

## Stewart Burnett soccer facility has rainy, but spirited kick-off



**By Brock Weir**

If it was a natural turf field, the opening kick-off would have been soggy, muggy mess, but the new artificial turf soccer facility at Stewart Burnett Park was more than up for the task.

Members of the Aurora FC and Aurora Youth Soccer Club huddled under a tent early Sunday afternoon for the official opening of the new 500 seat outdoor facility located just behind the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex and the Marilyn Redvers Tennis Centre on Wellington Street East.

Doing the honours at the ceremony, which was also attended by Councillors John Abel and Jeff Thom, were Mayor Geoff Dawe and Roy Cohen, President of the Aurora Youth Soccer Club.

‘It is quite a pleasure to be here, even if it is somewhat less than ideal weather, to celebrate the official opening of this field, the Stewart Burnett Park Field,’ said Mayor Dawe. ‘It is really a fabulous facility, and, as we all know, the World Cup is playing right now and this is also a FIFA regulation field. That is doubly impressive and seating for 500 people, it is really quite a tremendous facility and I am very pleased we have had the opportunity to put this together like this.

‘Because it is an artificial turf field, we are going to have longer playing, play later into the evening, and on the shoulder seasons. We cut down on our maintenance costs, so it is a good story all around. Thank you to everybody who has helped get this organized. Eventually we will also be adding in the area a splash pad and playground facilities to make it even more useful.’

With 500 seats, meeting FIFA regulation standards, and featuring electronic scoreboards and other amenities, the Stewart Burnett Field is now the official home of the Aurora FC. The finishing touches on the park, including the splash pad and playground, as well as washroom facilities and a trail connection into the adjacent wildlife park, are expected to be completed in 2019.

‘I would like to say a quick thank you not only to our Town, our Mayor, but Council and the hard-work that they do for us on behalf of all the sporting communities and to have better facilities for you young ladies and all our other teams,’ said Mr. Cohen. ‘It is an honour to be a part of the Aurora Football Club, more importantly the Aurora Youth Soccer Club. We are [going on our] 55th year of service in Aurora and I have been a part of 20 of them. I am very proud, I am very blessed and very honoured to be a part of it. I am happy for our athletes and our participants.

‘It is very, very important to them to have good quality fields and facilities and our Town is doing it. They are making it happen.’