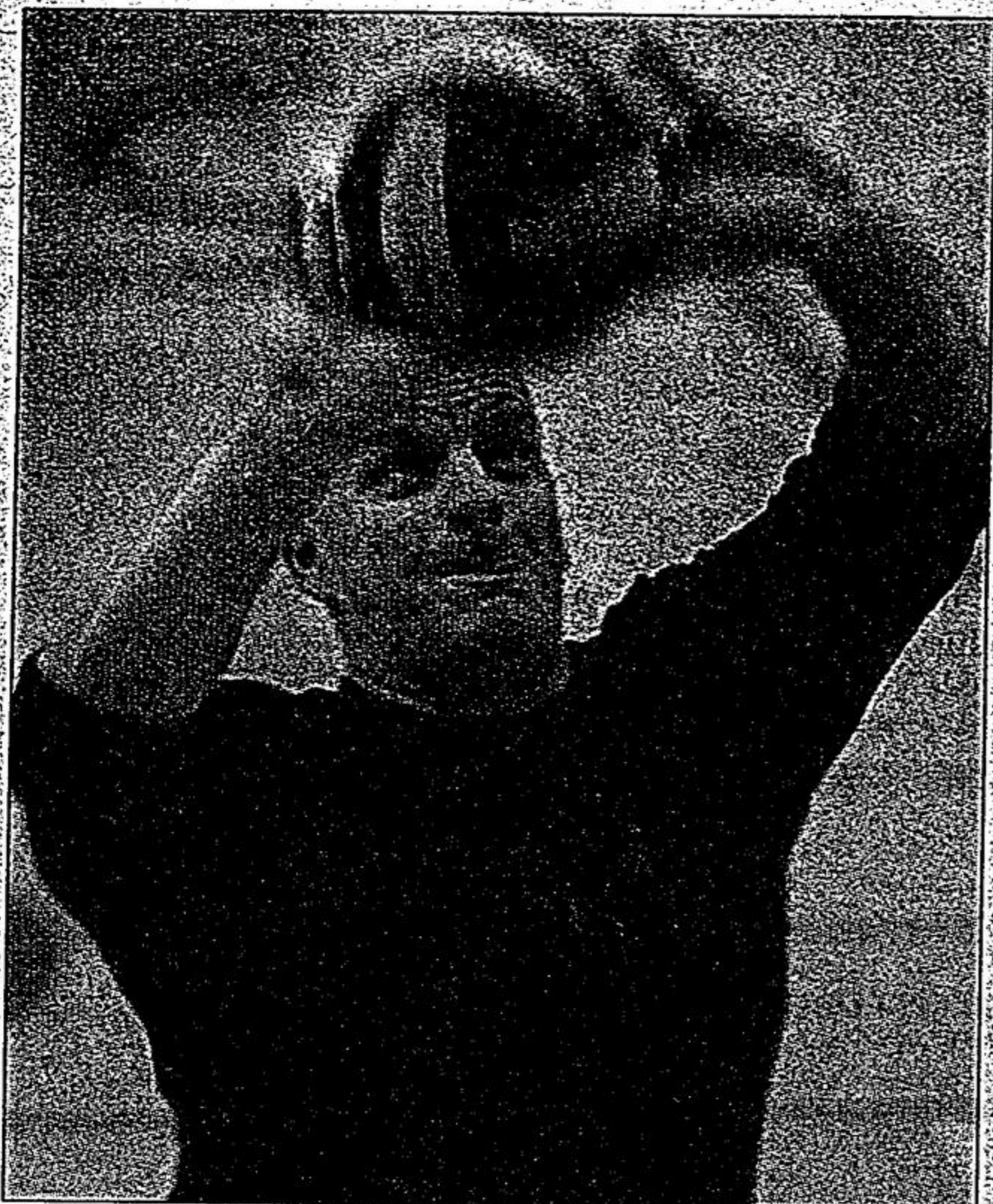


# SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

## It's a setup

Former Stouffville District Secondary School student Paul Boynton, 42 (graduating class of 1980-81), attempts to set this ball up to a teammate during action in Saturday's Millennium Cup alumni volleyball tournament at SDSS. The Cecil Clarke Sandbaggers won the tournament with a 2-0 win over the Dube and Reesor Attack team.

## Bantam Stars skate off with Ottawa gold

The Markham-Stouffville bantam AA Stars skated away with the gold medal from the recent seventh annual NCCP Tournament in Ottawa after defeating the host NCCP Capitals 2-1 in the championship final.

Backed by strong netminding from Danielle Skoufranis and Cassandra McNichol, the Stars finished first in their pool after recording decisions over the Capitals 3-0, Vaughan 3-0 and Whitby 5-0. The Stars then faced Nepean in a semi-final and prevailed 3-0.

