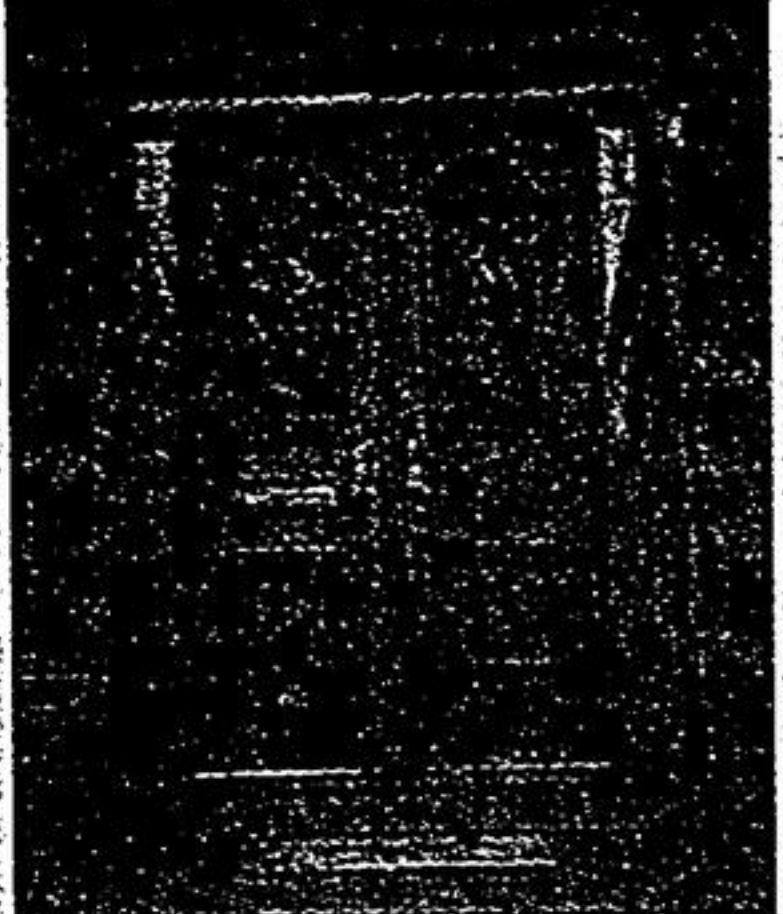


Sports

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A SPIRITED TIME ON THE LINKS: The Spirit of Stouffville Junior A hockey club held its inaugural golf tournament at the Maples of Ballantrae Lodge and Golf Club on Monday. One of the day's lighter moments saw (from far left), Pete Fintelman hold the flag while former Uxbridge Bruins' player Kirk Smythe encourages Spirit forward Scott Martin to sink this putt at the 18th hole. Looking on are former Bruins' players Darron Baston and Chris Winn.

Photo by LORI EMMERSON

Spirit golf tourney a successful venture

**BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent**

They gathered 120 strong for the first ever Spirit of Stouffville Golf Tournament at the Maples of Ballantrae on Monday.

The event, a scramble which saw each foursome grouped with a Spirit player or official, was organized to enable the Stouffville community to familiarize themselves with Spirit players and members of the Provincial Junior A Hockey League organization.

Professional Hockey Players Association vice-president Randy Hall was the guest speaker at the dinner which followed the tournament. Hall coached the Uxbridge Bruins Junior C hockey team in the mid-1980's, piloting the Bruins for a two-week exhibition tour of Germany and Switzerland in 1986.

A former director of operations for the Ontario Hockey League's Niagara Falls Thunder, Hall coached Spirit head coach Dan Larmer when he was with the Vaughan Raiders Junior B hockey club.

Hall reminded players and others in attendance that hockey is a business at the Junior, as well as the professional level.

"The owners have to have deep pockets," he said, adding that a successful marketing program is essential for any hockey team to survive.

He told the players to enjoy the game, have fun and enjoy the friendships made while always putting the team first.

"The most important name on your sweater is on the front, not the back," he said.

Spirit owner Ed Hakonson paid tribute to those who have committed themselves to supporting the team. He introduced new general manager Clive Moody, head coach Larmer, assistant coaches Trevor Clark and John Peron, and chief scout

Ken Burrows.

Moody addressed those in attendance, asking for the support of the town as the Spirit attempt to build a competitive, entertaining team this season.

"Without the support of the people of Stouffville, and our sponsors, there is no hockey team," said Moody, who hinted the Spirit have some "big plans" for the current season.

Spirit defenceman Jeff Marshall thanked the coaching staff and those who organized the tournament.

"We hope to pay you back with a couple of victories when the season starts on Sept. 18," said Marshall.

The winning men's team in the tournament included Stouffville's Jim, John and Bill Bell, Sam Singer, and Spirit winger Kevin Edgar. The quintet combined for a dazzling 54 on the par 72 course.

The top ladies' team was Lorna Burrows, Lois Bartley, Helen Hassard and Carol McKinnon, who were grouped with Moody.

Ron Schell was the winner in a playoff in the putting contest, while Bobby Shanks won two of the four closest to the hole contests.

In an auction held after the dinner, a photo of the 1967 Stanley Cup winning Toronto Maple Leafs fetched \$460. A Toronto Blue Jays jersey autographed by 1996 Cy Young Award winner Pat Hentgen went for \$110, while a stick from Buffalo Sabres all-star goalkeeper Domenic Hasek brought in \$120.

Spiritually Speaking: A preseason game between the Spirit and Milton Merchants scheduled for tonight at the Rec Centre has been cancelled. The Spirit close out their preseason with weekend road games against the Bowmanville Eagles on Saturday and Lindsay Muskies in Bradford on Sunday. The Spirit open the season at home against the Couchiching Terriers on Sept. 18 at 7:30 p.m.

Assinck and Bellissimo bear down to help capture gold

A trio of Stouffville softball players made their presence felt at the recent Eastern Canadian Pee-wee Softball Championships in Fredericton, N.B. Stouffville's Rod Assinck and Ben

Bellisimo helped the Willowdale Golden Bears to the gold medal at the tournament. The Bears defeated the Richmond Hill Rebels 5-1 in the title

■ Please see page 19 ■

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