

## Hundreds attend the Toronto Mets? Grand Opening of its spacious baseball facility in Aurora



Hundreds of players, parents, coaches, and dignitaries attended the Grand Opening of the Toronto Mets Performance Centre in Aurora on Sunday afternoon.

Mets' owner Lawrence Vera acknowledged the satisfaction inherent in seeing the 29,000 square-foot, state-of-the-art baseball facility opened officially.

?For me, the best part was seeing our vision come to life?creating a space where players of all ages can train, develop, and dream big. It's not just about the building; it's about building the future of baseball in Ontario.?

After welcoming the hundreds of attendees who stood on the new turf field, Vera introduced emcee Rod Black whose son Tyler is a graduate of the Mets program and is currently an infielder for the Milwaukee Brewers.

Black, the long-time host of the Aurora Sports Hall of Fame induction ceremony, recognized the superior nature of the CPBL franchise's program by noting ?The Toronto Mets had more pros playing this year than any other baseball program in Canada.?

He extolled the program's excellent record with post-secondary placement and the resident of Stouffville wished the facility had been opened in Aurora when his sons played for the Mets.

The amiable host and baseball dad introduced Mayor Tom Mrakas who expressed his civic pride about ?the opening of a first-rate baseball facility in Aurora? and complimented the Mets program.

?The Toronto Mets are known across the country and this shows their commitment to help young athletes to reach their goals. Congratulations to Lawrence, Ryan, and Rich for creating a first-class centre for local athletes to pursue their dream.?

Mayor Mrakas presented a congratulatory certificate from the Town of Aurora to Vera and McBride to mark the Mets' Grand Opening of their facility at 24 Desjardins Way.

MPP Dawn Gallagher Murphy followed suit and presented a congratulatory certificate from the Province of Ontario.

MPP Gallagher Murphy referred to the Mets Performance Centre as ?a true Field of Dreams, an incredible facility that shows the

power of community partnership.?

She acknowledged that ?many of the Mets have gone on to play Major League Baseball? and she congratulated the Mets management ?for their leadership and vision.?

After the MPP's presentation, Rod Black welcomed Mets President Ryan McBride to the microphone.

McBride praised Black's broadcasting acumen? ?Let's get this guy into the Sportscasters Hall of Fame? which was received with much warm applause. McBride thanked Black for emceeding the event and for entrusting ?the Mets with two kids who went through the program.?

The Mets' President alluded to a recent discussion he'd had with Jays President Mark Shapiro who advised him to ?surround yourself with great people to create a great team culture.?

McBride thanked his coaching staff for creating the winning Mets culture and ?for being the difference makers in what we do.?

?Skip?, as he's known as to hundreds in the facility based on his decades of baseball coaching, also made reference to the Mets motto emblazoned across the upper deck facing of the facility.

?Respect the legacy, create your own.?

All players and coaches present were encouraged by the long-time CPBL coach and instructor to ?enjoy the hell out of this tremendous facility. Once a Met?always a Met.?

Following his address to attendees, Coach McBride secured his catcher's mitt and received the Official Opening Pitch from long-time Mets administrator, lead instructor, coaching partner, and NCAA teammate Rich Leitch who fired a strike?as the Mets tend to do more often than not.

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