

YOUNG ATHLETES SHINE AT SPORTS AWARDS

The Wairarapa College 1st XI girl's hockey team reined in the big prize, Harcourts Hamill Realty Sports Person of the Year, at the 2011 AMI Masterton Secondary School Sports Awards, held at Copthorne Hotel & Resort Solway Park on Friday the 4th of November. Event facilitators, Sport Wellington Wairarapa and the local Secondary Schools, Chanel, Kuranui, Makoura, Rathkeale, Solway, St. Matthews and Wairarapa were pleased to see a record number of 64 nominees put forward to contend for the seven categories. The judges, Chris Cogdale, Sam Curtis and Libby Paterson were, however, then given the very onerous and challenging task of having to narrow these many names down to only a select few. A successful crowd of 230 turned up on the night in celebration of the success of this young talent; the accomplishments of whom contributed to our region being described as 'punching well above our weight' on the sporting stage.

Having won Gold at the New Zealand Secondary School Federation Cup the evening's conquerors also went home with the accolade of Transit Coachlines Sports Team of the Year. However, contest for the title was tight with St. Matthews Collegiate's 1st XI also gaining a finalist spot, having defeated the Wairarapa College girls in both the Wellington Premier 1 Secondary School competition and the Duncce Cup. The Wairarapa College 1st XI boy's earned themselves a deserving place after getting silver in the Wellington Premier 1 Secondary School grade. The efforts of the Makoura College Senior A Netball team in winning the local Premier Reserve Grade and being runners up in the B Grade at the Lower North Island Secondary School Champs found them too in the top four.

The talent within Wairarapa College 1st XI girls' hockey side was again evident through the success of Felicity Reidy, also a member of the 2010 U17 Youth Olympic NZ Girls team, a feature in the capital under 21 side and recently named in the New Zealand under 18 lineup, winning the Trust House Sportswoman of the Year category. She took to the podium alongside fellow Wairarapa College and Capital teammate, Katherine van Woerkom, who was named Wairarapa Hockey Women's Colt of the Year. Hockey proved to be the popular code amongst the young ladies with Jenna Anderson of St. Matthews Collegiate being another name deliberated over for the title. Her sporting curriculum vitae includes vice captain of the Wairarapa under 18's, as well as being another representative of the Capital under 21 team and joining Reidy in gaining national honors at under 18 level. Wairarapa athlete Laura McKenna, with an array of triumphs to her name, including a current ranking of 1st in her age group for 100m sprints gave tribute to the existence of other sports within the Sportswoman of the Year category.

Wairarapa College also dominated finalist placings in the AMI Masterton Sportsman of the Year category with hammer thrower and shot putter Alex Fafeita taking home the glory. He was the sole Wairarapa athlete selected to represent New Zealand at the Commonwealth Champs. He also competed at under 18 level at the Australian Junior Champs, winning gold in the hammer and silver in the shot put, as a representative of the Oceania regional team. Fafeita's name currently takes ownership of two national titles. Kayaker, Joseph Jury, another rising star from Wairarapa College, gained acknowledgement for his inclusion in the New Zealand Development squad and selection to represent New Zealand at the Australian Open Nationals. But when one thought achievements at national level in one sport were enough of a feat, Joseph also competed at the North Island Snowboard Champs and won silver in the Giant Slalom. Rathkeale College's Tom Quinn received a 1st and 4th in the Junior and Intermediate 800m New Zealand Secondary School Champs respectively.

As well as this, he finished 15th in the men's 17 800m at the Australian Junior Track & Field Champs. Achievements of which, were too difficult for judges to overlook as worthy of a final four placing. So to be those of Brayden Mazey a member of the New Zealand Golf Academy and student at Wairarapa College.

He has represented the Wellington Senior Golf Team, was placed 4th equal in the individual New Zealand Secondary School Champs and won the Mal Lewis cup for best individual score in the Wellington Secondary School Golf Champs. Adding to his many victories, he has been invited to play in the Aaron Baddelly World Junior Golf Champs later this year.

