

Stouffville Sports

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Spirited fans enjoy road win

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 its traditional black away uniforms to the new-look red Buffalo Sabres knockoffs.

Game 7 had multiple personalities. The Spirit appeared to be en route to a blow-out win, scoring five straight goals in the second period to take a 6-2 lead. But the Hurricanes caught a second wind, scoring three straight of their own in the third, the last with 1:25 remaining and their goalie out, to make it 6-5.

Just 21 seconds later, Mike Forgie fired home an empty-netter and the victory party was on for the numerous and noisy Spirit fans seated behind the Stouffville bench.

Quite a contrast from Game 6 the night before. The Hurricanes sent their fans home happy from the Stouffville rink, when Joey Faraone scored at 9:38 of the second overtime period for a 5-4 Newmarket win.

The difference between the two nights?

"Hard work, that's it," said Forgie, who added two assists and a team-leading 12 hits in Game 7. "It was a war out there. We just wanted it."

There were approximately 800 fans at each game, including a standing-room-only crowd Saturday in Stouffville.

"We just skated and finished our chances," said Spirit coach Brian Perrin, now 2-0 in playoff series against Newmarket since being promoted from associate coach with the Canes to head coach of the Spirit five years ago.

There was a history of bad blood between the teams before the series started. When Perrin and other volunteers left Newmarket in 1998, Hurricane management was miffed.



IAN STAAL

In the last two years, the trend reversed with two hockey staffers leaving the Spirit for the Canes.

Last summer, Newmarket successfully pursued tampering charges against the Spirit over invitations to training camp sent to minor hockey players living in Newmarket. The Spirit, which was fined \$1,000, was bothered that infractions it called minor would be prosecuted.

Ian Staal, whose parents drove 1,500 kilometres from Thunder Bay to watch the series, had a goal and an assist in Game 7.

Andrew Dennis, Kevin Jarman, Dave Brown, Mark Mitchell and Konrad Bruetsch had the other goals. Mike Sullivan and Michael Comisso had two assists each.

Brown, a Stouffville resident, was called up from the Uxbridge Bruins junior C team to replace the injured Kevin Hayward.

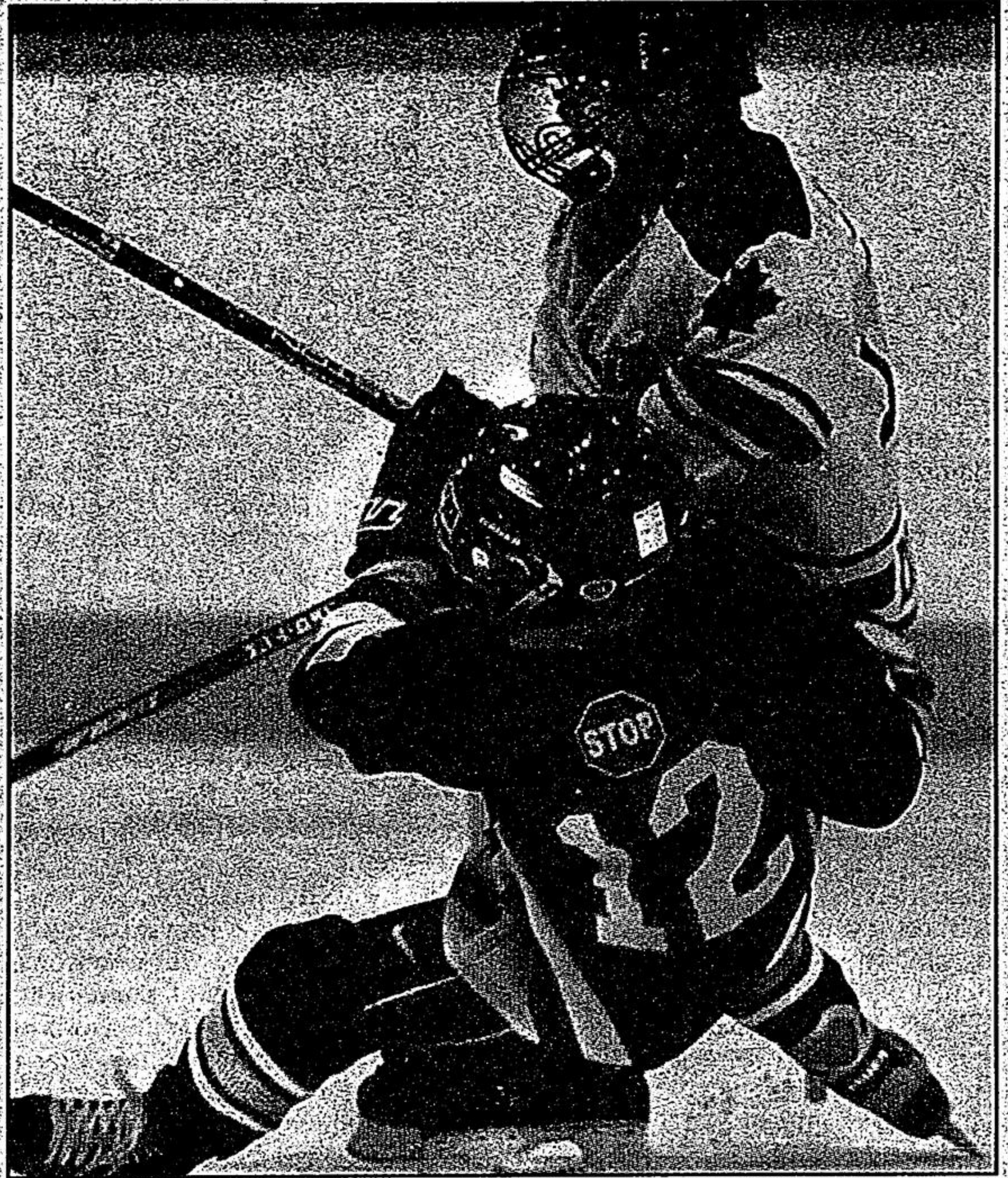
On Saturday, the Spirit came back from a 3-1 deficit to lead 4-3 after two periods, only to have Newmarket score the last two goals of the game.

