

## Aurora Tigers rekindle old partnership ahead of the upcoming season



The Aurora Tigers unveiled a new naming partnership with Access Storage and CubeIt last Thursday in Bolton.

Veterans and newer members to the team came out with head coach Jim Wells Jr., Director of Hockey Operations Jim Armstrong, General Manager Dermot Anderson and team governor Jim Thomson, all of whom attended the company's new location that just opened in June.

This is their third season in partnership together and Thomson said, it's all about the culture.

"It's the culture that we're both looking for and giving back to the community. I go back to two years ago when we reached out to Celeste and Access Storage. We got together and brought 13 members of the Humboldt Broncos hockey team down that were survivors and we set up a CubeIt Portable Storage container with a food drive and we had Hometown Hockey there. That's what we're talking about in this partnership. It's about giving back," he said.

Thomson reached out to the National Director of Corporate Partnerships Celeste Blackmore to discuss the potential of becoming partners once again.

During the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, Tigers players went to help Access Storage at the company's Burlington location, much to the delight of Blackmore.

"I am so pleased and proud we had Jim Thomson and the Aurora Tigers as our partner; they actually helped us sort and pack food to distribute to food banks across Southwestern Ontario. They are the type of people we want to partner with. We're not just an ice partner with them, we're a community partner with them. Their boys came from Aurora to Burlington and loaded food boxes in the early stages of the pandemic," Blackmore said.

With more than 200 locations nationwide, Access Storage is a proud community and sports supporter. The business is a sponsor of the Edmonton Oilers, and most recently, became the official storage and moving partner for Team Canada.

"We know how important sports is at all ages, the mental component of being a part of the team, the physical component. Especially now since the pandemic, we have seen how much we have missed sports. The kids in fields, courts and arenas. It's great to have them return to play," Blackmore stated.

The Tigers also unveiled a glimpse of their new jersey. The team is reverting back to their original black and yellow colours with the Access Storage logo presented in the middle of the jersey. The club will don Black and Yellow, with a vintage Los Angeles Kings purple alternative for the upcoming season.

Access Storage and CubeIt will also represent the Aurora Tigers at the locations of their business whilst the Tigers will have their partner's logos on the ice, replacing previous sponsors, Highland GM.

The Tigers continued to give back to the community last Friday. Thomson purchased sandwiches and French fries from Philthy Philly's in Aurora for the homeless with Newmarket's Inn from the Cold.

There, Thomson shared his inspirational story, from his life living in a trailer park in Edmonton, to becoming a professional NHL hockey player.

Thomson, suffered from drug and alcohol addiction his whole life and following rehab 12 years ago, he proudly celebrates sobriety and aids those in need suffering from these afflictions. He sets the right example in front of new players to the team and veterans who were in attendance yet again for an event for the club.

Near the end of the presentation, Thomson pledged to help the Inn From the Cold wherever needed and said everyone in the room is considered family from here on out.

The Tigers, following a heart-felt week and new look ahead of the upcoming season, still await the final decision from the OJHL as to when the new season will begin.

**By Robert Belardi**