

Midget AE Clippers put provincial title on ice

Coach was on town's last midget OMHA title team in 1986-87

When the Stouffville Mitchell Family Books Spotlight Casual Wear midget AE (additional entry) Clippers faced the Stoney Creek Bruins in Friday's third game of its best-of-five Ontario Minor Hockey Association championship series, they brought along the brooms.



And they got to use it. The Clippers swept the series on the Rec Complex ice surface with a convincing 7-3 victory.

The title also marked the first time a Stouffville midget entry earned provincial honours since the 1986-87 campaign.

Ironically, current Clippers head coach Paul Sinclair was a player on that last provincial-winning squad.

In Friday's finale, the Clippers blitzed Stoney Creek with three first-period goals and were never threatened after that.

Mike Hulshof paced the attack with two goals and two assists while Ryan Jackson, Jason McDonald, Lee Howard, Adam Christensen and Josh Brillinger added singles. Howard and Scott

McDougall each earned two assists while McDonald, Robert Steckley, Brent Robinson and Ryan Jackson were credited with singles.

"I'm proud of each and every one of these men as we had a rocky season and to win this puts the icing on the cake," said an elated Sinclair. "The guys wanted to win. They'll remember this for the rest of their lives."

In assessing the success attained by the Clippers, Sinclair said it boiled down to the club showing a total commitment.

"The guys were focused. They just never gave up. They were at the rink an hour before each game and they watched videos of the games."

The Clippers drew first blood in the series with a hard-fought 3-2 win at the Rec Centre.

In the second game at Stoney Creek, the two teams played another closely-contested affair with the Clippers skating home with a 4-3 win to set the stage for last Friday's clincher.

Other members that contributed to the club's success were: Marcus D'Annunzio, Michael Cornacchia, Cody Bennett, Devon Cullen, Cam Davis, Kyle Theakston, Adam Pappas, Robert Anderson, Justin Cheshire, Richard Lynn and Dan Cherkas.

Assisting Sinclair were Wayne Jackson, Bill Anderson, trainer Rob Davis and team manager Gail Anderson.

Local skiers have a smooth downhill ride

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

Streaking down the slopes in an amazing time of one minute and 16 seconds, 15-year-old Stouffville resident Katelyn Button placed 22nd out of 80 competitors in the National Downhill Ski Championships at Mont-St. Anne, Que. last Sunday.

The same weekend, Jacquie Harris, 14, was competing in the Canadian K-2 races at Mont-Tremblant near Montreal and came in 35th out of 50.

Due to unfavorable weather conditions at Mont-St. Anne, most weekend runs had to be cancelled.

However, Button received the green light to enter the Super Giant Slalom on Sunday.

And she made the most of the opportunity.

At age 15, it was amazing for her to be there, Dale Button, her mother said, "she gave Canadian team members a run for their money."

In two earlier training runs, Button placed 29th and 15th.

Harris is in her sixth year of racing. Button's been skiing since she was 3 years old. Both are students attending Stouffville District Secondary School and train with the Collingwood-based Toronto Ski Club.

Button comes by her skills honestly. Both parents and a younger sister, Erin, 13, are avid skiers.

"Even at five, she'd be waiting at the bottom while I'd be half-way down," her mother recalls. "For her, it's a passion."

For Button, downhill speeds can reach 110 kilometers an hour, Mrs. Button explains.

"I'd be terrified but she shows no fear."

Button makes a point of memorizing the course before taking off, her mother notes.

She added jokingly that her daughter came close to being born on the slopes.

"I was seven months pregnant with her and skiing in Austria. It's in her blood."

Her daughter's ultimate goal is the Olympics, she says.

