



# TEAM USA—2013 World Dwarf Games

## Official Newsletter of the Dwarf Athletic Association of America

October  
2012

Welcome to the first edition of TEAM USA NEWS, leading up to the 2013 World Dwarf Games - **the largest sporting event in history exclusively for dwarf athletes!**

This newsletter will provide our TEAM USA athletes, friends and supporters with important information about the Dwarf Athletic Association of America (DAAA) and the 2013 World Dwarf Games.

### What are the World Dwarf Games?

Held every four years, the World Dwarf Games are a multi-sport competition designed specifically for dwarf athletes. Previous World Dwarf Games included:

- 1993 Chicago, USA
- 1997 Peterborough, England
- 2001 Toronto, Canada
- 2005 Rambouillet, France
- 2009 Belfast, Northern Ireland

Over **500 athletes** from all continents are expected to compete in the 2013 World Games. To-date, athletes from 36 countries have shown interest in competing in the Games. These countries include Algeria, Australia, Botswana, Brazil, Canada, Central Africa Republic, China, Djibouti, DR Congo, France, Germany, Ghana, Great Britain, Greece, India, Iran, Iraq, Kenya, Korea, Liberia, Mexico, Montenegro, Morocco, Namibia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Poland, Russia, Tajikistan, Thailand, Trinidad/Tobago, Tunisia, Ukraine, USA and Zimbabwe.

### When will the 2013 World Dwarf Games be held? What about the annual DAAA National Games in 2013?

On-site check-in for the Games will open on Friday August 2<sup>nd</sup>. The 2013 World Dwarf Games will begin with the opening ceremony and first athletic events on Saturday August 3<sup>rd</sup>. The Games will conclude with the final events, closing ceremony and closing banquet on Saturday evening August 10<sup>th</sup>. *In 2013, the World Dwarf Games will be held in lieu of the annual DAAA National Games.*

### Where will the 2013 World Dwarf Games be held?

Most of the events will be held on the campus of Michigan State University (MSU) in East Lansing, Michigan. The swimming events will be held at the Mason Aquatics Center in Mason, Michigan (15 minutes from MSU's campus). For more information on each of the event venues, click here: [Facilities - 2013 World Dwarf Games](#)



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## Why East Lansing? Why Michigan State University?

Until the mid 1980's, the sports career for athletes with dwarfism in America was pretty predictable. Many young dwarf children with athletic desire could participate in organized sport and recreation activity in their local schools and communities. Most of these opportunities, however, would begin to close as these children reached the later grades of primary school. The growing disadvantages of size and body proportion differences meant only the most athletically gifted dwarf children in early adolescence would find organized sports fulfilling. Even these elite athletes, entering high school, would find almost no competitive sport opportunity at a varsity level. For most dwarfs in America, unless you wanted to be a jockey or big time wrestler, your athletic career pretty much ended when adolescence began.

The reason was pretty simple: the relatively low incidence of dwarfism made the provision of competitive amateur sports opportunities on a local basis logistically difficult. As a result, most sports programs, and thus most dwarfs and their parents, didn't take sports seriously. But what about a national sports association dedicated to dwarf athletics?

Early in 1984, representatives of the International Disabled Games came to Mid-Michigan to ask the Little People of America Foundation President about recruiting dwarf athletes to the 1984 U.S. Team. The issue was how to identify athletes with elite potential. Unfortunately, the answer wasn't immediately available. But there was an opportunity, literally just down the road. The next year (1985) the Cerebral Palsy/Les Autres National Games were to be held on the campus of Michigan State University in East Lansing, MI. With a strong commitment to inclusion and diversity, MSU was one of the few facilities in the country at that time with enough accessibility features to host such an event.

A decision was made to offer some sport events at the CP/LA Games where dwarf athletes would only compete against other dwarf athletes. A formal invitation to compete was then made to the dwarf community at a special event during the 1984 Little People of America National Convention. Over 30 dwarf athletes accepted the invitation to East Lansing to compete in the 1985 CP/LA National Games on the MSU campus. The events exclusive to dwarf athletes included Basketball, Power-lifting, Track (60m and 100m), Field (shot put, discus, and javelin), Swimming (25m and 50m freestyle and backstroke), and Table Tennis.

