



RUNDEZ-VOUS

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Albert Tschirhart

Albert was recently named as a recipient for the Ontario Government/Sport Alliance of Ontario 2007 Syl Apps – Special Achievement Award presented annually to each Provincial Sport Organization's nominee in recognition of long time service to the sport. The citation provided with Albert's nomination follows:

During his career as an athlete, Albert Tschirhart was a national level wrestler. He began coaching in the sport of track & field in the 1980's at both the high school at which he taught and at the Guelph Track & Field Club, which he helped found and of which he has been President ever since. Guelph progressed over the years to become the #1 Junior club indoors in Ontario in 2004. Amongst the athletes he has coached is Carmen Douma-Hussar, a top international 1500m runner.

In 1999, after serving on the OTFA Board for a number of years as the Western Region President, Albert was elected to the Ontario Track & Field Association as the Director of Operations. In 2002 he ran for President of the OTFA and was elected. He recently completed the final year of his third two-year term in this position and he stepped down from the position in November. However, he will continue in an administrative leadership role as a Director on the Athletics Canada Board.

Albert was a very hands-on President, working closely with the staff and Board on an almost daily basis. This he did while working as a full-time high school teacher (and raising a family). He never failed to answer an email from the office and always had valuable input: this made decision making so much easier for the professional staff.

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One of Albert's strengths is his ability to see the "big picture" and, in response, to initiate new programmes. Several years ago, he founded the FUNdamental summer track school programme and has since run the programme annually in his home community. He hopes this programme will spread across the province and entice thousands of children to join in the FUN of track & field. At the more elite level, he has been the starter motor for several inter-provincial competitions, including the successful Eastern Canadian Espoir Team Championships, the fourth edition of which was recently held in Newfoundland. In 2005, in response to a need for high level competition for senior athletes Albert began organizing an Eastern Canadian Grand Prix Series. The series came to fruition in the summer of 2006 and has now been embraced administratively and financially by Athletics Canada.

His special skill in terms of team leadership was demonstrated by his Head Coach/Team Leader role with the 2001 Ontario Canada Games Track & Field team. Both men's and women's teams won and there was not a single point lost through non-finishes, disqualifications or no heights! With 55 athletes on the team and 35 events spread over a week, this is quite an accomplishment. As part of the preparation for the 2001 CSG team Albert organized the Ontario Junior team for a competition in an international match following the 2000 Canadian Junior Championships in Montreal. He handled many aspects of team organization, including selection, travel and uniforms. Albert had also served as the distances coach on the 1997 Ontario Canada Games team.

As if the above activities weren't enough, Albert took on the meet directorship responsibilities for a number of major events, including the 1996 Canadian Junior and Senior Championships, the 1998 and 2002 Canadian Junior Championships and many provincial and local level competitions, including approximately half a dozen Ontario Championships meets, indoors and outdoors. In 2000, he was the Technical Chairman for the Ontario Summer Games in Guelph.

He has done all of the above as a volunteer in the sport, taking no payment for his work. He rarely complains, preferring to take a positive approach. It has been said that, in life, there are the givers and there are the takers. Albert is a giver. He truly deserves the Syl Apps Award.

Congratulations

Congratulations go to the London Legion Alliance for defending their overall Indoor Club Championship. London scored 378 points to Phoenix's 305 and Niagara Olympic's 199.5. Laurel Creek (175), University of Toronto Track Club (170) and Etobicoke (137) rounded out the top 6 clubs.

London Legion also captured the team titles in the Junior, and Bantam age categories and lost the Midget team championship by only a single point. In that category Centro Scuola came out on top.

Phoenix captured the Senior title over York University Track Club and won the Youth Championship handily over London Legion. One of the closest battles came in the Junior category, in which the top three teams were separated by only 3 points.

More complete teams standings, go to page 9.

Ontario Championships - 10,000m and 4 x1500m Relay

These events will be held on Saturday, May 17 at Waterhouse Stadium in London. The JM/SM/SW 10,000 (and possibly the SM/SW 4x1500m relay) will be run as a mixed race, which is now allowable under IAAF rules in this category of competition.

