

Jared Janicek bounces his way onto the national stage with an eye towards Pan Am



By Jeff Doner

When 15-year-old Jared Janicek took his first bounce on a trampoline many years ago, he was hooked right away.

He first started out in gymnastics and worked his way up to training full-time on the trampoline and is now well on his way to competing on the national stage.

"I wanted to do recreational trampoline just because I loved it so much and I wanted to do more of it," he said. "When I was first doing gymnastics when I was about eight years old I started doing the trampoline and it quickly became my favourite part. At the end, there was always 10 minutes on the trampoline and I always loved it the most. That's when I started learning basic maneuvers."

A couple years later, when he was 11 years old, he started trampolining competitively, but it has been the past couple years that he has really blossomed.

He has won back-to-back provincial championships and last year was a top finisher at the Eastern Canadian Championships in St. John's, Newfoundland, placing third in individual, second in synchronized and second in the team competition.

The silver in synchronized was a special one for him, as it was something he did for the first time with a partner he was unfamiliar with. He chalked that up as one of his career's most memorable moments thus far.

"I had never done it before and I was paired with an athlete from New Brunswick [Noah McCoy] and we were so surprised that we actually won the silver medal. So to do it at the Eastern Canadian Championships and get second was amazing."

However, being a top trampolinist is not as easy as it sounds. Janicek's typical week consists of four two-hour training sessions that ends with a four kilometer jog back home from the Kids SuperGym in Aurora.

It's a demanding sport physically, but Janicek explained that it's not really the most difficult part.

"I have to say it's more mental than anything," he said. "The self-dedication, determination and perseverance you need to learn these skills is high. It's a very mental sport. You have to think very hard and you might have to modify things you're doing, as you're doing it."

He has had good consistent guidance from his coach, Cameron McPherson, who has been coaching him on the trampoline for five years. However, the two first started working together about 10 years ago when Jenicek first got into gymnastics.

McPherson said his student has climbed up the ranks and isn't that far from reaching the next level of competition.

"We're pretty proud," he said. "He shows so much potential and he's one level away from the national level now, so eventually he'll be competing on that level and not just the province. He's not that far off."

Jenicek is now hoping to keep things rolling along at the national and international levels and has his eye set on making the cut for the 2015 Pan Am Games.

Jenicek said he has a strong class of athletes to look up to in helping him reach that goal.

"I have met all our Olympians, Rosie MacLennan, Karen Coburn and Jason Burnett, but I've always idolized Jason Burnett," he said. "I've met him a few times and he's truly amazing. He's almost perfect and when he won the Olympic silver medal I was ecstatic. I can only wish to be as good as him."

Also marking his accomplishments on the trampoline was recognition from the Town of Aurora, as Jenicek was recently awarded with the Civic Appreciation Award.

"That was the first award like that that I have gotten. I was very surprised, but also very happy."