

Teams gear up for the spring season

By Jeff Doner

Getting involved in sports is a lot easier than you think.

That's part of the message Sport Aurora is trying to spread as the summer season approaches.

Sport Aurora is an umbrella organization for most of the sports that operate in the community and helps people of all ages and skill levels get connected with a bevy of sports teams and organizations.

'There's lots of things for people to do, they just need to know how to get hooked up with the right people who are providing those programs,' said Ron Weese, chair of Sport Aurora.

'We have 26 member organizations in town, so these member organizations include hockey, rugby, lacrosse, football and so those organizations have programs from the age of four to 80. When people get in touch with us and they want to be referred to a sport in Town we will refer them to people in our membership. We're kind of like the better business bureau for sport.'

Weese said there are plenty of things happening year round, but many teams are just beginning to gear up for the spring and summer.

Some of these include: summer hockey, baseball, tennis, softball, lawn bowling, swimming, lacrosse, slo-pitch, football and soccer.

Barbarians Rugby is one of the most popular summer programs with over 350 members and programs for all ages.

John Reich, the past president of Barbarians Rugby and current senior men's team manager, said he is looking forward to the upcoming season and added there are teams for anybody who has an interest in the sport.

'There's no maximum number for registration at the moment or minimum qualification,' he said. 'There's a place for everybody to come into the sport from age eight to whatever. We've got a place for anybody who wants to start.'

Regular season starts on April 11 and runs every Saturday through May to September excluding long weekends.

The next junior registration is April 6 at the Aurora Recreational Centre, but Reich said people can register right up until the start of the season simply by heading out to training sessions.

'Everybody is welcome. We pride ourselves on being a club for all and there's always an entry level for anyone who wants a start in the game,' he said.

With over 10,000 members within Sport Aurora, Weese said the main objective is helping people achieve healthy physical activity through participation in a variety of activities.

'We're all trying to drive this thing called, 'physical literacy', which means people shouldn't be specializing at a very young age,' Weese explained. 'All of our organizations believe that kids ought to have a wide variety of sporting experiences so they learn how to run, jump, throw, catch, swim and skate.'

'If kids don't learn skills early, they tend not to feel confident with it and then they don't feel comfortable to participate in sports later on and so they retreat into sedentary lifestyles, which is not good.'