

**The Works**  
 Fitness & Aerobics Centre  
 190 Bullock Drive • (905) 471-7871

THE TRIBUNE  
**Sports & Leisure**

Got a score?  
 Call our Hotline  
 at 640-2100



**JUMPING FOR JOY:** Richard Mulder tries to extend himself as far as possible as he tackles the long jump event at the Orchard Park Public School Track and Field Meet at Stouffville District Secondary School on Wednesday.

Photo by SJOERD WITTEVEEN

# Acton hoping for another Stanley Cup

**BRUCE STAPLEY**  
 Correspondent

Keith Acton's going back to the show.

But this time he'll be holding a clip board instead of a hockey stick.

The 39-year-old Stouffville native and former National Hockey League all star will be behind the Philadelphia Flyers bench Saturday when the NHL's Eastern Conference champions take on the Detroit Red Wings in game one of the best-of-seven Stanley Cup finals.



KEITH ACTON

While Acton played on Stanley Cup champion teams in Montreal and Edmonton, this is his first trip to the finals as an assistant coach. The Flyers were ousted in the conference finals in his inaugural season as assistant coach in 1995, then failed to advance past the second round of the playoffs after finishing first in their division last spring.

But the Flyers are just four victories away from taking it all as the team looks to confirm its status as legitimate Cup contenders.

"The expectations have been

high for this team," Acton acknowledged in a Tribune telephone interview from his home in Cherry Hills, New Jersey. "We were a little disappointed last year."

Acton said rather than feeling the pressure of being favorites this spring, the Flyers are exuding confidence, using their high standing in the eyes of the analysts as confirmation of their talent.

"They're thinking, 'Hey, the expectations are high, that means we're a good team.' I think we're looking to prove that we're a winner."

When asked the difference between going to the Stanley Cup finals as a player and as a coach, Acton said a coach is removed physically and emotionally from the day-to-day grind on the ice.

"As a coach, there's not the same wear and tear physically as a player. Also, you're on a more even keel as a coach, it's less draining emotionally. The players get the big adrenalin rush."

Acton said another difference is that now that he's a coach, the players are less inclined to tap him for his Stanley Cup experiences. Instead, they'll draw from the Cup veterans on the team.

"The players talk to each other, they're a little guarded in talking to the coaches. They're going to talk to a guy like (veteran Paul) Coffey."

Acton said the road to the finals has been anything but easy for the Flyers. He credited the New York Rangers with showing a lot of character in the recently completed conference final, saying the series was untypical of a five-game set.

"It was gruelling," he conceded of the series.

Acton said the Flyers will have their hands full with the Red Wings.

"You're going to see two teams that are evenly matched."

As Saturday's opener approaches, Acton said the Flyers are anxiously awaiting the chance to realize their ultimate goal of winning the Stanley Cup.

"That's what you play for all year. We're looking forward to it. We've got a good team, the guys are playing with a lot of desire."

Win or lose, Acton said he'll return to Stouffville with his wife Susan and their four children in early July. With the playoffs taking up most of his time, he hasn't had a chance to hit the golf course so far this spring, and said he's looking forward to getting the clubs out during his summer break.

As for the Acton kids, they're too busy with their own lives to pay much attention to dad's date with destiny, said Acton.

"They're talking about it a little, but they've got their own things happening"

## Riders take centre stage today

Aspiring show jumpers from the Whitchurch, Claremont and Uxbridge-Scugog Pony Clubs will compete at the first of four Central Ontario Region Show Jumping Qualifiers in Stouffville today.

The show, which gets under way at 9 a.m., is to take place at the Pause Awhile Equestrian Centre (formerly Zweibrucken) on McCowan Rd. south of Bloomington Sideroad.

Spectators are welcome without charge.

Competitions will be at the beginner, novice, intermediate and open levels, plus non-qualifying classes for pre-beginners.

Competitors will be out to earn points to qualify to represent the region at the Ontario Pony Clubs Tournament of Champions, later this season.

Coming June 7.  
**The 407 Express Toll Route.**

Watch this paper or call 1-888-407-0407 for further details.

Zip Across Town **407 ETR**  
 Express Toll Route