

Grantee Spotlight: Jason Fowler

Once a champion, always a champion is the case with multitalented Jason Fowler. Jason spent most of his childhood in Kingston, Massachusetts on motorcycles, and became a nationally ranked amateur racer by age 10. A natural competitor, he was recognized as a "remarkable championship athlete" early in his career and with his talent, had a lot to look forward to. Tragedy struck on March 13, 1991, when Jason was only 17-years-old. He hit a rock, which sent him crashing down head first and severed his spinal cord at the T5/T6 level, leaving him paralyzed from the chest down. In an instant, his life was changed forever. But in his heart, he never doubted he would be competitive again.

During his rehab, Jason insisted on staying as active as possible, as soon as possible. Competitive racing had been his passion. Soon enough, his drive, determination, and strong will propelled him into racing again - only this time in a wheelchair and only four months after his accident and spinal fusion surgery.

"The injury was a set-back, but not a roadblock," said Jason about the accident. "My hunger for speed and competition never left. The only thing that changed was the means by which I raced."



Despite some medical and physical bumps along the way, Jason continued to set lofty goals for himself. He never accepted that his life would be anything other than extraordinary. To date, he has completed over 140 road races, 28 marathons, and 16 triathlons. In October 2004, Jason competed in his first Ironman Triathlon World Championship in Kona, Hawaii. His dream of crossing the finish line was cut short when he missed the bike cut-off time and was pulled off the course at mile 106 of 112. He's been determined to return and conquer the event ever since.

CAF is happy to report that on June 29, Jason finished first in the men's handcycle division at the Buffalo Springs Lake Triathlon Ironman 70.3 in Lubbock, Texas earning one of the two coveted male handcycle division qualifying slots into the 2008 Ford Ironman World Championships. CAF will be supporting his championship efforts with a travel grant to compete in the Hawaii Ironman.