

Orangeville skier hoping to take on the world in Russia



Written By MIKE PICKFORD

One Orangeville resident is asking for the public's assistance as he continues to chase a lifelong Olympic dream.

Ever since 19-year-old Alexander Maycock was exposed to the sport of skiing some 10 years ago he has been slowly chipping away at the absolute loftiest of goals. What started out as something fun soon morphed into competition and now, years later, a potential career. Sitting down with the Citizen earlier this summer, Mr. Maycock talked about his journey, which next year will carry him to the World University games, to be held in Russia.

In preparation for that trip, Alexander is hosting a fundraiser at Monora Park on Aug. 4 to help him on his way to eastern Europe.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for me, being invited to compete in the World University games," Mr. Maycock said. "I'm going to be representing Canada at this competition as one of the top 6 male athletes in the country. It's an amazing honour for me and I can't wait to go."

Alexander estimates he needs around \$6,000 to pay for this trip. In total, he's banking on his 2018/2019 ski season costing around \$10,000. And so, the Mono Nordic Trail Run has been organized to help Alexander chase his dreams. The event will include both a 3km fun run or walk and a 5km challenge run. There is a \$25 entry fee to participate in the event.

A physical education student at Nipissing University in North Bay, Alexander not only cracked the school's ski team in his first year, he exceeded all expectations. Ranked as one of the top six skiers currently enrolled in a Canadian post-secondary institution, Alexander struck gold in his inaugural season in North Bay. He won gold, alongside his teammate Jordan Cascagnette, in the men's team sprint at the Nordic Skiing Canadian College and University National Championships, held in Thunder Bay back in February.

"That was a really cool moment. I've been working very hard for the better part of a decade to improve my skills and it all sort of culminated in that win in February. I've won a few competitions growing up and got a little bit of attention, but the gold at nationals was a new personal highlight for sure," Alexander said.

And while the joy of winning on home soil was something to remember for the young skier, that doesn't even come close to comparing to the pride he will feel when he represents his country overseas in March. He's optimistically aiming for a top 30 finish at the World University games.

"It's been a life goal of mine for the past eight years or so to eventually work my way up the ladder to be in consideration to represent Canada. I'm going to be the youngest person on this time, so it's a massive accomplishment," Mr. Maycock said. "It's something a lot of sports people work their entire life to achieve, so to have gotten here so young is amazing."

And while he can't imagine things getting much better from here, they just might if he continues to impress moving forward.

The Winter Olympic Games will next be held in Beijing, China in 2022. By that time, Alexander will be 22-years-old by that point, with four more years of experience under his belt. Already considered one of the nation's great young skiing talents, it isn't hard to imagine Mr. Maycock competing on Team Canada in four years' time.

But Alexander isn't getting ahead of himself. He acknowledges skiers typically don't enter their prime until their late 20s, so 2022 may come too early for him. Regardless, his end goal is to one-day crack that Olympic roster.

?I still have a ten-year window in my mind where I can see myself competing at the top end of the sport. I've just got to keep working year on year to improve and get even closer to the top.

When it comes to the Olympics, they'll take the top 5 or 6 men and women from across the country. I'm there right now at the university level, I just need to push on and get there on a national scale,? Alexander says.

?It's a lofty goal, but you're always told as a kid to chase your dreams. I'm just doing what I can to reach out for mine,? Mr. Maycock concluded.

Registration for the Mono Nordic Trail Run is now open. For more information, visit mononordic.com.