



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Searan Vasanthakumar (right) and Darcy Clarke (left) battle it out in a game of Subbuteo under the watchful eye of referee Nadeem Kassam at Central Park Public School.

Getting a kick out of Subbuteo

Table board soccer game incorporates elements of chess

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Sports Editor

Soccer is a popular sport among the students at Central Park Public School. With that being the case, teacher Bill Edmondson sees no reason why the game of Subbuteo cannot kick up a storm among the youngsters. After all, Subbuteo is a board game like table soccer, but also combines the elements of chess. "It's nothing like fooze ball," said Edmondson of the game, which was invented in England by Peter Adolph in the 1950s. "Subbuteo is more tactical and there's more skill involved. It's half sport and half game. What the game teaches is positioning and the rules of soccer." Played on a felt piece of cloth spread out on a flat table, miniature player figures are placed on the surface. Like the actual game of soccer, each team is comprised of 10 men playing out and one in net. The miniature figures are manoeuvred by the participant, who flicks them with his fingernail. In addition to the two participants manning the figures, the game has a referee, who has the authority to issue yellow or red cards on the players. "It's really neat," Edmondson said of the game's resemblance to the real deal. Edmondson notes the player figures are painted in colours of actual club teams from around the world, which adds to the game's reality. There are anywhere from 500 to 600 different colours of miniature figures available, and while Edmondson does not have the entire set, he's slowly acquiring pieces. Obtaining the pieces has not been easy, or cheap. "You can't get them in any old store," he said.

"I had to win them in an e-bay auction house." A popular game played around the world, Edmondson estimates some five to six million people know of its existence. But to his knowledge Subbuteo is a local rarity. "I haven't heard of anyone else playing the game in Markham. But I know that in Mississauga they play the game and even have a league." "We have a soccer crazy school and the kids couldn't wait to get at it. It's been wonderful."

Just recently, Edmondson formed a Subbuteo club at his school and immediately drew a response from 30 eager students. The game made its debut at the school during a recent open house. With the resources Edmondson had available, four tables were put to use and the game proved a success. "I like the game because it's fun and I like soccer," noted Grade 7 student Ricky Lai, 12. "The game was easy to learn and I can learn more strategy from this game." "I think the game is exciting," added Gallant Wu, 12. "It just took a few minutes to learn and this game is a lot like soccer. I think I've picked up more patience by playing this game." These days, the students gather at lunch hour to partake in an in-school league. Edmondson said the league will have an FA Cup and possibly a World Cup. "We have a soccer crazy school and the kids couldn't wait to get at it. It's been wonderful," Edmondson said.

