

Siblings take on the world in Ultimate Frisbee this month



By Jeff Doner

There's no doubt about it, Ultimate Frisbee is a rapidly growing sport that is spreading worldwide ? and it just so happens that Aurora has groomed a few of Canada's finest.

Twins Jordan and Josh Meron, 23, and their younger brother Jaret, 19, will be proudly representing Canada at the World Flying Disc Federation U23 Ultimate Championships at York University this month.

Jordan captains the U23 Canadian women's team, while Josh and Jaret will be a big part of the U23 co-ed team.

Over the years, the sibling trio has managed to develop their skills together and are now at the apex of their playing careers.

Jordan and Josh have been playing for roughly six or seven years and subsequently coerced their brother into joining the fun a couple years later in 2008.

?It was really big at our high school, so I got into it in Grade 10 [2006] and Josh and I joined the high school team that year,? Jordan said. ?That summer I decided to join the Toronto junior club team. The next summer, Josh joined the same league and Jaret had no choice but to copy us.?

Added Josh: ?But this guy hated it. We had to drag him out to go throw,? he said pointing to his brother.

?To be honest, I was terrible at it when I first started,? Jaret said, with his older siblings laughing while he explained. ?Josh isn't exactly the most patient in the world, so there were some frustrating times at the start, that's for sure. But eventually once I got the hang of it I started to enjoy it.?

Jordan got the last word: ?Plus you had some legendary siblings to live up to.?

While they said most of it is fun, they admitted that there was a tad of sibling rivalry between the two brothers.

?It's easy for me not to rival with them because I've never had to compete directly with them,? Jordan said. ?I've always been on women's teams separate from them, but we kind of get bunched into one group all the time, so we have to make each other look good. These two have a bit more competition. If one messes up, they are really hard on the other one,? she said.

In university, all three were able to push their talents a little further. Jordan led her team at Western University for three years, while achieving her undergrad in English and History. In the fall she will be heading back to Western for teacher's college.

Josh and Jaret, on the other hand, have built themselves a bit of an Ultimate family legacy at Guelph University.

Josh graduated last year with a bachelor's degree in sociology and captained the Ultimate team a couple of years ago.

Jaret has followed suit. Like his older brother, he is studying sociology at Guelph and captaining the Ultimate team now that his brother has moved on.

As for Jordan, this season might be her last as she and Josh are at the maximum age for their current teams. Josh and Jaret, however, have their eyes on the expanding men's pro leagues when they are finished with the U23.

“There are two pro leagues now, the AUDL [American Ultimate Disc League] and the MLU [Major League Ultimate],” Josh said. “They are getting pretty good exposure now on TV and on the radio. The first Toronto Rush game in the AUDL drew 2,500 fans. For us, we’ll hopefully play on that team next year.”

Now they are just happy that there are some options to keep playing and are optimistic about the growth of their sport.

“It’s getting some recognition now,” Jordan explained. “A lot of people that used to play university soccer or whatever join ultimate and end up being really good at it because they are great athletes.”

“I was at work yesterday and this older lady came up to me and said she heard about the new Toronto pro team on the radio and I was like, “wow, ultimate on the radio, that’s awesome.”

With the worlds coming up, the trio is pumped to play in front of their hometown on the world stage. This will be Jordan's third time participating in a world championship ? last year she went to Florence, Italy for the competition ? while it will be Jaret's second and Josh's first.

“It’s nice having world’s in Toronto so that we don’t have to travel too far,” Josh said. “It’s going to be nerve-wracking too though, because it’s a lot of people’s first worlds, including mine. If you go to Europe or something you’re a little more under the radar. This is going to be like everybody is right in your face, but saying that I would much rather be here and give people a chance to see it and promote it a little bit.”

However, they didn't want to make it sound as though they didn't enjoy the traveling, as all three said that was probably their biggest hobby/interest other than sports. They also know they have all the support they need to keep pushing their careers even further.

“Our parents are our biggest fans ever. Most of our friends are really supportive and think it’s awesome, but others are like, “ah, it’s Frisbee, that’s for dogs,”” Josh said with a laugh.

It's safe to say that Frisbee is not just for dogs anymore.

For more information on the upcoming world championships from July 22 ? 28, including where you can watch them play, visit www.wfdf2013-u23.com