

Baseball season around the corner for Aurora Jays



By Jake Courtepatte

Spring has sprung (sort of), and with it comes talk of baseball once again.

For the North Dufferin Baseball League, the talk never really stops.

The league doled out its 2014 season awards in Lisle earlier this month, with a number of Aurora Jays picking up some hardware for their dominating regular season last year.

Jays coaches Rob Wilson and Michael Keon shared the Coach of the Year award for the second season in a row. The pair led the Jays to a 21-4-1 record last season, good for tops in the league while also driving in the most runs.

"Mike will mostly look after the lineups and the pitching, and I'll tend to look after third-base duties," said Wilson. "Between the two of us, we share the reigns and it's worked out pretty well for us."

Fab Dolan also earned Catcher of the Year honours in a three-way tie, while Andrew Bukovec earned All-Star MVP.

"The boys are really the secret," said Wilson. "We've got enough talent that it makes it easy on Keon and I to just come up with a plan and throw them on the field and we've got a chance to win every single week" it makes it easy to be coach of the year when you've got the right talent and the right attitude."

The Junior Jays also had a number of recognitions, as Devon Wu took the honours for best pitcher while Chris Fafalios was part of a five-way tie for most home runs in the league.

Wilson said he and the team have their eye on the young up-and-coming talent.

"We've got a few junior players that we're taking a real keen look at. We're looking forward to welcoming a few new faces that'll be aging up."

Following the awards presentation was the league's annual general meeting, in which it was announced that the Bolton Brewers were taking a one-year leave of absence to join the AAA Greater Toronto Baseball League. Another Creemore senior team will take their spot within the league.

Wilson doesn't rule out the Jays ever moving up to the Toronto league.

?We're potentially on the same track as Bolton in terms of our competition level. We're a few years younger than them. I think we could hold our own in the 'G', but right now we're a much more competitive team in the NDBL.?

With snow still melting, the schedule has been set for the 2015 season, set to kick off May 2. Team workouts are already going on throughout the league, with the Jays set to start training very soon.

?We're going to be starting in the next couple weeks,? said Wilson. ?We're gearing up, hopefully we can bring home some other hardware this year.?

The Jays fell to the Ivy Leafs in the Challenge Cup finals last season.