

The Works
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 190 Bullock Drive • (905) 471-7871

Sports

No Spirit in support of junior A club?

SPORT NOTES



bruce stapley

Oil and water.

That's what lies at the heart of the current crisis that could see the Spirit of Stouffville pick up stakes and leave town.

Ed Hakonson, the Spirit's action-oriented, shoot-from-the-hip owner is a breed apart from the arena officials he's blaming for failing to provide his team with practice ice time this past season.

Ed's longstanding beef with public sector employees is that of any self-made entrepreneur, i.e., those on the public payroll get paid every week no matter what they contribute to the people they serve, whereas he's never had a guaranteed payday in his life.

Ed is frustrated to be sure, and that's understandable when you consider the Spirit's lack of support after two seasons.

"You don't spend \$100,000 a year on a hockey team and be where we are and not be a little down," he told me.

But he should understand that the arena staff's allocation of scarce ice time, prior to the coming of the second ice pad, is not the issue to use in a philosophical debate over those who draw from the public purse. For now is the time to get back to the business of establishing a first rate Junior A hockey club in keeping with Stouffville's distinguished hockey tradition.

Mayor Wayne Emmerson, no slouch with a hockey stick, is offering to help Ed and the Spirit stick handle their way to a solution that will see the club entrenched here for years to come.

Emmerson's plan would give Ed what he wanted in the first place - a hockey club with an effective board of directors, along with the overall support and involvement of the town.

The truth is that Ed is 100 per cent committed to his team and his town. His renovations to the Rec Centre are proof of the way he operates when his heart is into something. But even he's

aware that public relations is not a strong point. While he aims his invective at the people paid to run the rink and at a local minor hockey association he accuses of holding back ice time from his team, he's unaware that he's causing some hurt at a time when the coming of the second ice pad should be erasing all past pain involving the years-old ice time squeeze. Leslie Mabley, a long time volunteer with the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association (WSMHA) of which her husband Peter is currently president, summed up the association's shocked reaction to Ed's recent statement in the local press.

"Pete just feels he got kicked in the face," she lamented. "We feel we did all we could for him."

Leslie recalled the flack her husband received from angry parents every time the association's house league schedule was moved around to accommodate a Sunday Spirit game this season. But the WSMHA believed a Junior A team was a plus for the town, so they did what they could, Leslie said.

To try to pin the blame on the town's facilities superintendent John Crawley wasn't fair either, insisted Leslie.

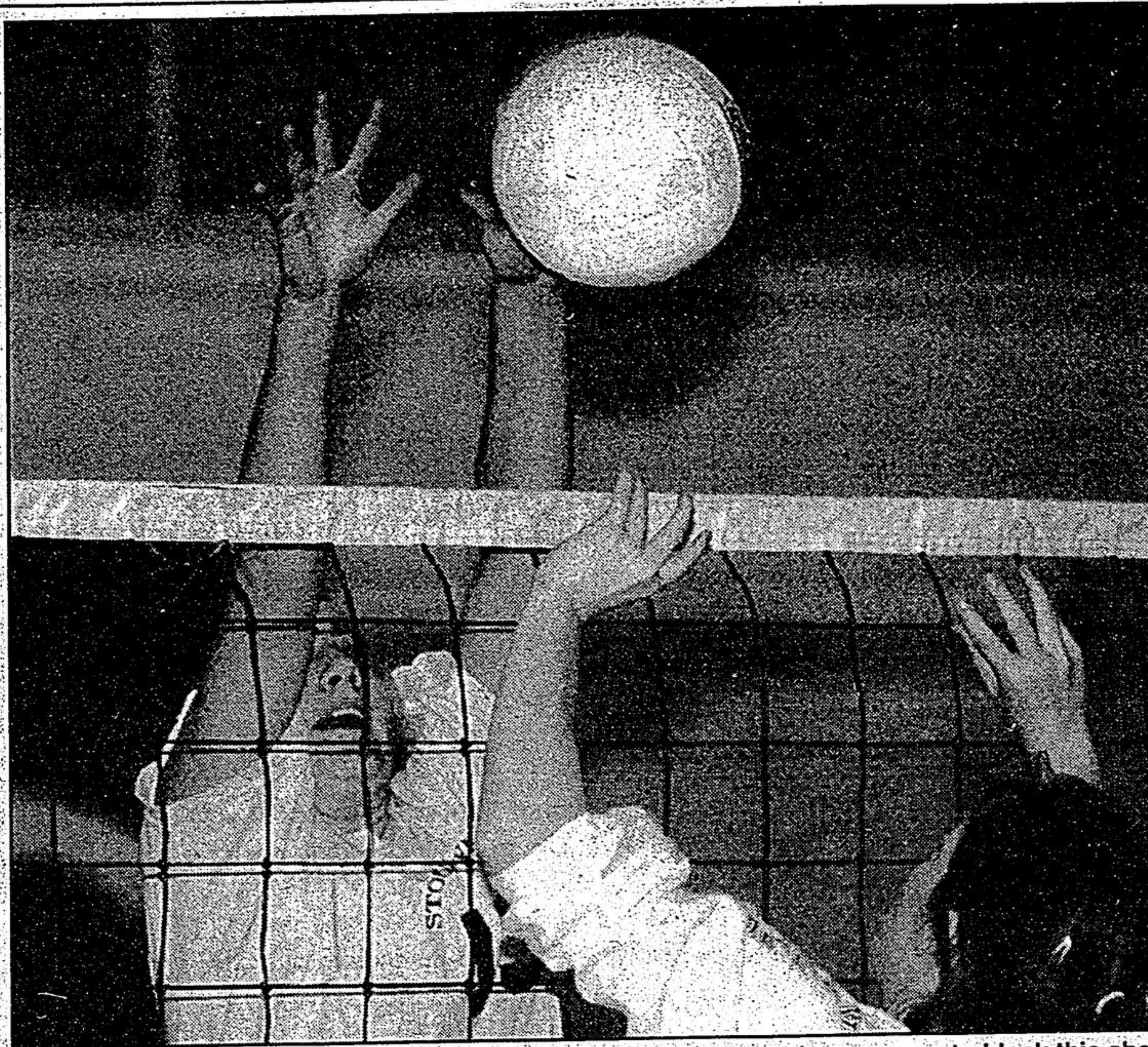
"Crawley did the right thing. He had a legally binding contract to honor the commitment's made to the various user groups. He (Ed) knew he only had to struggle through this year like the rest of us until the second ice pad came."

