



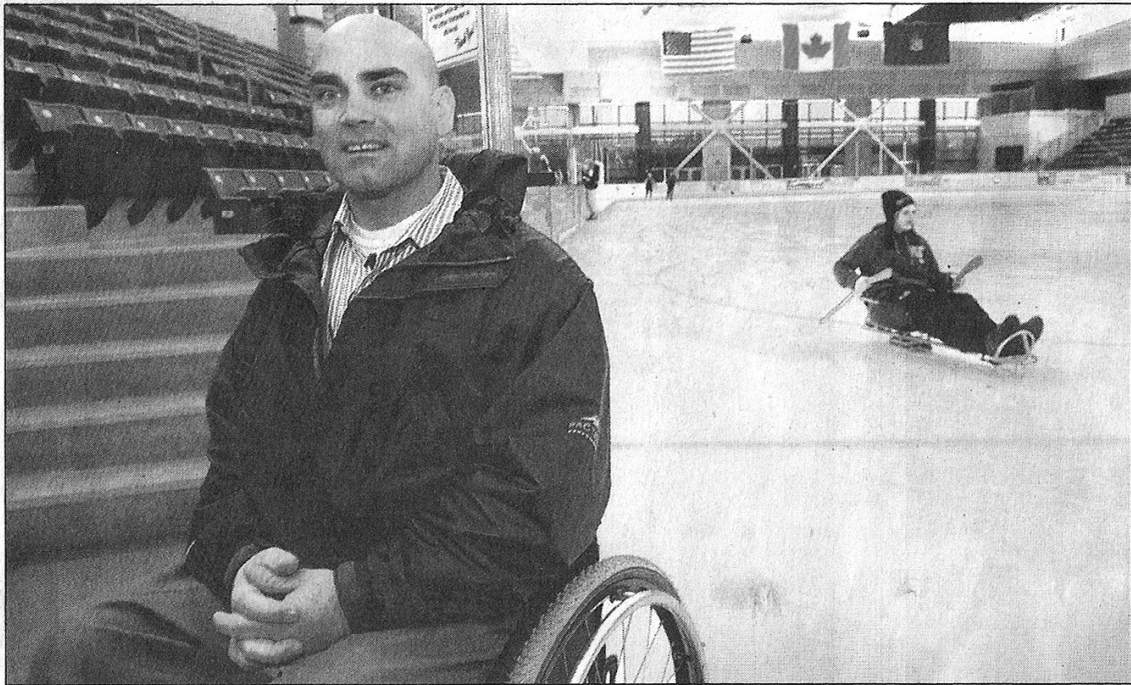
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OSWEGO

INSIDE

Fort Drum soldiers, preparing for an April deployment to Afghanistan, are ordered to spend time at home for the holidays. B-3



John Berry / The Post-Standard

GREGORY CALLEN, the founder of Move Along, discusses his vision for the adaptive ice sled that is demonstrated by Leah McNaughton, a member of the Oswego State women's varsity hockey team.

Getting Back in the Game

Ice sleds at Oswego State open door to ice rink for disabled

By Debra J. Groom
Staff writer

Gregory Callen says everyone should have the chance to play sports — even if he or she is in a wheelchair.

That belief hooked the Liverpool man up with the State University College at Oswego, where he helped the college obtain an adaptive ice sled for people to use during open skate times at the ice rink in the Campus Center Arena and Convention Center.

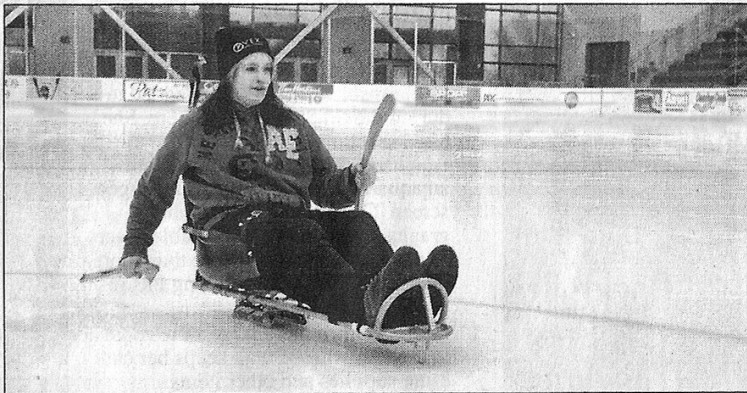
Tim Graber, skate shop manager, said the college just began the adaptive ice sled program. So far, a few physically challenged people have used the sled for skating while a few able-bodied folks also have given it a whirl.

Oswego State and Cortland State are the only colleges in the State University of New York system to have adaptive ice sleds for open skating. Cortland has 10 sleds it uses for a sled hockey recreation program and for use in the adaptive physical education classes for those pursuing a physical education teaching degree, said Tim Davis, associate professor.

The sleds cost about \$800 each. Graber said he began thinking about the adaptive ice sled after seeing the U.S. national sled hockey team at the rink during the Erik Cole Dream Big Foundation's summer hockey event in 2009.

"I started thinking about all the people with physical challenges who are left out of sports," he said. "I thought, 'let's get them included' and buy one of these sleds."

He was so excited at the thought of getting a sled for Oswego State that he contacted Starr Knapp, the college's coordinator for disability services. She



John Berry / The Post-Standard

LEAH MCNAUGHTON, a member of the Oswego State women's varsity hockey team, takes a demonstration ride on an adaptive ice sled earlier this month.

loved the idea and came up with some ways to make the idea a reality.

One plan was getting Callen involved. A 1999 Oswego State graduate and a paraplegic since a 1995 two-story fall, Callen in 2009 founded a company called Move Along Inc., which puts disabled people back in the game with programs in sports such as basketball, tennis and sled hockey.

"The sled was originally developed for sled hockey," said Callen, who is a sled hockey player in a league in Cicero. "The sled levels the playing field for competitors, and that camaraderie now can occur."

Callen grew up in Oswego playing hockey and thought the thrill of checking someone into the boards or watching the puck soar into the net was a thing of the past after he was injured. But then he found out about sled hockey

and knew he wanted to help people with disabilities get back into the sports they love.

"I was ignorant about all this before I was injured," said Callen, 35. "I want society to be inclusive so people of all abilities can be involved."

The adaptive ice sled has a plastic seat and two long bars in front that stretch to accommodate a person's legs. Underneath are two blades that glide along the ice. The person sitting in the seat propels himself or herself across the ice using short hockey stick-like devices with picks on the bottom to grasp the ice.

"It's adjustable for the length of the legs," Graber said. "The straps come over the lap and it has a high back in case someone needs extra support."

Graber said able-bodied people who

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Thrill watching others back on ice again

THRILL, FROM PAGE B-1

try out the sled can't believe the upper body workout it delivers.

"I have students who come in who use it just to work out," he said.

He's also seen athletes or others who have knee prob-

lems who can't skate as of yet, but want to get out on the ice and use the sled for a workout.

The first time Graber tried a sled was with Callen at Callen's sled hockey team practice.

"I was really wiped out," he said of the experience.

But the biggest thrill is

watching the reaction of folks who never thought they would be able to get out on the ice.

Davis, from Cortland State, said a woman was watching her daughter figure skate and said she had severe arthritis. He asked her if she would like to try the sled.

"There were both skat-

ing around the rink," he said.

"Then I noticed the mother is in tears. She told me, 'I've watched my little girl skate for years and I've never had the opportunity to skate with her until now.'"

Contact Debra J. Groom at dgroom@syracuse.com, 470-3254 or 251-5586.