



Shields named athlete of the year

Bill Doucet, Times Staff

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It's hard to tell what Andy Shields is more shocked about – winning the actual Tim Turow Award or winning as a cross country skier from Cambridge.

When people think of athletes from the city, Shields – who moved to Thunder Bay last winter to train at the National Development Centre – admittedly said cross country skiers aren't the first thing that comes to mind.

Even as a youngster, he used to get the snow dumped from arena ice machines to make a skiing track.

"Cross country skiing is not a very big sport down in Cambridge, though up here in Thunder Bay it's a different story," he said over the phone before departing for the final dryland training session of the season in Minnesota.

His mother Susan accepted the award on his behalf Friday at the Cambridge Sports Awards banquet at the Cambridge Holiday Inn.

Other nominees were: Madeline Gardiner (gymnastics), Victoria Moors (gymnastics), Ashley Nichols (muay thai), Robert Thomas (muay thai), Andrea Watson (muay thai) and Whitney McClintock (water skiing).

"I can see why people think cross country skiing from Cambridge would be interesting as the climate is not that conducive to the sport.

"I did not expect this at all. Up against the other athletes that were nominated, I thought there's no way. I'm very surprised, for sure."

Shields shouldn't be too blown away by his win, as he had an outstanding season on the snow-covered trails. At the world junior trials in Thunder Bay, the 20 year old was first in the 15 km skate, third in classic sprint and first in the 20 km pursuit to qualify for the junior worlds in Otepää, Estonia. There he finished 31st in the classic sprint and in the 20 km pursuit.

At the U23 Canada Winter Games in Halifax, he was second in the skate sprint, and at the nationals in Canmore, Alta., he was first in the 30 km skate and 15 km classic.

He was also named Skitrax magazine's North America's Best Overall Junior Male for the 2010-11 season.

Still, he didn't think that would give him the edge.

"Being junior national champion and being voted Skitrax magazine junior athlete of the year in North America, I knew that nationally and in North America I was the best junior," he said.

"I'm sure the other nominees would be able to place a lot higher than me on the world stage.

"It was an incredible year and it went better than I could have hoped. I'm still surprised. Especially for someone like me, as I'm not really as high a calibre as the other nominees, I would have thought."



Shields named athlete of the year. City's best: Andy Shields was named the Tim Turow Award winner as Athlete of the Year at the Cambridge Sports Awards banquet. Andy's mother accepted the award on her son's behalf as he was heading to Minnesota to train. *Photo courtesy of National Development Centre*

Regardless, he'll be the reigning Tim Turow Award winner until next year.

"I guess it's a feather in my cap now, something to brag about."

In addition to the Tim Turow Award winner, the other award recipient announced at the banquet was Don Pavey as the Sports Contributor of the Year. Pavey has been a key organizer of the Tour de Grand since the beginning.

Also receiving awards were: Pro Athlete of the Year, Jody Jamieson (harness racing); Sports Organization of the Year, Cambridge Cheer Sport Sharks; High School Team of the Year, Southwood Sabres senior boys' soccer team; Team of the Year, Cambridge bantam Lions football team.

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