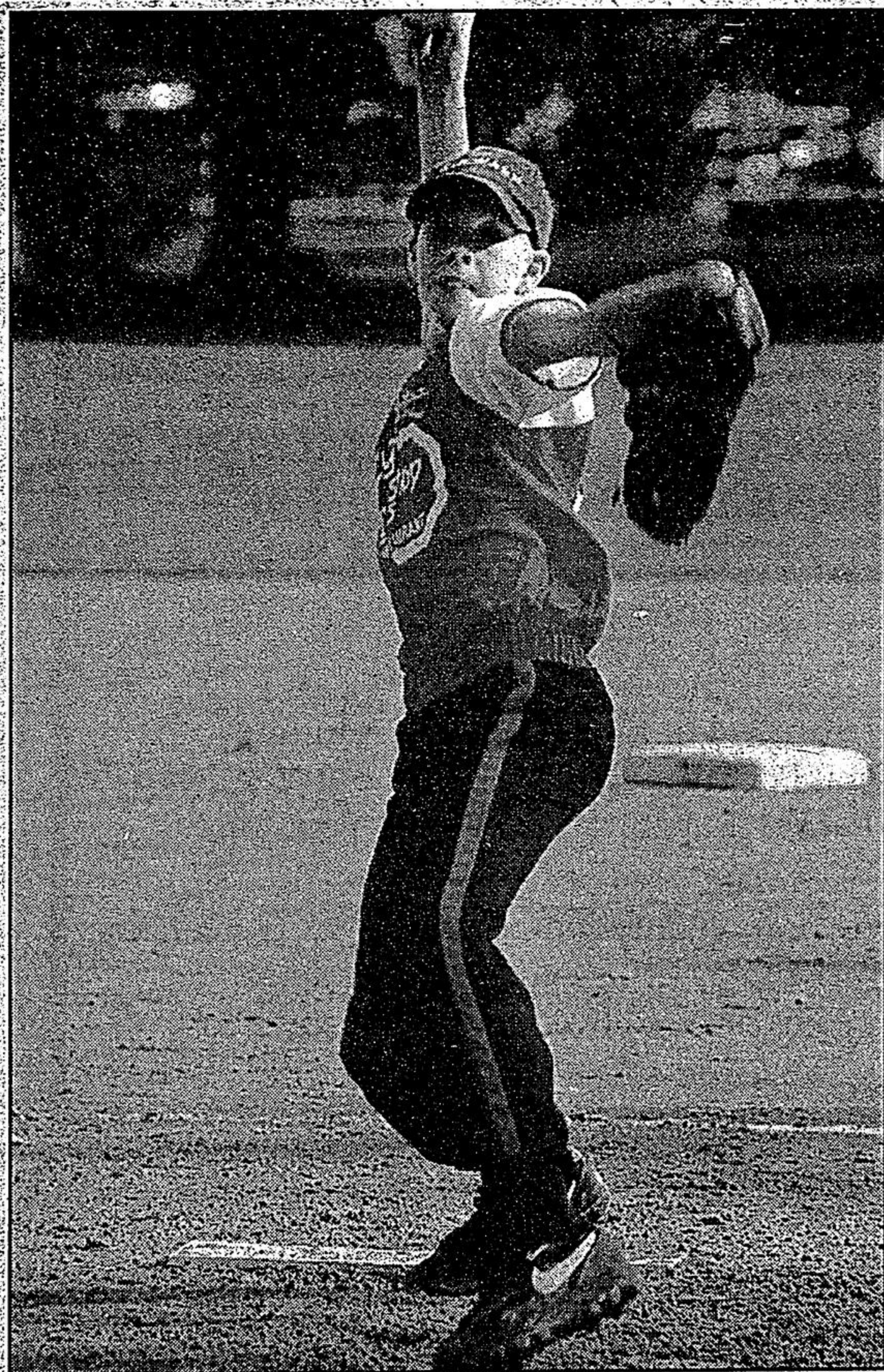


Sports & Leisure

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DELIVERING SOME HEAT: Ballantrae pitcher Jonathon Paynter gets set to unload this pitch to a Vandorf batter during action in Saturday's Whitchurch-Stouffville Baseball Association squirt houseleague playoff game at the Town Park diamond. Vandorf, however, won the game 11-8.

Photo by CHERYL JOHNSON

Ice user groups set up for two ice pads

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

The final pieces of the ice time jig saw puzzle have finally been put in place as Stouffville prepares for its first season as a two-ink town.

The various ice user groups had their ice time confirmed Tuesday after some last-minute shuffling to accommodate a Spirit of Stouffville request to have their home date changed to Thursday nights from Saturdays.

"All the groups are pretty well where they wanted to be," said the town's Director of Parks, Facilities and Recreation John Crawley.

He said that while conflicts had arisen among some of the groups, schedules were ironed out by a process of give and take in all but one case.

"This was accomplished through the co-operation of user groups modifying their times. Only one change was stipulated by the (recreation) department, and that only involved 20 minutes."

That change saw the Whitchurch-Stouffville Girls Hockey Association's (WSGHA) Tuesday night slot pushed ahead from an 8:40 p.m. start to 9 p.m.

The girls will play until 11 p.m. WSGHA president Dianne White was disappointed with the move, saying it effectively squashes plans to have two rep level games Tuesday nights.

"We're not happy, it's not going to work for us," said White, who said it will be impossible to bring in teams from out of town for a second game. "They refuse to consider a game starting at 10

p.m. And I can't have one game at 9 p.m. because the referees won't come in for just one game."