The SM and SW 10,000m race will also serve as the National Qualifier competition.

(Normally, top 5 without entry standard are eligible for entry to National Championships).

An information sheet and entry kit will soon be available on our website.

Ontario Junior and Senior Men's and Women's 10km Walk (Road) Championships

Entry kits for the Ontario 10km Walk Championships, which will be held at Hanlon's Point, Centre Island in Toronto on June 1, are currently available in the Events Calendar on the OTFA website.

Officiating Workshops - For Clubs and Meet Organizers

One of the main objectives of the OTFA's Year of the Official is to increase the number of active working officials and to make more track & field meets self-sufficient in terms of their officiating requirements. To that end the OTFA, in conjunction with the Ontario Officials Council (OOC), has launched its Introductory Officiating Workshops Programme.

To encourage clubs or other groups to host a workshop most costs will be assumed by the OTFA/OOC. Meet Directors may save on meet costs by having a large local pool group of trained volunteers to call on. Clubs, which are asked to supply volunteers for Ontario Championship meets, can get people trained and allow them to make an especially valuable contribution at meets.

Please see the attached information flyer found on page 10 on courses and consider setting up a workshop in your area.

Please check our website soon for a list of upcoming workshops.

Apprentice Coach Training Grants

The Coaches Association of Ontario (CAO) has indicated that they will continue their Apprentice Coach Training Programme in the coming fiscal year.

Grants of up to \$2500 will be available to selected apprentice coaches to cover their expenses, including a Master Coach's honorarium. The programme is ongoing and applications may be submitted any time. However, applications submitted early in the fiscal year stand a better chance as they are reviewed and funded on a first-come-first-served basis until the available funding is allocated. The application requires the availability of a Master Coach to act as Mentor for the Apprentice Coach. The apprentice coach must be a member of the OTFA.

For more information and an application form please contact Roman Olszewski at:

roman.otfa@cogeco.ca or Tel: 905-732-9955

Three CAO Apprentice Training Programme Applications Approved

We're pleased to announce that Apprentice Programme Training grants have been approved from the 2007-2008 fiscal year budget for the following:

Craig Blackman (Faye Blackwood Master Coach)
Kevin Dinardo (Brian Risk Master Coach)
Kelly Bethune (Sue Wise Master Coach)

Thanks to the Coaching Association of Ontario and Quest for Gold for providing the funding for this programme.

Run, Jump, Throw Certification Course

A Run, Jump, Throw Certification Course will run Saturday May 31 – Sunday June 1, 2008 at the Toronto Track and Field Centre (North York). This course will be offered in the New NCCP format, which is taught using the CBET (Competency Based Education and Training) approach. This method of teaching is learner-centered and offers many opportunities for group work and interaction among course participants.

The Run, Jump, Throw Program is designed to provide a fun approach to fundamental skill development and the acquisition of basic fitness. The course is approximately 15 hours in length and includes both classroom and track sessions. (Including 2 hours of practical teaching with kids).

For more details, please go to page 11.

Athlete Transfer Policy Change

The following change has been made to the OTFA Athlete Transfer policy:

All Applications for Transfer must be sent to the OTFA office for review and acceptance. Transfers are NOT complete until the paperwork has been received by the OTFA office, and athletes may not compete as 'Disassociated' athletes until the transfer has been finalized. The entire document can be found at: <http://www.otfa.ca/groups/membership%20policy/New%20OTFA%20Transfer%20Policy%20-%20March%202008.pdf>

Dave Scott-Thomas named Ontario High Performance Coach of the Year

Dave Scott-Thomas head coach of the University of Guelph Men's and Women's Track and Field program and the Speed River Track and Field club has been awarded the 2007 Ontario Coaching Excellence Awards in the High Performance category.

2007 was an outstanding year for Scott-Thomas who saw his University of Guelph Gryphons men's and women's cross country teams become the first school to ever successfully defend both the men's and women's Canadian University titles. The women were led by Canadian University champion and Rookie of the Year Lindsay Carson of Cambridge, Ontario, while the men were led by Ontario University Champion and Centennial graduate Kyle Boorsma.

