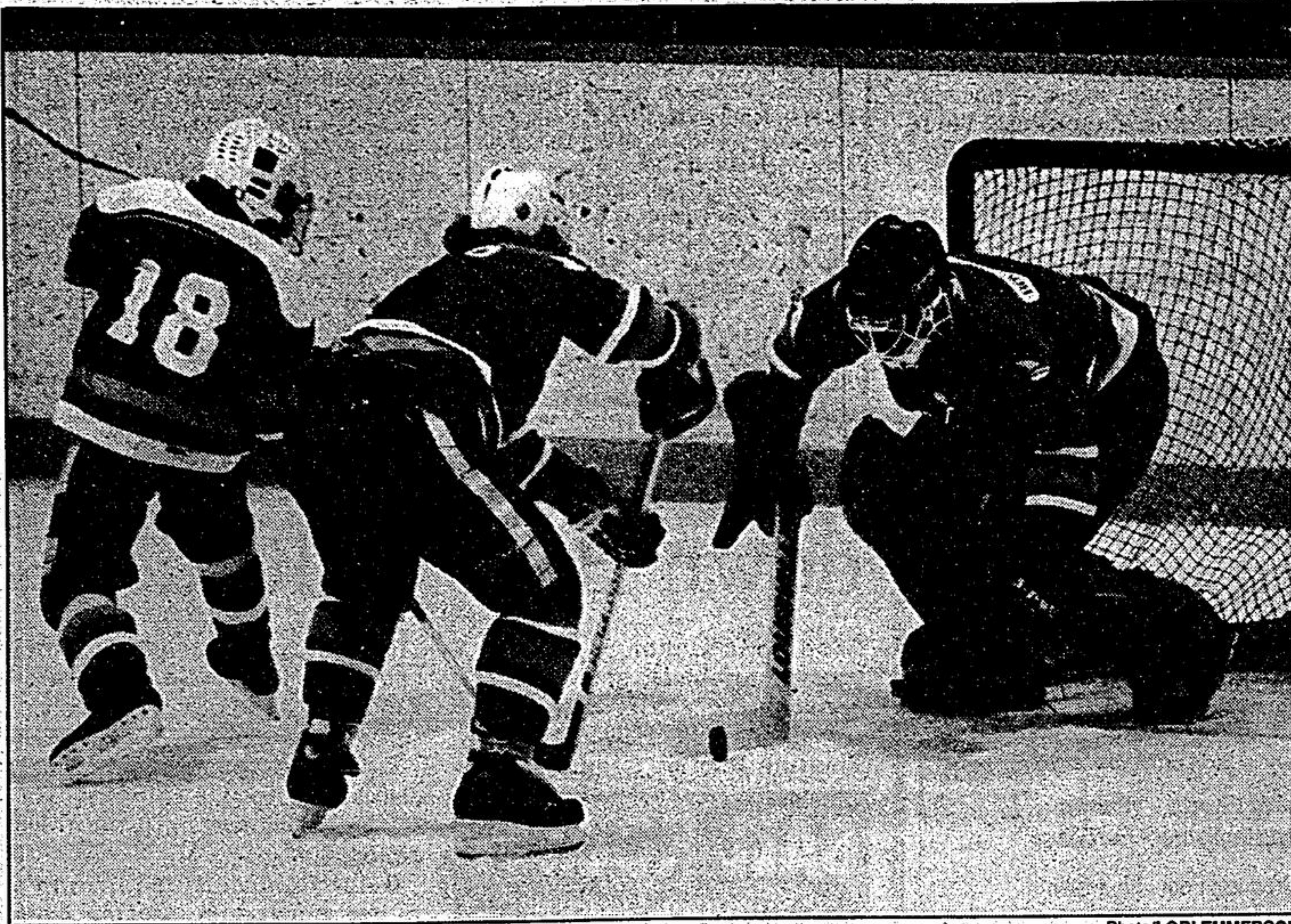


stouffville sports



Photo/LORI EMMERSON

Sharks goalkeeper John Carrick (right) gets set to pounce on this loose puck during action against the North Stars in the Stouffville Amateur Hockey League playoffs at the Rec

Centre on Sunday. Meanwhile Sharks' defenceman Owen Heise (centre) prevents Doug Wright of the North Stars from cashing in on any stray rebound.

