

Sport Aurora Breakfast of Champions Spotlight: Aurora Barbarians u18 are 2013 Ontario Champions

As the final whistle sounded on the 2013 Ontario u18 championship match with the score tied 12-12, Barbarians coach Ryan Stickle proudly announced to the nervous team that there was nothing to worry about as his team, had the best kicker in Ontario.?

Fortunately for the him, and the rest of the team, Coach Stickle was absolutely correct as kicker Connor Chown was perfect, converting all three attempts, in the penalty kick shootout to give Aurora the win, 15- 12 over Bytown Blues from Ottawa.

The win capped a wonderful season for the u18 team, a season in which they had an overall record of ten wins and only two losses and a remarkable run of five wins in four days to win both the Toronto Rugby Union Championship and the Provincial Finals.

Their play-off run began with a convincing 27-11 win over Barrie. The score was close at half but a strong second period prevented any possible comeback. Scoring for Aurora with tries were captain Marnus Coetzee, with three, plus singles by Liam Kennelly and DJ Dillon. Chown added to the scoring with two converts.

Next up was an extremely tough match against Mississauga. The game was a close physical encounter between two teams unwilling to give even an inch. At the final whistle the scores were level at 22, and the game went to overtime. A successful penalty kick by Chown less than two minutes into the sudden death was the difference maker and Aurora was on to the Toronto Rugby Union (TRU) Final.

Other scoring for Aurora were tries by Gustavo Mozzato, Adam Hankins, Kennelly and Coetzee, while Chown added a convert.

The TRU Final was held that afternoon and after only a short rest the team was back on the field, this time against Markham Irish. Once again the boys rose to the occasion and played in impressive fashion defeating their rivals 22-0 to capture the title. Scoring tries were Dillon, Mozzato, Coetzee and Chown added a penalty and a conversion.

That victory earned them a spot the next day's Ontario Cup semi-final match against Sarnia. So, for the fourth time in four days the coaches began preparation for another win-or-go-home match.

This time the decision was never in doubt with Aurora cruising to a comfortable 32-0 win. Scoring was led by Ben Risi with three tries and singles from Kennelly, Jordan Marsh and Anthony Veltri. Chown added a single convert into a very difficult wind.

After the match, Chown received support and advice from the coaches to just worry about making good contact on his kicks and to try not to think about the wind. It proved prophetic advice as the Ontario Final was decided by the cool accurate kicking of Chown.

At the kick-off, Aurora was beginning its fifth match in four days while their opponent, Bytown, were well-rested and eager to play exciting attacking rugby. However, Aurora struck first when fullback Dillon scooped up a loose ball and ran 60 meters to score under the posts. Chown added two with the convert and Aurora was up by seven.

Bytown pushed through to lead 12-7 with time running down in the second half, but winger Luc Travell escaped the clutches of his opposite number and outraced the defenders to score and tie the match. Unfortunately Chown missed this convert and the game ended 12-12. With no sudden death overtime the game was to be decided in a penalty kicks shoot out.

Each kicker made the first two, but when the Blues kicker pushed his third attempt wide it opened the door for Aurora. As Chown's kick sailed through the uprights loud cheers were heard as the Aurora Barbarians were the 2013 Ontario Champions!