In addition to his highly successful results in the varsity arena; Scott-Thomas' post-collegiate athletes were arguably even more successful. University of Guelph graduate Reid Coolsaet captured two national titles, his record fourth consecutive title over 5000 meters and the AGSI Canadian Cross Country title at the Guelph arboretum in December. Hilary Stellingwerff captured the national title over 1500 meters and represented Canada at the World Track and Field Championships and Eric Gillis captured the men's 10000 meters national title while adding a silver medal at the cross country championships and a bronze in the 5000 meters. Overall, Speed River athletes captured a stunning twelve national medals in 2007 a three fold increase over their previous high of four. - Written by Chris Moulton

Notice to Club Coaches at ROPSSAA Championships

Club Coaches should be advised that ROPSSAA Co-educational Track & Field, Playing Regulations, Revised as of June 2007, states under category 12, Department, section d)

"Parents, club coaches, and ineligible athletes are only allowed in the stands and/or away from competition areas. Violation of this will disqualify athletes".

National Championship Travel Grants

This is a reminder of the long-standing OTFA policy re: National Championship Travel grants: **the athlete must compete (in his/her choice of individual events) at the Provincial Junior or Senior Championship* in order to qualify for OTFA travel grants, should they be available, preceding or following the National Junior/Senior Championships.**

The above requirement is not in effect for cross country.

If there is a direct competition/travel conflict with an international team event, as determined by the OTFA Director of Technical Services, the athlete will be excused from attending the Ontario Championships. In addition, if the Director of Technical Services is satisfied that an athlete is unable to compete in the Ontario Championships due to injury he/she may be excused. In the latter case the matter must be brought to the Director's attention prior to the date of the Ontario Championships.

*includes Supermeet 1 in Ottawa (Juniors only affected); Art Keay Memorial 10km Walk (Juniors only); 10,000m in London, and Combined Events at the National Qualifier Meet in Toronto.

Funding assistance will not be available for the National Senior Championships and National Cross Country Championships (Juniors and Seniors) as these competitions will be held in Ontario (Windsor and Guelph, respectively) in 2008. The decision as to whether to include National Youth Championships in this funding programme will be announced soon.

'Handicap' Rating Program for Runners

A new 'handicap' rating program (an OTFA initiative) called "**Road Warrior**" will allow runners of all abilities to compete in races at virtually the same ability level.

For Road Warrior Media Release, go to page 12.



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S: OTFA Sanctioned

A: OTFA Approved (not OTFA Sanctioned but approved for competition by OTFA athletes)

