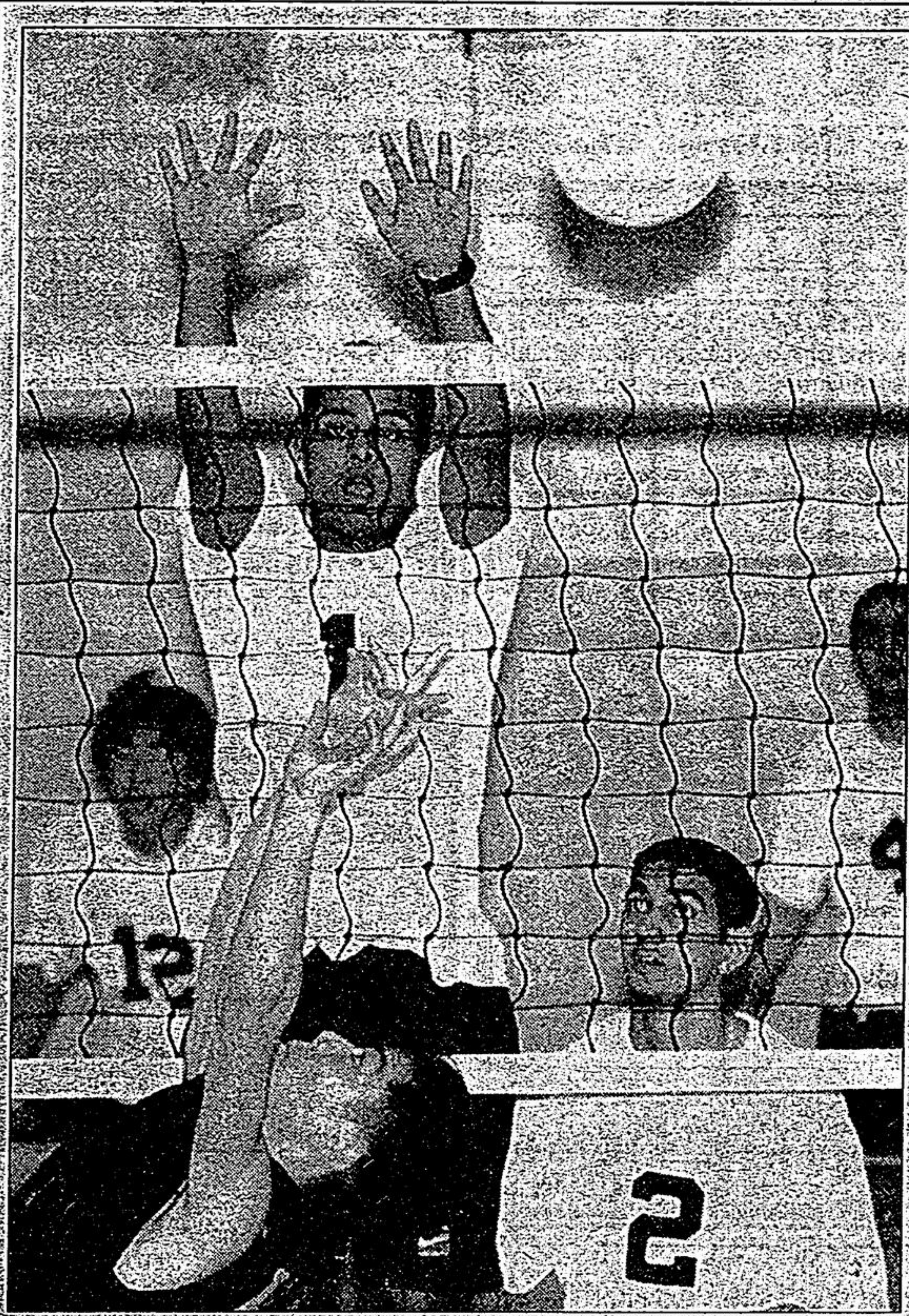


SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO/SIGERD WITTEVEEN

TAKING A HANDS UP APPROACH

Unionville High School Wolf player D. Kim sets the ball for teammates as Middlefield Collegiate Institute Silver Hawk Sam John threatens a block in a game won 2-0 by UHS on Tuesday. Looking on for MCI are from left: Michael Lam, Savinder Singh, and Sumit Thakur. The game was played at UHS.

