

Barbarians set to get back on the rugby pitch

By Jake Courtepatte

With the rugby season just around the corner, one of Aurora's premier clubs will be looking to regain their championship form while the other will be looking to defend it.

The men's Premiership squad, competing in Rugby Ontario's first division, were a middle-of-the-pack style team in a pool of eight teams in 2015.

A first-round wallop of the Ajax Wanderers in the 2015 McCormick Cup race was a short-lived victory, with the Barbs knocked out of the championship the following week in a 30 ? 20 loss to the Crusaders of Oakville. The 2015 Cup was won by Balmy Beach, who hoisted the trophy for a record eleventh time.

The Barbs took home the trophy in back-to-back years in 2009 and 2010.

The men's preseason has been pushed back due to weather, and begins with practices throughout the month of April at the St. Max Kolbe field, leading up to a preseason exhibition with Toronto Scottish on April 30 in Scarborough. Regular season competition kicks off on May 14, with the Barbs visiting Stoney Creek.

They host their first home game at Fletcher's Fields two weeks later, against the Brantford Harlequins on May 28.

On the women's side, the Barbs will be looking to defend their Ontario Women's League (OWL) Cup from 2015, having defeated the Toronto Saracens 63 ? 31 in the championship match after finishing ranked second in the tournament. They last won the prestigious cup in 2012.

With a preseason schedule opening mid-April, the female Barbs will take to the pitch to open their regular season against the Yeomen Lions at Fletcher's Field on May 7.

In the meantime, the Barbarians organization is looking for anybody interested in getting involved in rugby to come out to their annual 'Try Rugby' event, free for anyone between the ages of 5 ? 14 at St. Maximilian Kolbe CHS on Thurs. April 21 and Thurs. April 28. For more information, email info@aurorabarbarians.com, or visit www.abrfc.ca.