S(AC): Athletics Canada sanctioned

Date	Status	Competition/Event	Location	Contact
April 3		Louis Riel Dome High School Track Series #2	Ottawa	AM
April 10		Louis Riel Dome High School Track Series #3	Ottawa	AM
April 17		Louis Riel Dome High School Track Series #4	Ottawa	AM
April 17		Regina Mundi College Meet (High School)	St. Thomas	
April 18-20		New York Relays	New York, NY	LP
April 19	A	Kettle Creek High School Meet	St. Thomas	
April 20	S(AC)	Canadian Half-Marathon Championships	Montreal, QC	
April 24	A	Strathroy HS & Holy Cross HS Meet	Strathroy	
April 24	A	Louis Riel Dome High School Track Series #5	Ottawa	AM
April 26	A	Forest City Prep (High School)	London	
April 27	S	Southwestern Ontario Throw Series Meet #1	London	JA
May 1	A	Bronco Hurdle Classic (High School)	London	
May 1		University of Ottawa High School Invitational	Ottawa	AM
May 4	S	Southwestern Ontario Throws Series Meet #2	London	JA
May 6-7	A	ROPSSAA High School Championships	Etobicoke	JM
May 8	A	Oldham Memorial Field Meet (High School)	London	
May 8		National Capital High School Classic (& Open)	Ottawa	AM
May 8-10		Glenn D. Loucks Games (HS only)	White Plains, NY	
May 10		NOC Twilight Meet #1	St. Catharine's	SG
May 10		Ottawa Olympic Prep Meet 1	Ottawa	AM
May 13-14	A	TVRAA Central Zone Meet (High School)	London?	
May 17	S	OTFA 10,000m Track 4x1500 Relay Champs	London	SW2
May 17	S	Southwestern Ontario Throws Series Meet #3	London	JA
May 18-31	A	Ontario High School Regionals	Various	
May 19-20		New Balance NYC Qualifying Challenge	New York, NY	LP
May 22-23	A	WOSSAA High School Championships	London	
May 24		NOC Twilight Meet #2	St. Catharine's	SG
May 24		Ottawa Olympic Prep Meet 2	Ottawa	AM
May 25	S(AC)	Canadian Marathon Championships	Ottawa	
May 31	S(AC)	Keeper Athletics T&F Meet (World Athletics Day)	Sioux Lookout	SH
June 1	S	OTFA 10km Road Walk Championships	Toronto	SW3
June 4	S(AC)	Canadian 10,000m Championships	Toronto (VC)	CG
June 4		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 1	Ottawa	AM
June 5-7	A	OFSSAA Track & Field Championships	Hamilton	
June 11		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 2	Ottawa	AM
June 14	A	RCL District C Meet	Kitchener	TR
June 14	A	RCL District F Meet	Belleville	TC
June 14	A	Bruce Faulds MTA Meet	Belleville	TC
June 14-15	S	OTFA National Junior & Senior Qualifier	Toronto (TTFC)	CI
June 15-21	S(AC)	2008 PacificCanada Series (PCS)	Various (BC)	
June 15	S(AC)	Review Kajaks Int'l Track Classic (PCS)	Richmond, BC	



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S: OTFA Sanctioned

A: OTFA Approved (not OTFA Sanctioned but approved for competition by OTFA athletes)

S(AC): Athletics Canada sanctioned

Date	Status	Competition/Event	Location	Contact
June 17	S(AC)	Abbotsford Int'l Track Classic (PCS)	Abbotsford, BC	
June 18		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 3	Ottawa	AM
June 19	S(AC)	Victoria Int'l Track Classic (PCS)	Victoria, BC	
June 21	S(AC)	Vancouver Sun Harry Jerome Int'l (PCS)	Vancouver, BC	
June 21-22	S	OTFA Supermeet #1 Jr & Sr Chmps (EHPAS)	Ottawa	AM
June 28	S	HH/PIB Throws Challenge	London	JA
June 28	A	RCL District G Championships	Ottawa	AM
June 28	A	RCL District D Championships	Toronto (TTFC)	PP
June 28		Ottawa Olympic Prep Meet 3	Ottawa	AM
June 29	A	Ontario Masters Outdoor Championships	Toronto (TTFC)	OM
TBD	S	OTFA Outdoor Relays (?: 4x200m, Sprint Medley)	Hamilton	TBD
July 3-6	S(AC)	Canadian Sr. Championships/Olympic Trials	Windsor	
July 8	S(AC)	Kidd-Crothers Track Classic (EHPAS)	Toronto (VC)	CG
July 8-13		2008 IAAF World Jr. Championships	Bydgoszcz, Poland	
July 9		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 4	Ottawa	AM
July 11	S(AC)	Aileen Meagher Invitational (EHPAS)	Halifax, NS	
July 12		4th Asian Community Games (Open)	Toronto (TTFC)	TBD
July 16		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 5	Ottawa	AM
July 18-19	A	RCL Ontario Legion Championships	Kitchener	
July 18-20		2008 NACAC Under 23 Championships	Toluca, Edo.Mexico	
July 20	S	Southwestern Ontario Throws Series Meet #6	London	JA
July 25-27	S(AC)	Canadian Jr. Championships	Abbotsford, BC	
July 29	S	Southwestern Ontario Throws Series Meet #7	London	JA
August 1-3	A	Canadian Masters Championships	Regina, SK	
August 2-3	S	OTFA Supermeet #2 Bant/Midg/Yth Champs	Toronto (TTFC)	BS
August 6		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 6	Ottawa	AM
August 8-10	S(AC)	2008 RCL Canadian Legion Championships	Sherbrooke, QC	
August 10		Timmins Golden Trails Festival	Timmins www.goldentrails.net	
August 13		Brooks Ottawa Summer Twilight Series 7	Ottawa	AM
Aug. 14-15		Ontario Summer Games/E.Cdn.Espoir Chmps	Ottawa	
Aug. 15-24		2008 Olympic Summer Games	Beijing, China	
September 14	S	OTFA 20km Road Walk Championships	Welland	RO
October 18	S(AC)	TransCanada Run with the Champions	Ottawa	
November 16	S	OTFA Cross Country Championships	Toronto (Sunnybrook)	DC
November 29	S(AC)	Canadian Cross Country Championships	Guelph	DS