This first ever Olympic style national sports competition for dwarf athletes was electrifying! Providing organized athletic opportunities exclusively for dwarf athletes became imperative, and the Dwarf Athletic Association of America was formed before any of the participants left the MSU campus. The rest is history. Dwarf sports became a regular part of LPA National Conference plans from then on. The first dwarf athletes made the US Paralympic Team in 1988. The first Paralympic Gold Medal won by a US dwarf athlete was in 1992. The first World Dwarf Games were hosted by DAAA in 1993. The International Dwarf Athletics Federation was formed at those Games, and organized dwarf sports became an international movement.

As a result, every dwarf child born in America over the last thirty years has had a reasonable opportunity to compete at a national and international level; to carry a sport career well beyond adolescence. Taken seriously as athletes has also opened professional careers in other sports related areas like coaching, and athletic training, and sports administration. And now we invite the world back to where it all started; back to East Lansing, Michigan; back to the Michigan State University campus for what will be the largest sporting event in history exclusively for dwarf athletes!

Reported by Len Sawisch—2013 World Dwarf Games Steering Committee Staff—October 11, 2012



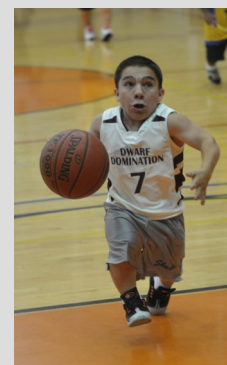
“The difference between the impossible and the possible lies in a man’s determination.”

~Tommy Lasorda~



“Do you know what my favorite part of the game is? The opportunity to **play**”

~Mike Singletary~



## Who is eligible to compete as part of TEAM USA at the World Dwarf Games?

Any citizen or resident of the USA with any type of dwarfism (see size definitions below), regardless of skill level is eligible and welcome to compete in the World Dwarf Games as part of TEAM USA. Athletes do not need to qualify to compete for TEAM USA, but they will need to register, and cover their own participation expenses. TEAM USA will have no limitation on the number of athletes that are entered for individual sports.

For team sports, TEAM USA will be allowed to enter as many teams in team sports events as desired. As has been tradition at DAAA's National Games, athletes will be allowed to form their own teams prior to the World Games. All athletes on each individual team that competes for TEAM USA must be a citizen or resident of the United States. Those athletes ("independents") who do not have a team to compete with prior to World Games will be placed on a team consisting entirely of independent athletes or they will be placed on one of TEAM USA's existing teams that have open roster spots. DAAA may determine that each team leave open roster spots available for independent athletes to join the team.

The World Dwarf Games competition committee will likely determine a pool play or bracketing methodology which will allow a finite number of teams from each country to enter the final or medal rounds of a competition. It should be noted, however, that during the World Games week, all TEAM USA teams will have the opportunity to compete for entry into the final/medal rounds of each team competition.

Note that IDAF (International Dwarf Athletic Federation) rules specify that height shall not exceed 5 feet 0 inches for persons with a disproportionate dysplasia and 4 feet 10 inches for a proportionate short stature due to medical reasons.

## Will age and gender classifications be used?

### Age and Gender Divisions

Events are offered in four age divisions. Your age division is based on your age on December 31st of 2013. Separate individual sports events are offered for both males and females. In some team sports, mixed gender teams will be offered in lieu of single gender competition.

- **Futures Division:**  
Futures are children aged 6 years and younger
- **Junior Division:**  
Juniors are children aged 7-15 years of age. Individual sports (such as swimming and track & field) will have sport-specific age groups such as 7-9 years old, 10-12 years old, 13-15 years old. For team sports, the age groups will be defined as 7-11 years old and 12-15 years old. **Note that final determination of age brackets per sport is made by the World Games host committee.**
- **Open Division:**  
Athletes of any age may choose to compete in the Open Division.
- **Masters Division:**  
Athletes aged 35 years and older.

