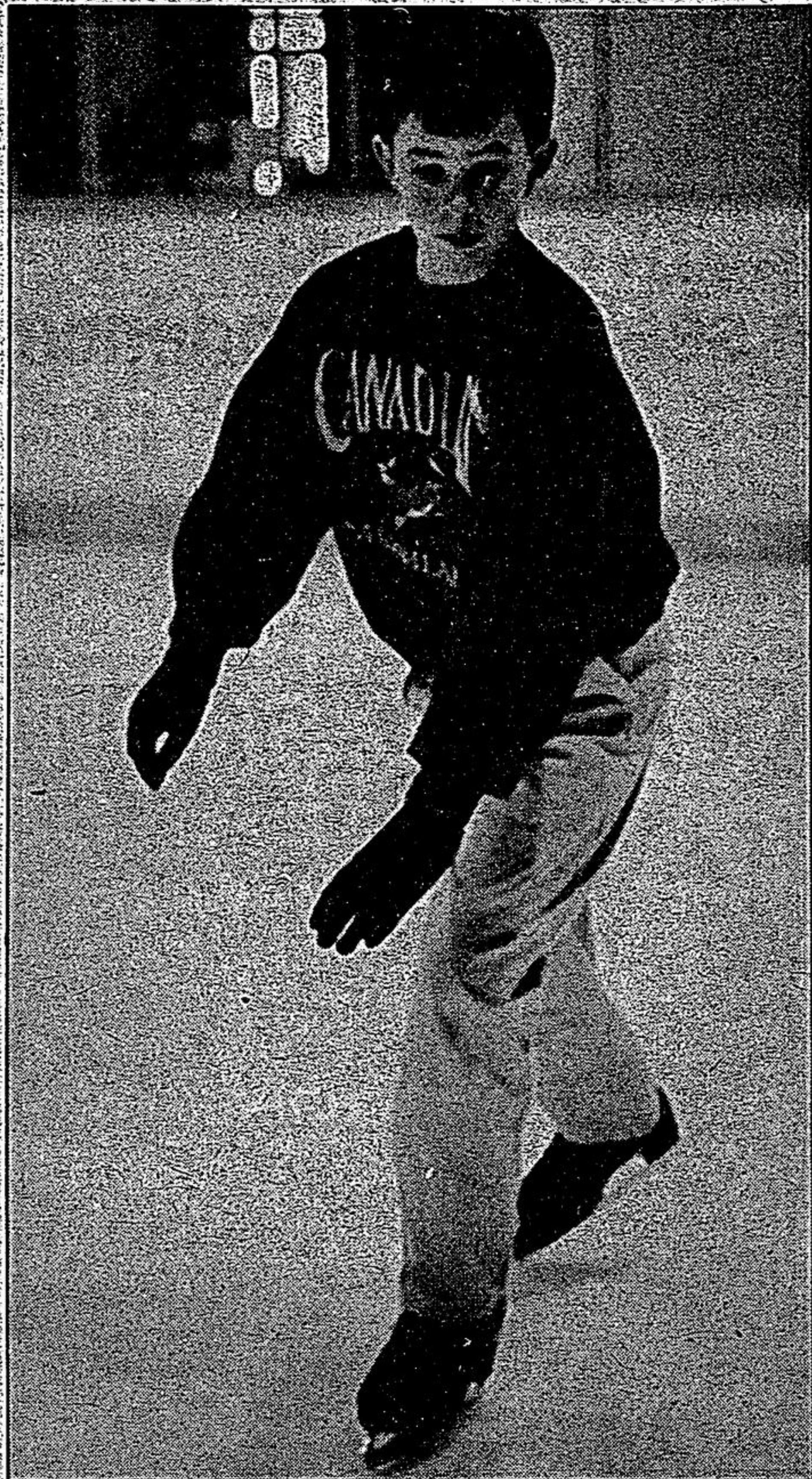


SPORTS



Photo/ANNETTE BUCHKOWSKI



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Stouffville skaters earn honors at Uxbridge Invitational

Michael Pride, right, seen practising in this photo, was the big winner for the Stouffville Figure Skating Club at the Uxbridge Invitational on the weekend. Pride won the silver medal in the Pre-Novice Men's Final at the prestigious event. A number of other Stouffville club skaters competed, including Amanda Leger, left, in the Preliminary Ladies division, Flight Two. The

Invitational took place over three days at the Uxbridge Arena, with about 415 skaters from across Ontario attending. Along with Pride, Ballantrae's Stephanie McLeod also put in a strong showing for the Stouffville club, finishing fourth in the Juvenile Ladies Flight Two, and sixth in the Pre-Preliminary A Ladies Flight Five.

Former Clippers make mark with Bruins

Strange as it may seem, with winter just nicely established in these parts, it's playoff time for all our Stouffville Clipper hockey teams.

