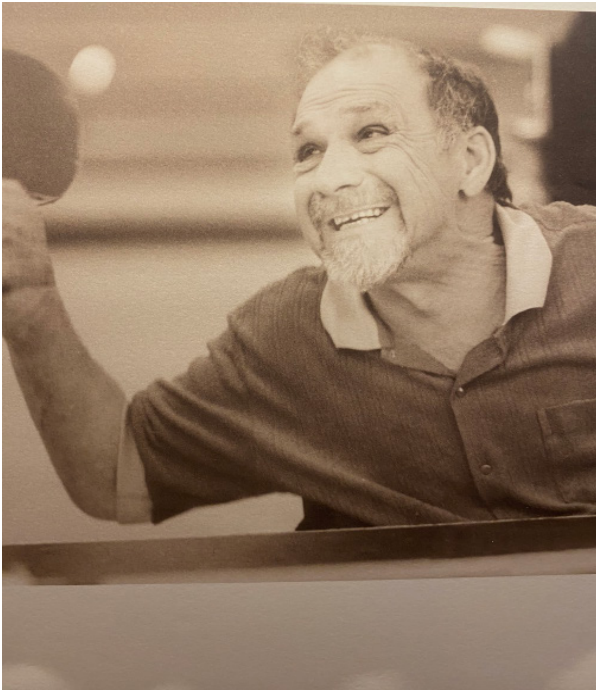


# Hall of Fame

## Stefan Florescu

Lincoln Park, Michigan

Inducted in 1975



Stefan Florescu was the first high level quadriplegic in the United States to compete in different swimming competitions on the national level. The following are excerpts from coverage of the 5th National Wheelchair Games published in the July 1961 issue of *Paraplegia News* describing his trail blazing influence on wheelchair sports. “Another outstanding contestant was a ‘loner’ from Michigan, Steve Florescu. Steve’s a quad who entered the swimming competition against paras. Although he came in last each time, he kept on trying. Due to Steve’s stick-to-it-iveness, it seems likely that the rules committee might include events for quads in next year’s National Wheelchair Games.” And the Games committee did include athletes with quadriplegia the following year. In 1962, the I-A Class 40 yard swimming event was introduced to the competition.

Subsequently, a Class I-B was developed to accomodate the “super quads” and 25 Meter events were included in the competitions for both classes. Stef went on to qualify as a member of the U.S. Wheelchair Team that competed in the 1964 Paralympic Games in Tokyo, Japan.

Stefan’s real claim to fame in wheelchair sports was his dominance in the quad division of table tennis competition. To this day he competes with the top players and still garners his share of gold medals. Stef’s unwavering persistence was a major factor in giving quads the opportunity to compete in wheelchair sports.