

## AYSC joins prestigious provincial league



By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Youth Soccer Club officially welcomed the Ontario Player Development League (OPDL) to the Town of Aurora last Saturday, bringing with it a higher level of competition the Aurora program has been craving.

The club became one of eighteen members in Ontario granted an inaugural license to the league in 2015, hosting them for the first time while running alongside the AYSC's annual June festival, the club's house-league season kickoff.

As a member of the AYSC OPDL program, players are given the opportunity to learn from nationally-licensed coaches, extensive player personnel, as well as gain the most exposure province-wide playing in front of OSA scouts.

"This is a great opportunity for the Town of Aurora to get out and see this elite training program at play," said Kimberly Warner, Social Media and Events Coordinator at AYSC. "The OPDL is more than a league, it provides a top-notch training environment for all players all-year round."

With four games on the schedule for the day, an opening ceremony was held prior to the U13 girls matchup welcoming the league to Aurora. There to say a few words was one of the newest members of the club, soccer star Jim Brennan, who took the reins as the executive director of AYSC in March.

Brennan joins the organization with tons of valuable experience. The East York native played professionally in the United Kingdom for twelve years before settling in as captain of Toronto FC for four years from 2007-2010. He also represented Canada internationally almost fifty times.

"The club is heading in an exciting direction," said Brennan to the parents and players gathered at Sheppard's Bush. "This league is a top developmental league, where not only can our best athletes shine, but everyone can learn at the highest level."

Mayor Geoff Dawe called the league "a great step forward for soccer in the Town of Aurora."