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News Release

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San Diego VA to Host National Sports and Rehabilitative Clinic for America's Recently Injured Combat Veterans

SAN DIEGO (July 16, 2008) – VA San Diego Healthcare System (VASDHS) will host the first National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic in San Diego, September 28 – October 3, 2008. Recently injured combat veterans from around the country will participate in the Clinic, which will include innovative adaptive sporting events such as sailing, kayaking, surfing, cycling, and track and field events. The week-long program is designed to provide a supportive environment for healing and rehabilitation, and to promote a healthy lifestyle for veterans who are newly injured.

“San Diego offers a perfect climate, picturesque scenery and ocean breezes – we hope this will create a healing experience for these veterans,” said VASDHS Director, Gary J. Rossio. “We provide the highest quality health care to our veterans every day, and we’re pleased to be able to offer this Clinic as an extension of the medical, mental health and rehabilitative care we already provide.”

The event is open to recently injured military veterans who have spinal cord injuries, traumatic brain injuries, certain neurological conditions, amputations, other mobility impairments, or post-traumatic stress disorder. The National Veterans Summer Sports Clinic will attract 100 recently injured veterans with disabilities. For many injured veterans, this will be their first opportunity to participate in recreational sports and activities after being injured.

“We know from our experience with VA’s other national rehabilitative events, that the camaraderie of participating with other veterans in rehabilitative sports has a powerful therapeutic impact on these veterans,” Rossio added.

Opening and closing ceremonies will be held at Sea World and the San Diego Marriott Hotel and Marina, along with some of the other Clinic events. Sporting events will be held at the U.S. Olympic Training Center in Chula Vista; Kellogg Park in La Jolla Shores; the Embarcadero Marina Park; and the Mission Bay Yacht Club. Admission is free and the public is welcome. More information is available at: www.summersportsclinic.va.gov.

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VA San Diego Healthcare System provides superior health care to more than 58,000 veterans, including almost 12,000 combat veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan, at the medical center in La Jolla as well as five community clinics throughout San Diego and Imperial Counties.