

Times have indeed changed in small-town junior hockey

It was good to know you. That's what many fans are undoubtedly saying following word several outstanding players with the Provincial Jr. A Stouffville Spirit will jump ship next season.

They'll take another step up the hockey ladder. And who can blame them?

For prestige, big salaries and scholarships await.

They're only a skate stride short of their goal.

But for resolute supporters, it's a difficult pill to swallow. For they've come to know their boys over the past two or three seasons, even on a first-name basis.

And while few live in Stouffville, they're still, for fans, home-town hockey heroes.

Take netminder George Eliopoulos, for example. He's a mainstay between the pipes for the Stouffville squad, considered one of the best puck-stoppers in the league.

But George doesn't hide his expectations.

"I could be back next year but I want to be gone," he admits.

He hopes to catch a spot with Colorado or Clarkson College or Notre Dame University.

The same applies to forwards Jon Smyth, Michel Bond and



Jim Thomas

Michael Tucciarone.

Hockey scouts are training eagle eyes on all three.

Although Spirit management is well aware this level of play is only a stepping stone to further accomplishments, the fans, at least many fans, see it differently.

They consider them ours, unmindful of the fact hockey boys grow into hockey men. Sooner or later, they take wings and fly.

Such was not the case 50 years ago. Then, towns, Stouffville included, advanced up the ladder with their players rather than staying put without them.

It produced hockey, and rivalry, unlike anything seen before or since.

It was a love affair, an infatuation that filled rinks to overflowing.

True, not all players lived in Stouffville, or Markham, or Newmarket.

Some worked and boarded in the communities where they played.

But they were as much a part of the populace as the corner store baker or butcher. Because they stayed.

Back in the 1940s, Stouffville iced an excellent Jr. C club. Later, the town went Intermediate C, then Intermediate A, then Senior B. Players, at least many players, remained on board.

This union of talent resulted in a Senior B championship in 1952.

Hockey was the talk of the town.

While it cost money, lots of money, to ice a competitive team back then, expenses were nothing compared to today. Plus the fact, television was still in its infancy and the term couch potato hadn't yet been conceived.

But more importantly, players were keepers. They came and they stayed.

Why? Because as the players came of age, so did Stouffville.

Today's juniors are champing at the bit to move on.

But Stouffville isn't.

Atom Stars ice gold

SPORTS DIGEST

The Stouffville-Markham Stars atom girls selects skated home with the gold medal at the recent Ray Morris Memorial Hockey Tournament in Brampton with a 3-1 victory over London in the title game.



The Stars advanced to the final after posting wins over the Thunder 4-1, Taylin Services 5-3, Zellers 7-0 and 7-1 in its semi-final contest.

Scoring for the Stars in the final game were: Stephanie Seggie one goal, three assists; Tressa Moncada, Vanessa Mound and Katherine Wilson one goal, one assist; Danielle Henderson, Christine MacDonald and Sarah Bradshaw one goal; Lindsay Leung two assists and Katelyn Cartwright and Linda McCabe one assist.

Other team members that contributed to the club's success were: Amanda Frechette, Laura Faulds and Kristen Henderson.

Coaching the team were Ken Moncada, Vince Henderson and Neil Macdonald.

Minor novice Clippers advance

The Stouffville minor novice rep Clippers had little trouble in their first-round playoff series against the Newmarket Redmen as they swept their six-point series Saturday.



The Clippers opened the series with a 5-2 road win and followed that with a 5-1 win at the Rec Complex. Backed by

strong goalkeeping from Harrison Radersma, the Clippers finished off the series with a 2-0 win.

Scoring for the Clippers in the series were: Peter LeBuffe four goals, one assist; Darren Zimmermann two goals, two assists; Jessie Godin two goals, three assists; Lloyd Davis and Andrew Leger one goal, one assist; James McLeod two assists; Cam MacMurtry and Joshua King one goal; Kevin Stevens, Scott Miller and Russell Zarzeczny one assist.

At the recent Markham Waxers Christmas Tournament, the Clippers brought home the championship trophy with a 12-1 win over the Ajax Knights in the title tilt.

The Clippers reached the final after defeating the Pickering Panthers 4-1, Barrie Flyers 9-1, the Scarborough Young Leafs 5-2 and the Panthers again 6-2 in their semi-final encounter.

Scoring for the Clippers throughout the tournament were: Davis 10 goals, three assists, LeBuffe eight goals, five assists, Zimmermann five goals, four assists, Godin two goals, four assists, MacMurtry two goals, two assists, King and Zarzeczny two goals, one assist, Miller one goal, three assists, Peter Wideman one goal, two assists, Stevens, Leger and Ryan Brown with one goal and one assist each.

McLeod anchored the blue line with excellent defensive play.

Strong goaltending was provided by Eric Lee and Radersma.

See MINOR, page 19.

Finding your next used vehicle just got...

- easier
- faster
- cheaper
- better
- all of the above



Introducing www.yorkregionwheels.com, a completely new way to shop for used cars and trucks in York Region...

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>easier... Search the inventory of more than 20 regional dealers from the comfort of your home.</p> <p>faster... Narrow your search in minutes to the cars that best meet your criteria.</p> <p>cheaper... No driving from lot to lot, no long distance calls and price comparisons are easy with more than 500 vehicles to choose from.</p> <p>better... Shop 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ 500 Used Cars ✓ Searchable ✓ Full Colour Photos ✓ Easy to Use ✓ All Makes ✓ All Models ✓ All Years ✓ All Price Ranges ✓ All Local ✓ More than 20 Dealers ✓ FREE TO BROWSE! |
|---|--|

294-2200

www.yorkregionwheels.com

presented by ECONOMIST & SUN Stouffville Tribune

Check us out today at www.yorkregionwheels.com

GRAND OPENING



Family Dining in a Relaxed Atmosphere

FICKLE PICKLE DINING LOUNGE

Welcomes You Sat. Jan. 20th

from 2-4 pm

FREE Hors-d'oeuvres & Beverages

Bring Your Family and Your Friends

Experience the Fickle Pickle Restaurant & Banquet Hall You'll Love It!



Reservations 905-787-1963



10 Newkirk Between Bayview & Yonge directly beside GO Train Richmond Hill