

Learning from a puzzle expert

Rubik's cube champ will be a guest speaker at Innovation Nation medical conference

RACHAEL WILLIAMS
The Hamilton Spectator

The world record holder for solving the Rubik's cube using only one hand has caught the attention of some major local innovators.

Antoine Cantin, 16, is to be a guest speaker at the fourth annual Innovation Nation, presented by the Centre for Surgical Invention and Innovation (CSii). The event takes place July 28 and features presentations from people who have achieved a high level of success in their fields, including health sciences, medical robotics and aerospace technology.

"When I first heard I was invited, I thought 'Wow, what am I doing here?' I'm just a kid who plays with toys," said Cantin, from the Ottawa area.

His talent caught the attention of organizers in April when he beat the world record for solving a Ru-

bik's cube at the Toronto Open Spring competition. It took Cantin 12.56 seconds to match all six faces of the cube (the previous record was 13.46 seconds).

"Antoine is going to be one of many that will keep the conference interesting for everyone who comes out," said Mehran Anvari, CEO and scientific director for CSii.

The list of speakers also includes Bob Young, owner of the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, Laura Fortino, gold-medalist of the Canadian women's hockey team, and David Saint-Jacques, an astronaut with the Canadian Space Agency.

"I'm not really comparable to these people, but I am pretty good at what I do," Cantin laughed.

The young phenom plans to demonstrate his talent in front of the 300 to 400 people in attendance at the conference, which will be held at Liuna Station. He will also show some videos breaking the North Ameri-

can record and the world record.

Cantin is aware of the disconnect between the mandate of CSii - to develop intellectual property in the field of medical robotics - and his ability to solve a Rubik's cube in record time. But Anvari said that no matter what the accomplishment or talent, the challenges people go through to get to the finish line are not dissimilar.

Cantin's biggest challenge was his 17-year-old brother, Andre. Andre was the one who passed the skill along to his little brother, constantly challenging him in Rubik's cube races.

"At first I found it boring. But after awhile, all I wanted to do was beat him," he said.

He is now trying to beat the world record for solving a Rubik's cube with his toes, which is 42 seconds.

The conference will close with Anvari discussing future directions in health care robotics, in-

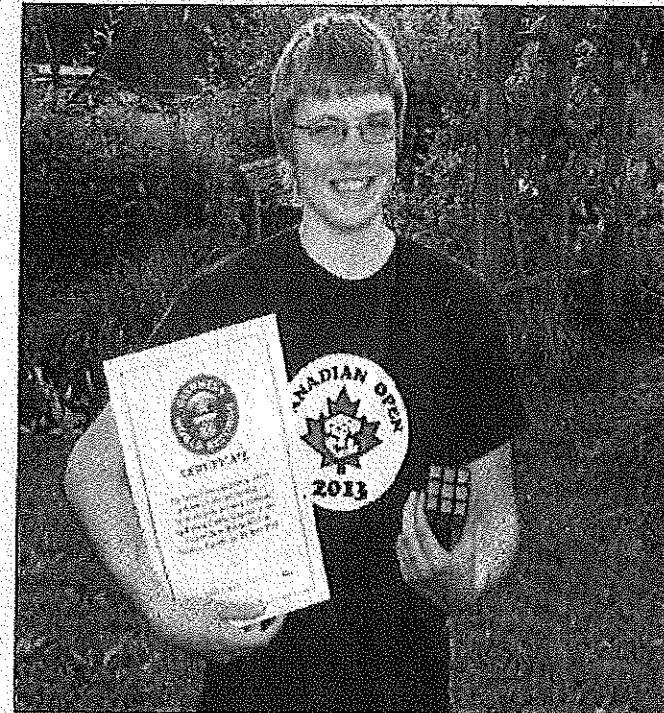


PHOTO COURTESY OF ANTOINE CANTIN

Antoine Cantin set a world record for solving a Rubik's cube with one hand.

cluding its use for pharmacies, rehabilitation centres and surgeries.

"We're pleased to host this conference in Hamilton because of its achievements in innovation throughout the years. We hope that it continues to grow and that conferences like this will highlight our city's role in promoting innovation," said Anvari.

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EVENT DETAILS:

Date: Monday, July 28

Time: 8 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Location: Liuna Station,
360 James St. N.

Cost: Free

Registration: Begins at 8 a.m.
Registration is limited.

More information:

www.innovation-nation.ca