

Is Stanley Cup
up for grabs?
see Acton/B2

The Tribune

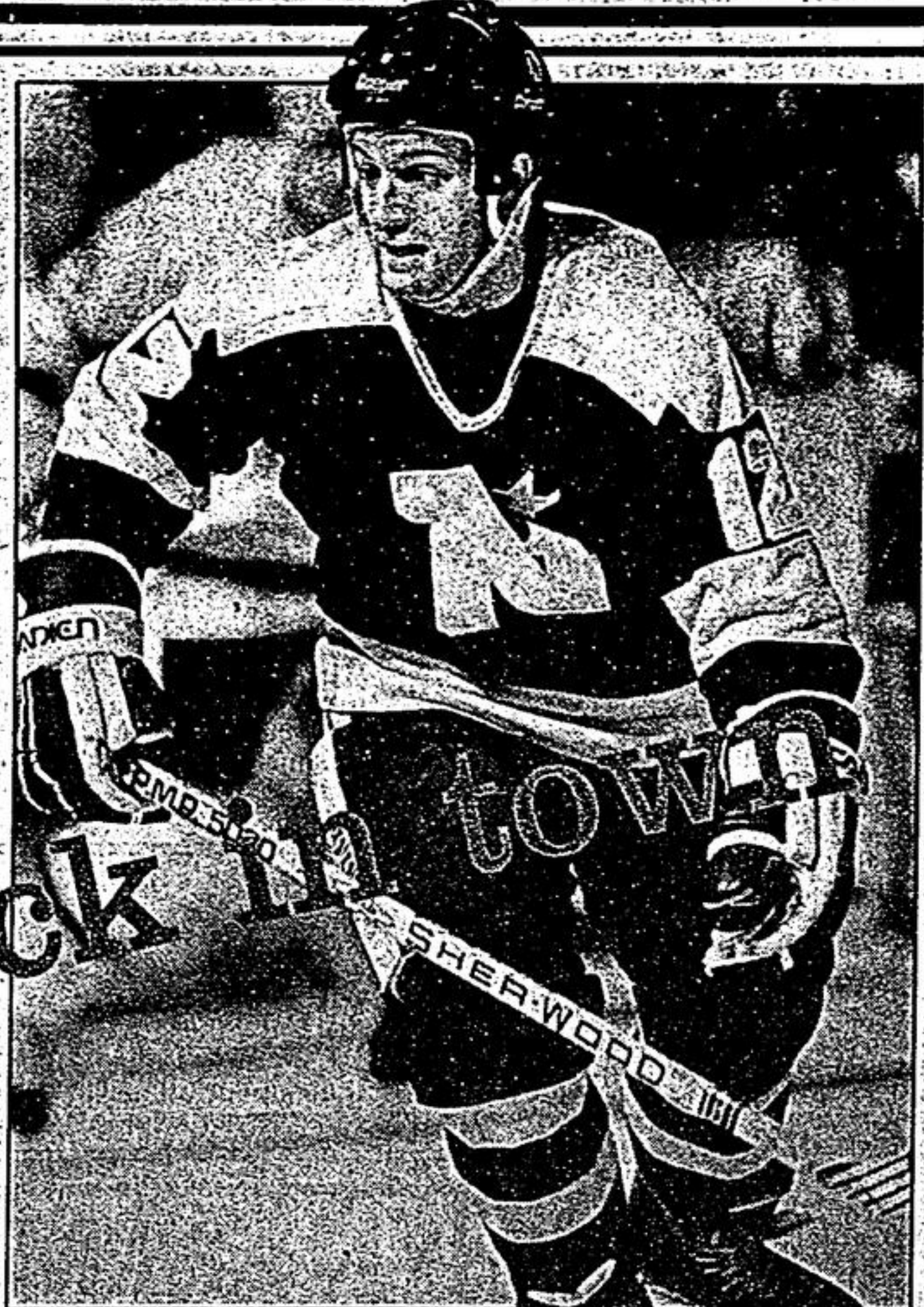
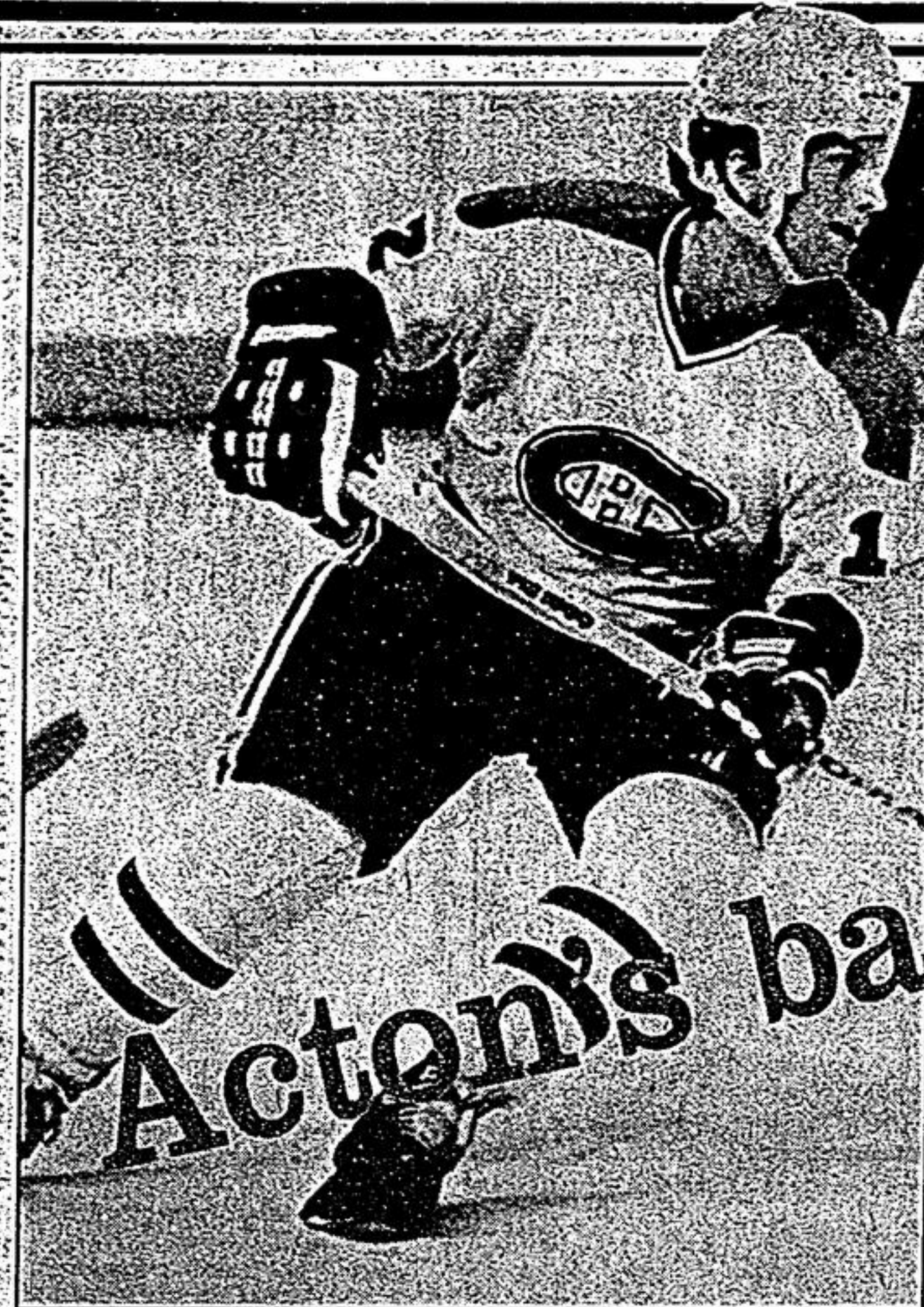
Sports & Classified

A Metroland Community Newspaper

Swimmer wins
three gold
medals/B2

Second Section

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'North Stars had better attitude this year'

BY KELLY CONNELLY
Sports Editor

Stouffville boy and resident NHLer Keith Acton is back in town. The former Montreal Canadian, now Minnesota North Star arrived home earlier this week — too early for his liking.