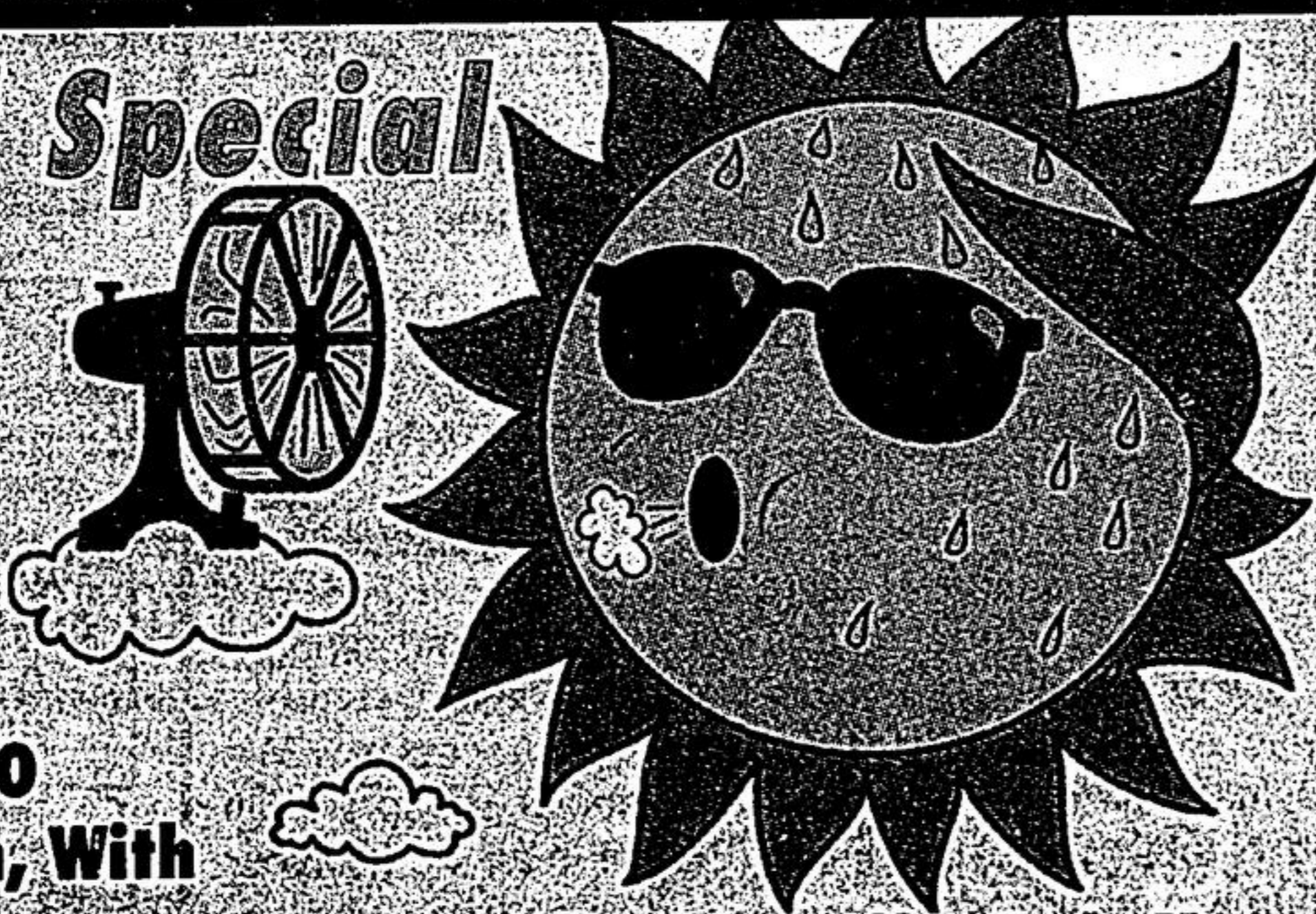
Realizing both Button and Harris' ambitions, the SDSS staff bend over backwards to help, their parents agree. Homework assignments must be kept up, however.

For Harris, the skiing season's over. Button, however, is going on to international races at Mont Orford and spring competitions at Mont-Tremblant, both near Montreal.

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