

SPORTS: Slow start haunts Spirit in Thursday contest against Thornhill Rattlers

Spirit get stung by Rattlers

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
CORRESPONDENT

It took the Spirit of Stouffville 40 minutes to find a cure for snakebite Thursday night at the rec centre.

But by then it was too late as a third period rally fell short in a 6-3 loss to the Thornhill Rattlers in the Ontario Provincial Junior A Hockey League game.

The surging Rattlers built up a 3-0 first period lead, then carried a 5-0 bulge into the final 20 minutes.

The host club finally came to life with a pair of goals early in the period, then added another with 12 minutes to play.

But the Thornhill squad managed to stave off the Spirit resurgence, adding a sixth goal into an empty Stouffville net in the dying seconds to slither away with the win.

"We kind of ran out of time," said Spirit assistant coach Craig Donovan. "If we had started 10 minutes earlier, or if the game had gone 10 minutes longer, we might have got them. I just hope they take the intensity from the third period and carry it into their next game (against the Tigers in Aurora last night)."

Defenceman Justin Graham counted the first Spirit marker, his third of the season, on a pretty three-way passing play that also involved Mike Michelf and Jason Read.

Ryan Bowen connected with his first goal of the season a low screen shot from just inside the blue line a minute later, with Dave Zelasko and Scott Martin drawing assists.

Will Chang made no mistake when he suddenly found himself all alone with the

puck in front of the Rattlers net, making a nice play to put it behind Thornhill goalkeeper Jamie Fraresso for his fourth of the year. Jesse Johnston and Mike Tucciarone assisted.

The Spirit continued to apply pressure especially in the final few minutes.

But a combination of near misses and Fraresso's efforts kept them from drawing any closer.

Donovan had praise for the efforts of Bowen, who was shifted to defence when a combination of injuries, suspensions and a flu bug left the team with only four rear-guards. He was also impressed with the work of defenceman Dan Oshell.

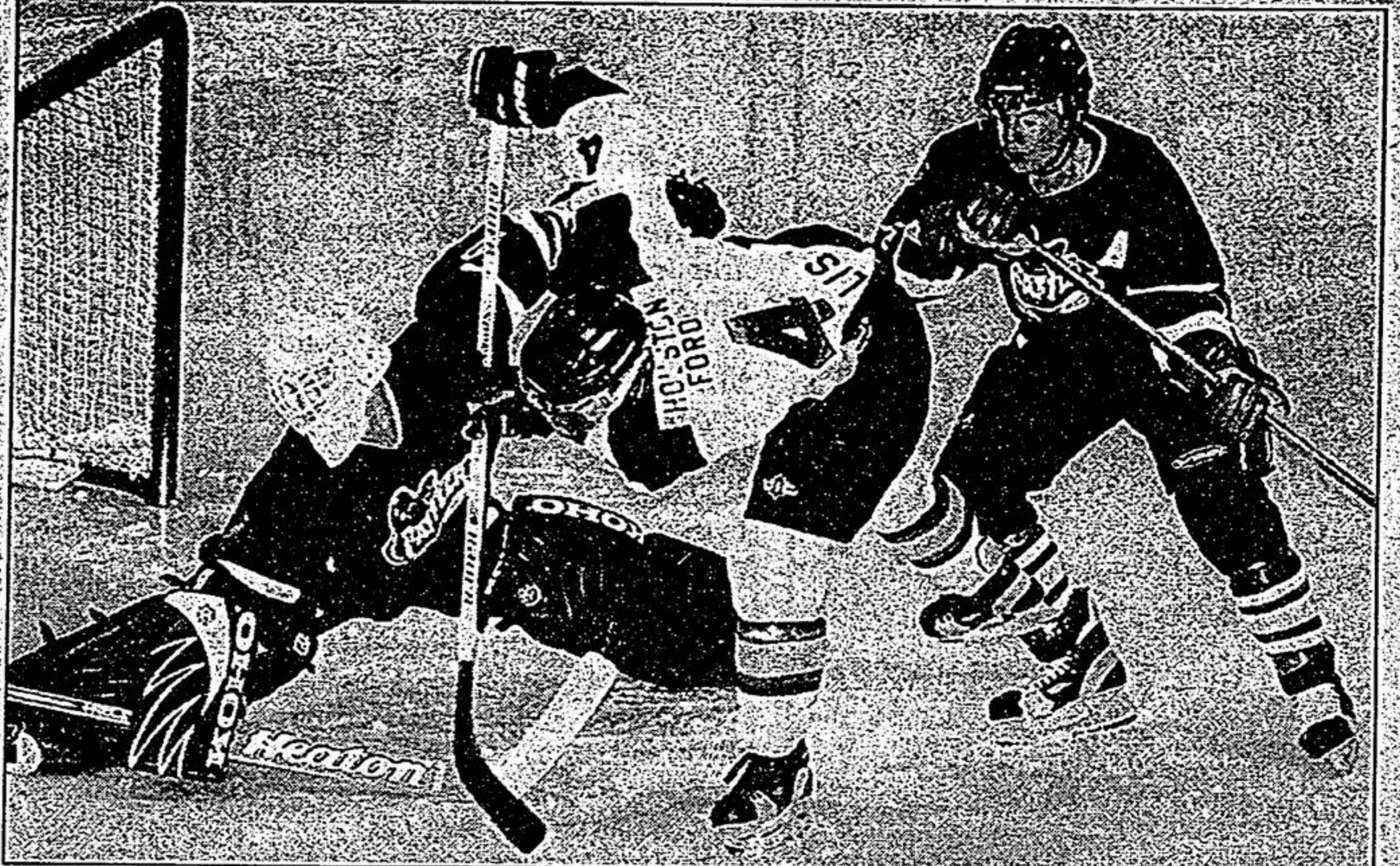
The Rattlers held a 35-26 edge in shots on goal. It was the fourth straight loss for the Spirit, who fell three points behind the seventh-place Rattlers in the league's Central Conference standings.

