

# Amputee shows life goes on

## Athlete, 60, keeps competing, defying age and loss of leg

By TONY GONZALEZ  
The Detroit News

**REDFORD TOWNSHIP** — In a nightmare, Daniel Boulter tipped his kayak and could not right himself. But last weekend, the 60-year-old athlete dissolved his fears by racing through the water at the O&P Extremity Games in Orlando, Fla.

The oldest competitor among the nearly 200 international athletes, all of them with limb loss, Boulter, of Redford Township, hasn't let his age — or his amputated right leg — slow him. He returned from rock climbing and kayaking at the Extremity Games and barely paused before crossing the state for this weekend's Michigan Amputee Golf Association tournament in Three Rivers.

### Redford Twp.

The tournament is his first. Boulter is used to firsts. Before earning fourth place in the kayak competition, he'd never paddled in one.

"If I think it's hard I want to do it," Boulter said. "I think it's a mindset."

Since his 2001 surgery after a hunting accident, Boulter has made a point of showing amputees that life continues.

"If I'm 60 and I'm climbing a rock wall and doing the kayak and a 20-year-old or a 30-year-old thinks they can't do anything they've got to get that out of their mind," Boulter said.

By speaking at hospitals and spreading the word about amputee athletics, Boulter has tried to set an example. Those around him, like certified prosthetist Tim Salley, notice.

"He's one of those guys who's super strong and doesn't know his own strength and gives you a bear hug and almost breaks your back," Salley said.

Keeping Boulter at full speed and strength is part of Salley's business. Working for Michigan-based Wright & Filippis, an Extremity Games sponsor, Salley works on high-strength prosthetics like the rose-and-skull-adorned prosthesis Boulter uses below his knee.

He joined 10 other Wright & Filippis-sponsored Michigan amputees at the Games. Jim Wazny, 36, of Merrill came home with a Motocross silver. He lost his leg jumping a motorcycle, but has competed for seven years since. He pushed to add Motocross to the Extremity Games lineup which includes wakeboarding, surfing and biking.

Wazny and Boulter met last year at the competition, where the camaraderie is "just awesome," Wazny said.

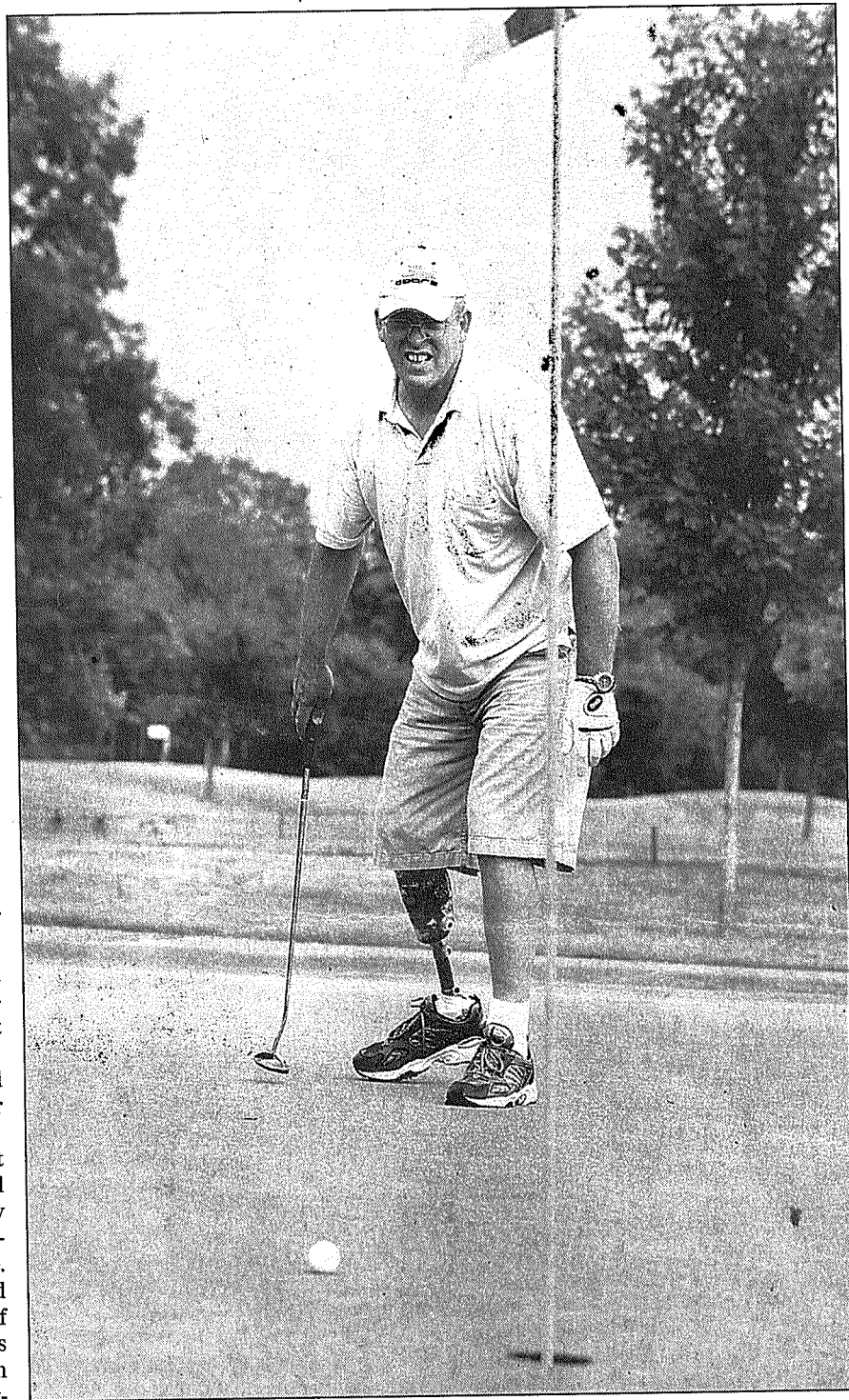
"Anywhere you look around there is another amputee with an equally incredible story," he said.

Wright & Filippis Director Ken Woodward said next year's Extremity Games, the third annual, will grow. He said he wants Michigan athletes to bring home even more medals than nine this year.

For Boulter, that would mean reaching the top of the climbing wall and moving his 6-foot-3, 255-pound frame a little faster around kayak race buoys.

"Next year I want to come in first," he said.

But first, Boulter will swing his golf stroke today against more than 60 amputees and seek challenges for the 12 months in between.



Photos by Heather Rousseau / Special to The Detroit News

Daniel Boulter, 60, of Redford Township makes a putt Wednesday at Glenhurst Golf Course in Redford. Boulter lost his leg in 2001 after a hunting accident.



"If I'm 60 and I'm climbing a rock wall and doing the kayak and a 20-year-old or a 30-year-old thinks they can't do anything they've got to get that out of their mind," says Boulter, right, with John Hoogacker, 54, of Farmington Hills.

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