Makoura College showed a notable contribution to the awards place getters, with Te Kapua Haira being acknowledged for just that, Contribution to Sport, a category sponsored by local health provider Whaiora. Te Kapua was awarded his Netball NZ Centre badge from Netball Wairarapa and was crowned most promising and most valuable umpire at the recent Lower North Island Secondary Schools. Fellow counterpart, Maddy Hullena of St. Matthews Collegiate was one of three other category finalists. She, too, was an umpire at the Secondary Schools tournament; she coordinated the Netball Wairarapa Fun Ferns programme, umpired for the St. Matts Primary A Netball team and volunteers as a Surf Life Saver at Riversdale Beach. The remaining top spots went to Regan Fricker and James Jordan, both of Wairarapa College in recognition of their commitment to hockey. Regan voluntarily juggled the roles of coach, manager and umpire of the schools 3rd XI boys' team and diligently attended a two day coaching clinic with Hockey Wairarapa in order to advance his skill set. Coach of the Wairarapa College 4th XI boys' team, James Jordan also proves handy with a whistle. He umpired all of the games for the team under his instruction and others from Women's 3 to Men's Premier grades. The high regard for his abilities also saw him invited to Levin to umpire an under 15 championship tournament. Another attendee of the coaching clinic provided by Hockey Wairarapa, James assisted with the delivery of the Wairarapa Hockey Fun Sticks programme.

Cheers from the Makoura College supporters were very audible in response to the announcement of a win for both Haira, and Elleshia Clarkson who took out the Trev's Sports Junior Sportsperson award. Clarkson is Netball Wairarapa's most promising player across all grades, and in her respective age group of under 15. She represents Wellington's under 15 Ikaroa ki Te Tonga Maori Netball team. Named attacking player of the Netball Wellington under 15 tournament her selection in the tournament team seems only logical. Coming from a family with a great involvement in, Elleshia's choice to also compete for the Under 19 Waka Ama team who were the fastest Wellington region team and made the semis at the National Secondary School championships is one which shows her broad abilities in the sporting arena. Dylan Duffy of Kuranui College won't be your likely victim to bullying, having won gold at the New Zealand Secondary School 14-16 age group. He took the big prize in both the 14-16 and 17-20 age groups at the North Island Champs. His NZ Champs appearance saw him gain silver in the 14-16 and gold in the 17-20 age groups. It has been a year of personal bests for Rathkeale College's George Sims. He has swum 25 of them this season and gained two places, with a 3rd in the 50m Butterfly and 2nd in the 100m Butterfly at the Wellington Champs. His entry at the New Zealand Division 2 Champs brought him a 2nd place in the 100m Butterfly and 3rd in the 100m Freestyle. Alison-Andrews Paul, another youthful sportswoman of Wairarapa College was the winner of the Wellington Regional Cross Country and 8th in the New Zealand Secondary Schools Cross Country. Alison also came 2nd in the 800m and 3rd in the 1500m at the North Island Championships.

Mini Stock Car racer, Todd Jenkins hailing from Rathkeale College was announced the winner of the Wairarapa 89.5/105.5 More FM Emerging Sport category. Runner-up in the Wellington Speedway Driver of the year, 2nd in the New Zealand Youth Stockcar Champs and Captain of the New Zealand Youth team, Todd is undoubtedly making a name for himself. He outclassed his Australian rivals in the NZ vs. Australia team challenge. Kuranui College was well represented in this category, with Equestrian competitor Francesca Silver and Brady Mudgway, a Speedway Solo Bike rider securing finalist places. Brady was 1st at the Remembrance Championship in Auckland and 8th at the World Youth Gold Trophy in Sweden. Franscesca found selection in the Wairarapa/Wellington show jumping team. She was also selected in the Junior National Squad for eventing after being crowned the National Junior one day Eventing champion. The National NZ Pony Club also awarded her a Young Achiever.