

Aurora takes centre stage in girls hockey tournament

By Jake Courtepatte

Female athletes from across Ontario and the United States will converge upon Aurora in a few weeks in what is perhaps the most prestigious minor hockey tournament in North America.

The Aurora Panthers will play host to the 16th Annual International Silver Stick Girls Finals from February 13 ? 15 this year, just as they wrap up their regular season schedules and look ahead to the Central York Girls Hockey Association playoffs.

From its humble beginnings in Richmond Hill in 1956, the Silver Stick Tournament has grown into the largest North American minor hockey event, hosting over 65,000 players and coaches each year.

The Town of Aurora hosts 952 of those players this month, as 56 different teams battle for hockey supremacy.

They will represent AA, A and BB divisions throughout the Atom and Bantam age levels.

Well represented in the tournament, the hometown organization has a team competing in each division ? teams that have seen success in the tournament in the past.

Last season, both the Atom AA and Bantam BB Panthers came out on top in the 2014 Silver Stick Tournament.

Games will be split between the Aurora Community Centre, the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex, and the Magna Centre, and the Ray Twinney Recreation Complex, both in Newmarket.

For more information or schedules when posted, check out www.silverstick.org.