For more information on age and gender divisions and team affiliation, click here: <http://www.2013worlddwarfgames.org/PDF/RulesPart1.pdf>



"The five S's of sports training are: stamina, speed, strength, skill, and spirit; but the greatest of these is spirit."

~Ken Doherty~

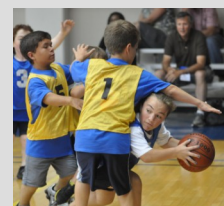


"It is not the size of a man but the size of his heart that matters."

~Evander Holyfield~



"Persistence can change failure into extraordinary achievement."  
~Unknown~



## Will other classifications be used to provide a more level competition amongst body types?

### Body Classifications

Body type classifications will be used for some age groups and for some events. Athletes will be asked to submit measurements pertaining to various aspects of their upper and lower body (standing height, sitting height, shoulder height, arm span, etc.). A detailed set of instructions on how to accomplish these measurements will accompany the registration material for the Games. In general, upper body classification data is used for those sports that involve more upper body activity (swimming, boccia, field events). Respectively, lower body classification data is used for those sports that involve more lower body activity (badminton, table tennis and track). The use of body classification data helps to ensure that athletes are competing against other athletes with similar body proportions, ensuring a more level playing field. Classifications will only be used for some age groups and will not be used for all sports.

For more information on body classifications, click here: <http://www.2013worlddwarfgames.org/PDF/RulesPart2.pdf>

## What events will be held at the 2013 World Dwarf Games? Is there a tentative schedule of events available?

To see all of the sporting events broken down by age category, click here:

<http://www.2013worlddwarfgames.org/PDF/EventsGlance.pdf>

In addition to the athletic events, the World Games week will also include:

- Opening Ceremony event (Saturday morning August 3<sup>rd</sup>)
- Opening Reception event (Saturday evening August 3<sup>rd</sup>)
- Fun activities which may possibly include flag football, USA vs. World softball, bass fishing and Frisbee events (Tuesday August 6<sup>th</sup>)
- Closing Ceremony & Closing Banquet/Dance (Saturday August 10<sup>th</sup> afternoon/evening)
- Social events throughout the week

For a tentative schedule of events for the World Games week, please click here: <http://www.2013worlddwarfgames.org/PDF/TentativeSchedule.pdf>

## Why should I (or my friend or family member) be encouraged to participate in the World Dwarf Games?

Over 500 athletes from six continents will compete at these Games. And while each athlete will have some form of dwarfism, that's not what makes these Games unique. Dwarfism occurs in about one in every 10,000 births, and in over 200 diagnosable forms. In most cases, dwarfism influences both overall body height and body proportions. Dwarfism doesn't affect the desire to achieve or excel, but the low incidence can significantly limit the opportunity to test your level of achievement or excellence in a context of other people 'just like you.'



"The spirit, the will to win, and the will to excel are the things that endure. These qualities are so much more important than the events that occur."

~Vince Lombardi~



"Always make a total effort, even when the odds are against you."

~Arnold Palmer~





What is unique is that the World Dwarf Games offer competitive opportunities to the full spectrum of the dwarf community. Children who don't have another child with dwarfism in their grade, let alone their school, blossom with the chance to compete 'for real'. Doing it in the same venue as the world's best dwarf athletes for many will be a once in a lifetime role modeling opportunity - for some it will set the foundation for becoming one of the world's best. So at these World Games, special events are offered in the Futures division (six and under), and Junior divisions (up to 15).

In the throes of adolescence, the opportunity to 'measure up' in a setting where dwarfism is NOT an issue can be both sobering and motivating. By age 16, competition becomes the real deal in the elite competitive 'Open' division. This is the point when athletes realize "we're not in Kansas anymore," because only the athletes with the mettle win medals.

Appreciating the heat can still be there long after the flames ebb; the World Dwarf Games also offers events in a 'Master Division' for athletes over 35. Having their collective wisdom and experience available helps our younger athletes develop perspective.