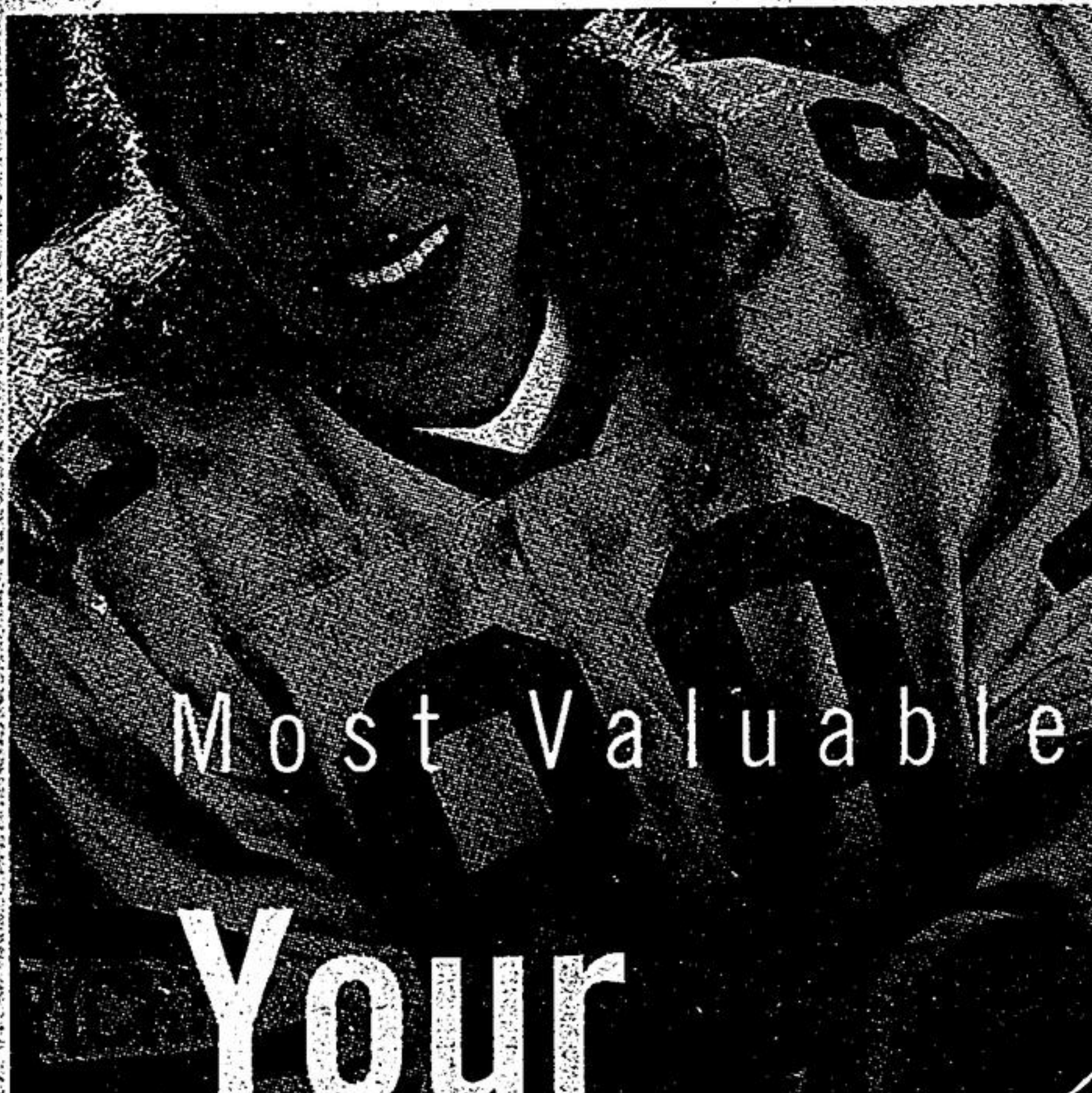
Canada out to make amends in Nations' Cup

BY BRUCE STAPLEY
Correspondent

The Canadian LPGA team that lost to the United States in last summer's inaugural Chrysler Nations Cup at the Emerald Hills Golf Club is viewing last summer's one-sided defeat as a mulligan. Nine-time LPGA winner Sandra Post, who will return as Canadian team captain for the second Nations Cup July 3 and 4 at the Stouffville course, said last year's American victory served as a learning experience. "We didn't like the beating we took," Post said in a teleconference interview Tuesday. "Our team learned a lot from last year." Post said the adjustment to the match play format proved tougher than her players expected. "It was a new format for

them. It's been a long time since most of my players played match play. They really had to think as a team. "Were a little better prepared all around. We're going to get a little more team-minded. Having the same team means we know the golf course. We know what to do." But with American team captain Judy Rankin also on the conference call, Post declined to elaborate on her team's modified approach. "I'm certainly not going to tell you our strategy with Judy Rankin on the other end of the line," Post chuckled. Once again, the Canadian team will consist of Dawn Coe-Jones, A.J. Eathorne, Lorie Kane, Gail Graham and Nancy Harvey. The American squad has been completely overhauled and will include Sherri Steinhauer,

Brandie Burton, Nancy Scranton, Kelli Kuehne and Wendy Ward. Rankin said last year's team will be preparing for the Solheim Cup match play event in early fall as well as another major team tournament in France in June. Also, the U.S. Open is to be played within two weeks of the Nations Cup. But Rankin said she expects the new quintet to be competitive. "Our team will be fresh and new. It will be the first crack at this kind of thing for some of them. I think these five players are capable of beating any five players." The Nations Cup consists of 36 holes of alternate shot, best ball match play July 3, with head to head play the following day. There will be a Celebrity-Am July 2. Tickets are available by calling (416) 870-8000.



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