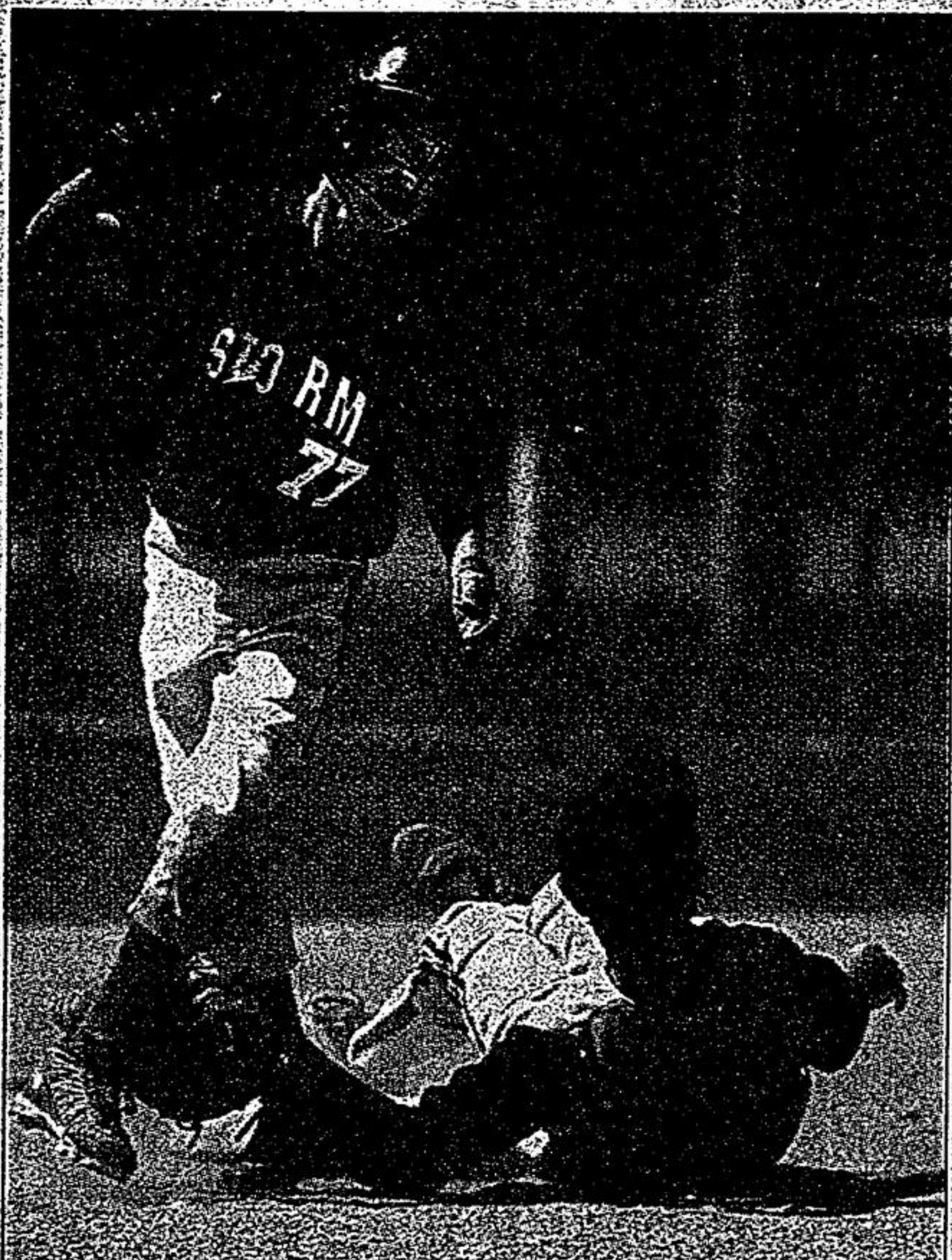


Stouffville Sun-Tribune

SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

Out at second base

Stouffville Storm baserunner Kohl McVicar (left) reacts after being tagged out by Belleville Bengals shortstop Nick Crouter during action in Saturday's provincial squirt boys' softball qualifier at Memorial Park. Stouffville won 11-7 in a tiebreaker and finished the tournament in second place behind Napanee. The Storm, Napanee, Orleans and Peterborough advanced to the provincials, which are in Peterborough Aug. 9 and 10.

Mennos rally in the final frame to edge Bradford

The Stouffville Mennos saved their best for the end when they scored three runs in the bottom of the seventh inning to emerge with a 4-3 win over the Bradford Sox in Oshawa City and District Fastball League action last Wednesday at Memorial Park.

