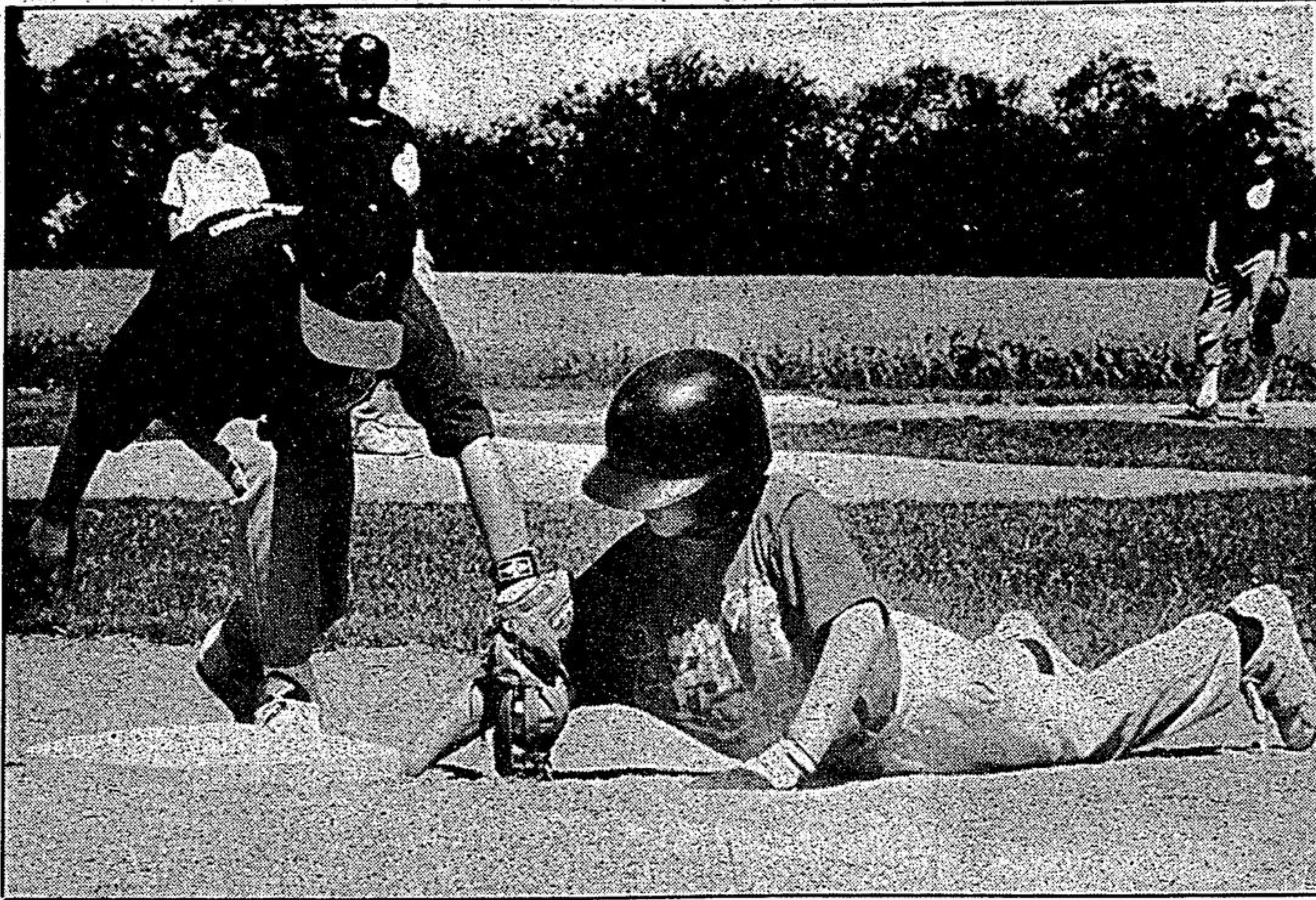


# stouffville sports



Photo/LORI EMMERSON

## A safe return to first

First baseman Blair Cain (left) applies a tag on baserunner Andy West during action in the Stouffville Houseleague Baseball Tournament at Green Acres Camp on Saturday. Cain's efforts went for naught as West made a safe return to the bag.

