

# Anime characters brought to life with cosplay at Coronation Park

By Dan Ho  
SPECIAL TO THE BEAVER

If you saw some strange looking characters searching for their dragon balls at Coronation Park this weekend, do not be alarmed. Planet Earth is still safe from invasion.

"We were curious as to why they were here, given that they are dressed in colourful costumes," said Stephanie Baumann, who had been observing the characters for 30 minutes. She found it strange for them to be in long pants for a "sunny beach type day."

The park was the scene of a cosplay event organized by Anthony Terlizzi.

"You're basically just dressed as your favourite character, try to be like them," said Terlizzi.

He organized the event as a way for cosplayers to meet new friends and "chill, hang out and have fun" when there were no conventions in their schedules.

Characters from various

Japanese animation series, commonly called anime, came alive as the park hosted characters from *Final Fantasy*, *Naruto*, *Dragonball Z* and others.

"I think it's great because it entertains children and on a day like today there's lots of kids around," said Baumann whose own child was watching the characters.

As Android 17 was about to finish off Sakura, one child exclaimed "Hey they are from *Dragonball Z*!" before running off.

Emma Atkinson, who was Sakura from the popular manga *Naruto*, started cosplaying when she was in high school.

"I met my best friend Matt and he started telling me about anime and the convention that he went to, Anime North," said Atkinson. "He suggested that I looked like a character from a show he liked."

She ended up attending the convention with him dressed as Misa from *Death Note* and

has been hooked ever since.

Making her own costumes takes between one and six months. Sometimes it takes even more time when weapons are involved. As a commissioner, she also makes and sells costumes for other cosplayers.

"I'm really detailed with my costumes," said Atkinson.

She loves the cosplay community as she felt no one judges each other and is comfortable with each other. She says they often become best friends after meeting each other for only 10 minutes.

Terlizzi sees this as a seasonal event and anticipates that Coronation Park, chosen by votes from participants, will once again be invaded by real life anime characters.

"Who doesn't want to live in their fantasy world?" asked Atkinson "Everyone has some fantasy world, favourite book or movie they would love to be a character in. It's just fun to do for a day or two."



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**IN CHARACTER:** The past weekend, Coronation Park was the site of a cosplay featuring a battle between Emma Atkinson as Sakura (left) and Anthony Grey as Android 17, among other anime characters.

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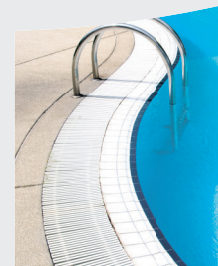
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