Acton and his Minnesota teammates were knocked out of first round playoffs by the determined St. Louis Blues. Blues coach-magician Jacques Demers would later orchestrate the same KO against the Toronto Maple Leafs.

First round knockouts are never easy to take. The Tribune called Keith Acton on Sunday at his Minneapolis residence to find out what happened.

TRIBUNE—Did you think you'd be playing golf this early?

ACTON—It's too cold to play golf in Stouffville (chuckle)...The NHL is getting to be a real competitive league now. All the best teams are out. You don't get yourself ready for that, but it can happen. It was really disappointing for our team in the sense that from Feb. 1 until the end of the season we were the third best team overall in the whole league. When you get yourself playing at that level for the last two months, you begin to have high expectations of what you can do in the playoffs. When you go out like we did, it's a lot more disappointing than if you had 50 points overall during the regular season.

TRIBUNE—In December, the Stars were 7-1 and after the all-star break you were 19-9-1. You were doing so great, then what happened? Was it injuries or not the right chemistry on the bench?

ACTON—Because of league rules, draft picks and protection lists, if teams are well managed you're going to have a very competitive league which the NHL has now. I think in hockey you're going to see the same things as in baseball and football — it's going to be very hard to win two years in a row. I think you're going to see different teams in the finals in the NHL almost every year now and a different winner every year.

TRIBUNE—Are you saying the Montreal, New York Islander and Edmonton dynasties are a thing of the past?

ACTON—I don't think you'll ever see that again.

TRIBUNE—Will there be some major trades in Minnesota before next season? Do you need some bigger grinders to help out the smaller skill players?

ACTON—That's hard to say. I'm not that close to the general manager to know, but just guessing I don't think there will be a lot of changes on our team for the simple fact there isn't much movement in the NHL. To get something good, you have to give up something. To strengthen yourself in one place you have to weaken yourself somewhere else. Minnesota is not exactly over-powered in any one position where we can afford to weaken ourselves.

TRIBUNE—The team had a lot of coaching changes over the past few years. Is rookie skipper Lorne Henning a breath of fresh air?

ACTON—People have always said that Minnesota has a great team on paper, they have all kinds of talent and if that's true, which it is, then

why aren't they winning — it's got to be attitude. I think Lorne Henning installed some things in our team this year that have never existed since I came here. He taught us that hockey should be a major priority in our lives (with the exception of our families), we have to dedicate ourselves to our profession and have a lot of desire. Henning initiated an atmosphere like that here. Maybe that was one of the biggest reasons why we did so well in the second half of the season. I think in years to come you're going to see a great team here.

TRIBUNE—The best offence is a good two-way defence. Is that the Henning philosophy or do all coaches want that?

ACTON—A team like St. Louis or Montreal are very good defensive teams, but Henning has us playing very disciplined and with a real system in our own end. Once we moved the play to the neutral zone, he allowed us to be more creative and more offensive minded. But certainly if you're going to win or lose it starts in your own end.

TRIBUNE—A story in The Hockey News this season described you as follows: "Keith Acton, who would earlier get down on himself when he was scored upon, played better overall this season with what seemed to be an improved positive attitude." How do you react to that?

ACTON—Well, for sure our whole team had a much better attitude this year. We had a coach who was from a winning organization and he knew what it took to win.

TRIBUNE—You collected 58 points this season, the same as last year, except you scored six more goals. Are you happy with the way you're playing?

