

SPORTS & LEISURE

Master triathlete is aging Grace-fully

'Adrenaline junkie' captures pair of provincial honours

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

After winning his age group in every triathlon he entered in 2011, Georgetown's John Grace figured he'd have a pretty good shot at earning the Ontario Association of Triathletes (now known as Triathlon Ontario) Master (40+) Athlete of the Year Award.

The 60-year-old mechanic not only received the latter honour, but also the OAT's Official of the Year at the organization's recent awards night in Toronto.

"It was a nice surprise to get the officials' award too," said Grace, who sits on the technical committee for Triathlon Ontario.

"I have actually won both awards before, but not in the same year. I guess (Triathlon Ontario) like me as a head official because I tend to fill in a lot of the blanks for them. If they have a race where they've had issues, they like to send me out because I can generally handle the situation. You're just trying to tweak things and make the race better every year. It's a lot of fun to do. Basically, the whole idea is safety and fairness."

Grace usually alternates his weekends on the race calendar between competing and officiating, but he does all of the events in the Subaru Triathlon Series, for which he claimed the 2011 overall points title for the men's 60-64 age category as well.

He also qualified for the 2012 World Triathlon Championships in Auckland, New Zealand and it will be his 19th trip to the worlds—he passed on going to this year's event in China and went to

Florida instead with wife Susan to celebrate their 60th birthdays.

"I've managed to do a lot of traveling through doing this and the training part really becomes part of your life," he added of his weekly regimen, which includes biking to work each day from March to November to the Halton Region depot on Steeles Ave.

"I've found I'm not doing as much running these days and doing more cycling and swimming. I'm generally the top runner in my age group, and maybe fourth or fifth in the swim, so I'm working on my swimming to bring it up a little more."

The self-confessed "adrenaline junkie" is also a white-water rafting enthusiast and hosts a group of cyclists in his basement during the winter months for twice-a-week spin classes.

Grace admits to taking great pleasure during the late stages of a race passing competitors who are half or one-third his age. He decided to challenge himself one weekend this year by entering a sprint (750m swim, 20km bike, 5km run) on the Saturday and an Olympic distance event (1.5km swim, 40km bike, 10km run) the next day.

"Just wanted to get a gauge of my fitness and see how well I could do the second day," he said.

"The older you get, the tougher the races are on you because of the time you need to recover from fatigue. I know I can hammer the first day really well, but it's how I can survive the second day, especially with the race being twice as long as the first one. I was able to beat my closest rival by three minutes and he didn't race the day before."



Georgetown's John Grace poses with the Ontario Association of Triathletes Master (40+) Athlete of the Year Award and the OAT's Official of the Year honour following the group's recent awards night in Toronto.

Photo by Eamonn Maher

Bank betters Bright for Egg Nog Jog title

Toronto's Darryl Bank prevailed by 10 seconds over runner-up Daniel Bright of Brampton for top spot in the 29th-annual running of the Georgetown Runners' Egg Nog Jog last Sunday in Terra Cotta.

Bank crossed the finish line with a time of 37 minutes, 28 seconds for the 10.8-km race, while Rachel Crowe of Toronto was the fastest female finisher in 45:14.

Georgetown's Kirsten Cooper was second amongst the

women at 46:31. Brad Mailoux of Georgetown had the best time for a Halton Hills entrant, placing 16th overall in 44:44.

Georgetown's John Grace was 28th overall and won the men's 60-64 age group with a finish of 46:30.

Over 600 runners registered for the race this year, with proceeds going to support Cancer Assistance Services of Halton Hills and Community Living North Halton.

Game-saving save

Goalie Dean Dimou of Christ the King's Jaguars foiled a 3-on-1 break by the Milton District Mustangs with a save late in their Halton high school varsity boys' hockey contest last week in Georgetown. Connor Mortimer and Pat Gough had the CtK goals in a 2-2 draw. Next Thursday (Dec. 22), CtK's 2-1-1 boys take on the 2-2-1 Georgetown Rebels at 2:45 p.m. at the Alcott Arena.

Photo by Eamonn Maher



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