But Ed's unique entrepreneurial qualities and big vision for Stouffville are badly needed. The town's recreation office staff, along with the WSMHA executive, may be good at what they do, but they could never have enough clout or cash to see a Junior A club through it's formative years.

In the end, all three entities need to work together to make it succeed.

Despite some of the petty knocks against Ed and his hockey club, if everyone works together, the Rec Centre could become THE place to be on Saturday night if the Spirit can eventually flourish.

Come on Ed, Wayne, Peter, et al. Let's all get together and work this thing out.



Stouffville District Secondary School's Alison Crowder (left) gets her arms up to block this shot taken by a Markham District High School player during action in Wednesday's YRAA junior girls' playoff game at Stouffville District Secondary School.

Photo/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Junior Spartans spike win over Markham in playoffs

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans junior girls' volleyball team responded to a home court wake up call to advance to the next round of the York Region Athletic Association playoffs Wednesday.



The Spartans romped to a 15-9 win in the first game of their best-of-three south east division opening round playoff set with Markham D.H.S., but had to overcome a 10-5 deficit in game two before rallying to win 15-13 to sweep the set.

"We just weren't focussed," said Spartans coach Heather Henricks about her team's play in the early stages of the second contest. "Hopefully it's a lesson we learned for the next playoff round."

The Spartans were led by Danielle Trimms, Tanis McKnight, Alison Crowder and Sherry Hartnett.

The Spartans now go on to play in the eight-team second round playoff tourna-

ment Tuesday at Bayview S.S. The top two teams play for the YRAA title two days later at St. Roberts C.H.S. in Thornhill.

At Wednesday's playoff at SDSS, Unionville H.S. downed Markville to join the Spartans as the other south east division representative at Tuesday's second round tourney.

MIDGET SPARTANS HOLD COURT
 Danny Hill hit for 29 points as the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans midget boys' basketball team ended their season with a 61-56 victory over Middlefield S.S. recently.

Mark Burkholder had 16 points for the Spartans, who led 28-27 at the half before nursing their lead through the second half. B.J. James had 11 points and Allan Reesor-McDowell added five points. The Spartans were 13 for 22 from the foul line, with Burkholder hitting for eight of 10 free shots.

It was the second win in a row for the Spartans.

Clippers advance to quarter finals

It's on to the OMHA quarter finals for the Bouwmeister midget Clippers.

The Clippers captured the Lakeshore division crown when they defeated Cobourg 3-1 in a hard fought road contest Feb.

11. The win gave the Stouffville squad the best-of-five series three games to one. Kyle Harrison, Brett Boyd and Dan Tardella were the Clippers' marksmen. Assists went to Brandon Crossen (2), Cory Turgeon, Andrew

Korb, Ryan King and Boyd.

The Clippers open their quarter final series with Bradford on the road tonight in Bradford. Game two is scheduled for Sunday at 6:30 p.m. at the Rec Centre.