Former York Region resident wins Portland Marathon

A former Markham resident took a giant step towards gaining a berth on the Canadian Olympic track and field team recently, by winning the Portland Marathon.

Kyra Slade, 32, was the first female runner to cross the finish line in the Oregon race with a time of 2 hours, 48 minutes and 23 seconds. She finished 32nd overall among the 5,000 runners in the race. Now a resident of Pasadena, California, where she is a nurse at the

City of Hope Hospital and St. Joseph's Hospital, Slade's time was good enough for her to warrant a berth in the trials for the 2000 Olympic team. Making the feat even more memorable for Slade was that this was just the second marathon she's run in, noted her father, Everitt, a teacher at Unionville High School. A graduate of Bayview Secondary School, Slade edged Laura Melson of Bend, Oregon, who was clocked in 2 hours, 52 minutes, 18 seconds.

RINGETTE: Association seeks to increase enrolment in its grass roots level programs

Young players can ring in the new year

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Sports Editor

The Markham Ringette Association offers introductory programs to teach youngsters the game of ringette.

They also have the ice time available for instruction.

What they need though, are players. Especially those between the ages of 4 and 7.

Over the last couple of years, the association has witnessed a decline of participants in its grass roots level programs.

Should the trend continue, local ringette could eventually go the way of the dinosaur, warned association spokesperson Estelle McCalmont.

"When my daughter was in the Learn to Skate program four years ago there were 36 kids and 22 went on to learn how to play," she recalled. "Last year we had 11 kids and we only had six that wanted to continue to play ringette. So far this year we've got only a few who have signed up in the Learn to Skate Program. With that number we can't have a bunny team. It's pretty scary."

The growth in popularity of girls' hockey has put a dent in ringette enrolment at the beginner or bunny level, McCalmont acknowledged.

She also speculated a change in ice hours where youngsters now play earlier in the day as compared with prime mid-day hours might be another factor for the decline.

But when McCalmont notes that centres such as Whitby can field five bunny teams, she sees no rea-

son why Markham cannot have that many teams at the same age level.

Played during the winter months, ringette is a great vehicle to teach youngsters skills for skating and hockey, if they wish to someday convert to that sport, said McCalmont.

"It's fun and it's fast and it's a non-contact team sport with players using full protective gear," she said in extolling the virtues of ringette. "It's also a game where you don't have to be the best skater on the team."

Hoping to attract at least 12 players, girls and boys, to form a bunny team, McCalmont said the association will run a Learn to Skate Program starting tomorrow at Centennial Arena for a one-hour period at 6:30 p.m.

This 10-week program is open for youngsters four years of age and over. The program is open to girls and boys possessing various skating abilities and has a small instructor-student group ratio.

Should enough participants come out and show an interest to play ringette, McCalmont said a Learn to Play program will start up.

McCalmont notes though that the older programs such as the novices will field several teams this season.

Playing host to three provincial regional championship teams last year with the novices, petites and juniors, the association also welcomes players hailing from neighbouring areas like Stouffville to come out.

Those wishing further information on the association's programs can call Michelle Peacock at 470-8560.



Clippers win two of three in tourney

The Stouffville Accuwrap Profiled Components-Four Seasons Grading and Sodding Ltd. Birkett Hassard Insurance-Roadway Alignment-Lebovic Homes major novice Clippers won two of three games when they took to the ice at the recent East Gwillimbury tournament.

The Clippers opened the tournament on a strong note by posting victories over Collingwood 7-3 and Richmond Hill 6-4. But a 5-3 loss to Newmarket eliminated the Clippers from further action.

Scoring for the Clippers were: Jeff Kavluk, six goals; Justin Hulshof, four goals, three assists; Matthew Raguseo, three goals, one assist; Malcolm Forbes, one goal, three assists; Patrick Salvagna, one goal, two assists; Dennis O'Shaunessy, one goal, one assist; Connor Stevens, three assists; Christopher Boake, Matthew Benincasa and Grant Sommerville, one assist.

DON VALLEY NORTH LEXUS - TOYOTA ATHLETE OF THE WEEK

STEWART YOUNG



Qualifying for the ReMax World Long Drive Championship is beginning to be a ritual for Stewart Young.

The 36-year-old Markham resident will be making his fifth trip to this event in Mesquite, Nevada on Oct. 22 and 23 after winning a recent district qualifying event in Cleveland, Ohio with a drive of 361 yards.

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