Top teams upended in 40 and Over playoff action

They were all tied up in Stouffville Amateur Hockey League 30 and Over division playoff action Sunday at the Rec Centre.

But in the league's 40 and Over loop, it was upset time as the top two teams in regular season play were downed by the bottom two squads in the standings.

In the only Over 30 game which didn't end in a draw, Don Reesor and Bob Hughes scored to give the G & R Flooring Jets a 2-1 win over the A & S Construction Flames. Rick Glen had the Flames goal.

Rick Lee scored for the Village Landscaping Capitals, and Andy Cartwright replied for the Stomark Rental Kings, as the teams battled to a 1-1 stalemate.

The Boyd's Sports Sharks got a marker from Wayne Thompson to counter a score from Doug Wright as the squads also tied at one goal apiece.

In 40 and Over action, the Spring Lakes Nordiques played giant killers, doubling up the first place finishing Occasions Catering Blues 4-2. Robert Smith, Stu St. John, Frank Jago, and Ron Cain shared the scoring for the Nords, who ended up in second last place in the

regular season.

Bruce Mehaffey netted both Blues goals. It was only the fourth loss of the campaign for the Blues, who ran off with the 40 and Over division during the regular season.

The Smurthwaite Heating Bruins, who placed dead last in the division, managed to overcome the second place finishing Gallo Real Estate Red Wings by a slim 3-2 margin. Ron Smurthwaite, Rick Miller, and Don Lloyd lit the lamp for the Bruins. Dale Vick had a pair for the Wings.

In other 40 and Over play, the Villeneuve Heating Flyers nipped the Stouffville Travel Whalers 3-2. Laurie Montgomery, Bob McKinnon, and Wayne Jackson scored for the Flyers. Erwin Meyer and Art Nicholson found the range for the Whalers.

Bob Allison had a pair of goals to help the Rand Pools Maple Leafs to a 4-3 victory over the Canadian Tire Black Hawks. Terry Weatherill and Glen Whitebread rounded out the Leafs scoring.

Jack Holder, Wayne Harris, and Wayne Forsyth clicked for the Hawks.

Clippers ice two wins and a tie

The Stouffville Aikens IDA minor atom Clippers racked up two wins and a tie in recent post season exhibition play, before splitting their two games played at a tournament in Brussels over the weekend.

The Clippers got a two-goal effort from Lukas Williams in a 6-2 win over Aurora.

Justin Heyworth, Brent Myer, Rob Howie and Blair Cain also scored for Stouffville. Assists went to Matt Prentice, Ryan Jones, Casey Maude and Heyworth.

The Clippers managed a 2-2 tie and a 5-1 win in a pair of games played against Vaughan.

Ryan Fontana had two goals and three assists in the two games, while Myer netted a pair of markers. Heyworth and Williams each had a goal and a pair of assists.

Eric Harper had a goal and an assist.

Howie and Jones each earned two assists.

At the Brussels tournament, Harper had two goals and an assist to direct the Clippers to a 4-3 overtime win over Ingersoll in their opener.

Heyworth and Howie also scored

for Stouffville, with other assists going to Howie and Jones.

But the Clippers were overcome 7-1 by St. Mary's in their next contest.

Howie had the lone Clippers goal. Fontana and Dave Brown were credited with assists.

The stars take to the ice

Legendary hockey star Bobby Hull, along with former Toronto Maple Leafs' defencemen Jim McKenny and Bill Root, will highlight Saturday's hockey game between the CITY TV-Much Music No Stars and the Stouffville bantam-peewee girls' all-stars at the Rec Centre.

