

Sport Aurora's 'All Sport One Day' Program Returns to AFLC on June 17 and September 9

It's back! Sport Aurora's laudable 'All Sport One Day' program returns to the Aurora Family Leisure Complex on June 17 and September 9.

Local youth will once again have the opportunity to try out fifteen different sports with local organizations providing instruction and encouragement.

The 50-minute 'beginners' clinics' constitute a cornucopia of sporting delights. On June 17 at the AFLC, the sports featured in the morning session (9 a.m. to 12 p.m.) will be Lawn Bowling, Tennis, Lacrosse, and Martial Arts, while the afternoon session (12.30-3.30 p.m.) highlights the games of Soccer, Pickleball, Football, and Rugby.

An equally-rich menu of sports awaits 'campers' on September 9 at the AFLC. The morning session will be comprised of Beach Volleyball, Softball, Archery, and Road Tennis. Participants in the afternoon session will engage in the joys of Basketball, Martial Arts, Ultimate Frisbee, and Baseball.

Confirmed organizations and individuals that will lead the clinics include the Aurora Lawn Bowling Club, Aurora Community Tennis Club, Shoshinkan Martial Arts, Rising Stars Soccer Academy, Elevation Athletics, York Region Lions Football Club, Aurora Barbarians Rugby Club, Storm Volleyball, Ron Kellman, Claude Nembhard, Aurora Family Martial Arts, York Region Kids, and the Titans Baseball Club (Canadian Premier Baseball League). Registration for the events will open on May 17 via Sport Aurora's website.

The Chair of Sport Aurora's 'All Sport One Day' is Ryan Gardner. The former NHLer took time from his busy schedule-- including hockey tryouts-- to respond to our interview questions:

The Auroran: What is the value of 'All Sport One Day' for the residents of Aurora?

Ryan Gardner: 'The value is that all the participants get to try a new sport, something they may never have had time to do, or thought to try and then potentially falling in love with the sport. It allows them to find out if they're interested in something else other than maybe a mainstream sport we all know about.'

The Auroran: How satisfying are these events for you as the Chair overseeing these sixteen clinics?

Ryan Gardner: 'For me, personally, it's great to see the kids enjoying something new. Trying a new sport is sometimes scary and nervous, but in the environment we have at this event, it's about fun and staying active. It's not a competition out there-- kids can go out and just try the new sport.'

The Auroran: What feedback did Sport Aurora receive from participants in 2022 regarding All Sport One Day?

Ryan Gardner: 'Feedback has been very positive. Everyone enjoys themselves and leaves the day very happy.'

The Auroran: How did Sport Aurora come up with the plan to introduce All Sport One Day?

Ryan Gardner: 'Sport Aurora's President Ron Weese had seen a similar event run in Calgary. One of our Olympians was introducing it. I know they have the same types of events in Europe allowing kids to try new sports in a non-competitive manner.'

The Auroran: What's the best part of coordinating this event for Sport Aurora?

Ryan Gardner: "Seeing the kids having fun, getting out of their comfort zone to try something new, and potentially unlocking someone's love for a new sport."

It's evident that Sport Aurora's annual events contribute significantly to the Town's cultural fabric. "Breakfast of Champions," "Talk a Good Game," "Sport Scramble 5K," and "All Kids Can Play" are great events, programs, and initiatives. However, it could be argued that "All Sport One Day" is the most noble of its programs in that it exposes a range of local kids to potentially 16 different sports over two days and gives them an opportunity to deepen their love of sport and community.

All the elements of Sport Aurora's mission statement "to support and develop sport and recreation for all ages, genders, and abilities by advocating on behalf of our community in order to build capacity, increase participation, enhance integration, celebrate excellence, and for the love of sport" are alive and well in "All Sport One Day."

By Jim Stewart