

Aurora and King baseball begins after off-season merger

By Jake Courtepatte

A new baseball season is upon us, and with it comes the newest joint venture between Aurora and King Township in sports.

The 2015 season will be the first for the newly formed Aurora King Baseball Association, or the AKBA, marking the merger of the Aurora Baseball Association and the King Township Baseball Association.

Both towns have worked together in the past, with the associations beginning to interlock in 2014. The merger creates a prime opportunity for talented baseball players within King to reach the higher level.

While King lacked a higher program outside of the local house league, the Aurora Jays are an established rep organization that can now draw from an even larger pool of players.

"Aurora has a good program, but it's considered small by Ontario Baseball Association standards," said Jason Sorlilo, the Rep Director for the AKBA. "So it gives us more of a talent pool, to get some stronger teams and have more kids out at tryouts."

Speaking of sign-ups, Sorlilo said the younger divisions usually don't face many troubles with having kids who want to play. In the older divisions, however, they have experienced a significant lack of numbers in the past.

King's house league program will remain the Cobras, playing out of the same parks in Nobleton, King City and Pottageville. The slogan for the program seems to be "Business as Usual", used on both the Facebook page and the King Cobras website.

As for the reps, players from King will be put under the umbrella of the Aurora Jays name, which underwent a uniform and logo upgrade just a few years ago.

The first game has already kicked off for one of the program's teams, with Sorlilo's Minor PeeWee Jays taking on the North York Blues on the road Sunday.

An exhibition double-header in Oakville the day before was the key to getting in some early-season practice, as they moved to 1 ? 0 beating the Blues 10 ? 8.

After press-time, the Midget squad has also opened the season with a home-and-away series.

A number of tournaments are also on the schedule for the AKBA, first hosting a Minor PeeWee tournament on the May long weekend. All games will be held at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. Four more tournaments will follow in Aurora throughout the summer season.

If your child is interested in joining either the rep or house league programs, there's still an opportunity. Sorlilo said that select tryouts are currently ongoing. All information, including registration, schedules, and scores, can be found at www.akba.ca.

The organization is also looking for sponsors. Any company interested in sponsoring a local youth sports team is invited to contact Matt Giesen at mattg@akba.ca.