

The economics of purchasing hockey equipment for a youngster

To outfit your youngster for the upcoming hockey season requires money and caution in purchasing equipment

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
CORRESPONDENT

So your son or daughter wants to play hockey.

For decades, parents have been coming to grips with the allocation of both funds and time required for their young offspring to take up the traditional Canadian game.

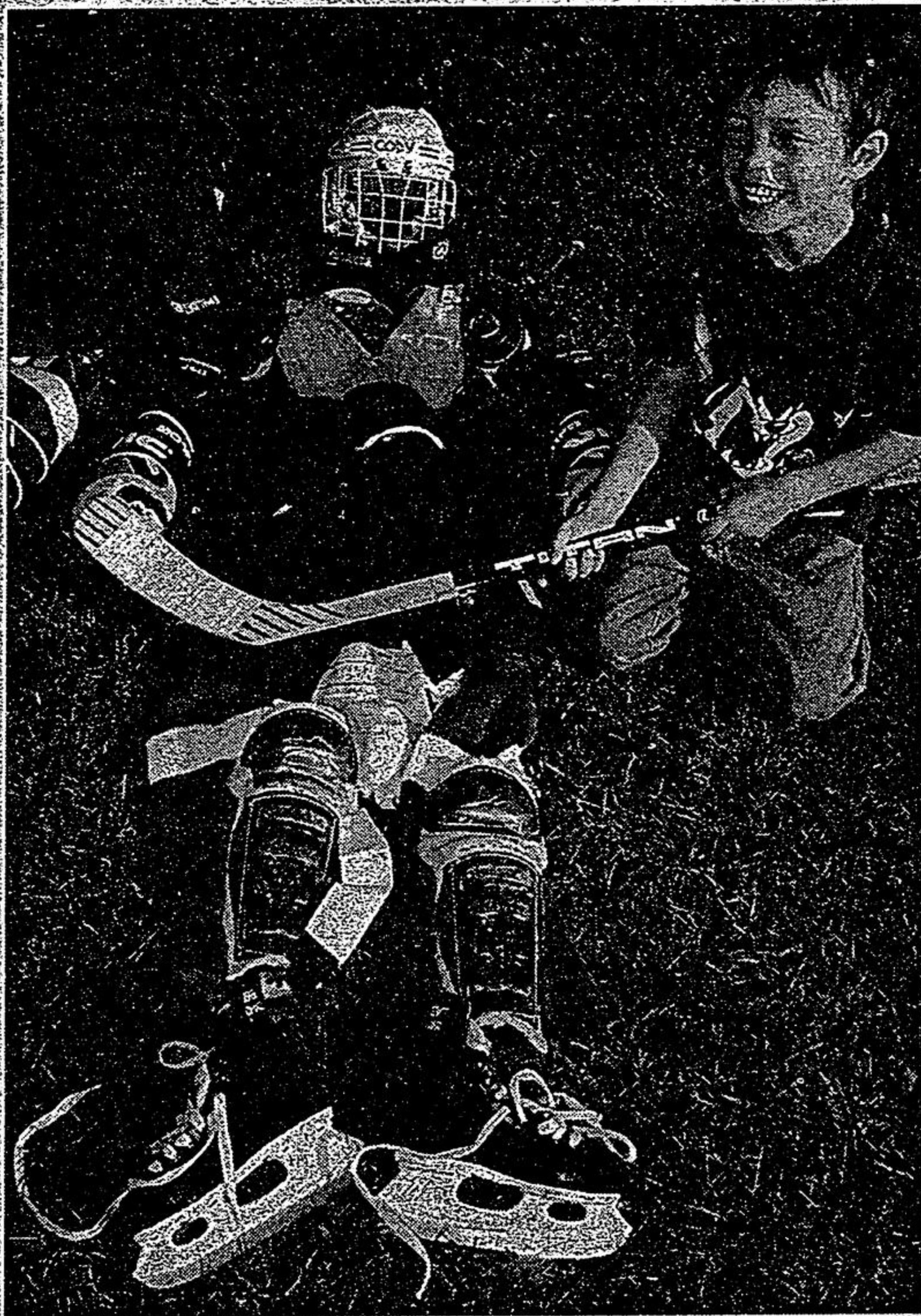
While there's no arguing that the costs of entering a child into a hockey program for the first time can be prohibitive, there are ways of making sure you get the most bang for your buck.

Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association Player Development and Training Coordinator Anne Salvagna says it's best to start out by taking the youngster to a local sports equipment retailer.

In Stouffville there's Boyd's Source For Sports and Canadian Tire," says Salvagna. "Both stores are very competent, and can tell you what you'll need."

