

Extremity Games to let athletes with disabilities show 'there are no limits'

By JERRY WOLFFE
Of The Oakland Press

Jamie Stanton can't wait until summer, when he goes to Orlando, Fla., and competes in the Extremity Games to show that a person who lost a limb can be a great athlete.

Jamie — who turns 13 in June, meeting the age limit for the event — already plays hockey and baseball. He wins athletic awards at Van Hoosen Middle School in Rochester Hills, where he is a seventh-grader.

Jamie had his right leg amputated below the knee because of a birth injury.

He's not alone in his desire to show that a disability isn't a block to athletic competition.

Jim Wazny, a prosthetic technician at Wright & Filippis' Saginaw store, plans to compete in the games, July 19-21.

He was riding a motorcycle in April 2000, went over a hill and landed in the bucket of a front-end loader he hadn't seen working in the area. He injured his left leg in the accident so seriously that it had to be amputated above the knee.

"But I got to keep my left arm," he said, showing the range of motion of his arm and noting that the only thing he can't do is completely straighten it.

"I want to let other disabled people know there are no limits," the 36-year-old father of two said.

Frank Grainer of Clarkston, 50, also will be among the contingent of athletes with limb loss going to the eX2 games under the sponsorship of Wright & Filippis, a durable medical equipment company based in Rochester Hills.

Ken Woodward, director of prosthetics at the company, said it will sponsor at least six Michigan athletes for this year's games.

The late Tony Filippis Sr., who founded Wright & Filippis 61 years ago, lost both of his legs in a train accident when he was 12.



Jamie Stanton of Van Hoosen Middle School in Rochester Hills had his right leg amputated below the knee shortly after he was born. He plans to compete in the Extremity Games in Orlando, Fla., in July.

He died in January at age 90.

The Extremity Games were founded by College Park Industries of Fraser, a company that manufactures prosthetic feet.

Events include rock climbing, skateboarding, wake boarding, kayaking, bicycling and moto-

cross, said spokesman Todd Salley.

There are two classes of competitors: beginners, who receive trophies, and experts, who receive cash prizes of up to \$5,000, Salley said.

Grainer, who had his leg amputated after an October 2004 car accident, plans to compete in rock climbing, bicycling and kayaking.

Woodward, who has worked in the prosthetic field for 48 years, said the games give athletes with limb loss the opportunity to show they can compete "as well or better than able-bodied people."

Last year, the first year of the event, there were 90 competitors. This year, Woodward expects up to 300 participants.

Jamie expects to do well. He was named student of the year at Van Hoosen because of his athletic performance and leadership.

"I really think he can do what any two-legged person can do," said Rae Stanton, Jamie's mother. "I'm amazed at his abilities. Most people don't even know he has an artificial leg."

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