



National Disabled Veterans

# Winter Sports Clinic

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## Skier Profile

### Kade Hinkhouse — Fully Committed

On June 7, 2008, Kade Hinkhouse plans to *walk* down the aisle with his new wife. While that is certainly a momentous occasion for anyone, for this 21-year-old Marine Corps veteran the day will be even more meaningful.

Leaving his parents and girlfriend back in Colorado in August 2005, Hinkhouse, who had just graduated high school, was “finally doing something worthwhile” when he joined the Marines. He was deployed to Iraq a month later to help fight the War on Terror. In October of that year, Hinkhouse returned to the United States – much sooner than he or anyone else expected.

Growing up, Hinkhouse always wanted to be in the military. After joining the Marines, he was “happy and excited” to serve his country in Iraq. Only a month after his arrival though, his Humvee crossed over a path of improvised explosive devices. He feels lucky to have survived the blast. “I pretty much got it the worst,” he said. “Except for the guy about six inches away from me, because he died. So, in a way I really lucked out.”

The Colorado native sustained traumatic brain injuries and part of his skull was removed at the Army’s Landstuhl Regional Medical Center in Germany. In addition to the head injury, Hinkhouse’s right leg was amputated above the knee. “I woke up feeling a bit groggy,” he said about his three-week drug-induced coma. “A few minutes later, I found out my leg was gone.”

Despite the severity of his injuries, Hinkhouse has managed to maintain his sense of humor. “I can get half-off on pedicures and I have more socks,” he said jokingly. “Think about it...I don’t need a pair. So, I have 24 days worth of socks, and you only have 12. You can either give up, or deal.” It is this self-proclaimed jock’s optimistic attitude, plus months of physical and occupational therapy at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C., that help make his present and upcoming achievements possible.

The newly-engaged veteran currently lives at Walter Reed’s Mologne House. He enjoys getting out as much as possible and is taking full advantage of his surroundings. Visiting museums currently tops his list of things to do. He is steadfast on his path to gain more physical and mental strength. Despite long hours of strenuous therapy, he’s also exploring new career options, specifically teaching, and plans to start college when he moves back home.

The walk down the aisle will certainly mark an enormous lifetime commitment for Kade Hinkhouse, something he is quite familiar with since his perseverance and dedication are challenged daily. In April 2007, he will put his hard work to the test on the slopes of the Rocky Mountains at the 2007 National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. He may not be the best skier there, since this will only be his “third or fourth visit” to the slopes, but with his proven track record for devotion and passion, it is unlikely to be his last.

*Miracles on a Mountainside!*

