



## Media Release

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For immediate release

# Sask Sport Inc. Announces the April Athlete of the Month Award Recipient

**Joel Gagnon** of Saskatoon is the recipient of the **Sask Sport Inc. April Athlete of the Month Award**. He was nominated by Gymnastics Saskatchewan.

During the 2016 World Cup Challenge in Hungary, Gagnon successfully executed an element on the parallel bars that no other gymnast has executed. On April 4, 2017, the World Gymnastics Federation (FIG) selected Gagnon's element as one of eight to be added to the Men's Gymnastics Code of Points. The Gagnon element is a skill on parallel bars that is described as a basket roll backwards, with tuck salto half to upper arm hang and recognized as a C element. FIG has named this element "the Gagnon".

The other outstanding nominees were:

- **Shelby Newkirk, Saskatoon, Swimming** – at the 2017 Speedo Can Am Para Swimming Championships in Ontario, competed in the S7 classification and won gold in the 50m and 100m freestyles and 50m and 100m backstroke. Set Canadian and Americas records in both backstroke events and was named to the Canadian Para Swimming Team for the 2017 World Para Swimming Championships in Mexico City;
- **Team Syrota Curling Team, Elfros** – defeated Ontario 11-1 to win the 2017 Canadian Masters Curling Championship in Ontario. It's the second-straight gold medal Team Syrota has secured for Saskatchewan. The team consists of Delores Syrota (Skip), Bev Krasowski (Third), Donna Liebrecht (Second) and Sylvia Broad (Lead);
- **Daegan Wall, Regina, Golf** – placed first with an average of 77.7 strokes through 18 rounds at the Mercyhurst Spring Invitational Golf Championships in Pennsylvania, which featured five U.S. colleges. Qualified to compete in the NCAA Division 11 Atlantic/East Regional Championships;
- **Team Saskatchewan, Water Polo** – won gold at the Senior National Championships in Ontario. Three team members also received individual recognition: Cyril Dorgigne (Most Valuable Coach), Rae Leckness (Most Valuable Player) and Blarre McDowell (Most Valuable Defensive Player);
- **Cassie Prentice, Macrorie, Racquetball** – won gold in both the U16 singles and U18 doubles at the Junior National Racquetball Championships in Ontario and qualified for the Junior World Championships in Minneapolis;

- **Thomas Gordon, Pasqua First Nation, Boxing** – took home a silver medal at the National Boxing Championships in Quebec City. Defeated boxers from Quebec and B.C.;
- **Micaiah Besler, Saskatoon, Cycling** – at the Junior Track Nationals in Ontario, was part of the team that won gold in the first ever Junior Women Madison race and bronze in the Junior Women Sprint. Also gold as a composite team member for Team Saskatchewan, silver in the points race and bronze in the elimination race.

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For more information, contact Pat Rediger at (306) 780-9307 or email [prediger@sasksport.sk.ca](mailto:prediger@sasksport.sk.ca)

For information regarding the Athlete of the Month Awards program, including previous nominees and recipients, visit [www.sasksport.sk.ca/awards.php](http://www.sasksport.sk.ca/awards.php)

*For the latest in amateur sport news, visit [www.sasksport.sk.ca](http://www.sasksport.sk.ca)*