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Friday, September 29, 2000

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Three Georgetown duathletes to compete in France



Three Georgetown duathletes are headed to the world championships in Calais, France. John Grace, left, will be representing Canada for the 12th time while Sarah Hiseman, centre, and Mike Ackroyd will be making their first trip to worlds. The race is October 7.

Photo by Herb Garbutt

Mike Ackroyd and Sarah Hiseman are heading to their first World Duathlon Championships but they've got an inside track on other rookies.

The pair will be able to pick up some valuable pointers from a third Georgetown duathlete, John Grace, who will also be heading to Calais, France for the October 7 race. Grace will be competing in his 12th world championship and looking to improve on his career best sixth-place finish.

But one of the first things Grace told his fellow competitors is they can expect a tough field. Races in Europe usually draw more competitors.

"You can't really set time goals because each course is different," Grace said. "Basically you just have to stay calm and watch what's happening around you. The most important thing is just to have fun and do the best you can."

All three qualified for worlds at the Canadian championships in Kananaskis, a race won by Olympic triathlon gold medalist Simon Whitfield. Grace placed second in the 45-49 age group, Ackroyd was fourth in the 40-44

division and Hiseman was seventh in the 20-24 category.

The race consisted of a 10 km run, followed by 40 km bike ride and then a 5 km run. The ride started with a long climb in the mountains and much of the running was on trails rather than roads.

"It was a tough event—one of the toughest races I've ever been in," Grace said.

Ackroyd, who had trained with the Georgetown Runners for 15 years, started competing in duathlons last year.

"I was looking for something new, something to motivate me," he said.

He found motivation in narrowly missing a trip to worlds in his first national competition. Ackroyd thought he had qualified for worlds last year when he earned the final Canadian team berth. But days after the event he received a call saying an error had bumped him back one spot and off the Canadian team. Ackroyd focused on the bike to make sure there would be no more near-misses.

"That was disappointing but I came back this year and dedicated myself to the bike and rode

with John," Ackroyd said.

A second-place finish at the provincial long course championships in Peterborough gave Ackroyd the confidence he needed and he carried that into nationals.

Hiseman came into duathlon with a specialty in the other discipline. A road racer for seven years who competed at the Canada Games, Hiseman passed on last year's nationals because she felt she didn't have enough experience in the sport. After a strong season on the Ontario duathlon series, she decided to go this year with the goal of making worlds.

"It's a thrill to compete for your country," Hiseman said. "It's quite exciting to get there in two years."

With her major goal in duathlon accomplished, Hiseman is now looking at getting into the pool to train for triathlons.

"I've always had a great respect for triathletes and I want to do more triathlons," she said. "This is more enjoyable than road racing."

—By Herb Garbutt,
staff writer

Streak on line

Acton harness driver Trevor Ritchie was hoping his winning ways continued last night (Thursday) as he handled the reins for Banker Hall in the Ontario Sires Stakes \$100,000 Gold Final at Mohawk Racetrack.

Ritchie drove Banker Hall to a wire-to-wire victory in the recent Gold Series Elimination.

Starting from post-three, Ritchie took the two-year-old colt to the front of the pack, held off a challenge at the three-quarter pole and pulled away for a one and a half length victory over Coldspot. Banker Hall chalked up its third straight victory in a time of 1:59.1 and earned \$70,514 for the win. The colt is undefeated at Mohawk.

Earlier this year Ritchie drove Yankee Paco to victory at the Hambletonian in New Jersey.

Team with Brampton girl for gold

Local sisters Kings of baton world

Two Georgetown baton twirlers are kings of the world.

Sheridan and Kennedy King teamed up with Nicole Boutin of Brampton to win the trio gold at the recent 50th Annual World Open Baton Championships in Indiana.

Making the victory even more impressive was that it was only the second time they had competed together as a trio. Kennedy and Sheridan had won a bronze medal as a duo in April at the world championships in Birmingham, England. That routine was modified to include Nicole and they performed it to near perfection.

Having just turned 11, which moved them into the juvenile division, the Kings Destiny members had hoped to finish in the top-10. But they got high marks because of the movement, the multiple exchanges and interaction—high enough to bring them the gold.

"We knew they had the potential because they looked similar, their twirling

style is similar and the routine was difficult," said Darlene King, who coached the trio along with Tim King and Susan Thibodeau. "They only had a couple of months to work on it so when the results were announced we were pretty much in shock."

The youngest of the 41 trios competing, the King sisters and Boutin will have two more years at the juvenile level.

Kennedy and Sheridan repeated their bronze medal performance in the pairs competition. Individually, the girls also performed well. Kennedy won a silver medal in Two Baton while Sheridan earned the bronze. In Movement, Kennedy finished third while Kennedy was fourth.

Boutin took the gold medal in the Novice Flag Championship.

The Kings Destiny senior teams repeated their performance in Birmingham by again winning two silver medal. The teams, including Georgetown twirlers



Sisters Kennedy King, left, and Sheridan King, right, teamed up with Nicole Boutin to win the juvenile trio gold at the 50th Annual World Open Baton Championships in Indiana.

Photo by Herb Garbutt

Sheridan and Kennedy King, Thibodeau and Krystal Orchard, placed second in both the twirling corps and show production divisions. Thibodeau is one of five members of the senior team retiring to pursue coaching.

—By Herb Garbutt,
staff writer

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