# May hopes momentum will continue in his favor

**BRUCE STAPLEY**  
Correspondent

Brad May heads into his third National Hockey League season this fall with visions of increased ice time and a pending marriage dancing in his head.



**BRAD MAY**

The 22-year-old Buffalo Sabres' left winger, who started his minor hockey career in Stouffville, returned home to Markham for the summer.

He announced his engagement to long time sweetheart Brigitte Tyrrell of Markham earlier this spring.

The pair plan to be married next summer.

But before he takes the trip to the altar, May is looking to make his mark with the Sabres, hoping this will be the year coach John Muckler lets him run free.

"I got messed around a little last year," May said recently.

"Around Christmas, I was on a line with Pat Lafontaine and Alexander Mogilny, and Mogilny really broke open. But then I was taken off that line, and we never played together again until the playoffs."

May was put on a line with Wayne Presley and Bob Sweeney, but with that pair often used for penalty killing and power play duty, May became the odd man out.

"It was brutal," recalled May, who ended up the season with 14 goals and 14 assists, along with 250 minutes in penalties.

"But you must stay enthusiastic." May scored the overtime goal which eliminated the Boston Bruins in the Sabres' four game opening round playoff series sweep.

May is hoping Muckler will move him up a notch this season.

"He (Muckler) wants to see young players do well, but in my opinion he takes it away from you just when you're becoming successful so it won't go to your head. He wants us to mature, to grow up and be on a level with a veteran like Rick Vaive (his Sabres' teammate). It's frustrating in one sense, but it's only been two years."

"I hope this is the year he (Muckler) takes the reins off. I think the more I play, the more I get my rhythm going. But I have a role to do as well, and I have to keep up my end of the bargain."

May has spent much of the summer refining his off-season training methods.

His routine has included running, biking, and boxing at Sean Wong's Martial Arts Centre in Markham.

He's also spent some time at The Works gym, which is located in the same building.

"It's been great this summer, I've done everything I planned to do," said May, who will trim two pounds off his 210-pound frame before camp opens in September. "My summer job is to work out."

"I've learned a lot, and I kind of know now exactly where I have to be. If you don't put in your training time now, you're kicking yourself in February. We played a total of 102 games including exhibition games and playoffs last season."

May said the coming season will be even more competitive for the Sabres with the new NHL alignment which puts the Pittsburgh Penguins in the same division as his team.

The Sabres were fourth in their division last year, earning the final playoff spot.

"This year, the top-eight teams from our conference make the playoffs, and there are 12 teams who could make it. We're playing more good teams this year, so all the games are more meaningful now."

Hopefully for May, this season will be a meaningful one and one which could help the Sabres capture the Stanley Cup.

# Watch out for that curve ball

Anyone who has ever played the game of baseball or even watched a major league rookie on his first at bat, knows that out there in the playing field it's all hit or miss.

