

# Operation Game On Founder Honored

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RANCHO SANTA FE — A Rancho Santa Fe man who founded a golf program to help wounded warriors return “to a somewhat normal life” recently received a U.S. flag that flew over the headquarters of the Regional Command Southwest and Marine Expeditionary Brigade aboard Camp Leatherneck in the Helmand province of Afghanistan this past Sept. 11.

Brig. Gen. Daniel D. Yoo honored Tony Perez with the flag, which was flown for Perez as part of a ceremony to commemorate the 13th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks on this country.

“What can I say but that I am very moved and (it) immediately brought me to tears,” Perez said. “The flag will forever remind me of those that paid the ultimate price.

“And for those that survived, it is my honor to serve those that allowed OGO to be a part of their rehabilitation to get back to a somewhat normal life through golf,” he added.

Perez prefers not to be lauded for his efforts, insisting servicemen and women, especially those wounded in action, are the “real heroes.”

“But this special flag is one that I will always cherish for the rest of my life,” he said.

In 2008, Perez started Operation Game On, a program for severely injured soldiers undergoing rehabilitation at the Naval Medical Center San Diego and Naval Hospital Camp Pendleton and Vietnam War veterans.

Participants receive free golf lessons from PGA-certified instructors at the Del Mar Golf Center and a professional fitting session by the staff at The Kingdom at TaylorMade Golf.

They also receive custom-fitted equipment at no cost to them, the hospital or the military.

To help cover costs, Perez holds a golf tournament that in recent years has raised about \$75,000 annually. At the banquet following this year’s event in August, title sponsor Linda Rizk announced a \$100,000 donation.

Source: The Coast News Group