Scoring for the Stars in the tournament were Hayley Hughes five goals, two assists; Corliss Bean two goals, four assists; Nyssa Kuwahara four goals; Jamie Tostik three goals, one assist; Amanda Fawns one goal, two assists; Alex Forsyth four assists; Vicky Wells one goal; Alex Wells, Kelly Seiter, Jenna Callaghan and Stephanie Seggie one assist. Also making major contributions were Natalie Geiger, Trisha Egberts and Jordanna Peroff.



## Novices unbeaten in 4

The Stouffville novice AE Clippers took to the ice for four recent minor hockey contests and skated off with a pair of wins and two ties.

The Clippers began its four-game slate with a 3-0 win over Orillia.

John Anthony, Coscarello, Matthew Espey and Owen Pearce each scored once while Michael Rabey and Matthew Avoledo earned assists.

After battling Ajax and Newmarket in its next two games to scoreless ties, the Clippers defeated East Gwillimbury 4-2.

Pearce had a goal and an assist while Espey, Jon-Ross Newlands and Coscarello contributed single tallies. Brendan Clifford, Rabey and Joel Leuschner were credited with assists.



## Victorious Spirit 'has to step it up' against Markham, Newmarket

The Stouffville Spirit eked out a win Monday night, but it knows it will have to play better tonight and Saturday if the Provincial Junior A Hockey League team hopes to compete.

The Spirit, which won 3-2 Monday over the Vaughan Vipers in Maple, hosts the Markham Waxers tonight and Newmarket Hurricanes Saturday. Both games are 7:30 p.m. starts at the Stouffville Arena.

Defenceman Chris Gray chipped in a loose puck with 1:55 left in overtime Monday, after assisting on the Spirit's first two goals. Both were scored by Kevin Hayward, who set up the winner with a neat drop pass.

The Spirit outshot the Vipers (7-19-1-1) 32-17, but looked disorganized much of the night.

### CONWAY SAVES THE DAY

Fifteen-year-old goalie Neil Conway bailed Stouffville out several times, including stopping two Vaughan breakaways and foiling former Spirit scoring king Anthony Minicucci.

"We weren't doing anything right for a while, but we pulled it out," said Hayward, one of six Stouffville resi-



KEVIN HAYWARD Veteran forward scored twice and set up game-winner in Spirit's 3-2 road win Monday over Vaughan.

dents on the Spirit roster this season. "We're going to have to play better as a team (tonight and Saturday)."

Spirit points leader Ty Raine had two assists.

### FOUR-DAY LAYOFF SHOWED

"It showed that we had been off for four days," Spirit head coach Brian Perrin said. "We worked hard but our timing was off."

"Markham is a bit of a rival for us and Newmarket is definitely a rival. If we want to move up in the standings, we have to win."

Decimated by injuries on defence and inconsistent netminding, the Waxers signed their fourth goalie of the season this week. Rob Gundari, a Sault Ste. Marie native, was plucked from the roster of the Huntsville Wildcats, who have ceased operations for the season.

The Spirit (16-9-1-0) is in third place in the league's North Conference standings, four points back of Newmarket (18-6-1-0).

Markham (11-9-2-4) is in fourth in the South. See standings on page 20.

**SPIRITED NOTES:** The Spirit hosts its second annual Toronto Rock night next Thursday. Stouffville resident Glenn Clark, assistant captain of the National Lacrosse League champions, will autograph free Rock photos...ex-Spirit winger Jon Smyth scored four goals Saturday to lead Colgate University to a 6-1 win over Clarkson. He was named USCHO.com NCAA Division I offensive player of the week. The sophomore forward had just two goals and one assist in his entire rookie year.

## McNeil receives surprise birthday gift

Former hockey colleagues travel from far and near to help ex-pro celebrate his 70th

BY JIM THOMAS  
Correspondent

During his hockey hey-day overseas, Bob McNeil pulled off surprise manoeuvres on many an opposing defenceman and goaltender.