White said the original schedule was set in June, with the WSGHA told just recently of the change.

"That's too late. We worked on our new schedule from January through June." She said she was hopeful something still might be worked out to regain the original slot.

However, like other user groups, the WSGHA is basking in the luxury of greatly increased overall ice time, going from eight to 14 total hours.

The organization also has seven hours of weekly ice time in Markham to accommodate WSGHA players from that town.

"I think overall we've got an excited bunch of user groups," said Crawley.

"By and large, they're looking at expanded programs. Plus, they don't have to turn any one away, or buy out of town ice time any more."

MORE HOURS FOR MINOR HOCKEY

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association (WSMHA), the town's biggest user group, will see its allocation upped from 40 to 76 hours. The Whitchurch-Stouffville Figure Skating Club goes from 13 to 22 hours. The burgeoning Stouffville Amateur Hockey League (SAHL), is another victim of the ice time crunch in recent years, will have 10 hours to work with, taking over both pads Wednesday nights from approximately 9 till midnight, as well as the second pad Sunday mornings from 7:40 till 11:40 a.m.

The Spirit will practice Monday nights from 9:30 till 11 p.m. Crawley said existing hockey and skating interests gobbled up all the extra prime time hours and made available by the coming of the second ice pad, except for a few hours on Saturday night.

"Every one expected that because there is a second pad there would be plenty of (prime time) ice. There isn't."

He said the Saturday night vacancy gives the department something to work with.

"From an operational point of view, it's good to have some vacant ice time. When you're 100 per cent booked, you can't accommodate changes to anyone's schedule."

Crawley said the recreation department will now set about the task of marketing the remaining 45 hours a week of off-time ice still available.

"We'll be looking at parent and tots, learn to skate, and adult skating groups. We'll always have (off time) ice available for special clinics, or tournaments beginning Friday afternoons."

Pad A already has 20 of its 35 off time hours booked. Pad B has booked five off time hours to date.

Crawley said extra Christmas and March break slots are already filled as existing tournaments have simply expanded. Also, the second pad has made it so special tournaments booked throughout the season will no longer mean lost ice time for regular users.

Looking towards next year, Crawley said he expects things to do even better in terms of prime time ice allocation.

Spirit put Axe to Ajax

BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Spirit of Stouffville head coach Dan Larmer was quick to warn fans not to expect the same type of offensive outburst they saw Saturday night every time the team takes to the ice this season.

But while the upbeat coach was reluctant to read too much into the Spirit's 11-4 win over their Provincial Junior A Hockey League rival Ajax Axemen in their pre-season home opener at the Rec Centre, he was pleased nonetheless.

"We were really happy with the effort the guys put forward last night," Larmer said Sunday. "They are working real hard. It's something I never saw last season."

Returning right winger Scott Martin equalled his entire goal production of the 1996-97 season with a pair of markers.

Jason Ellis, a returning defenceman who will be one of four captains with this year's edition of the Spirit, scored twice as well, as did Brandon Crossen, one of the team's promising Stouffville hopefuls. Stouffville's Andrew Hutchison also

scored.

Other goals went to Dave Velasco, Kyle Chapman, Todd Sikorski and Aaron Kohn.

Kohn was one of five players cut after the game, leaving the Spirit with 25 players in camp. Larmer will start the season with 23 players.

The win was the first of the pre-season for the Spirit, who have a tie and two losses.

Larmer said he is noting a marked difference in attitude and work ethic with this year's Spirit players.

"It's gratifying to see it start to come together. There's a real about face in the attitude in the dressing room."

Larmer said the 1997-98 Spirit will be an older, bigger bunch than last year's squad. He said that by carrying 23 players there will be more competition by positions.

The Spirit practice tonight and Thursday at 9 p.m. at the Rec Centre, then take to the road this weekend for games against the Bowmanville Eagles Saturday, and the Lindsay Muskies in Bradford Sunday.

Recalling a world record

Sports Notes

September

RIDING TO THE TOP

A couple of Whitchurch-Stouffville riders were in the winners circle at the Ontario Pony Club Tournament of Champions held at the York Equestrian Centre, formerly the Eglinton Equestrian Centre, in Cedar Valley Aug. 29-31.

In the Central Ontario Regional Show Jumping Championships Novice Division team competition, Rohan Sajani and Laura Valenta of the Whitchurch Pony Club were on the first place finishing team. Amanda McIninch and Danielle Hilton of the Whitchurch club were on the second place team in the team competition in the intermediate division.

In the Invitational Show Jumping Competition, Cynthia Johnson from the Pause Awhile stables was a member of the team which came in second in the Beginner 1 (Ponies) Division team competition. In the Novice Division team competition, Laura Valenta was on the first place finishing quartet. Amanda McIninch was on the third place team in the Intermediate Division.

The Total Recall Flyball team, which includes several Stouffville trainers as well as dogs from this town, is back on top of the world.

The team established a world record earlier this year, but was knocked off its perch by their Caledonia rival, Instant Replay, at a competition in Glanbrook the weekend of Aug. 23.

But the Total Recall outfit vaulted back on top by posting a time of 16:33, an unofficial world's record, at the Borden Canine Association Fifth Annual Flyball Tournament at Base Borden the weekend of Aug. 30. Instant Replay were North American Flyball champions in 1995 and '96. The Total Recall team is hoping to be named 1997 champs after winning the gold at six of 12 tournaments they participated in this season, while placing second in the other six. The decision will be made in November by the North American Flyball Association. The season wraps up at the end of