

## Aurora Jays are eager to get back on the baseball diamond with their top coaches



**By Jeff Doner**

After a great season in 2013, the Aurora Jays of the North Dufferin Baseball League (NDBL) are eager to get back on the diamond.

The NDBL recently held their annual general meeting and the Jays came out with some positive news.

Jay's veterans Rob Wilson and Mike Keon shared the coach of the year award as the league's top skippers.

"It felt great," Wilson said of the award. "For a team that the core at least has been together since we were 12 years old, playing and coaching with your peers is challenging, but to be able to have the success that we've had is obviously in large part due to the guys themselves. If Keon and I can contribute in some small way in terms of strategic decisions or leadership and making sure that we've got a team on the field, it's nice to be recognized for that, but really it's about the guys that are playing."

Wilson also added that Mike Wallace of Bolton deserved kudos for coaching his Brewers to a league record of straight championships.

Last season, the Jays finished the season in third place with a 19-6-1 record in the 14-team senior league.

This year, Wilson said the bulk of the team will be back, but there will be a couple of familiar faces both coming and going.

Nate Drury and Kevin Buck are leaving to be a big part of a returning Orangeville squad and a couple of ex-Jays will also be making their comeback with Aurora.

"We've got two guys coming back from the past," Wilson said. "We've got Jake Pinnigar, who took last year off, and then another player who played with this team for a lot of years into his teens, Fab Dolan. He's got some CIS experience and he was quite the ball player in his prime, so we're pretty pumped to get him back. He's a catcher too, so we're happy to get [Chris] Fafalios out from behind the dish."

Fafalios will be coming home for the summer after playing some college baseball in the U.S.

The other big news for Aurora baseball coming out of the NDBL's AGM was the announcement that Aurora will be forming its own junior team this year.

As past-president of the NDBL, Wilson said the addition of a junior team is great for the sport in Aurora by giving young players the chance to make it up to the next level and bounce back and forth.

?It's kind of a win-win, because I look at that as a really strong opportunity for our younger players to double dip and I'm sure we'll be?making sure the boys are happy and healthy and playing as much ball as they can, so that'll be great.?

The executive also discussed the possibility of pushing back the start of the season due to the seemingly everlasting winter.

?It's all likelihood that the season start will be pushed back,? he said. ?The fields are so wet and there's still snow sitting on them. We understand with the municipalities, they want us to play too, that's why they build the facilities, but if we get out there too early and destroy it, we're going to be the ones out there complaining in August.?

Wilson said possible solutions will be to cut back the 28-game schedule, add more doubleheaders or simply push back May 3 opening day.

For more information, visit [www.ndbl.ca](http://www.ndbl.ca)