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TBD	To Be Determined



2008 TIMEX Roadrunning Series

Date	Competition	Location	Contact
April 19	Spring Into Action Physio 5K Run 5km - 8:30am	Toronto	Adam Saporta adam.saporta@yahoo.com
April 27	Backs In Motion 5km - 9:00am	Toronto	Jodi Spivak jspivak@cmcc.ca 416-482-2340 x200
May 24	MDS Nordion 10k 10km - 6:30 pm	Ottawa	National Capital Marathon Inc info@ncm.ca
June 8	Bread & Honey Road Races 15km - 8:00 am	Mississauga	Ellie Arruda www.breadandhoneyrace.com
June 8	Toronto Challenge 5km - 9:30 am	Toronto	Erin Mulcahey Abbott challenge@toronto.ca www.toronto.ca/challenge
June 18	Night Crawler 5 Miler 5 miles - 7:15 pm	Toronto	Bruce Trigg Ph. 905-469-1962 Fax: 905-469-1503 www.nightcrawler.to
July 20	Lindsay Milk Run 10km - 9:00 am	Lindsay	Shelley Cooper 705-324-9411 x335 scooper@city.kawarthalakes.on.ca
September 21	Longboat Toronto Island Run 10km - 11:15 am	Toronto	Mike Turner info@longboatroadrunners.com
October 18	TransCanada Run with the Champions 10km	Ottawa	http://www.transcanada10km.ca/

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2008 OTFA Indoor Club Championship Final Standings

Overall

1.	London Legion Track Alliance	378
2.	Phoenix	305
3.	Niagara Olympic	199.5
4.	Laurel Creek	175
5.	University of Toronto T.C	170
6.	Etobicoke	137
7.	York University TFC	135
8.	Centro Scuola	120
9.	Durham Dragons	118
10.	South Simcoe/Dufferin	106
11.	Brampton	100
12.	Saugeen	87
13.	Durham Legion Athletics	84
	Guelph	84
15.	London-Western	70.5
16.	Hamilton Olympic	70
17.	Project Athletics	67
18.	St. Thomas Legion	62
19.	I Be Fast	59
20.	Flying Angels	55

47 clubs scored at least 1 point

Senior

1.	Phoenix	72
2.	York University T.C	65
3.	Etobicoke	53
4.	London Legion	48
5.	Project Athletics	44
6.	I Be Fast	36
7.	Elite Edge	33
8.	Durham Dragons	23
9.	London-Western	19
	St. Thomas Legion	19
11.	Guelph	18
12.	South Simcoe/Dufferin	17
13.	Toronto Olympic	16
14.	Windsor Legion	15
15.	University of Toronto T.C	14
	Brampton	14

30 clubs scored at least one point

Junior

1.	London Legion Track Alliance	81
2.	Phoenix	78
	University of Toronto T.C.	78
4.	York University TC	45
5.	Etobicoke	44
6.	Guelph	42
7.	Laurel Creek	38
8.	Mississauga	32
9.	Durham Dragons	29
10.	Niagara Olympic	25
	Brampton	25
12.	London-Western	22
13.	Project Athletics	21
14.	Durham Legion Athletics	19
	Windsor Legion	19

