



Pompey Opens New Kitchener Facility

by Andrew Hendriks

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As an early January snowstorm blanketed the streets of Southern Ontario on Saturday, some 400 players, coaches and general enthusiasts converged on the region's newest indoor training facility to help welcome **Playball Academy Canada** onto the local baseball scene.



Toronto Blue Jays CF Dalton Pompey (Mississauga, Ont.) was on hand for the grand opening of Playball Academy Canada, owned by Trevor Nyp, Sam Hirani and Trevor Reading, Saturday in Kitchener, ON

Located on Executive Place (off the 401), the 23,000 square foot indoor facility becomes Kitchener-Waterloo's first baseball specific training center, answering a crucial need for a quality development center for thousands of individuals registered in organized baseball throughout the region.

With six batting cages, three bullpens, a gym and a fully turfed open infield located in the heart of the complex, Playball will be a welcome addition to the area as owners **Trevor Nyp**, **Sam Hirani** and **Trevor Reading** hope to draw clients from across Ontario.

Of course, no baseball training facility would be complete without a quality Softball program and the game is well represented in instructors Tori Taylor, Maria Greco and Lauren Ruff who, since attending Hillsborough College (Tampa) on a softball scholarship, has returned to the region to pitch for the Conestoga Condors.

On hand for the festivities was Mississauga's **Dalton Pompey**, current centre fielder with the Toronto Blue Jays and proud supporter of amateur baseball in the "Great White North".

"I really didn't have a place like this" explained Pompey. "A facility this big with the ability to do as much as you can here, such as both infield and outfield. You can hit, run, throw ... I mean back in the day, we were in a gymnasium and then a good place like the Baseball Zone in Mississauga came around and then we were able to work out there."

For Pompey, the ability to have a top tier facility to train in year round is integral to the games growth in Canada and coming from nearby Mississauga, the young outfielder is thrilled to be affiliated with such an outstanding indoor complex.

"It's huge for any Canadian baseball player to come here" said Pompey. "To refine their skills in every aspect, because, for the most part, back in the day, mainly all we had was hitting facilities. But now, you can do anything you want in here. It's only going to help Canadian baseball for years to come."

Preaching passion, practice and perfection, that's exactly what the staff at Kitchener's Playball Academy and other baseball specific training centers such as The Baseball Zone, Centre Field Sports (London), Pro Teach Baseball (Etobicoke), Ontario Blue Jays (Mississauga) and other facilities of the Canadian Baseball Network, intend on doing ... helping grow the game in Canada for years to come.

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