And while the local hot shots work at perfecting their game with the hopes of landing an Ontario Minor Hockey Association (OMHA) title, there are a half dozen ex-Clippers playing up Hwy 47 way who are finishing up what has been a truly remarkable regular season.

The six, who represent with a few exceptions, the best the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association has produced in recent years, are with the Junior C Uxbridge Bruins.

And while the team has been more than a little reluctant to display its talents in front of the Uxbridge faithful this season, their road show has been the kind of thing of which championships are made. They sport an overall road record of 13 wins, 3 losses, and a tie. The Bruins haven't lost an away game since Nov. Whereas at

home, they were a modest 7-7-1 as of last week.

The Bruins started slow, then roared back, going undefeated for one 10 game stretch. They go into this Friday night's final game of the schedule with a solid hold on first place.

Much of the credit for the Bruins success can be attributed to the Stouffville six. Darron Baston, the 19-year-old defenceman who decided to rejoin his old Clippers buddies this season after a stint with the Junior B Aurora Eagles, has been a bulwark. A tall, skinny kid with the Midget Clippers back in 1987-88, Baston has filled out to the point where he is an awesome sight to behold on skates. He leads all Bruins defenders in points, with an impressive 15 goals and 15 assists. In the recent All-Star Game played in Uxbridge, Baston dished out a perfectly legal check in the opening minutes, sending his stunned opponent at least six feet backwards, landing in a sitting position on the ice, and probably



sports notes

bruce stapley

wishing he had stuck to road hockey.

Baston also scored a goal later on in the same period, looking every bit like Bobby Orr as he burst through the defence and flicked the puck upstairs into the net. With Baston's poise, his smooth shot and his hulking presence, it's no wonder the Bruins are so impressive on the road. His two goal effort in a 6-3 Bruins victory in Lakefield two Sundays back was typical of the contribution he has been making.

Stouffville's Jason Underwood also made the Central Ontario League All-Star Team. For the talented centre, who just turned 18, it was his second All-Star appearance, although he admits he's not

quite up to the standard he established for himself last season.

But both he and Bruins coach Jim McDowall feel he's finally reaching peak form, however.

The other Stouffvillites on the Bruins roster include Paul Sinclair, Chris Winn, Kirk Smythe, and Keith Piette. All four are also making solid contributions to the cause, with their names showing up regularly among the Bruins' goal scorers.

Another ex-Clipper with the Bruins is Jamie Showers, who now resides in Uxbridge. The big, bruising rearguard, every bit the gentleman off the ice, is still battling his tendency to lose his cool in game situations. As a member of the former Junior B Markham Travelways squad two seasons back, Showers recalled going up against the eventual Ontario champion St. Michael's outfit. His memory of the encounter was his engaging Team Canada Junior sensation Eric Lindros in a round of fisticuffs. Some things never change.

Bantam B Clippers win series in Lindsay

For the Stouffville Edwards-Murphy Decorating Bantam B Clippers, happiness is looking at Lindsay in the rear view mirror.

The Clippers took a 5-2 win with them when they left the Lindsay Arena Friday night, giving them the best of three opening round playoff set by a two games to one margin.

But the Stouffville club was forced to overcome no end of adversity in the series, including the replaying of the third and deciding game, which the Clippers appeared to have won last Tuesday night.

The Lindsay outfit had a protest upheld over the use of a suspended player, and the match was scrubbed.

The hard fought series took its toll on both the Clippers lineup and coaching staff, as a coach, and several players, earned suspensions.

But in the end, it was Lindsay Haylow's two goal effort, along with solo markers by Lincoln Kerswill, Chris Benoit and Liam Brennan, which sent the Clippers home victorious.

Derek Harrison and Kerswill each had two assists, with single set ups going to Haylow, BJ Maude, and Shane Wilcox.

Brad Hackert was impressive in the Clippers' net. Hackert, a Pee Wee age player, shone for the Clippers throughout the series.

The Clippers, who now go on to play Port Perry in round two of the playoffs, drew praise from Coach John Davis.

"The kids endured a lot of controversy in Lindsay, but they really dug down."

Bantam A's eliminated

The Stouffville Howard S. Lee Bantam Clippers went down fighting last Tuesday night as they were eliminated in their first round OMHA playoff series against Cobourg.

The Clippers lost 4-0 Tuesday and were knocked out of the series three games straight.

The Stouffville boys, led by goalie Steve Servanis in Tuesday's game, kept Cobourg off the board until early in the third period, and created several good scoring chances of their own.

Cobourg added another marker as Stouffville pressed for the equalizer, then scored on a powerplay to put the contest away.

The Clippers dropped the series opener 8-2, then lost the second game 6-2.

Jermain Franklin and Ryan Jefferson had the Stouffville goals in game one, while Geoff Smith and Jefferson hit the net in the second game.