32 clubs scored at least 1 point

Youth

1.	Phoenix	120
2.	London Legion Track Alliance	101
3.	Laurel Creek	63
4.	South Simcoe/Dufferin	47
5.	Saugeen	43
6.	Niagara Olympic	42.5
7.	Durham Dragons	36
8.	Brampton	32
9.	St. Thomas Legion	28
10.	London-Western	24.5
11.	University of Toronto T.C.	24
12.	Guelph	18
13.	Hamilton Olympic	17
	Durham Legion Athletics	17
15.	Etobicoke	16

26 clubs scored at least one point.

Midget

1.	Centro Scuola	78
2.	London Legion Alliance	77
3.	Niagara Olympic	75
4.	Phoenix	35
5.	Durham Legion Athletics	34
6.	University of Toronto TC	31
7.	Brampton	29
8.	Saugeen	26
9.	Laurel Creek	25
10.	Hamilton Olympic	21
11.	Etobicoke	17
12.	South Simcoe/Dufferin	16
13.	York University TC	13
	United Tamil	13
15.	Durham Dragons	12

31 clubs scored at least 1 point

Bantam

1.	London Legion Alliance	71
2.	Niagara Olympic	45
3.	Laurel Creek	35
	Centro Scuola	35
5.	Quinte Legion	31
6.	University of Toronto TC	23
7.	Durham Dragons	18
8.	York County	17
9.	South Simcoe/Dufferin	14
	Flying Angels	14
11.	Hamilton Olympic	10
	York University TC	10
13.	Durham Legion Athletics	9
14.	Etobicoke	7
15.	Saugeen	6

18 clubs scored at least 1 point

Ontario Track & Field Association - Year of the Official

Introductory Officiating Workshops

If your club or group

- organizes and runs track & field competitions and/or
- supplies volunteers to serve as officials at OTFA championships and other meets

then you should be interested in hosting an *Introductory Officiating Course*

These workshops are 5 hours in length and include instruction in:

Starting and Starter's Assistant
Finish Line Timing and Lap Counting
Umpiring
Throwing Events Judging
Jumping Events Judging

Participants in the course who wish to become certified officials (Grade One) need to complete the course, successfully complete a take-home test, officiate at several meets* under the guidance of a mentor and take out a membership in the Ontario Track & Field Association.

Groups considering hosting an *Introductory Officiating Course* should note:

- Costs of instructors' honoraria and travel expenses will be fully covered by the OTFA (unless the workshop is a closed, in-house event).
- The only cost to host groups will be for rental of the meeting room or facility and a lunch for participants and instruction crew (if this is a problem please talk to us).
- There will be no cost to participants (except, at the discretion of the workshop hosts, a small amount to cover the meal).
- Participants may purchase an International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) Rulebook at or near cost (subject to availability).
- Students may be able to use time served as officials toward completion of the Secondary School voluntary hours requirements (this should be confirmed with the school).

Please contact Roman Olszewski 905-732-9955 roman.ofa@cogeco.ca to express interest in hosting a workshop or for more information.

* For upgrading, an official must acquire 6 credits. One credit can be earned for working at an event for up to and including 4 hours. Two credits can be earned for working between 4 and 8 hours. Three credits are earned for working in excess of 8 hours. In all cases, only three credits per day may be claimed.

Run, Jump, Throw Certification Course:

May 31st-June 1st, 2008

Toronto Track and Field Centre – North York

Toronto, Ontario

This course will be offered in the New NCCP format, which is taught using the CBET (Competency Based Education and Training) approach. This method of teaching is learner-centered and offers many opportunities for group work and interaction among course participants. The Run, Jump, Throw Program is designed to provide a fun approach to fundamental skill development and the acquisition of basic fitness. The course is approximately 15 hours in length and includes both classroom and track sessions. (Including 2 hours of practical teaching with kids).