The game, which is a fund raiser for the Whitchurch-Stouffville Girls Hockey Association, will also feature a guest appearance by a mystery female goalkeeper who played for the Stouffville-Markham ladies' team in the 1930s.

Action begins at 8 p.m. with former NHL star Bobb Hull dropping the first puck. Tickets are \$4 each and available at the Rec Centre or at the door on game night. Children under 10 are admitted free if accompanied by an adult.

A number of door prizes will be given away that night.

Merchants await a big decision

SPORT
NOTES

BRUCE STAPLEY



They're playing the numbers game in softball circles across Canada these days as the 1993 season comes ever closer to its start in May.

But for Stouffville Merchants junior men's fastball team coach Howard Burkholder, it's more like a waiting game as the softball powers-that-be decide the fate of his team, and teams all over Ontario.

The question being pondered by the folks at the Ontario Amateur Softball Association (OASA) is whether or not to fall in line with Softball Canada and up the junior men's age cap from 21 to 22 this season, then push it up another year for the 1994 campaign.

While the move would enable players to stay a year or two longer before being forced to move up to play with the men, it could also serve to complicate things all the way down the line in all-star ball. Some would lobby to have the age ceiling raised by a year on all other levels all the way down to mites.

There is also a notion among some to bring back the juvenile classification, which would fill the larger gap between junior and midget brought about by expanding the junior age to 23. Based on the current order of things, midgets are done once they turn 18, leaving a substantial age void.

Burkholder would welcome the raising of the junior to 23 if juvenile was reintroduced for the under 20 players. This way, graduating midget players wouldn't be left out in the cold for a year or so while they caught up to the 23 year olds in ability.

He would prefer to see the bantam, peewee, squirt, and mite ceilings stay at under 17, 15, 13, and 11 respectively. But the people heading up the Whitchurch-Stouffville Softball Association are in favor of retaining the status quo in its entirety, says Burkholder. Which leads him to believe he might have to do some lobbying to try and bring them around to his way of thinking.

He realizes there is a load of politics in play here, however, with each organization having its own agenda. Not to mention the dilemma the OASA finds itself caught in with the season all but upon them and no decision on age ceilings forthcoming until the

organization holds its annual meeting on April 4.

Then there's the question of whether or not the other provinces will go for the age changes. Burkholder said that traditionally, what Ontario wants, the other provinces oppose. Apparently the others are a little jealous of all the talent that grows in Ontario's ball fields.

Burkholder said it irks the softball associations in the other provinces when they go out and entice most of the best players from Ontario to play for them, only to see Ontario still come within an ace of winning the National Junior Men's Championships each summer.

Burkholder says the other provinces would like to open up the residency rules, allowing them to sign up even more Ontario players. Despite the fact that most provinces are allowed to sign anyone residing in that province as of May 1, while Ontario requires a March 1 residency requirement.

Burkholder would like to see the residency date changed to Jan. 1 across the board, but concedes that would be too simple.

As for the Merchants, Burkholder said he's pretty sure there will be a team no matter what the powers-that-be do with the age ceilings. If the age limit goes up to 22, he will simply field pretty much the same team that came second in the Ontario title tournament that was played here in Stouffville.

If it stays the same, he would have to fill in with a heap of midget grads, seeing as the Merchants were built back in 1990 around a three-year plan that was to culminate in '92. Only seven players from last year's roster would be available.

That would include pitchers Hubert Basilio and Rob Gray, Scarborough residents who pitched behind Byron Baranieski last season. The pair have been playing ball in Australia this winter, but should be back in plenty of time. Burkholder's younger sons, Rich, 20, and Ryan, 17, would also be eligible.

If the age goes up, the lineup could include Burkholder's oldest boy, Chris, 21, along with the likes of Baranieski and Claremont's Jason Yoshida, who are also 21. Yoshida was a softball player-coach in Tasmania this winter.

But for Burkholder, who believes in allowing the universe to unfold as it should, it's all mere speculation at this point. Besides, he's still trying to harvest what remains of last summer's miserable corn crop.

And after all, ball is a summer game.