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Everyday Athlete Contest

10:38 AM, Jun. 09, 2011

College and professional athletes get a lot of public attention. Many of us love to watch them play and get extremely wrapped up in following the ups and downs of their seasons. There's something about following a winning team that makes us all feel good — even if we're couch potatoes.

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But there are many, many more people who are athletes of a different kind — much less talented but just as devoted to staying healthy and often competing. They don't often get recognized.

These “everyday athletes” are the ones that Methodist Sports Medicine/The Orthopedic Specialists are recognizing in a new annual program.

The Everyday Athlete Contest is open to all recreational athletes over the age of 18. Each month, the contest will focus on a different type of athlete. The goal is to recognize nominees who have inspired others in their sport, in their community, or both.

“Whether you're a golfer that created a charity golf tournament or a grandmother competing in your first marathon, it's important to recognize and celebrate those accomplishments,” says Dr. Pete Sallay, president of Methodist Sports Medicine. He said the practice's physicians and staff are particularly proud of the “everyday athletes” they care for who achieve personal goals and motivate others to participate in recreational sports.

So, if you know of an everyday athlete from Indianapolis or the surrounding area, you can nominate him or her at Methodist Sports Medicine's Facebook page, www.facebook.com/methodistsports. Nominations should include a photo of the athlete and one or two sentences describing why he or she should be recognized as the Everyday Athlete of the month.

During the second and third week of every month, the Facebook community will vote on the nominees, which will determine that month's winner. The winner will receive an Under Armour workout shirt and a one-month membership and a free one-on-one elite personal training session with IU Health Sports Performance. Monthly winners also will be eligible to win the Everyday Athlete of the Year Contest and the grand prize, including an iPad2, Sports Illustrated subscription for a year, and a yearlong membership to IU Health Sports Performance.

The monthly categories are:

May/June: Inspirational female and male athletes or fitness instructor in any sport or activity.

July: Tennis players and swimmers

August: Golfers

September: Soccer players

October: Cyclists

November: Runners or triathlon athletes

December: Everyday Athlete of the Year

January: Comeback athletes who have overcome in injury or hardship

February: Basketball players and winter athletes (hockey players, skiers, snowboarders)