

Aurora Youth Soccer Club to mark 50th anniversary with record-busting marathon



By Jeff Doner

The Aurora Youth Soccer Club is turning 50 and has some big plans to celebrate.

Last week, after receiving approval from Council and qualifying for all the necessary permits, the AYSC announced they will be staging 54-hours of consecutive soccer games that may just earn them a place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

The idea was first brought up some time ago and has been in the works since.

?One of the coaches from the U15 boys team, approached me on this idea and I thought it was a great idea. I thought it was fantastic,? said Paul Cunningham, vice-president of the competitive rep teams at the AYSC.

The date for the event will coincide with the annual June Festival Soccer Tournament, starting Friday, June 6 at 5:00 p.m. through to Sunday night.

Cunningham said now that the project has received the green light, he and a team of organizers will begin to work out the logistics.

The plan is to have the tournament run just for the AYSC membership, with some adult teams from Aurora possibly filling out some of the later time slots from 2:00 to 5:00 a.m.

However, Cunningham said there is already a lot of excitement building among AYSC membership, coaches and parents.

?Everybody that I've talked to regarding the marathon, including the coaches, is excited about it,? he said. ?I coach the U15 girls team and my daughter is all pumped about it. The coaches think it's a great idea, so I don't think we'll have any problems getting volunteers or players to play in the marathon. Town Council was also unanimous on it and they just thought it was fantastic.?

The weekend itself will be a busy one, with opening ceremonies taking place with the Mayor and other local Councillors, face painting, a D.J., and live entertainment also taking place at Sheppard's Bush for the June Festival.

In terms of the Guinness Book of Records, the hope is to surpass the current record of 53 consecutive hours of soccer, which was

achieved last summer in Alberta.

?I had a look at the Guinness Book of World Records for the longest marathon [of this type] and it was actually 53 hours,? Cunningham explained. ?I've applied online and I was accepted, so we're going to go over some of the logistics for that and see if it's actually do-able, because they're actually pretty strict on their regulations and verifications that the record was done correctly.?

Cunningham is expecting it to be a tall task, but one the group of dedicated players and volunteers are confident they'll be able to accomplish for the AYSC's 50th year.

?It's going to be fun. A lot of fun,? he said. ?If we get some good exposure and we get as many people as we can coming out, it's going to be good. I don't think anything like this has gone on in York Region, that's for sure.?

The soccer season will commence for many throughout the month of May, but there are still opportunities to play or get involved. For more information on the AYSC and its programs, visit www.aysc.ca