- Included in the presentation:
 - Briefing on how RJT fits in with General Athletic Development
 - Analyzing the performance of a Run, Jump, & Throw (a 'How-To')
 - Overview of the basic Biomechanics of running, jumping, throwing
 - Safety and Emergency Action Plans
 - Technical Progressions of Run, Jump, & Throw
 - Roles and Responsibilities when working with children (Ethics)
 - Sample RJT lesson plans and practice creating your own
 - Fun and Games with RJT practical applications
 - Practical teaching and learning with kids
- Completion **does** provide NCCP certification
- Course runs 9am-4:30pm Saturday and 9am-3:30pm on Sunday
- All participants receive...
 - Instructor Workbook
 - Reference Guide
 - Technical Progressions
 - Teacher Manual (over 50 lesson plan ideas!)
 - Dartfish DVD

The cost of the course is \$50.00 payable by cash, cheque visa or master card payments to the Ontario Track and Field Association. Registration deadline is May 20th, 2008 and spots are limited!

For more information or to register please contact:

Anthony Biggar, Ontario Track & Field Association

Tel. 416-426-7215, Fax 416-426-7358

Email: ontrack@eol.ca

1185 Eglinton Avenue East, Suite 302, Toronto, ON



Tuesday April 1, 2008

For IMMEDIATE RELEASE

New 'Handicap' Rating Program for Runners

TORONTO: A new 'handicap' rating program called "Road Warrior" will allow runners of all abilities to compete in races at virtually the same ability level. The rating system is similar to that used in golf, so a better runner who has a 'handicap' rating of, say 10-15 out of 50, could run against a slower runner with a rating of 35 and at the end of the race their finishing times would be adjusted by the Road Warrior software to determine who was faster that day.

"The program is designed to encourage current runners to train a bit more, to enter more races and have fun with the competitive aspect of running 'against' others of all abilities", according to Road Warrior manager Michael Brennan. "It's not supposed to replace current road race results like overall winners or age group winners, it's just going to add another category of winners. The 'Road Warrior' winners at races could well be people who never win awards at races so for the masses, this program will be fun to participate in."

An initiative of the Ontario Track & Field Association in conjunction with a grant from Ontario's Trillium Foundation, the original program concept is from British fitness experts who designed the program and software.

"This system offers more accurate grading than 'age grading' offered at some races", says Brennan. "The British fitness experts who designed it first put it through massive testing to prove its accuracy in grading. It was popular in its acceptance. It doesn't rely on sex, size, age or weight, strictly ability. One's 'handicap rating' is based on the average finishing times of an individual's previous three races no matter what distance. If someone trains more it will show in their improved finishing time and gradually in their improved Road Warrior rating."

The result of one race alone will not change one's 'handicap rating', however. A rating will gradually improve from the average of three or more races. This way it reflects consistent improvement on a runner's part and not a one-time bonanza.

Brennan said, "We examined all Ontario road race results from 2007 with the help of RoadRaceResults.com and found over 10,000 Ontario runners who had done 3 races or more. It is this group that makes up the current Road Warrior database. We plan to add more as Ontario runners complete 3 or more races in 2008."

Five Ontario races are on board so far as 'Road Warrior' races and runners are eligible to win points for placing as one of the top ten 'Road Warriors' at any of these races and later in the year prizes will be awarded to the top point getters. Other races will be added as the season goes so that eventually 'Road Warrior' events will be offered all over the province.

- Backs in Motion 5k Run/Walk, North York, Sun. Apr. 27, 9am
- Bread and Honey 15k & 5k, Streetsville, Sun. Jun. 8, 8am
- The Toronto Challenge 5k Run, 5k & 1k Walk, Toronto, Sun. Jun. 8, 9am
- Summer Night 5k, London, Fri. Jul. 18, 7pm
- Longboat 10k run, 5k run, 5k walk, Toronto, Sun. Sep. 21, 9:30am

For more information and the 'Road Warrior' races, visit www.otfa.ca/roadwarrior, contact Michael Brennan, 416-497-5858, or email him at roadwarrior1@sympatico.ca