

Stinger Girls named BMO's Team of the Week

By Jeff Doner

The Aurora Stingers U9 A soccer team has been recognized as the latest winner of the BMO Team of the Week for their extensive charitable work in the community.

The prize is \$500 for a team party and \$500 for their charity of choice. However, head coach George Georgiopoulos said the team will be donating their party money to a young man in the community who has leukemia.

"There's a little boy named Carter Swedlo with leukemia, we've 'adopted' him into our family, meaning we've invited him and his family to be a part of our team, and we are dedicating our summer to him," said Georgiopoulos. "We invited him and his family out to watch a Toronto FC game and met a few players and got some autographs. We have his initials on our shirts. We keep in close touch with him."

He also said that the team has not yet decided which charity will receive the other \$500.

Since the soccer season began, the team has been organizing events and drumming up interest for a variety of different causes including donating clothes, toys and baby necessities to a family in Newmarket, raising \$1,000 for the Heart and Stroke Foundation through a 1K run and also frequently visiting and spending time with their friend Carter.

Coach Georgiopoulos said he is very proud of his team for their hard work and dedication.

"In life you don't always get rewarded for the efforts you put in, so it was really good that this team was rewarded for all their community efforts," he said. "Every team that I coach, I always tell the parents that my goal is to create good soccer players, but great citizens of their community."

BMO Team of the Week recognizes youth soccer teams (age 7-12) across Canada that demonstrate team pride, spirit, community commitment and passion for the game.

With winning Team of the Week, the Aurora Stingers U9 A team is now up for consideration to become the 2013 BMO Team of the Week Champion, which comes with an award of \$125,000 for local field refurbishment and a road trip to a Toronto FC, Vancouver Whitecaps FC, Montreal Impact or Canadian National Team home game.

So far, 11 teams have been recognized as Team of the Week, leaving four more spots for a total of 15 throughout the summer. The champion will be determined by the Canadian public through daily online voting at BMOsoccer.com from August 5-19 for the team they feel is most deserving of the award.

"This is a remarkable group of young girls, led by a truly dedicated coach," said Lily Capriotti, district vice president, GTA Central, BMO Bank of Montreal. "Not only do they work hard on the field, these girls spread their positive spirit throughout the community by going above and beyond in their charitable initiatives."

Added Georgiopoulos: "They're only nine years old, so there have been a lot of life lessons for them and as a coach I think that is much bigger than soccer."

The Aurora U9 Girls are not the only local team in the running for BMO's Team of the Week. The Stingers U9 Boys are also looking for a piece of the action. For more on the boys, visit www.bmosoccer.com, and search "Aurora" in the Find a Team Option, and check back in next week's edition of The Auroran.