



Special Olympics
North Carolina

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

RELEASE DATE: AUGUST 4, 2009

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**Special Olympics North Carolina Athletes Excel at
2009 Special Olympics National Invitational Golf & Softball Tournament**

Raleigh, N.C. — Nine Special Olympics North Carolina golf athletes, three partners and 15 softball athletes competed in the 2009 Special Olympics National Invitational Golf & Softball Tournament July 31-Aug. 3 in Lincoln, Nebraska, according to Keith L. Fishburne, president/CEO of Special Olympics North Carolina. Golf competitors competed at Highlands and Mahoney Golf Courses, while softball teams competed at Fleming Fields.

Special Olympics North Carolina athletes competed with more than 150 golfers from 20 Special Olympics U.S. Programs. This is the 10th Annual National Invitational Golf Tournament held by Special Olympics. Occurring simultaneously, 160 softball athletes from 14 states competed in the 1st National Invitational Softball Tournament.

Local Special Olympics North Carolina programs represented include Cabarrus, Rowan, New Hanover, Orange, Wake and Wayne counties.

The results of the 10th Annual National Invitational Golf Tournament are as follows:

- Cabarrus County: **Marvin Deese**, Level 1 (individual skills) – **Silver Medal**
- New Hanover County: **Richard Hansen** and **Mike Best** (Unified Partner), Level 2 (nine-hole alternate shot) – **Bronze Medal**
- New Hanover County: **Craig Lendino** and **Wally Simpson** (Unified Partner), Level 2 (nine-hole alternate shot) – **Silver Medal**
- Orange County: **Joey Kessler**, Level 4 (nine-hole individual stroke play) – **Silver Medal**
- Rowan County: **Edward Fortune**, Level 1 (individual skills) – **Gold Medal**
- Wake County: **Prentiss Judd Coats** and **James Coats** (Unified Partner), Level 3 (18-hole Unified team play) – **Silver Medal**
- Wake County: **Carl Hibbert, Jr.**, Level 5 (18-hole individual stroke play) – **Silver Medal**
- Wake County: **John D. Sweet**, Level 5 (18-hole individual stroke play) – **Silver Medal**
- Wayne County: **Erica Walderman**, Level 4 (nine-hole individual stroke play) – **Gold Medal**

Others in the Special Olympics North Carolina golf delegation included: Cabarrus County: **Bradley Overcash**, Coach; Orange County: **John Kessler**, Caddie; Rowan County: **Ted Oglesby**, Coach; Wake County: **Peggy Hibbert**, Caddie, **John H. Sweet**, Caddie; Wayne County: **Debi Walderman**, Coach; **Rich Walderman**, Caddie

All athletes participated in three rounds of competition at one of five levels ranging from individual skills to 18-hole play. Level 2 competition pairs a Special Olympics athlete with a partner playing a nine-hole alternate shot format. Level 3 competition pairs a Special Olympics athlete with a Unified Partner in an 18-hole alternate shot format. At each level, athletes were placed in divisions based on age, gender and ability level.

The results of the 1st National Invitational Softball Tournament are as follows:

- Wake County: Wake Chargers Softball Team – **Bronze Medal**

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*Special Olympics - Created by the Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr. Foundation, Authorized and Accredited by
Special Olympics, Inc. for the Benefit of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities*



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Wake Chargers Team Members include: **Jeffery Autry, Zach Butler, Bryan Chew, Keith Esbenshade, Michael Gorman, Preston Jordan, Kendrick Mangum, Sven Miller, Casey Phillips, Charles Powell, Jr., Marlo Reese, Kevin Richardson, Alan Watkins and Jaelyn Williams.**

Wake Chargers Team Coaches include: **Jeff Butler, Brad Homlotis, James Sprengel and Michael Moore.**

Special Olympics North Carolina Photographer: **Paul Stackhouse.**

Photos of SONC athletes at the 2009 Special Olympics National Invitational Golf & Softball Tournament are available by contacting Lisa Pleasants at lpleasants@sonc.net or 919-719-7662, ext. 110.

Special Olympics North Carolina offers year-round sports training and competition for more than 38,000 children and adults with intellectual disabilities. These athletes inspire greatness through their success and provide motivation to the thousands of coaches, sports officials, local program committee members and event organizers involved in Special Olympics statewide. SONC offers Olympic-type competition in 20 sports on local and state levels.