

Stouffville Sports

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 Phone 640-2612, Fax 640-8778
 E-mail sports@stouffvillesun.com
 Tuesday, Jan. 14, 2003
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Starry minor hockey line reunites for Acton benefit

By Jim Thomas
 Stouffville Sun

Thirty years ago the forward line of Keith Acton, Doug Feasby and Doug Todd led Stouffville to the Ontario Bantam B hockey championship.

Now, they're 45-year-olds with kids of their own.

On Sunday, the trio will be re-united at the Stouffville Arena when a team of ex-National Hockey League

stars and celebrities taked on the Stouffville Spirit in The Game of Our Lives charity match for cancer research starting at 3 p.m.

The Acton, Feasby, Todd troika paced Stouffville to an Ontario title in 1973, beating out Petrolia in the finals. The club was coached by the late Jack Watson, Gerry Acton, Keith's father, was manager and Wilf Morley, the trainer.

Both Feasby and Todd remember Acton for his grit and speed.

"He could fly," Todd recalls, "and he still can. He'll be the fastest player on the ice for either team."

The three remain close friends.

After one year of midget hockey, Feasby graduated to the Markham Royals and Markham Waxers juniors. At age 19, he was drafted by the Detroit Red Wings and assigned to their farm club, the Adirondack Red Wings of the American Hockey League.

For Feasby, education was a top priority. Following graduation from Stouffville District Secondary School, he attended Union College in New York State and Concordia



FEASBY

PEOPLE

University where he obtained a bachelor of commerce degree.

He's presently a vice-president with the Toronto Dominion Bank. The family, including wife Patti



TODD

(Davidson), formerly of Stouffville and daughters, Katrina, 18; Kyla, 16 and Hayley, 13, reside in Stittsville, outside Ottawa.

Feasby's athletic endeavours now relate mainly to golf. However, he still engages in a little pick-up hockey now and again, "but nothing too serious," he says.

He takes in all the Senators' games when the Maple Leafs are in town. Keith Acton is Toronto's assistant coach.

"Thanks to Jack Watson, Wilf Morley, Gerry Acton, Bob Hassard and others, I had great growing-up years in Stouffville," Feasby recalls. "I played on some great teams back then, it was a lot of fun."

He admits to looking forward to getting together again.

So is Todd. "The Spirit will probably put the boots to us," he says, "but it's all for a good cause."

At 235 pounds, he says he's a bit out of shape, but will give it his best.

"I play a little shinny in Richmond Hill," he notes, "but have laced on the blades only a few times this season."

Todd started playing minor hockey in Scarborough and joined the Stouffville peewee club when his family moved to town. He was 12.

Like linemate Feasby, he says he

owes a lot to Jack Watson, Gerry Acton and Wilf Morley.

"They were three great guys, real gentlemen, good people," he remembers.

Later, Todd played with Markham and against Acton when the latter suited up with Wexford.

Drafted by the Calgary Flames, he was assigned to the Birmingham Bulls, a Calgary affiliate.

"My heart wasn't in it," he admits. "I felt it time to get a real job."

After obtaining a degree from the University of Michigan, he established Todd's Pools of Stouffville that he operates with brother Bryan.

Doug and wife Barbara (Boadway), live in Stouffville with daughters Jocelyn, 19; Aynsley, 16 and Alexis, 13.

Todd describes Acton as "one of the most amazing hockey players I've ever known." He says he marvels at Acton's ability to stick with the game all these years.

"Only one in several thousand would have his kind of dedication. But he was always that way," he says.

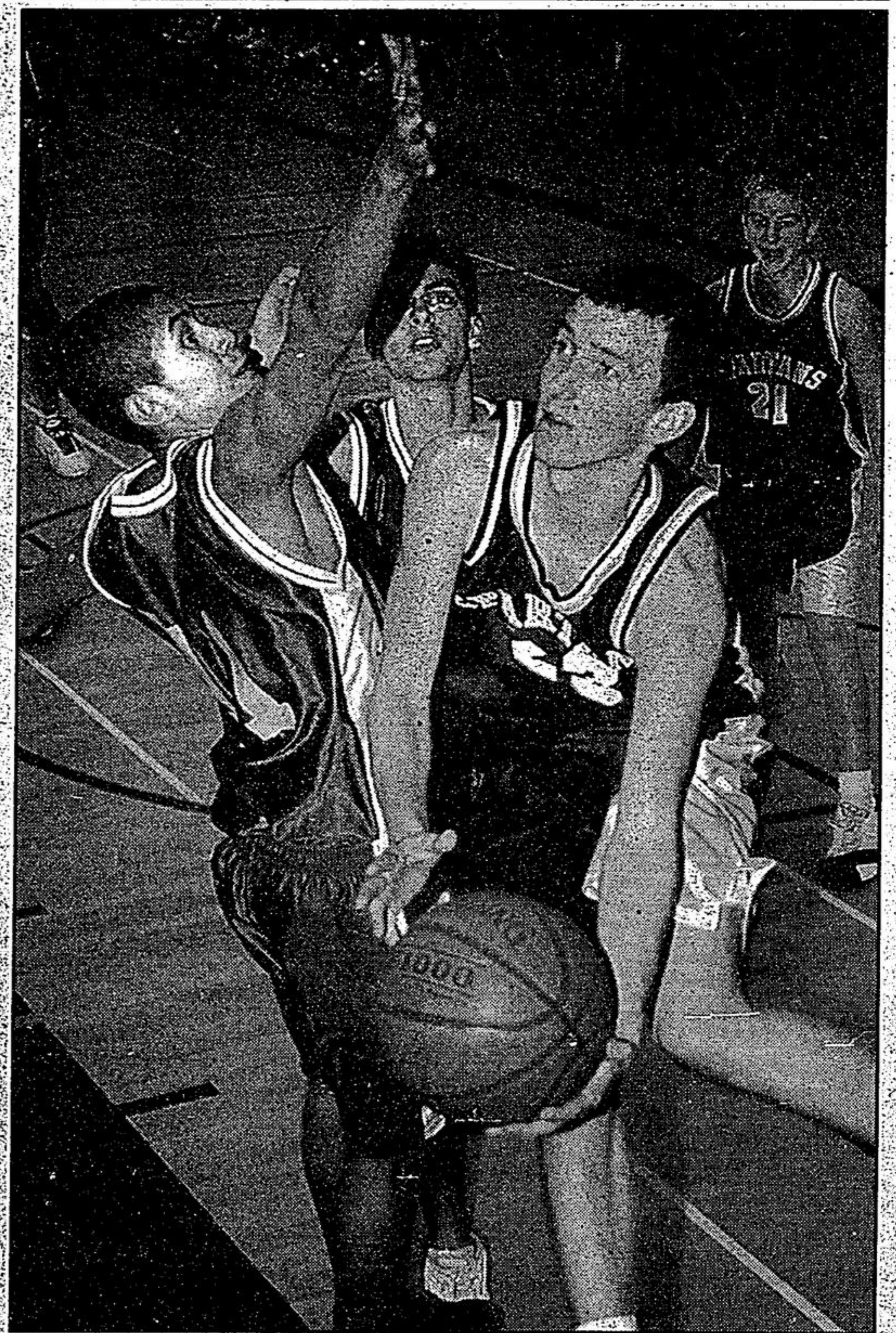
Todd says it's an honour to be part of a game for so worthy a cause. He cancelled a planned trip to Aruba to attend. He's also looking forward to turning the clock back 30 years.

