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Breakfast of Champions Spotlight: Aurora?s Senior Jays

By Javed Kahn

It's Sunday, September 2, 2012.

It's the 5th inning of the Ontario Baseball Association Senior ?A? provincial championship game where the host team, the Port Hope Flyers, are in a jam.

The scoreboard reads Visitors 3, Home 2. The bases are loaded and there are 2 out. Along with about 300 spectators, Aurora's Ryan Lewis is watching as the Port Hope coach walks to the mound with a new pitcher in tow. This will be an important at-bat.

The 2012 edition of the Aurora Senior Jays had plenty of familiar faces. You've probably seen them around town: the manager at a local grocery store, another supervising a major steakhouse, or a few might be your insurance agents.

These are just a few of the men, between the ages of 21 ? 31, who make up the Aurora Senior Jays.

Many of whom have proudly represented Aurora on the diamond for over 20 years.

Ryan Lewis digs in and sees two fastballs pass him, 0 - 2. Fortunately for Ryan and the rest of the Jays, he's red hot, with an outrageous .600+ batting average over the 3-day tournament.

The next pitch wouldn't fool him, he fights off the inside pitch, and finds grass down the first base line. The crowd goes silent, but with two out, Aurora's base runners are on the move. When order is returned, the scoreboard reads Visitors 5, Home 2.

When the last out is recorded, the score is Aurora 7, Port Hope 2. The men, acting more like the kids they were 20 years ago, gather at the mound in a heap of beat up leather gloves, metal spikes and laughter.

It's been a long time coming; but an entire childhood of dedication has instantly paid off. Aurora has its first Senior ?A' provincial baseball championship.

You can watch the Aurora Senior Jays every Tuesday Night from May to July at Lambert Willson Park. First pitch is 7:30pm.

It was just another Aurora Jays youth team that became the Aurora Senior Jays when Coach Keon pulled his son, and two other players aside and said it was time to hand the reins over. After years of dedicated coaching, it was time to see if the boys had the passion to continue on their own. The young men, just 18 and 19 years old were certified coaches within the year and began to manage, and continue to play for the team of their peers.

The 2013 season marks the 9th season the Aurora Senior Jays have played in the North Dufferin Baseball League - A league with over 80 years of history. The early years were tough but the Aurora Senior Jays have developed into an annual championship contender.

Sport has the ability to bind people. Beyond time, and reason, it gives us reason to cheer and a source of pride. It's what kept this team together over all the years, a love for a game, a bond between friends, and pride in our community.