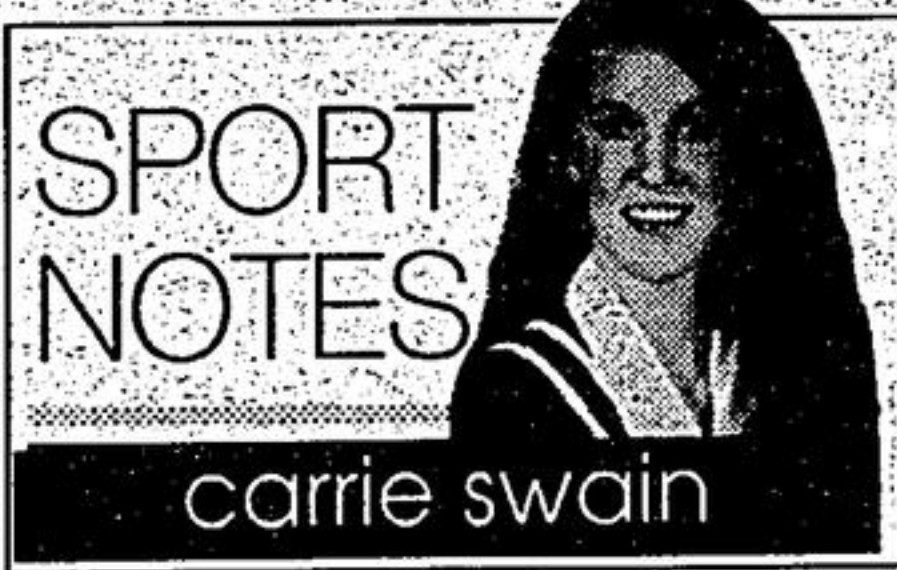
That's the same way I felt upon graduating from the Stouffville District Secondary School sports scene to challenge a whole different ball game at the university level.

I never stepped up to the plate thinking that on my first audition for a volleyball team at this level I would hit a home run.

Of course not. I was a little less cocky, only expecting a triple and two RBI's since having five years of experience in volleyball under my belt.

How could I or any other athlete from a small town school not bear this attitude when showered with awards, medals, plaques, and pins throughout one's high school career?

It's funny how it all works



**SPORT NOTES**

carrie swain

actually.

The smaller the school, the more an athlete receives awards and recognition for an ability that is less than revered in university.

Surely it's not easy being a top athlete in high school.

But it is a lot easier than being one at university.

There, the roster to contend with is so much larger, that the only option is to crack a homer or deal with a strikeout.

As it turned out, I had to deal with the latter.

A bummer beyond belief for any athlete.

Luckily enough, life gives you more than one out so there's always a next time for the Kirby

Puckett homer.

The shift from the minors to the majors was definitely a lot tougher than anticipated.

The first one is slow-pitch and relatively easy to keep up with.

The second, you're trying to hit a fastball that's flying as fast as your head is spinning.

I eventually concluded that in the game of life and in a life of sports, desire and determination combined with talent are great for high school.

Unfortunately, that only gives you a batting average of .350.

What the big leagues keep a close look for are those qualities and more which will then grant you the .450 average they're looking for.

No one ever said life was a breeze.

As a parting word of advice to all of those rookies out there, the game of real life is a hard one to play.

Just go for the gusto and be careful of those curve balls that come your way.

# Kellington girls make quick exit from provincials

The Kellington Garden novice girls' baseball team tried to show their stuff at the Provincial Championships held recently in Stouffville's Memorial Park.

Unfortunately, the girls surrendered losses to teams from St. Catharines and Brampton and were eliminated from the double

knockout event.

In their first game with St. Catharines, the Kellington Garden outfit suffered a 3-2 loss in extra innings.

Julia Peters, Danielle Timms and Alison Crowder led the offence for Kellington Gardens with two hits each. Anna Maria Durante, Jessica

Weatherill and Lindsay Murray added their efforts by belting out a single each.

The pitching arm of Erin Skubiski was ready for this game and she used it well, scattering six hits among four strikeouts keeping the St. Catharines team at bay.

In their second game against

Brampton, Stouffville fell behind early and couldn't recover from the deficit.

Denise Neale, Morgan Dubkowski, and Skubiski shared the pitching duties for Stouffville while Crowder and Timms led the offense.

The team would like to thank the

Whitchurch-Stouffville Softball Association executive, scorekeepers, gate keepers, parents, and other volunteers for their tremendous efforts put forth.

The tournament was a triumphant success and a special thanks is extended to Wayne Pennanen for this.