

BRAINSPORT TIMES

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After finishing third at this spring's Saskatchewan Marathon, Trevor Jacek waited anxiously for the awards ceremony to be over.

He needed to get to a second race — one behind the wheel of a car he had built specifically for competitive drag racing.

It's not the first time Jacek, 38, has had to dash between running and drag racing events. The Saskatoon man has been drag racing for 17 years and running regularly for about eight.



*Trevor Jacek behind the wheel of a car he built for competitive drag racing.
Provided photo.*

“I remember an EY River Run race a few years ago where I literally ran from the finish line at River Landing to my truck and then zipped out to the drag strip without stopping to catch my breath, see where I placed or what my official race time was,” Jacek recalls. “Within 30 minutes of finishing the running race, I was going 200 kilometres per hour down the race track in my car.”

Jacek has occasionally been on the podium in both kinds of races on the same day. But he says giving 100 per cent effort in two events in such short order isn't always fun.

He remembers a hot day a few years ago when he raced a gruelling half marathon and then went to race his car.

“The combination of total fatigue from a strenuous half-marathon race effort and 35C heat made focusing in my race car uncomfortable and a real challenge. I don't remember the result that day, but I probably lost out early on.”

Jacek, who grew up in the small town of Allan, Sask., has always been active, but he didn't start running regularly until he turned 30. That's when he was playing basketball and noticed that many of the other players were bigger and faster than him.

“Since I obviously couldn't make myself younger or bigger, I decided to focus on my fitness and began running to supplement my other activities,” he says.

Not long after he started running, Jacek hurt his ankle playing basketball and spent an entire summer on crutches with a cast. He didn't enjoy the experience.



Trevor Jacek, second from the left, has turned his focus from drag racing to running this year. Provided photo.

“I decided at that point that, once I was through rehab, I wanted to make the most of being able-bodied and committed to be active almost every day. From that point on, I became a more dedicated runner and started racing often,” he said.

But until recently, running took a backseat to drag racing as Jacek focused on winning drag racing season championships — a challenge that involved making sure the car he built and maintained was set up properly and he was driving well. But after winning the championship twice within three years, he decided to seek out a new personal challenge and dedicated more time to running.

This was the first year since he's been drag racing that he decided not to attend point races at the Saskatchewan International Raceway so he could compete at running races including the Saskatchewan Provincial Track and Field Championships and the Canadian Masters National Track and Field

Championships.

And the focus on running has paid off.

Jacek has had a big running season this year beyond his third-place finish at the Saskatchewan Marathon. He's run 15 races in a variety of distances, setting 14 personal bests.

At the Canadian Masters Track and Field Championships in Montreal earlier this summer he ran the 800-meter, 1,500-meter and 4x400-meter relay events, winning age-group golds in each.

His 2:08 in the 800 meters gave him confidence going into the World Masters Track and Field Championships next year and Jacek says he looks forward to bettering his time. He suspects he will need to run the distance in 2 minutes flat or faster to make the finals next year.

"I am not sure if my body is even capable of getting to a sub-two-minute performance, but my 'fantasy' goal for 2020 is to be in the finals at the World Championships," he says. "Performance goals aside, I am really looking forward to wearing a Team Canada uniform at a world-class event and racing against the fastest men my age from all over the globe."

Until then, Jacek says he looks forward to pushing his training to new levels and chasing some provincial age-group records on the track this winter.
