

2009 AGM Annual Awards

Coach of the Year – Michel Menard, Blind River Biathlon Club

Michel Menard is the embodiment of a creative, caring, and competent coach.

He has worked tirelessly over the last few years toward turning the Blind River Biathlon Club's young athletes into serious contenders, and into a TEAM. He has sacrificed personally, professionally, and financially to help make that a reality.

He is a high school teacher, who, in spite of 80 hour work-weeks, has always found time to research training techniques, race stats, equipment sales, and to set up and run team practices, as well as to develop other club leaders to assist with the athletes. And don't forget all the waxing he does for the team! He finds money, sometimes out of his own pocket, to cover purchases of equipment and other training materials, and to run events. He organizes fun events for his athletes to get some exercise, while earning community volunteer hours, and raise money for the team budget. Who knew that sweeping town streets was good cross-training!

Michel was nominated by a fellow coach who is also a parent of two athletes.



Male Athlete of the Year – Jeremiah Hynes

The Athlete of the Year Award involves more than medal performances. It's also about promotion of the sport of Biathlon, about sportsmanship, and about encouragement of others.

Jeremiah is a long time modern pentathlete, who a few years ago decided to try out biathlon. At age 54, he continues to compete at the Masters level whenever he can find a race, whether winter or summer. Jeremiah exemplifies the LTAD (Long Term Athlete Development) stage of "Active 4 Life" The huge grin on his face after leaving the range at this year's Ontario Championship, after he shot a clean round, says it all – he loves it!



Female Athlete of the Year - Becky Puiras

Becky is a long time competitive cross country skier who, in her late twenties, participated in a fun air rifle biathlon race at the Finnish Festival in Sudbury. That prompted Becky to come back to Biathlon after competing for a while in university. In addition to competing in as many races as she can manage, Becky has helped to start up the Lappe Biathlon Club in Thunder Bay. As a mother of a young child, working full time, Becky has clearly demonstrated that when you're committed, you can do it all, and excel at it! She won Bronze at this year's National Championship. Becky couldn't make it from Thunder Bay for the AGM, but here she is in action at the Nationals.



The Inaugural Recipients of the Hurley Cups:

Junior Female Athlete Of The Year - Gabrielle Bruser

Gabrielle was the junior female points leader in the Ontario Cup Circuit this year. She is a member of the Walden (Sudbury) Biathlon Club.

Junior Male Athlete Of The Year - Ryan Hunter

Ryan was the junior male points leader in the Ontario Cup Circuit this year. He is a member of the Walden (Sudbury) Biathlon Club.

