Spirit management get the big picture as training camp unfolds

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Sports

They're growing 'em big as the Spirit of Stouffville pick the best of the crop at their 1997-98 season training camp.

Spirit head coach Dan Larmer is putting the emphasis on size as the team prepares for its 1997-98 Ontario Hockey Association Provincial Junior A Hockey League opener against Couchiching (formerly the Orillia Terriers) on Sept. 18.

The king-sized look will begin with the rear guard component, says Larmer.

"We have a really big defence," he said. "They're all over six feet and 190 pounds, and they're all (Tier two Junior A) veterans."

Up front, recent new signee Mark Bruss, a 6-foot-6, 230-pound right winger joins Kyle Chapman, a 6-foot-3, 210-pounder who signed last week.

Bruss, 18, had a goal in the Spirit's 7-2 pre-season loss to the Bowmanville Eagles on Wednesday in Richmond Hill. He averaged over a point a game with Westport Junior B's last season.

Larmer is confident the team's new bulk, combined with the strong work ethic he has seen in training camp, will make the Spirit a presence on the ice this season.

"These guys want to play a hard-nosed brand of hockey."

Larmer said the Spirit are also undergoing an average age increase, with last year's kiddie corps giving way to a squad with an average age of 18 to 19 years of age.

The Spirit camp will temporarily close up shop as Ontario Hockey League camps open this weekend.

They will resume on Thursday, before playing their first Rec Centre exhibition match on Sept. 6 against the Ajax Axemen beginning at 8 p.m.

Spiritually speaking: The Spirit are looking for an equipment manager as well as billets to house several out-of-town players. The team can also use some game night volunteers. Anyone interested should call **Jamie Hakonson at 642-6755** . . . the Spirit's inaugural golf tournament will take place Sept. 8 at the Maples of Ballantrae. More than 100 golfers are scheduled to take part. There are still some openings. Those interested should call **Ken Burrows at 640-9841** or **Jeff Cowley at 640-4125**.

Ringette players wanted

Stouffville area women are being invited to take part in the Markham Women's Ringette League houseleague program.

Interested participants must be 21 years of age or over. Games are played at Mount Joy Arena on Friday evenings from 9 to 11 beginning Oct. 3.

For further information, contact Sue Kay at 640-0217.

Got a score? Call us at 640-2100 or FAX us your results at 640-5477.

Triathletes make good time at Musselman's Lake

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

They came from all over the world to take part in a short distance triathlon just north of Stouffville last Saturday.

The Stouffville 2 Triathlon, the second in the 12-event Midland Walwyn Great Lakes Multi-Sport Series this summer, saw 125 triathletes from 11 through 55 years of age take part.

Sixteen-year-old Nerissa Johnson of British Columbia was the overall female winner. Johnson, who is the top junior female triathlon athlete in the country, is a member of the Canadian National Triathlon Team which will compete in the World Triathlon Championships in Australia this November.

Sweden's Jonas Colting was the overall male winner.

Mt. Albert's Jackie Wilson was first overall in the duathlon, which was run the same day.

The triathlon, which began at the Shadow Lake Centre, included an 800-metre swim, a 28-kilometre cycle and a six-km. run.

The duathlon saw a 28-kilometre cycle sandwiched between runs of two and six km. A surf and turf event involved an 800-metre swim and a six-km. run.

The series is serving as a fund raiser for the Canadian Cross Training Club, which is out of Toronto. Stouffville 2 Triathlon co-ordinator Jim Climenhaga said the Stouffville site was picked because of its overall convenience.

"Durham and York Regions have both been involved with the program," said Climenhaga. "There are lots of local triathletes here."

He said Musselman's Lake is being considered for the 1998 Midland Walwyn series Junior National Triathlon Championships.

DON VALLEY NORTH LEXUS - TOYOTA ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

Leslie Bonello

Suffering an arm injury the night before the start of the recent provincial championships in Stratford did not deter Leslie Bonello from taking to the field with her Markham Lynx bantam girls' fastball team.

The 16-year-old Bonello tore the large ligament which runs down the inside of her left arm (catching arm).

Despite the injury, Bonello had the arm heavily taped and took to the field where she was the club's designated hitter in two games and played left field in the third game. In one game, Bonello had four hits in five trips to the plate in the Lynx's 9-8 extra-innings win over London.

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