

SPORTS: Despite the growth of other sports, the Whitchurch-Stouffville Softball Association still draws a good number of players



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

A TIMELY SAVE

Hawks goalie Brad Malvern makes a kick save on a shot taken by Bruins' Ken McKay in this SAHL round-robin contest at the rec centre last Saturday. The Hawks won 3-2.

It's almost time to play ball

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

Soccer is drawing new converts in Stouffville, while the prospect of a new skate board facility has many young people champing at the bit to sign on.

But the pull of the softball diamond continues to attract kids and teens from this town and neighbouring hamlets.

The Whitchurch-Stouffville Softball Association (WSSA) takes to the field with 62 house league teams, nine rep level squads and an assortment of select units in mid-May.

Rep teams have been holding winter tryouts in local school gymnasiums, with rosters already set as the action sets to shifts to the parks over the next few weeks. The select outfits are also assessing the cream of the house league crop indoors in preparation for the return to the grass.

And although alternatives to softball as a summer activity for young people continue to increase, WSSA president June Doner refuses to see it as a competition as to which sport or activity can attract the most players.

"There are a lot of sports out there for kids today," Doner said. "I think that's great. As long as they have something to do."

While the glut of WSSA teams are at the lower age levels, there is interest at the upper ages as well, especially among females.

"We have six girls bantam/midget teams, and four boys teams at that level," she noted.

The WSSA runs programs from the t-ball and five pitch levels through midget.

The association will field rep boys teams at the mite, squirt, peewee, bantam and midget levels. Girls' rep teams are being fielded in squirt, novice, bantam and midget divisions.

The house leagues will be made up of roughly 510 Whitchurch-Stouffville players, in addition to teams from affiliated centres including Goodwood, Claremont and Oak Ridges.

Doner said her executive is still putting the finishing touches on getting things ready for opening day.

But while the first pitch is yet to be thrown, the WSSA has already managed to overcome one potential problem. The association was faced with the prospect of the temporary loss of two diamonds located to the southwest of the main diamond at Memorial Park.

"We had been told we couldn't have Franklin Park and diamond four because of road construction," Doner said. "But the road has been delayed."

Doner said that while her four years as WSSA president have brought with them a heavy workload, she has had support from her fellow executive members.

She also heaped praise on the long list of sponsors who

always come through each season, with a few extras always on hand when needed.

While some coaches, like some parents, take a more competitive approach to the game than others, WSSA coaches have a good track record, she said.

"We've had no big problems."

WHAT JESUS HAS TO SAY ABOUT...

MONEY

MULTIPLE CHOICE

Which statement best describes what Jesus has to say about MONEY?

- a) For what shall it profit a man if he moves to Rosedale yet continues to drive a 1976 Pacer?
- b) He who has ears to hear, let him hear...every word that proceeds out of the mouth of Alan Greenspan.
- c) It would be easier for teachers to vote Mike Harris 'Politician of the Year' than for yuppies to live without credit.
- d) For Donald Trump so loved New York that he bought all the prime real estate so that whosoever invests like him will remain poor but become exorbitantly wealthy.
- e) Blessed is your investment counselor for he shall help you inherit Freedom 55.
- f) Forgive us our excesses as we forgive those whose great stuff made us covet in the first place.
- g) For you shall know your credit card balance and the truth shall give you an ulcer.

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Stars ice title

Lauren Gainsbrook's goal four minutes into overtime lifted the Markham-Stouffville Kindred Construction-OAS-Pronto Automotive-1 and 1 Construction-Hazmasters-Risk Management Solutions peewee Stars to a 2-1 overtime win over Brampton in the recent North Metro BB girls' hockey championship final.

Ashley Lucas staked the Stars to a 1-0 lead before Brampton rallied to tie the score in the third period to force overtime.

Erin Carter earned an assist on Gainsbrook's marker.

In reaching the final, the Stars received a stellar netminding effort from Danielle Paterson and a goal from Emily Penrose to down Durham West 1-0 in its semi-final contest.

Stephanie Giliberto and Shannon Hagarty drew assists.

Other members contributing to the title included: Emily Bradford, Ashley Lucas, Jillian Morrison, Melanie Paterson, Heather Van Dam, Sarah Mikos, Erica Burgess, Kara Lise deJong and Laura Mahoney.

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DON VALLEY NORTH LEXUS - TOYOTA ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

JULIAN CHIU

Julian gave a gym dandy performance when he took to the mat at the recent fourth leg of the Provincial Men's Artistic Gymnastics meet in Mississauga. The 11-year-old Markham Gym Club performer captured the gold cup in the cadet division after finishing first overall. In individual events, Chiu was first in floor, rings and high bar and was second in parallel bars and vault and third on the pommel horse. Chiu also earned a gold medal as a member of the first-place Metro East quadrant team.

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