



PHOTO BY STEFANIE MCARDLE

Tim Wintoniw (in orange second from right) competes in the Rafting World Cup last weekend in Quebec.

Wintoniw paddles to Canadian title

by Terry Frey

NEXT UP for Steinbach native Tim Wintoniw is a trip to the World Rafting Championships in New Zealand.

Wintoniw, who now lives in Winnipeg, was part of a six-man team that won the Canadian title at a Rafting World Cup event on a pair of fast-moving rivers in Quebec last weekend.

Along with another Winni-

pegger, Andy Hill, they joined the Petawawa Raft Team for the Rafting World Cup, held at Jonquiere near Chicoutimi and on the Jacques Cartier River at Stoneham, near Quebec City. Wintoniw is the newest member of the Petawawa Raft Team, which consists of river guides from the Ottawa River.

The competition included seven teams in all, some of the best in the world, including three from Canada. There were also two Brazilian teams, a team from Slovakia as well as the U.S. champions. At stake for Wintoniw and the Petawawa crew was a trip to next year's World Rafting Championship in New Zealand. The leading Canadian boat of the three would earn the right to represent Canada in New Zealand.

Wintoniw's raft competed in three events at the Quebec World Cup. In the 300-metre sprint they finished fifth as well as in the head-to-head race, where they lost to the Brazilians, who ended up winning the competition. But they had their best result, placing third in the slalom.

"We knew it was close with the

other Canadian boats as to which one would finish first, based on points overall, we didn't know for two or three hours after our last race. When we heard the announcement, well, we celebrated."

"I just love whitewater paddling," said Wintoniw, a store manager for Wilderness Supply in Winnipeg, "but to represent Canada in a world championship, that is like a dream come true."

Those world championships in New Zealand are more than a year away, in November of 2013. In the ensuing months Wintoniw will be training at home, such as cross-country skiing and the team will probably compete in more events next summer possibly in both Canada and the U.S. as funds allow.

During the next year the team will also be drumming up some sponsorship money for their trek to New Zealand, which will cost in the neighbourhood of \$25,000 for the six-man team.

For more information on the Petawawa Raft Team go to their Facebook page or to their website www.petawawaraftteam.ca.



PHOTO BY STEFANIE MCARDLE

Tim Wintoniw (middle) celebrates with two of his teammates following the announcement they will represent Canada at the World Rafting Championship in New Zealand.