

Team Canada takes Silver at the STIHL TIMBERSPORTS® Team World Championship

INNSBRUCK, AUSTRIA, November 16, 2014 – One swing of the axe, one second, was the difference between Gold and Silver, as Canada was edged out by Australia at the STIHL TIMBERSPORTS® Team World Championship where more than 100 athletes from 21 countries competed.

Australia turned four logs into firewood in 56.80 seconds in a relay race that truly came down to the final chop with Canada timing in at 57.91 seconds. It was Canada's first trip to the finals and Silver represents the team's highest finish in the world championships.

"We pulled together as a team and showed Canada will be a force in the sport moving forward," said Team Canada coach Gerry Rozo. "The STIHL Timbersports Series is gaining traction in Canada and we're attracting more athletes and spectators every year. I couldn't be more proud of this team. We trained for a week before the competition in Milan. It helped because we were one swing away from Gold and we beat a lot of good teams to make it to the finals."

Team Canada was comprised of Stirling Hart of Maple Ridge, B.C., Marcel Dupuis of Memramcook, N.B., J.P. Mercier from St-Etienne, Que., Mitch Hewitt, Scotch Creek, B.C., Cecil Starr, Sebright, Ont., and Nathan Cumberland of Keswick Ridge, N.B.

Four disciplines turn logs into firewood – in under a minute

The team competition in the STIHL TIMBERSPORTS® Series takes the form of a relay competition. The four athletes in a team complete two disciplines with the axe (Underhand Chop, Standing Block Chop) and two with the saw (Single Buck, Stock Saw) one after the other. The four technically demanding disciplines revolve around the athlete and his skill in handling the equipment and the wood. All the disciplines derive from typical forestry activities and they combine maintaining traditions with the demands of high-performance sport.

Canada beat Great Britain in the quarterfinals and Sweden in the semi-finals. Entering the final against Australia, Hart was on stock saw, Dupuis on underhand chop, Mercier on single buck and Hewitt on standing block chop in a relay race that had everybody on the edge of their seats! Australia's anchor Dale Beams finished the chop ahead of Hewitt by one single axe blow, giving Australia the world title.

Hart, as Canada's national champion, represented the team in the individual competition, placing fifth overall.

ABOUT STIHL TIMBERSPORTS

The STIHL Timbersports Series is established worldwide as the major league of lumberjack sports, with a massive global fan-base following competitive events live and on TV. The sport originated in Canada where lumberjacks held local competitions to determine the best of their profession. Over time these tests of strength and skill evolved to a professional level and in 1985 the first STIHL Timbersports Series Championships were held. In Canada, STIHL Timbersports has consistently grown from a niche sport in the lumberjack community to a National Tour with over 15 competitions from east to west.

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