

Spartan girls downed in YRAA tier one rugby final

Emotional semi-final win might have taken its toll on Spartans in their York championship debut

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Sports Editor

In explaining why his Brother Andre Catholic High School Cardinals girls' rugby team were successful in winning this year's tier one York Region Athletic Association title, Dave Turner had a simple answer.

Commitment

The Cardinals head coach noted it was back in October when he began to institute once-a-week workouts for his charges in their quest to win this year's title.

The practices, which commenced at 7 a.m., paid dividends Monday when the Cardinals capped off an undefeated YRAA season with a 15-5 win over the host Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans.

Rosie Moher, Karen Chrobak and Michelle Birks each scored one try for the Cardinals, who led 5-0 at the half en route to their fourth YRAA title in the last five years.

"The girls were committed, they worked really hard," noted Turner. "All of that extra work definitely paid off."

While the Cardinals set their sights on winning the YRAA title, Turner said their undefeated record wasn't one of their goals. However, the effort put forth by the girls paved the way for that feat to take place.

"Going undefeated was a result of hard work and improvement and I think we did just that," he said.

In Monday's final, Turner felt a balanced attack and a strong kicking game with the foot of Birks turned the tide in their favor.

"Scoring our first try was the result of our strong forward play. We spun off and spun off to draw their backs into our mauls and rucks and we thought we could kick the ball into the corners," he said. "Michelle's (Birks) kicking was a key too."

Earlier in the day, the Cardinals battled Aurora High School in their semi-final match and prevailed 22-5. Birks recorded a try, two converts and a penalty kick while Chrobak and Nathalie Cote each contributed a



PHOTO/PAULINE METAURO

Stouffville District Secondary School's Alanna Schad (forefront) and teammate Heather McManus (behind), extend their arms in an attempt to get possession of the ball during a lineout against Brother Andre Catholic High School in Monday's YRAA girls' tier one rugby final at Stouffville District Secondary School. The visiting Cardinals won the game and gold medal by a 15-5 score. Helping to lift Schad is Irene Baxter (middle).

try.

With the victory, the Cardinals will represent the YRAA at the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations festival in Kitchener on Monday.

The Spartans, who finished third in the regular season, advanced to the final after defeating second-place Alexander Mackenzie High School 17-0.

Jasmine Geense and Candace Robbins each scored a try for the Spartans. Bethany Jacobson booted a convert and penalty kick.

Andrea Meyer scored the Spartans' lone try in the final.

For the Spartans, reaching the final was a moral victory of sorts as it was the first time they have reached the championship match. Making the feat even more remarkable was the fact that they had no team last year

due to the teachers' work-to-rule labor campaign.

"It wasn't a bad year at all," said Spartans' head coach Heather Henricks, who felt the victory over Alexander Mackenzie in their semi-final after losing to them in the regular season might have been an emotional high. "I thought we played our best game of the year in the semi-final. Our girls all played well."

Henricks also felt the Cardinals' overall experience eventually surfaced in the final.

Despite the loss, Henricks looks forward to next season as she expects some members from their tier two team, which won the YRAA tier two plate title with a sudden-death win over Sutton District High School earlier in the day on a penalty kick by Allison Mc Kee, will make their tier one entry even more formidable next season.

Team 3 Red races off with sixth-place effort in Peterborough

RACING NEWS

The Stouffville-based Team 3 Red racing team had their best showing to date in the CASCAR series on Sunday after earning a sixth-place finish at the Logels Auto Parts 200 event at Peterborough Speedway.

With inclement weather forcing the race to be delayed until Sunday, Team 3 Red driver Billy Rowse Jr. began the race with his 2002 Snap on Tools/Canadian Forces Team 3 Red Monte Carlo from the 20th position before carefully working his through the pack.

With the help of his owner/spotter, driving teammate Chris Fowler and some great driving, Rowse Jr. kept the car in one piece and brought it home in the sixth running position.

"We had a great day today," said #3 crew chief Rob Rowse. "The guys did a great job in the shop this week preparing the car and Billy was up on that wheel all day. He kept us out of trouble. We are pretty proud of our results today."

The sixth-place finish was a major improvement from a 22nd position they had in their inaugural race during the Victoria Day holiday weekend at Delaware Speedway near London.

Team 3 Red will head to the province of Quebec this weekend for the AUTOPRO/NAPA 150 being held at Autodrome St. Eustache, outside of Montreal.

Through two CASCAR events, Rowse Jr. sits in 13th place in the overall standings with 248 points and is 71 behind series leader D.J. Kennington.

Gibbons finishes 13th again

For the second straight week, Peter Gibbons and his Canadian Tire team raced home to a 13th place finish at the CASCAR Logel's Auto Parts 200 race last weekend at Peterborough Speedway.

Starting in the 10th position for the feature race, which was rescheduled for Sunday due to inclement weather, the Stouffville resident slid back to 14th



PETER GIBBONS: Stouffville driver encounters mechanical problems, but salvages 13th place finish in Peterborough.

place while waiting for an opening on the lower groove which was the fast way around the 1/3-mile oval track.

Gibbons eventually battled back his Chevrolet Monte Carlo into the eighth position and was trying to hold on for a top-10 finish when a wreck occurred on lap 178 and he was clipped by another car.

Gibbons, however, returned to the track and with less than 10 laps remaining in the race, Gibbons entered the pits for a right rear tire change, hoping this might help them gain a couple of positions.

In the end, Gibbons finished 13th. "We fought an ill-handling car the whole race. I couldn't even step on the throttle or I would spin out. We have to figure out this new car we call 'Blade' or we may have to rename it 'Headache,'" said Gibbons.

Through two CASCAR races this season, Gibbons sits in 10th place in the overall standings with 260 points and is 59 behind series leader D.J. Kennington.

Novice girls hope to make progress on the fastball diamond this year

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

With the majority of players back, coach Donna Harris hopes to field a stronger novice-aged girls, rep fastball team this season.

They're playing in a league that includes two clubs from Oshawa, Newmarket and Whitby plus Barrie, Pickering, Ajax and Cobourg.

Because improvements to the main Stouffville diamond aren't yet complete, the team expects to play most of

its games at Ballantrae. Their home night is Tuesday at 8:30 p.m.

Jessie Harris and Emma Bomberry will share the pitching chores with Kim Eickmeier completing the battery.

Other positions will be filled by: Kim Hughes, first base; Amy Hector, first base and right field; Shelby Markle, second base; Kate Devine, second base and short stop; Danielle Holmes, short-stop and centre field; Nyssa Kuwahara, short-stop and centre field; Winnie Law, third base; Jessica Stewart, third base and left field.

Stouffville Secondary student-athletes to be honoured on June 12

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

The year's top athletes will be honoured when Stouffville District Secondary School holds its annual awards banquet on June 12 at 7 p.m.

Teams represented will include: cross-country, football, field hockey, ice hockey, basketball, volleyball, wrestling, golf,

track and field, rugby, fastball, skiing, badminton and soccer. Close to 300 student-athletes are expected to attend.

The event, a highlight of 2001-2002, will be held at Stouffville District Secondary School.

The organizing committee is headed by OAC student Lianne McMullen assisted by staff teachers Heather Henricks and Jamie Hewett.

Alanna Schad is president of the athletic council.

In addition to most valuable player selections, male and female athletes of the year will be honored. Their identities are being withheld until that evening.

A slide show and video, highlighting all team events prepared by Henricks, Schad and McMullen, will be part of the post-banquet program.