

Auroran cycling across Canada for Special Olympics Canada



By Jake Courtepatte

A two-man team has been cycling across Canada for just over a month now, and the 50-day, 4,500-kilometre journey takes Aurora's Trevor Rice and Ancaster's Dawson Lucier to Toronto this Friday.

The MacMaster University students are looking to raise \$10,000 for the motionball program of Special Olympics Canada, which works to integrate athletes and supporters across the nation.

‘The amazing work motionball does for the Special Olympics Canada Foundation struck a chord with us for a few different reasons,’ said the 21-year old Rice. ‘Dawson initially saw a presentation from motionball reps at a kinesiology conference called Kin Games that was pretty moving. Add that to the fact that we’re both kinesiology students and have always been involved in various team sports growing up, we knew the value and positive impact the participation in team sports have in life and wanted to help. We realized how lucky we were to have had opportunities to participate in team sports from toddlers to university students, and understand that it’s not accessible for everyone.’

‘Motionball is an admirable organization that works with the Special Olympics Canada Foundation to ensure that those with intellectual disabilities can have opportunities like the ones Dawson and I had. With our love of sport (especially cycling) and the way motionball brings sport and special athletes together, we couldn’t think of a better way to help the cause.’

Beginning in Vancouver on July 3, the pair has made scheduled stops in Kelowna, Calgary, Saskatoon and Winnipeg and are now on the final leg of their journey.

The idea spawned from a yearning for Lucier to finish what he had started ? all for a good cause.

‘Dawson completed a ride from Hamilton to Halifax a few years ago,’ said Rice. ‘Also, he already had experience in long distance cycling, so the idea kind of came about from him wanting to complete his cross-Canada ride. This in combination with wanting to explore our country made it an easy decision when he asked me if I wanted to join!’

For Rice, a self-proclaimed ‘occasional cyclist to campus and back’, he sees the journey as both a philanthropic effort and a physical challenge.

‘This is likely something that we take for granted,’ said Rice. ‘As many people do not get the chance to be involved in things like sport, being a part of something like a team is something everyone should get to experience, and this organization makes this a reality to those who may not otherwise get that opportunity.’

Thousands of kilometres later, Rice has earned the moniker of cyclist along with long-time rider Lucier. Rice said his "training" was the first leg of the journey, venturing through the mountains in B.C.

"I bought my first road bike before the trip, and had time for one test ride before I left, so you could say I'm pretty new to the sport. We actually didn't do any sort of training before we left, instead we looked at our first few days of riding through B.C. mountains as our training for the trip!"

A donation page is set up at www.motionball.com/bikinghome.