



Iain Wilson Character Through Competition Award Winners

■ Marc Balcer

I am pleased to announce Matthew Stout and Brigitte Bordelon as the inaugural winners of the Iain Wilson Character Through Competition Award. Matt and Brigitte will each receive a \$1,000 travel grant. The committee also awarded a travel grant of \$500 to Isabel Bryant in recognition of her inspirational enthusiasm.

The committee received applications that were beyond our expectations in quality and number, and choosing winners was difficult as we could not recognize every meritorious candidate.

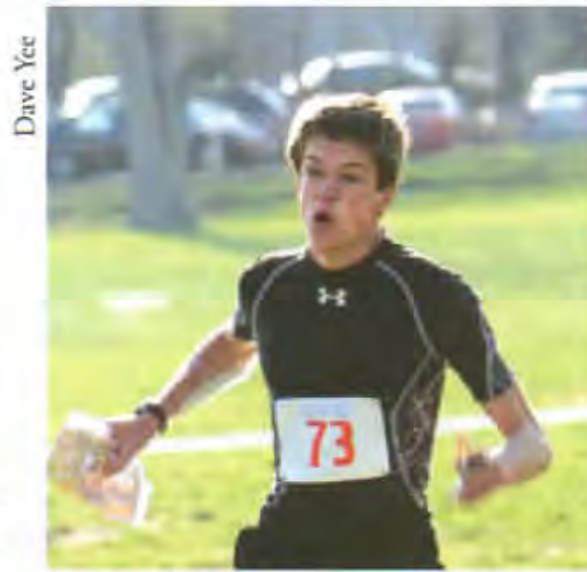
We thank the writers of letters of reference for the thought and energy they gave in support of the applicants. The high level of interest for this new award encourages us to build it as a permanent fixture in support of youth in orienteering.

Matt Stout

Matt has been orienteering since eighth grade. After an initial easy success it became obvious to him that the sport presented enduring challenges that would require close attention. To his credit, he persevered and his determination was rewarded by a series of strong finishes in 2012 and 2013. In his application, Matt clearly articulated what he hopes to accomplish and how he will work on fitness, pacing and navigation to achieve these goals. He emphasized the value of training.

One of the interesting insights in Matt's application was that "American orienteers are spread so far apart that competition is one of the few times you have to develop rivalries, find encouragement for training, and meet your closest friends."

Matt's high school orienteering coach and teacher wrote, "I wish I could have more just like him in every one of my classes." She highlighted the significant role that orienteering plays in Matt's life as well as his work



Matt Stout, GAOC



Brigitte Bordelon, AOC



Isabel Bryant, CSU

in starting an orienteering club. The committee was heartened by the way that Matt's application captured the spirit of orienteering, and the spirit of the Award.

Brigitte Bordelon

Brigitte has been orienteering for just over a year. While a relative newcomer to the sport, she has made an immediate impact and demonstrated her commitment through attendance at the Texas Junior Orienteering Camp last summer. Brigitte was recently named to the JWOC team and is team commander for her JROTC team. Brigitte's careful, handwritten application clearly described not just the ambitions she has for herself, but also how she will develop others around her. She hopes to use her skills to grow her JROTC team from six to fifteen members and build a larger orienteering presence in San Antonio. Her high school track coach wrote "I find myself motivated at practice time because of her eagerness for the activity." The coach recommended Brigitte for this award because of her "genuine, sincere leadership skills, amazing dedication and her overwhelming enthusiasm." While it is clear Brigitte is determined to improve her own individual skills, her frequent reference to building successful teams is a testament to her understanding of orienteering as a shared human endeavor.

Isabel Bryant

Though it was not the original intention to recognize three individuals, Isabel made an impression on the Award committee that could not be ignored. Isabel has been orienteering ever since she could walk. Her enthu-

siastic spirit and commitment to orienteering showed through in her application. When describing her orienteering aspirations, she wrote "just typing that makes me smile". Isabel made us smile with her description of getting a "sudden urge to run through the woods" on watching interviews with Thierry Gueorgiou and Emily Kemp. In the future, Isabel hopes to make a positive difference in the world by supporting others, an aspiration that is very much in keeping with the spirit of the Award.

The Award is presented in memory of Iain Wilson who is remembered for helping and supporting his family, friends, and colleagues. This year's winners demonstrate these very characteristics. We hope the travel grant that comes along with the award will enable each of them to grow, learn, and inspire. We feel our awardees are uniquely developing character through orienteering, while at the same time providing support for others.

The generous support of the Wilson Family, Iain's track and cross country teammates at Haverford College, and other friends, has made The Iain Wilson Character Through Competition Award possible.

Initial funding for the award has been generously provided by Iain's friends and family, but in order to sustain it many years into the future, your financial support would be greatly appreciated. To learn more about the Award, including application for future years and how you can support the Award into the future, please visit us at our website, www.us.orienteering.org/wilsonaward or contact me at marc.balcer@gmail.com.