

Midget Clippers set sail with Sinclair

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
CORRESPONDENT

Paul Sinclair has brought his coach's clip board back to Stouffville in hopes of hanging the first provincial midget hockey championship banner on the rec centre walls since the one he helped win in 1987.

The 29-year-old former Stouffville Clipper and Uxbridge Bruin stepped in to take over this year's Bouwmeister midget Clippers squad just two weeks before the season began.

The team's roster includes eight players Sinclair coached as minor bantam Clippers three years ago. That was the season that saw Sinclair team up with another former Clipper and one-time Bruins teammate, Jason Underwood, to guide the minor bantam squad to the York Simcoe League finals.

Sinclair accepted a coaching position with the Georgina Ice of the Central Junior C Hockey League the following season. He brought along eight Stouffville players he had coached at the bantam level. The Ice, who then had an affiliation agreement with the Spirit of Stouffville Junior A club, reached the league final.

The 1997-98 season saw Underwood go on to become Bruins head coach while Sinclair stayed with the Ice. But a disappointing season and a change of policy that saw the Ice carry just one Stouffville player resulted in Sinclair's leaving the Georgina club last spring.

"Georgina didn't want Stouffville kids, they wanted to keep it local. I figured with all the talent we had here in Stouffville that if I couldn't take them up to Georgina there was no point."

He said a new job he recently took in North Toronto contributed to his decision to leave the Ice.



PAUL SINCLAIR
Hopes to coach midget Clippers to OMHA title

Sinclair was prepared to leave coaching altogether until midget Clippers coach Dan Fontanna's son, Ryan, caught on with the York Simcoe AAA midgets earlier this fall.

"Dan said he'd still coach the team if they wanted him to, but he was hoping to watch his two boys play as much as possible."

Sinclair agreed to assume the coaching position, with Wayne Jackson and Dan Jardella as assistants.

Sporting a 5-1-1 mark in its first seven games this year, Sinclair feels his charges have a shot at going as far as last year's squad, which advanced to the Ontario Minor Hockey Association championship finals.

Beginning his coaching career in 1991 in the Uxbridge minor hockey system, Sinclair helped the Bruins to the Central League and Eastern Ontario titles in his final season with the team. He piloted the Uxbridge bantams to the OMHA semi-finals, and the International Silver Stick finals, in 1991-92. He coached that town's juvenile rep team the following season.

Sinclair continued to play hockey for two seasons in the former Stouffville intermediate men's league at the conclusion of his junior career.

But he was off skates until this season when he joined a team of local players in an A division men's league in Scarborough.

But with Sinclair's ever increasing responsibilities as inventory control co-ordinator with Check Point Canada, he sees his coaching days drawing to a close.

"This might be my last year," hinted Sinclair, who was Stouffville's Sports Personality of the Year in 1996.

"I've done my share of coaching. It's been fun."

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The Stouffville K-Line Group-Muir's Cartage major atom select Clippers captured the consolation title of the recent Warsaw tournament with a 5-0 victory over the PMHA selects.

The Clippers lost its first game of the tournament to Pickering 1-0. But they rallied to edge Uxbridge 5-4 in overtime to reach the consolation final.

Scoring for the Clippers were: Nick Singh, four goals, two assists; Daniel James, two goals, four assists; Philip Briggs, two goals, one assist; Jordan Kellett, one goal, one assist; Jennifer Carter, one goal, one assist; Kurtis Paisley and David Hogg, one assist; Kyle Basset and Matt Cartwright split goal-tending duties.

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**DON VALLEY NORTH LEXUS - TOYOTA
ATHLETE OF THE WEEK**

CARMEN BARNETT

Carmen Barnett swam up a storm last season and for her efforts was awarded the Silver Dolphin Award by the Town of Markham at the Markham Aquatic Club's annual banquet Sunday.

The 16 year old Barnett earned the honour after winning four gold medals at the Ontario Summer Games and being named the best athlete. She also finished ninth the 100 metre butterfly and 16th in the 200m butterfly at the Summer Senior Canadian championships.

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