Singles by Jeff Boadway and Kyle Barber set the stage for a three-run homer by Scott Eyre to propel Stouffville to victory.

Terry Reesor worked the final two innings in relief of starter Paul Boynton to earn the win.

The Mennos scored their first run in the second inning when Shawn Boadway drove in Danny Deeks, who had reached base on a single.

The victory improved Stouffville's record to 12-5.

Hughes proves she's one of the boys

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

Amazing. That's how Tom Baker, coach of the Triple A Toronto Young Nationals, described the hockey skills of Heather Hughes.

The 12-year-old Stouffville resident was the lone girl playing on a team that, this past season, won the Greater Toronto Hockey League's Carnation Cup and the North American minor peewee championship. She's equally at home on defence or left wing.

"Words cannot describe the skill and determination she shows," says Baker, "she's one of a half-dozen of the best players anywhere."

Some parents, Baker noted, questioned the advisability of a girl playing on a boys team.

"But that was before they had a chance to see her play," he said, "they left the rink in awe."

If Heather's improvement continues at its current rate, Baker says she has the ability to make a major impact on any girls' team in the world.

Not only is she skilled in all aspects of the game, but she's ready and willing to assume any role requested of her, Baker said.



HEATHER HUGHES: Was a vital cog as a defenceman and left winger with Toronto Young Nationals minor peewee AAA club.

"Nothing asked of her is too much trouble," he stated. "She's a team player all the way."

Heather's hockey career began seven years ago in tyke level house league.

She later performed with boys teams in Stouffville, Markham and Mississauga before graduating to the Toronto Red Wings in Triple A minor peewee.

While a Red Wing, the team won

the Greater Toronto Hockey League title.

When coach Baker moved from the Red Wings to the Young Nats, Heather went with him.

"While some parents posed questions, (most think their sons are future Wayne Gretzky's, he says), the players themselves were not intimidated. At their age, they're not even thinking about girls," he notes.

"Truth is," Baker said, "if it wasn't for a ponytail hanging down from beneath her helmet, no one would know she is a girl, she's that good."

"She's transcended the border between boys and girls."

How long can this state of affairs continue?

"As long as ability allows her to handle the rough going," Bob Hughes, her father, said.

Hughes claims a backyard rink has helped her enormously. Heather, along with brother Bobby (drafted this year by the Kingston Frontenacs) and sister Hayley (a player in the Markham-Stouffville AA league) spends every available winter minute perfecting her skills.

While hockey is Heather's first love, she also plays lacrosse with the Markham Thunder, and plays some golf during the off season.

Gibbons drives off with second place

Peter Gibbons began the CASCAR Mopar 300 weekend in Calgary on a high note by qualifying on the outside front row for last Sunday's 300-lap feature race.

The Stouffville resident ended it on an almost high-note after driving his Canadian Tire Monte Carlo to a second-place finish.

Gibbons was in control of the event from the drop of the green flag, leading for the first 124 laps before handling conditions forced him to hand over the lead.

After various pit stops for chassis adjustments and tire changes, Gibbons moved up from 11th place after his final pit stop to second, behind eventual winner Dave Whitlock.

Gibbons was pleased he was able

to make amends after a disappointing 26th-place finish in the last support race at the Toronto Molson Indy.

"It has been an excellent weekend here in Calgary for the Canadian Tire Team, we are happy to be on the podium once again," said Gibbons. "These finishes are what we need to recover our points."

Gibbons' second moved to fourth place in the championship points chase, only one point out of third.

TEAM 3 RED REACHES PODIUM

The Stouffville-based Team 3 Red/DJK Racing earned its first podium finish of the 2003 CASCAR Super Series season when DJ Kennington finished third in Sunday's MOPAR 300 feature race in Calgary.

Qualifying his Snap-on Tools/Castrol Canada Intrepid third on the grid for the 300-lap event, Kennington took the lead on lap 156 and held it for the next 40 before relinquishing it.

After making his final pit stop on lap 230, Kennington returned to the track in ninth place before gradually working his way towards the leaders.

"This Snap-on Tools/Castrol Canada Intrepid was great today. I was happy with our car since the drop of the green flag. We just simply ran out of time. I had lots of car left just not enough laps. Just one of those things," explained Kennington.

Gibbons and Team 3 Red are in Vancouver this weekend to compete in the CASCAR Canadian Tire 100.

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