

Barbarian women claim second OWL title in four years

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Barbarians are once again the holders of the Ontario Women's League Cup, using an 11-try effort to defeat the top-seeded Toronto Saracens 63-31 in the tournament final at Fletcher's Fields on Saturday afternoon.

Neither side was allowed ample time to ease into the match, with both teams attacking strongly to start off the game while making the most of their possessions. Wasting little time, the Saracens scored the match's first try just two minutes into the game, but the Barbarians replied quickly with a try of their own five minutes later. The Toronto-based club capped off the early scoring with a try at the 13-minute mark to lead 12-7.

Aurora captain Tyson Beukeboom was issued a yellow card 18 minutes in, but was joined on the sidelines shortly after by a member of the Saracens. With the Saracens still playing with 14 women, the Barbarians took advantage of the return of their captain to the pitch with a try to tie the game. The Barbarians then regained the lead heading into halftime, adding another tally to go up 17-12 just before the interval.

While little separated the two sides throughout the opening half, the second half was commanded by the Barbarians. Aurora carried their halftime momentum right through the second half with the club scoring eight tries throughout the final 40 minutes, including four in the opening ten minutes of the second frame. The Saracens managed to respond with three tries of their own, but it was not enough to keep pace with the Barbarians' rampant scoring frenzy. Aurora walked off the pitch with a convincing 63-31 victory, becoming the 2015 OWL Cup champions.

"It's an amazing feeling," said Beukeboom. "We worked hard all year for this."

The Barbarians' scoring output included 11 tries and four converts en route to putting up 63 points, while the Saracens countered with five tries and three converts for 31 points on the day.

The Saracens had a positive outlook to end the day as they were awarded the OWL's league championship trophy, which the club secured in July with their 9-1-0 record, attaining 45 of a possible 50 points.

Both sides earned convincing victories in their OWL Cup semifinal matchups two weekends prior to the final - the Saracens got by 2014 OWL Cup runners-up Yeomen Lions 52-22, while the Aurora Barbarians defeated 2014 OWL Cup champions Waterloo County 57-15 to secure a berth in the final.

The Barbarians last took home the championship in 2012. They fell to the Saracens in overtime the following year.