

Ontario All-Stars converge on Aurora for John Traganitis tournament



By Jake Courtepatte

It was a wet and humid downpour throughout the day in Aurora on Saturday, but the action on the soccer fields played on with a little bit of an extra challenge at the annual John Traganitis Tournament, hosted by the Aurora Youth Soccer Club (AYSC).

‘Apparently the fields were quite slippery,’ said Kim Warner, social media and events coordinator at AYSC. ‘But, a lot of teams played through it.’

The conditions weren't enough to stop the Aurora Stingers U15 girls' side, dominating both the Kitchener Spirit and Pickering Power on the Saturday in back-to-back shutout victories. It would be the only game Pickering would lose on their way to the championship game Sunday, once again facing the Stingers in front of a hometown crowd.

A stalemate throughout the game, it was the Stingers that came out on top in thrilling penalty kicks to earn gold on home field.

Their counterpart U13 and U14 squads found themselves actively competing against each other in the younger division, with both teams going 3 - 0 throughout round-robin play. Out of ten teams in the division, they were ranked number one and two heading into Sunday's playoffs.

The U13s were upset by the close-by King City Royals in semi-finals, going down by a close score of 4 - 3. Meanwhile, the U14's booked their ticket to the championship game with a 3 - 1 win over the Leaside Jets.

In the final, they were able to tame the Royals with just one goal in a 1 - 0 victory.

On the boys side, the U13s came closest to tournament glory by coming out on the wrong side of a 1 - 0 semi-final loss to the Ajax Warriors.

The tournament has provided teams from across Ontario with fun, competitive soccer for over twenty years. The ‘All-Star’ teams consist of house-league players deemed to be the best in their league, chosen to come together to compete at exhibition games and tournaments throughout the season.

‘It's a fun, relaxed atmosphere,’ said Warner. ‘It's competitive, obviously, but it's a way to wrap up the season with some healthy competition.’