ACTON—A lot of people base hockey players on statistics which is really not true. Players are used different ways and in different situations. Bob Gainey has never scored more than 50 points in a year, but there isn't a team that wouldn't love to have him.

TRIBUNE—What about yourself?

ACTON—Well, there are always areas you think you could have done better in during the season. Overall in the role that I was put in — penalty-killing — I feel pretty good about myself. But anytime your team isn't successful in the playoffs, you have to look at yourself and say there must be something more I could have done.

TRIBUNE—What areas would you like to improve on?

ACTON—That's a tough question. It depends on how you're used and what your role is. I was used as a penalty-killer most of the year...at Christmas time our penalty-killing was 18th in the league. By the end of the year, we ended up in 6th or 7th place which was quite an improvement, so I feel pretty good about that. I think I have the ability to do more offensively, maybe it's a confidence factor.

TRIBUNE—What advice would you give a Stouffville youngster who wants to play in the NHL someday?

ACTON—Hockey is very competitive. There are thousands and thousands of kids who want to play in the NHL and there are only 450 jobs. When it comes down to ability, in most cases a lot of kids are

See Acton/B2

Soccer's best come to town

Sixteen soccer teams including one from Brazil are scheduled to be in Stouffville for the Robbie International Soccer Tournament in June.

It will be the largest turnout of international teams to hit the town, represent the fourth occasion Stouffville has hosted a Robbie division, and coincide with Canada's first ever participation in the World Cup.

The under-14 pee-wee boys visiting Stouffville for the June 28-30 Robbie comprise teams from the United States, Brazil and Ontario.

The Stouffville Panthers, who won their fourth straight York Region Cup last September, and the awesome Stouffville Royals (under 16) are also competing in the tournament which annually raises money for cystic fibrosis and muscular dystrophy.

Panther coach Alfons Rubbens said his black cats will be up against some quality international players, but won't have the home field advantage that usually comes with hosting a competition.

"The fields will be as strange to us as to the visiting teams," he said. Two of the three fields selected for Robbie action are brand new pitches (located beside the Recreation Complex) that have never been used.

An anxious Rubbens walked the

fields last Thursday morning and noted there are no goal posts and the grass must be properly rolled and watered to be ready for the June tournament.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Soccer Club has opted not to practise on the fields until May 24 by which time they hope the ground will be in good shape.

SAHL players awarded

There were a lot of first-time awards at the Sunday Amateur Men's Hockey League (SAHL) banquet Friday night at Cedar Beach Park.

The Remax North Stars were the first team in eight years to finish in first place and win the 'A' division playoff championship. Lou Capitelli was the first SAHL player to receive a special award for the man with the most manners during hockey games. He set an example for others to follow, said SAHL referee-in-chief Wayne Nugent.

It was also the first time the SAHL honored two goalies — Dean Boland and John Boyd for their premier skills between the pipes.

Enough first-timers here's a run down of other award winners: Stouffville Travel captured the 'B' division championship. Bill Corner received the high excellence award for player ability. Dave Boyd capped the scoring championship. Ken May won MVP for his four-goal spurt in the 'A' final and goalie Gary Williams collected MVP for his two shutouts in four 'B' division playoff games.

Next year's executive on the SAHL includes Bob McKinnon (president), Don Giffen (vice-president), Henry Stevens (1st vice-president) and Bruce Gribbon (treasurer).

DRAFT NIGHT for next year's teams and the election of a new secretary is May 30 at the new arena. Special thanks to Jim Wagg and his Recreation Committee for organizing the banquet night.

SDSS girl leaps to 1st

Camille Rutherford won't budge when it comes to occupying first place in long jump competition.

The Stouffville Secondary student leaped to first spot for the second time in two weeks at the Georgian Bay Secondary School (GBSSA) Indoor Track and Field meet April 22. The senior division competitor was also first in the York Region meet a week prior.

