

BOWMAN'S BACK

Amputee Skydiver Jumps into Games



Dana Bowman, who lost both his legs in a skydiving accident, will once again be the keynote speaker at the opening ceremonies of the Empire State Games for the Physically Challenged. Bowman, who thrilled the crowd at the 1998 opening when he jumped from the sky onto the field amid the athletes, will re-enact his performance before speaking.

As a member of the U.S. Army Golden Knights skydiving team, Bowman and his partner collided mid-air at about 300 mph during a routine training exercise in Arizona. The accident claimed Bowman's legs and his partner's life. In an instant my whole life was changed forever, Bowman remembers. His doctors credited his incredible attitude and determination as key factors in his rehabilitation. In just nine months Bowman re-enlisted in the army and became the first amputee member of the Golden Knights. He made his final jump as a Golden Knight onto the field at Olympic Stadium in Atlanta, Ga., at the opening ceremonies for the Paralympics.

Bowman has a private pilot's license to fly single engine aircraft, is certified to fly sea planes and is the only double leg amputee certified to fly helicopters. He is also a helicopter instructor. An avid sportsman, Bowman enjoys scuba diving, bicycling, water skiing, snow skiing, riding snowmobiles and racing motorcycles.

Since his last visit to the Games, Bowman has gotten married and he and his wife Jennifer became parents to twin girls in 2000.