"As kids, Doug, Keith and I did everything together," he remembers. "from playing ball hockey on Blake Street to ice hockey on Ratcliff's pond. They were good times, a lot of great memories."

Many of those memories will be re-lived this Sunday.

Other Stouffville minor hockey grads playing this Sunday include Bill Hassard, Mike Feasby and Dan Larner.

Stouffville residents Don Martin (anchor on Global TV's Sportsline) and Graham Wise (hockey coach at York University) are also on the roster.



HOLDING COURT: Cardinal Carter Catholic High School Celtics' defender Mario Cepeda (left), holds his ground as Stouffville District Secondary School's Phil Briggs attempts to drive past him during last week's York Region high school junior boys' basketball game at Stouffville. Cardinal Carter, of Aurora, won 42-32. Looking on at the play are Celtics' Roberto Ciccone and Spartans' Patrick Bellissimo (right background). Later that day, the Celtics seniors defeated the Spartans 49-41. In senior boys' hockey action last week, the Spartans defeated St. Robert Catholic High School of Thornhill 4-2.

SIJERD WITTEVEEN PHOTO

Spirit's U.S. defenceman learning on and off the ice

Michael Barbera moved to Canada to learn more about hockey. He's picked up some life lessons, too.

The 18-year-old from Greenwich, Conn., is a rookie defenceman with the Stouffville Spirit junior A hockey team. He's living in a basement apartment in North York and attending York University part-time.

"I want to play college hockey and I knew I couldn't make the jump," he said.

The Toronto area, with its abundance of junior A squads, was a natural choice. Barbera had been to the GTA three times before attending Hockey Tech summer schools.

He tried out with a number of teams last fall, earning long looks from Markham and Wexford before catching on with the Spirit.

"I love the team and I love the coaching," said Barbera, sporting

cuts all around his right eye, courtesy of a high stick in the Spirit's win over Aurora Thursday. "This is really good hockey. And coaches Brian and Jeff (Perrin) have taught me a lot already."

"Anything you try takes perseverance. I learned so much about myself moving to another country and having to do everything for myself."

Barbera finds small-town Stouffville extremely friendly, like most of his York classmates.

"With everything going on in the world these days, I've experience a little anti-Americanism. It's weird

because I'm not a part of that. What do I have to do with that?"

Back in Connecticut, the Barberas "live 40 minutes from Manhattan, if there's no traffic."

"But there's always traffic," said Barbera.

The Spirit was lacking Saturday night at the Stouffville Arena.

The second-place Newmarket Hurricanes opened up a 3-0 lead early in the third period and held on for a 3-2 win. The third-place Spirit looked tired and played sloppily, especially in its own end, most of the night.

Mike Forgie and Michael Comisso scored for the Spirit which outshot Newmarket 31-24. Goaltender Michael Andreoff was the Spirit's Brimell Toyota player of the game.

The Spirit hosts Couchiching on Thursday at the Stouffville Arena.



BARBERA

SPIRIT AT A GLANCE

SCORES

Newmarket 3, Stouffville 2

WHO'S HOT:

Newcomers Michael Andreoff and Brent Chandler.

SCHEDULE:

Couchiching at Stouffville, Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
 Stouffville at Huntsville, Friday, 7:30 p.m.

PROVINCIAL JR. A LEAGUE NORTH CONFERENCE

STANDINGS (AS OF JAN. 13)

TEAM	GP	W	L	T	OTL	GF	GA	P
Aurora	41	36	3	1	1	218	90	74
Newmarket	41	26	12	1	2	185	135	55
Stouffville	40	23	15	2	0	180	127	48
Collingwood	41	22	18	0	1	177	141	45
Couchiching	40	18	17	4	1	152	145	41
Huntsville	42	2	39	0	1	110	334	5

one point for overtime loss

