



Joe Fisher won the 2011 RICOH Official of the Year during a Sport Nova Scotia awards banquet. (submitted photo)

Fisher named as top official

MUSQUODOBOIT ■ by Pat Healey

Joe Fisher's passion and dedication to ensuring the rules in table tennis are followed has led to him earning Sport Nova Scotia's Official of the Year.

The prestigious honour was presented to Fisher during the sport organization's RICOH Sport Awards, held June 4 at the Marriott Harbourfront Hotel in Halifax.

"It's a nice highlight to a year filled with lots of activities," Fisher said taking a moment away from gardening at his Middle Musquodoboit home on June 9. "It's an honour that's for sure."

He has been across the world—including Australia, and Moscow, Russia—where he officiated. Those trips were supported by Nova Scotia Recreation Association.

Fisher said having a government worker knowing all about his history and involvement was shocking to him. He said Jamie Ferguson, the head of Sport Nova Scotia, knows of his career.

"It's nice to know that those who are making the decisions are knowledgeable to a person's activities," Fisher said. "They certainly are aware."

Fisher was also a referee for table tennis during the 2011 Canada Winter Games in Halifax.

He said the award is a show of recognition to his commitment to officiating, not only in the province, but nationally and internationally.

"One of the things they had me do was fill out a paper with what my goals would be if they were to support me," he said. "I said it would be to come to Halifax and put on a course myself for referees. We offered it in Calgary, Vancouver, Montreal,

and then I got to offer it in Halifax. To me that was an achievement in itself.

"Down east, we don't always have the number of people involved as they do in the other communities."

Fisher, taking a minute or two to gather his thoughts, explained where his motivation to be an official stems from.

"I certainly like meeting people from around the world," he said. "I guess there are a couple of motivating factors. One is I always wanted to make sure that things were done according to the rules. I've been to many tournaments where it's been a farce. It's ridiculous. People don't know how they should make a draw, there are so many complaints. Therefore I felt there was a goal behind what I do and that's to make sure things are done fairly.

"Then there are side things, I get to travel, I get to visit other countries. That's a wonderful way to increase your knowledge and now that I'm retired I can take my wife."

Shane Hines of Carrolls Corner, one of the table tennis players who Fisher now assists, was honoured with the male Individual of the Year award for table tennis. Mount Uniacke's Rick Kitchin was presented with the rugby Volunteer of the Year for his involvement with the Dartmouth Pig Dogs RFC.

More than 500 members of the Nova Scotia sport community gathered in Halifax for the awards. The sport recognition event recognized the achievements of more than 180 athletes, coaches, officials, sponsors, and volunteers from across the province.

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