Salvagna suggests that while used skates and equipment can serve to reduce the cost of equipping a first-time player, the exchanged gear comes with drawbacks.

"You have to remember that the equipment has been used" and



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEN

Cody Wells, 5, poses with the basic gear he will be required to wear for the upcoming hockey campaign.

sometimes it has a tendency to smell. I find the new equipment doesn't cost that much more," Salvagna said purchasing used

skates is only an advantage if they fit.

"Be sure they fit properly," she cautioned.

Ian Boyd, proprietor of Boyd's Source For Sports, said his assortment of used skates bears an average price tag of \$30 a pair.

"Used skates tend to cost about 25 per cent of new ones in most cases," he said.

Boyd advocates the purchase of used equipment for beginners, but like Salvagna has reservations.

"Buy as much used equipment as possible. But just remember some places mark up used equipment just like they do new equipment so it's not always a great bargain. And remember that fit is the key to equipment whether it's new or used, low end or high end. Even a hockey stick has to be the right size."

He advises that those looking for goalie equipment should definitely check out the used market first due to the high cost of new gear.

Boyd said he invites customers to bring their used equipment into the store for proper fitting when they come in to purchase their new gear.

Debbie Hudson, who works in the Canadian Tire sporting goods department in Stouffville, said it's important to make sure that any equipment purchased will do the job it's intended to do.

"Things like neck guards, shoulder pads and hockey pants have to cover the areas to be protected properly," said Hudson.

She suggested parents look for sale prices on name-brand equipment when decking out their children for hockey.

The association is not planning skate or equipment exchanges for the coming season, said Salvagna.

Canadian Tire has no used equipment. The Boyd's store is offering a program allowing customers to drop off their used equipment the week of Sept. 17, with money received from the sale of the equipment coming back to the customer by way of a store credit on new equipment.

For new equipment, Boyd and Hudson suggested an eight-year-old youngster can get started for somewhere between \$250 to \$300 dollars.

"You want to get name brand equipment," warned Boyd, who reminded that other than helmets, there are no approvals required on hockey equipment.

Boyd said there's no need to get carried away when purchasing a set of hockey equipment for an entry-level player.

"You should be keeping it basic and simple. You don't have to buy the high-tech stuff."

Boyd said the cost of a full set of equipment for a 14-year-old individual could start around the \$600 mark.

In addition to the cost of equipment, registration fees must also be paid.

The association registration fee is \$300 for the 1998-99 season for house league players. Players making select level teams pay approximately \$300 more for the privilege, with rep level players required to shell out an additional \$500.

And of course, the cost of take out coffee for parents getting up to drive their kids to the arena before dawn on a Saturday morning is extra.

Major peewees reach semis

FROM PAGE 14

Brian Hillar and Adam Davis combined for the shutout against Willowdale.

Clippers MVP's for the five games were Justin Brugger, Bruno Mulder, Shayne Paterson and Allan.

The major peewee Clippers advanced to the semi-finals before suffering a 5-3 loss to Vaughan.

After defeating TNT in its opening round-robin contest 2-1, the major peewees dropped a 2-0 decision to Brampton.

In its third game, the Clippers blanked Whitby 4-0.

The major bantam Clippers jumped out of

the gate with wins over Malton 2-1 and Willowdale 3-0 before falling 6-0 to the Agincourt Lions in its third outing.

Richard Lynn had the shutout against Willowdale.

Richard Mulder, Dylan Harrison, Travis McMaster, Benjamin Crawford and Justin Amyotte had the Clippers goals.

The minor novice Clippers managed a win in three tries, with a 7-2 triumph over Clarkson the highlight of their weekend. Justin Hulshof and Malcolm Forbes each netted a pair in the triumph, with Jamie Wise and Dennis O'Shaughnessy also scoring.

The host minor bantams tied its three pool play games, leaving them out of the playoff round.

Pearce remains on short list

John Pearce is in the running to make the Canadian Show Jumping Team that will compete in Rome, Italy this fall.

Pearce was second on the short list released by the Canadian Equestrian

Team Jumping Selection Committee last week listing the leading candidates to compete at the World Equestrian Games in Rome this fall.

The 38-year-old Stouffville rider was bested only by Mario Deslauriers of Quebec.

The list includes 18 riders, any of whom may be selected to represent Canada at the World Games.

ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



MATTHEW BINNS

This 14-year-old Claremont cyclist went all the way at the Can-Am Challenge in Batavia, N.Y. the weekend of Aug. 29. Matthew won all three qualifying races, then took the checkered flag in the 25-lap Amateur Production Class 50 c.c. category.

Great going Matthew!

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