, Nebraska – his second year competing at the event. This year, he will compete in table tennis, which he calls his “core sport,” as well as bowling, handcycling and trapshooting. “The inspiration I receive from my fellow athletes is what I like best about participating in the Games,” Snover says. “I hope I can inspire other veterans to get out and live their lives.”

Sports are nothing new to Snover. An avid golfer before his injury, he has now turned his attention to wheelchair sports. “Competing in the Games in the past gave me a lot more self confidence,” he says. “I have tried sports I had never competed in before and it has opened my eyes to those opportunities. My present goal is to motivate others and work with my fellow veterans.”

When reflecting on his last experience at the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in 2006, Snover said, “I really enjoyed the camaraderie with my fellow athletes. Being part of this event is what it is all about. The feeling of participating in something so big and beyond you is great.” This past April for the third year in a row, he again attended the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic in Snowmass Village, Colorado, where he took on the incredible challenge of skiing the Rocky Mountains.

Snover credits the recreation therapists at the Augusta VA Medical Center with first telling him about these events. To the first time competitors and newly injured veterans, he advises, “Try everything and take advantage of every opportunity the Games present to you. I appreciated the assistance I got from other veterans when I was a novice, and I hope to return the favor this year. The Games are a wonderful experience, so get out there and give it your all.”

