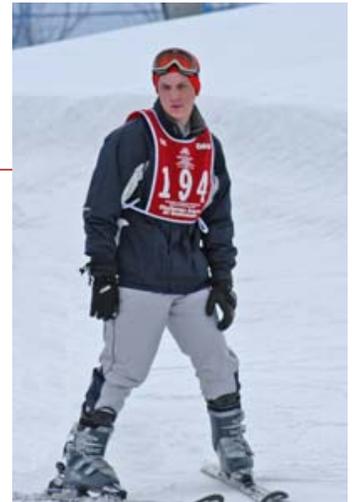




National Disabled Veterans

Winter Sports Clinic



Skier Profile

Adam McCann – Putting Life in Perspective

At 22, you would think Adam McCann would be a first time participant at the National Disabled Veterans Winter Sports Clinic. Not true, since he is attending the event for the third consecutive year. You might also assume he is struggling with newfound limitations after incurring a serious injury in Iraq. Wrong again – McCann has recently purchased a new house, a new car and started a new job with the U.S. Postal Service. If you believe it's the wild ride down the slopes that keeps this Marine Corps veteran coming back each year, you'd only be partially right on that one, too. "It's really being able to share stories and talk with the other vets that's the most important to me," he said. "They can relate to me so much better than anyone else."

McCann, who lives in Oberlin, Ohio, was serving as a machine gunner in Iraq when he was seriously injured from shrapnel to his neck and both legs during a mortar attack in April 2005. "There were four of us injured that day," he remembers. "It happened so fast, I didn't know what was going on." He was only 19 years old at the time. After his injury, McCann was flown to Germany for a month and later to Camp Lejeune in North Carolina, before being medically discharged in 2006. The attack resulted in damage to McCann's left Achilles tendon and caused significant weakness to both legs. For one year, he went through intensive physical therapy to work on improving strength in the leg muscles surrounding his tendons and his ability to support his legs while standing. "I can walk on my own now, but I still have to deal with some physical limitations," he said.

"I heard about the Winter Sports Clinic in 2005 while I was attending a friend's graduation party here in Ohio," McCann remembers. My friend's uncle is a ski instructor at the Clinic and he put me in touch with the people who run the event in Colorado. I had never skied before my injury and I went to the Clinic that first year on my own. I got a lot out of it because the event does so much for disabled veterans." Now, McCann travels to the program with a group of other veterans receiving care at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) medical center in Cleveland. McCann also receives ongoing outpatient care at the facility as well as a VA clinic in Lorain.

McCann insists that his life really hasn't changed all that much since that fateful day three years ago when the surprise mortar attack could have changed his life forever. "I am still able to do a lot of the things I did before, but on a more limited basis," he said. "I'm on a good track right now. I have a new house, a new car and a good job. I just want to keep up with everything and do well. Having an injury (like this one) helps put things in perspective."

For Adam McCann, it's all about learning what you can do and finding ways to do it. "Seeing all of the things out there that you can still accomplish even though you are injured, that's a big benefit of this event," he said. "You can still accomplish all of your goals and dreams. If you want to do it, you can – and when you see what some of these other veterans are able to accomplish, you want to do it, too."

[Above information provided by veteran.]

Miracles on a Mountainside!



Department of Veterans Affairs



Disabled American Veterans