The Spirit will host the third-place Collingwood Blues on Dec. 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Spiritually speaking, Spirit centre Phil Barski could be on the sidelines until the Newmarket Christmas Tournament. Barski is still groggy from a slash to the face courtesy of Couchiching Terriers forward Don Vernon on Dec. 3. Barski, the Spirit's second-leading point getter this season, had to have 29 stitches to patch a cut inside his mouth. He also suffered a mild concussion.

The Spirit are sending a videotape of the incident to OHA league headquarters, along with a letter asking for a hefty suspension for Vernon.

"Brian (Spirit head coach Perrin) would like to see him get six more games than I



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEN

Spirit of Stouffville captain Jason Ellis (centre), barrels in on Thornhill Rattlers goalkeeper Jamie Fraresso after being checked by a Rattlers' defenceman in Thursday's Provincial Junior A Hockey League game at the rec centre. The Rattlers prevailed 6-3.

miss," revealed Barski.

Spirit owner Ed Hakonson is sticking to his guns in his insistence the Newmarket Era-Banner retract a recent story in which it was stated that the Newmarket Hurricanes say the owner admitted to tampering with Perrin in an attempt to get him to bolt the Hurricanes to take the Spirit coaching job.

The tampering was supposed to have occurred during the Newmarket Christmas tournament last December.

"I wasn't even in the country then," said Hakonson, who said he first met Perrin in March.

Hakonson said he intends to hold the paper to account.

SPORTS DIGEST

Minor peewees ice B tourney title

The Stouffville minor peewee select Clippers came home with the B title at the recent Tri-County hockey tournament with a 3-2 win over Oshawa.

The Clippers won its first game over Keswick 4-2 but lost its second game to Newcastle 5-3 before reaching the B final.

Scoring for the Clippers were: Michael Short, six goals, one assist; Scott Robinson, two goals; David Salvagna, one goal, two assists; Scott Girard, one goal, one assist; Ryan Jenkins and Nikolas Ristich, three assists; Michael Fujimoto and Daniel Campitelli, two assists; Kyle Schell, Brad herchal and Benjamin Smith, one assist.



Novice selects win one of three in Warsaw tourney

The Stouffville Stewart's Truck Wrecking Ltd. Fairgate Homes-Pronto Automotive novice select Clippers ran into some formidable opposition at a recent tournament in Warsaw as they won one of three games.

The Clippers won its opening game over Port Hope 4-1 before dropping decisions to Uxbridge 2-0 and Port Hope 3-1.

Scoring for the Clippers were: Andrew Stewart, two goals; Jeff Gibson, Daniel Lewis and Derek Conlon, one goal; Matthew Mauro, Tyler Upton, David Stanton, Simon Kennedy and Wesley Davis, one assist. Goalkeepers Tyler Neil and Kirk Paterson earned Most Valuable Player honours in the first two games while defenceman Simon Kennedy garnered the award in the third game.

Local players help Waxers win five

Three local players have played a major role in helping the Markham Waxers tyke AAA team win its last five contests over Pickering 6-1, Ajax 3-1, Richmond Hill 8-0 and 5-1 and Brampton 7-4.

Ethan Werek delivered eight goals and seven assists in those outings while Patrick McEachen had two goals and seven helpers and Chris Porter, three assists.

Economist & Sun
Stouffville Tribune
Your best source of local and regional news.

CORRECTION

Our Website address is www.inforamp.net/~waxers

Rated one of the best Websites by Hockey Canada

The Economist & Sun apologizes for the error

DON VALLEY NORTH LEXUS - TOYOTA ATHLETE OF THE WEEK



JULIAN CHIU

Julian Chiu, 10, had a gym dandy performance when he took part in the Men's First Superqualifier at Mississauga last weekend.

The Markham Gymnastics Club member finished first overall in the Flight 3 Cadet 2 category.

Chiu recorded scores of: 8.80 on floor; 9.15 on pommel horse; 9.20 on rings; 9.35 on vault; 9.30 on parallel bars and 9.55 on high bar for an overall score of 55.35.

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