

Sport Aurora officially presents Athlete, Coach of the Year awards

Sport Aurora officially presented their Coach and Athlete of the Year awards last Sunday.

Jordan Master of the Aurora Community Tennis Club (ACTC) and president of the Aurora-King Baseball Association (AKBA) Shaun McGuire were named Coaches of the Year.

Aurora native and New York Rangers forward Barclay Goodrow was named Athlete of the Year.

In what has been another incredible and inspiring year in sport, it is quite remarkable to reflect on all three of these recipients' achievements, especially in a pandemic-ridden year and how all three of these winners made an impact within the community.

Nominated by the ACTC board of directors, Jordan Master has been teaching tennis since he was 20-years-old.

Having played competitive hockey, tennis was a sport that he loved to play in the summer. It eventually became his favourite sport. He was influenced into coaching the game and took many courses to continue expanding his resume.

The 35-year-old, originally from Thornhill, has been in Aurora for almost 10 years now and has loved this Town dearly. When he learned that he had won this year's Coach of the Year award, he had no inkling.

"I had no idea that I was nominated until I was told I had won the award. The board of directors nominated me. It was a big surprise," Master said.

Master was promoted to head tennis professional last year and, since then, made a monumental impact at the club. Known more for having an older membership, Master seemingly turned that right around. He found a way to inspire the youth and has brought in numerous youth from the ages of five to 14 along with their parents to the club.

"It's amazing how much it has grown in so little time. The lockdown was hurting everybody. I had the die-hards from before that are in higher performance. But I had all these people that play hockey, soccer, baseball, athletic people that couldn't play their sport," Master said.

Master, who is a Club Pro 1 Coach, also taught many people life skills on top of tennis. He takes pride in fostering youth both on and off the court.

With this award, he would like to take this momentum and continue to give people opportunity. He hosted an All Sport One Day event for Sport Aurora and would love to do it again.

For the president of AKBA, McGuire said he was very taken back by this award.

"Very humbled by that. Really truly was. It came out of nowhere. Andrew Backer had nominated me and he didn't even tell me until I got the message from Laurie [Mueller of Sport Aurora]," McGuire said.

Having been recently elected president last week for another two-year term, McGuire has been at the helm of AKBA for four years. He has also been a part of the Team Ontario Astros elite program.

For McGuire, he had many accomplishments this past season. He won three tournaments as a head coach, trained and mentored his Aurora Jays team from A to AAA, won a national bronze medal as player-coach with East York and even was a part of the 18U team for the Astros.

But there is one accomplishment that stands above them all.

?The one that stands out most to me is definitely is the kids I coached that got athletic scholarships to the USA. I've not only impacted my life doing something that I love, I've started kids on a good plan in their life. Where they're about to make something of themselves and turn into men really quickly leaving the nest from home and living on their own,? McGuire said.

To be exact, McGuire trained and mentored 15 players that went on to sign scholarships in the USA.

Moving forward, McGuire would like to plan a big return to baseball next year if pandemic restrictions are completely lifted.

And last but not least is the two-time Stanley Cup champion with the Tampa Bay Lightning. Goodrow played a pivotal role in the Lightning's success. In the playoffs last year, he might be most famous for setting up Blake Coleman's one-handed diving goal in game two of the Stanley Cup playoffs.

In the offseason, Goodrow signed a lucrative six-year/\$21.85 million deal with the New York Rangers.

Goodrow brought the Cup back home to Aurora this past summer. His father John accepted his award from Sport Aurora.

The Auroran congratulates Master, McGuire and Goodrow on receiving recognition from Sport Aurora. The road for next year's winners, whoever they may be, begins now!

By Robert Belardi