Recognizing the need to support athletes at all ages, to promote active lifestyles, and to provide access to role models 'just like us' are the things that make the World Dwarf Games unique - being a dwarf at these Games only gets you in the door - the rest is up to you!

The World Dwarf Games is an event that every dwarf athlete should experience at least once in their lifetime. Whether you are a serious athlete or participating in dwarf athletics for the first time, the World Dwarf Games provide an opportunity to form lifelong friendships with dwarf athletes and families from around the world. The 2013 World Dwarf Games represent an excellent opportunity for TEAM USA athletes to step into their "backyard" and experience the thrill and excitement of competing for your country in a world-class, international athletic event. This opportunity to compete for your country in a full-scale international competition may not be close to home again for decades!

For more information on the 2013 World Dwarf Games, visit the website at [www.2013worlddwarfgames.org](http://www.2013worlddwarfgames.org), and sign up for WDG Eblasts at [2013 World Dwarf Games](http://2013 World Dwarf Games)



## TEAM USA Athlete Profile

**Name:** Tim Murray

**Age:** 25

**Home:** Edgewood, KY

**Job:** Athletic Trainer

**How long have you participated in DAAA Games?** The first Games that I participated in was the 1996 National Games in Indianapolis, IN. I have competed at every DAAA National Games since 1996. I have also served as DAAA's athletic trainer at several National Games.

**How did you get involved in DAAA?** Prior to 1996, our family had not heard of the DAAA National Games. In early 1996, my mom and dad got word that the Games were being held in Indianapolis, which is only 1-1/2 hours from our home. I was fortunate that my grandfather was able to provide financial assistance so that I could compete in the '96 National Games.

**Favorite DAAA sport:** Basketball



"I hated every minute of training, but I said, 'Don't quit. Suffer now and live the rest of your life as a **champion**.'"

~Muhammad Ali~



"There are only two options regarding commitment; you're either in or you're out. There's no such thing as life in-between."

~Pat Riley~



## TEAM USA Athlete Profile—Tim Murray (cont)

**What sports do you play at home?** I played baseball and competed on the swim team in high school. Currently, I play recreational softball and indoor soccer, and I will begin playing on a roller hockey team in the near future.

**Favorite DAAA memory:** My favorite DAAA memory was competing in the basketball tournament at the 2005 World Dwarf Games in Rambouillet, France. We competed against Great Britain on the 4th of July, beating the Brits by 10 points.

I was thrilled to make a 3-point shot at the buzzer to seal the victory for our USA team.



**What is your sporting ambition?** To qualify and compete on the USA Paralympic team with track & field as my main focus. I had the opportunity to compete at the Paralympic qualifying events in shot put for both the 2008 Beijing and 2012 London Games.

### Why are you looking forward to the 2013 World Games?

Having had the opportunity to compete in three World Dwarf Games (2001-Toronto, 2005-France, 2009-Belfast) I am looking forward to putting on the TEAM USA uniform and competing for my country... Go TEAM USA!



“Never let your head hang down. Never give up and sit down and grieve. Find another way.”

~Satchel Paige~



“Every game is an opportunity to measure yourself against your own potential.”

~Bud Wilkinson~



## Who should I contact with questions about TEAM USA?

Stay tuned for future editions of the TEAM USA World Games newsletter. Future editions will include information on athlete and guest registration, housing and meal plans, personal fundraising for the Games, volunteer opportunities, fundraising to support TEAM USA, uniform information, and much, much more.

To make sure your friends in the US are on the TEAM USA email list, send their name and email address to [daaa@flash.net](mailto:daaa@flash.net).

Should you have any questions regarding TEAM USA and the World Dwarf Games, please feel free to contact the TEAM USA Chef-de-Mission (Team Leader) Mike Cekanor by e-mail at [daaa.mike.cekanor@gmail.com](mailto:daaa.mike.cekanor@gmail.com) or the DAAA office at [daaa@flash.net](mailto:daaa@flash.net).

**2013 World Dwarf Games — The largest sporting event in history exclusively for dwarf athletes!**

Sincerely,

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