

Coach sets bar high for students to follow

By **EAMONN MAHER**
Staff Writer

Not since 1999, when he last competed as a member of Romania's national gymnastics team, was Florin Chivu this nervous.

The 35-year-old head coach of the Halton Hills Gymnastics Centre and father of two hadn't entered a competition of any sort in a decade, but decided to sign up for the masters division of the Gymtrix North Bay Gymnastics meet just a week before Father's Day.

He had served as the official photographer at that meet in the past and while snapping shots last year, got the itch to return to competition, despite the tugs of chronic shoulder, heel and wrist pain. In a division with about a dozen athletes, Chivu surprised himself by winning all seven gold medals — the six individual disciplines and the all-around title — as many of his students looked on in admiration.

"They were teasing me beforehand, 'Are you sure you're training enough,' but I was just challenging them," laughed Chi-

vu, who will mark his 10th anniversary as HHGC head coach in October.

"The kids were excited for me, even the parents. I was nervous because I hadn't flipped in 10 years and there were some negative thoughts, but I accomplished my goal. There was a lot of pressure on me and I guess it was enough to get it done."

Chivu said he plans to compete in North Bay again next year, but that's the only meet he'll enter. He did do some conditioning to prepare for his comeback, dropping about 20 pounds without any routine training, and just going by muscle memory.

"At the end of the day, it wasn't about gold medals. It's about the pride of competing, inspiring the students and having fun," Chivu added.

"Hopefully they'll be motivated to train harder. My daughter was right beside me, watching me compete, and that was my goal. It's hard to coach your own child, so I was thinking maybe that if she sees me she'll want to be like daddy."



For the first time in the 37-year history of the Halton Hills Gymnastics Centre, its head coach participated in a masters' competition at the same time and place in which his students were performing. Florin Chivu shook off some rust and won all seven gold medals in his division. He's pictured with HHGC member Kaslyn Kallio, who earned gold, silver and bronze medals on the day. *Submitted photo*

Dickinson gets invited to summer camp

Georgetown's Jason Dickinson has been invited to Hockey Canada's junior hockey team summer development camp, set for Aug. 3-8 in Brossard, Montreal and Sherbrooke, Que.

The 18-year-old Dickinson, entering his fourth year with the Ontario Hockey League's Guelph Storm, was among 41 Canadian Hockey League players on the roster announced Monday.

Development camp attendees will gather at the Montreal Canadiens' practice facility for practices on Aug. 3-4 before playing the national junior teams of the Czech Republic and Russia, a news release states.

Hockey Canada will monitor these players and other national team candidates during the first few months of the 2014-15 season and during the CHL Subway Super Series to determine who will be invited to the final selection camp in December.

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