



Athlete Profile (Local)

Randy Squier – Competing Again at 50



Randy Squier, who recently turned 50, is excited to be participating in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in 2008 – after a 22-year absence. Squier, who has lived most of his life in his hometown of Glenwood, Iowa, entered the Army in July, 1976 just after high school. Squier's infantry unit took him to tours in Erlangen, Germany; Fort Riley, Kan.; and Fort Ord, Calif. As a supervisory maintenance technician in the military, he oversaw the duties of 52 mechanics. Squier said, "We fixed everything the Army had that didn't fly. We kept the Army moving."

On a warm day while on a weekend pass in 1984, Squier took one last dip in the pool. This last dive left him with a cervical injury to his spine. "In one split second I went from being 100 percent active to nothing. It changed everything and everyone around me," said Squier, who is now a paraplegic.

With the loving support of his family and hard work and determination on the part of Squier, he decided to participate in the National Veterans Wheelchair Games in 1986 in Arlington, Texas, where he competed in the field events. "It was very hot but it was such a positive experience," he remembers. "I had a wonderful time and have very good memories of that event."

In the 2008 Games, Squier plans to compete in air guns, archery, and nine-ball. As a member of the Great Plains Chapter of the Paralyzed Veterans of America, he will train with the Nebraska Team. He has been working on refining his shots at a local pool hall where the team trains for nine-ball.

Squier knows the true rewards of participating in the Wheelchair Games. "It is not for the medals, but for the camaraderie, getting to meet new people, and experiencing the great attitudes these veteran athletes possess." He believes the Games help build self esteem for those who compete. "It is an opportunity to show everyone what people in wheelchairs can do," said Squier. "I still get things done – I just have to do them differently." He believes that seeing the athletes participate in the Games helps people focus not on the wheelchair but on the person in the wheelchair. Some of Squier's biggest fans at the 2008 Games will be his wife of 20 years, Tammy, and their two daughters, ages 12 and 16. He believes the Games are good for the spirit for those who compete – even if they are doing it again at age 50.