

Aurora's Hunt and the Canadian Senior Dragonboat team strike Gold, Silver, and Bronze at World Championships in Ravenna, Italy

Aurora resident Dave Hunt and the Canadian Senior C Dragonboat team took their paddling talents to Ravenna, Italy last week to compete in the 14th Annual IDBF Dragonboat Club Crew World Championships.

Over 6,000 athletes from around the world travelled to Ravenna making it the second largest sporting event in the world this year after the Olympics.

Hunt and his intrepid paddlers overcame a pesky flu, uneven weather conditions, and technical delays to secure five trips to the podium in the six-day competition: gold and silver medals in the 2000m and three bronzes in the 200m and 500m sprints.

The Canadian Senior C paddlers captured their gold medal in the first event to start the Championships on a positive note, according to Hunt.

The crew visited the podium for a fifth time on the final day of competition in the Mixed Standard.

The race featured a 20-person boat and the Canadian squad was comprised of ten men and ten women who paddled their way to a bronze medal in the 500m Open race versus sixteen crews from five countries.

Hunt, a multisport athlete and former Canadian Olympic Team Track and Field coach, summarized the successful week in Ravenna in a celebratory Facebook post: "I can be extremely proud of myself, my family, my teammates, and coaches for their performance this week. We hammered every stroke for those six days of racing, bringing medals home for almost all our crews, especially the Senior C athletes. Most of us, by Day 6, were fighting 'a sick', so in spite of this, we powered on."

Currently a Track and Field Coach at St. Anne's School in Aurora and the straw that stirs the drink of the "Sugaring Aurora Project" that produces award-winning organic maple syrup in northwest Aurora, Hunt closed his post with a triumphant remark that is uttered by dragonboaters during training or at the end of a race: "Let it run."

Indeed, it was another great run for Dave Hunt and the Canadian Senior Paddlers in international competition.

This year's performance in Italy is remarkably similar to the crew's stellar performance at last year's World Championships in Thailand when Hunt and the Senior C captured 13 medals contributing mightily to Canada's 52-medal haul to win the overall team event in southeast Asia.

It's evident that our Canadian Dragonboaters are as good as gold and Aurora's Dave Hunt has a necklace of medals from 2023 and 2024 to prove it.

By Jim Stewart