Sullivan, J.D. Smithson, Ty Raine and Forgie scored for the Spirit.

Aurora downed Collingwood 3-1 Sunday to take their series in five games. Aurora went 43-3-2-1 in the regular season, the second best record in the 135-team Canadian Junior A Hockey League. One its three losses was to the 29-18-2-0 Spirit, which finished in third. Aurora was first and Newmarket second.

DOWN TIME:

Stouffville Atom Clipper Josh King (12) slides into an Oshawa player during last weekend's rep minor hockey tournament at the Stouffville Arena. Teams from across Ontario took part in the tourney which started Friday and ended Sunday.



MIKE BARRETT PHOTO

Father and son referee team calls games as it sees them

By Jim Thomas
 Stouffville Sun

When Bob and Ben Smith don striped jerseys and take to the ice, they're more than father and son. They're a team.

The Stouffville twosome referees in the Whichurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association's house league and the Markham-Stouffville Girls Hockey Association. It handles games up to and including juvenile. The elder Smith also officiates in the Stouffville Amateur Hockey League or the "old fat fellows," as he calls them. Ben handles time-keeping duties in the SAHL.

A Grade 11 student at Brother Andre Catholic High School in Markham, Ben enjoys working games involving the wee kids, particularly atoms and tykes.

"It's a lot of fun because it's not so competitive," he says. "The coaches are good too because they enjoy what they're doing."

He claims he becomes so focussed on the game itself, he seldom hears what fans and coaches are saying. He hopes to maintain his certification after entering college.

Bob, a former coach, said he took to officiating at the request of his son.

"I also wanted to see the game from another side."

Bob says he likes nothing better than working a game with Ben, especially the two-referee system.

"We know each other's game plan, where each is going to be," he says. "We also try and cover for one another's mistakes."



BOB SMITH

"We're a team," he says. "We treat each other as equals."

Both are still active players as well. Ben in juvenile and Bob in the amateur league. Bob's wife, Chris, is secretary on the minor hockey executive.

Bob admits juvenile games, involving older teens, are sometimes hard to handle.

"Timing is the thing," he says. "When two players are in a clinch or on the ice, they're easier to separate."

"I just say to them, 'let me know when you're tired.'"

Off-ice problems can be equally difficult, he says. When the situation threatens to get out of hand, he'll order an unruly fan or fans removed. Should they refuse, the game is stopped.

He never brings game problems home.



BEN SMITH

"It all ends in the dressing room," he says.

Ben is active in other sports as well, including mountain biking and soccer.

All referees must be re-certified annually, Bob says. Clinics are conducted August through October. A 70-per-cent pass average is required.

Bob claims the SAHL has a number of excellent players including John Barnett and Graham Wise.

"Sometimes it gets pretty competitive," he says. "I try and tell them no scouts are watching."

Both Bob and Ben describe the father-son arrangement as "a neat set-up."

"It's something we can do together," says Bob. "We have a lot of fun."

“There was a history of bad blood between (Stouffville and Newmarket) before the series started.”

Stars earn silver in Sarnia

The Markham-Stouffville pee-wee A Stars advanced to the finals of the recent Silver Stick girls' hockey tournament in Sarnia before losing 3-0 to the Michigan Ice Dogs in the title tilt.

In advancing to the final, the Stars defeated Syracuse 5-2, Michigan 2-0, and tied Brantford 1-1. The Stars defeated the Michigan Ice Devils 4-3 in their semi-final contest.

Scoring for the Stars were: Jamie Sparks with four goals, Kelly O'Hanlon three, Darcie Johnston two, Jessica Cockburn, Victoria Benacquista and Kylie Kovacs one each.

Earning assists were Deanna Parry, Courtney Hurley, Samantha Ruinsky, Kylie Chinery, Natalie Geiger, and

Brittany Crago, Sarah D'Andrea and Danielle Racioppo split goal-tending duties.

