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Perseverance Pays: Paralyzed Endurance Triathlete Lets Nothing Stand in His Way As He Takes on XTERRA Buffalo Creek

One to watch XTERRA winner and TeamUP member Craig Vogtsberger won't let his lower-leg paralysis stop him from competing or from inspiring others

Bailey, CO – August 3, 2015 – Among the more than 300 participants who will take their marks at the XTERRA Buffalo Creek Triathlon on Saturday, August 22, one Highland Ranch, CO resident and endurance athlete will strive, not just for a trophy, but to inspire the thousands of Americans who have foot drop, or lower-leg, ankle or foot paralysis, and are searching for answers.

Craig, an award-winning elite paratriathlete, never thought he would now be living the life that he'd always dreamed of after his body was crushed between two Humvees during a National Guard training accident in 2001.

"I suffered massive trauma to my entire body," said Craig. "Among my injuries, I came away with spinal trauma, which led to foot drop paralysis."

Craig was left with a grim prognosis of spending the rest of his life sitting in a chair taking pain killers, and battling his new reality, both mentally and physically, was taking its toll on him.

"In 2006 after six years of living the life that doctors expected of me, I saw an advertisement for a local triathlon and decided to go and watch," said Craig.

Inspired by this event, Craig worked to regain his confidence as a competitor, and was introduced to Allard USA's BlueROCKER in 2008. The technologically advanced, carbon fiber orthotic not only returned Craig to the freedom that he once felt while competing, but also aided this ultimate athlete in achieving many of his athletic goals to date, including winning the XTERRA USA Championship four times and the Regional Championship seven times.

"The Allard BlueROCKER has given me the freedom and confidence to take on any task or goal, including my next challenge at the XTERRA Buffalo Creek Triathlon," said Craig.

Craig will compete as a member of TeamUP, the first national team of people with lower-leg paralysis who participate in sporting and non-sporting events to spread awareness of their conditions and to encourage others to reclaim their lives.

He will be joined on the sidelines by national marathon runner and TeamUP Founder Beth Deloria. Beth also found her saving grace a few years prior with an Allard USA brace, which helped her reach a goal of running 48 races in just 24 months.

“I know just the type of freedom Craig found through both perseverance, as well as an Allard USA brace,” said Beth. “When you stop being able to do the activities that have meaning for you—the very pursuits that made you who you are—you find yourself profoundly lost. By sharing my experiences and the knowledge that I’ve gained throughout my journey, I hope to help other athletes like Craig and myself avoid the frustrations and depression that the type of injuries that we have can result in.”

Among the causes for the paralysis associated with foot drop are cerebral palsy, stroke, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, Charcot-Marie-Tooth Disease, spinal cord injury and many other conditions. Meet the TeamUP members and learn more about their efforts to help others manage foot drop at: www.GetBackUPToday.com.

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