Other highlights: Yvonne Semlacher, 3rd in high jump; Wally Barbour, 4th in 50M hurdles; Liz Sled, 6th in 50M hurdles and long jump; Linda Hachey, 6th in 1500M; Mary Sled, 3rd in long jump and 6th in 50M hurdles; and Rob McConnell, 6th in 400M.

Sideline Comment

Wrestling promo like a 'B' movie

BY KELLY CONNELLY

Small-time wrestling promoters are real fly-by-night individuals.

No one knows that better than Stouffville resident George Cowley. For weeks, he has been trying to track down a rather unusual looking character known as the Canadian Wild Man — a small town wrestling promoter.

The two men made a verbal "gentlemen's agreement," many months ago to set up a wrestling card for Stouffville's new Recreation Complex. The event, slated for this month, was to be a fundraiser to help out Betz Pools Oldtimers hockey team and youth sports programs.

"He quoted me a \$2,000 card and I jumped at it," said Cowley, who pointed out the deal was made in a back room during a wrestling event in Markham.

For a flat fee, the Canadian Wild Man — who also goes by the name Dave McKigney — told Cowley he would come into town, construct the ring and supply the wrestlers and tag teams.

But that was seven months ago. Cowley hadn't heard from him since and was getting a little anxious.

"I realize small-time wrestling promotion isn't recognized by the Better Business Bureau," quipped the Stouffville hockey player. "These guys are carnival types. They all travel together. They're little fly-by-night performers who roll into town and then they're gone."

So what happened to the Canadian Wild Man?

Cowley said the promoter was spotted in downtown Toronto at the St. Lawrence Market about a month ago, putting on a wrestling card.

And during the past year, wrestling's famed gurus like Hulk Hogan, the Sheik and Angelo King Kong Mosca have attracted much media attention and a strong fan following — all the more reason Cowley was anxious to get a wrestling night for Stouffville.

It would be a quick money-maker for town sports, great entertainment for youngsters, and a less greasy alternative to the exhausting fundraising hamburger weekends at the ballpark, said Cowley.

He suspected the \$2,000 quote would be outdated now thanks to wrestling's surge in popularity. In an effort to find someone else, Cowley called Maple Leaf Gardens for names of other small town promoters. Harold Ballard's workers remained tight-lipped as if Cowley wanted phone numbers of Al Capone's relatives.

The Tribune contacted a print shop in Uxbridge where the Canadian Wild Man drops by on occasion to have his wrestling posters printed. "He's got a big scraggly beard and long hair," said the shop foreman. "He's about 5'9", 180-lbs, big across the shoulders...and he wrestles a bear."

Enough said. Cowley vowed to continue his search for the rather unorthodox-looking promoter.

Sure enough, the Canadian Wild Man's partner, Mark Aho, walked into the Tribune yesterday with a wrestling poster for Stouffville. The chase is over for Cowley. The big night is May 21 (8 p.m.) at the Recreation Complex. Angelo Mosca, Joey War Eagle, the Sheik and the estranged Canadian Wild Man will be there. Interesting characters indeed. The kids should love it.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"In the role that I was put in and the way I was used, I feel pretty good about myself. But anytime your team isn't successful in the playoffs, you have to look at yourself and say there must be something more I could have done."

Minnesota North Star and Stouffville resident Keith Acton assesses his penalty-killing role and offensive prowess after the St. Louis Blues eliminated his team in NHL first round playoffs.



Stouffville tots love Kid's Gym

There's a new gymnastics program for kids as young as six-months in Stouffville. The classes started two weeks ago and judging by the smile on three-year-old Heather McManus' face, exercise is a lot of fun. Mary Anne McManus and son Michael, 1, look on. Parents can still

sign their kids up for the Monday morning and Tuesday evening sessions. The program runs at the Recreation Complex and Summitview Public School. Call 640-6527 for more information.

—Kelly Connelly