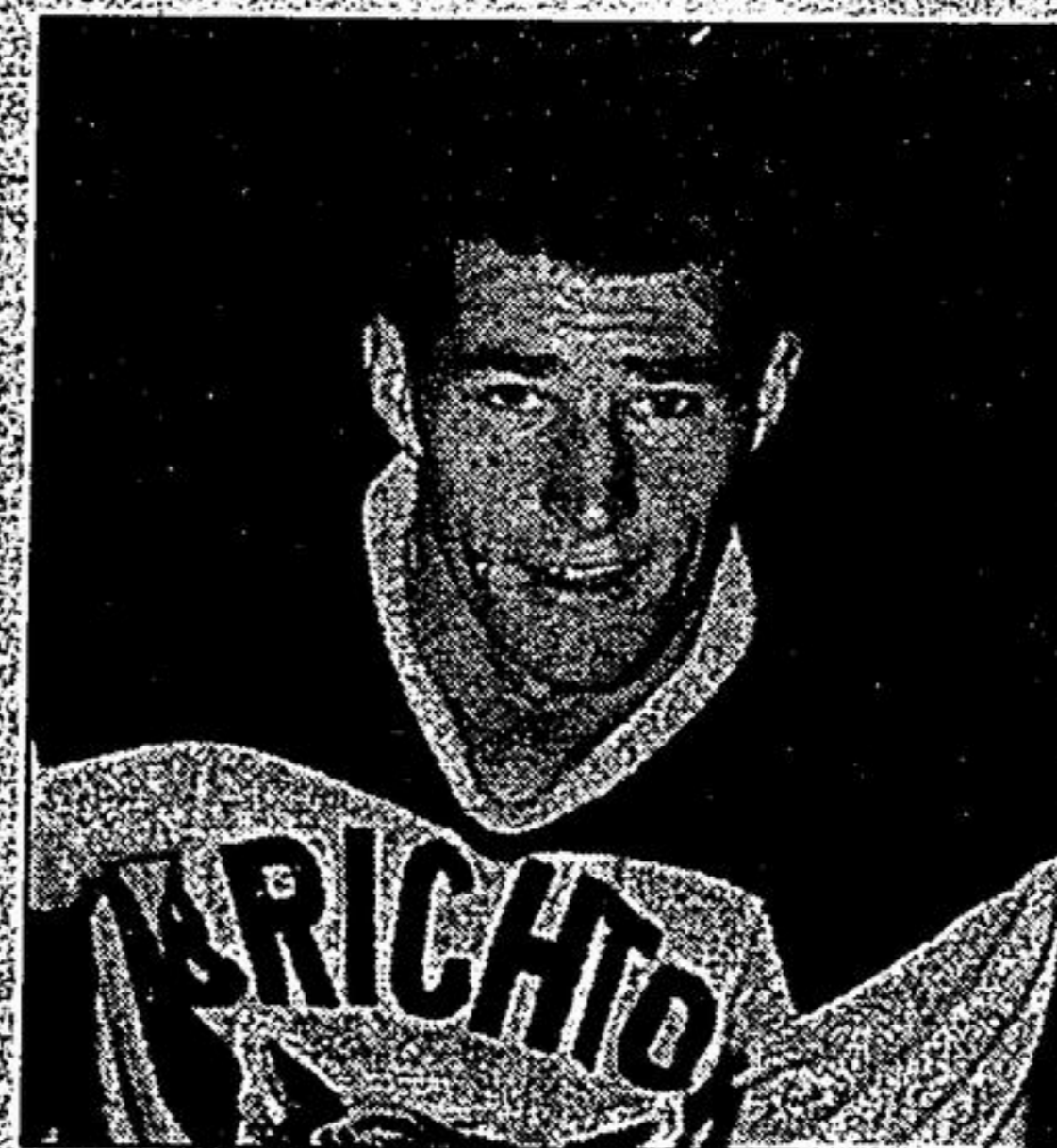
However, none could equal the surprise pulled off on the Stouffville resident Saturday night.

On the arm of wife Sheila, he entered the Amaretto Restaurant, anticipating a quiet evening meal with a couple of close friends. Instead, he was welcomed by 130 well-wishers awaiting his arrival.

The occasion was the local electrician's 70th birthday.

Included on the guest list were five former teammates from the Brighton Tigers of the British Hockey League. They included: Harry Pearson, Bill Dummett and Anthony Wiltshire of Brighton; Tony Parisi, now living in Pittsburgh, Penn., and Gar Vasey of Clifford, ON, near Mt. Forest.

Five other Brighton friends were also in attendance along with a star-studded collection of the Toronto and area hockey elite including Brian McFarlane, Pete Conacher, Bob and Bill Hassard, Polly Minton, Grant Larner and more.



BOB McNEIL Long-time Stouffville resident pictured during his pro hockey playing days in England.

### PARTY PLANNED A YEAR IN ADVANCE

Reunion plans were initiated by Bob's wife and daughter Cindy nearly one year ago.

"If we have it, they will come," Cindy repeatedly said, fully realizing the deep love felt for her dad during his playing days in Brighton and retained over the past half-century.

Sheila admits it was difficult shielding her husband from invitation replies and phone calls.

"I hope I'll be forgiven for all the little white lies I've been forced to tell," she says.

Brighton friends began arriving a week before the event with more coming later.

"We had to keep them in hiding," Sheila said.

A native of Timmins, McNeil performed with several teams before heading to England including the Galt Black Hawks, the Windsor Spitfires and the South Porcupine Flyers, Memorial Cup champions in 1953.

He's played against such National Hockey League notables as the late Harry Watson and Carl Brewer, Brian Conacher, Danny Lewicki, Bobby Baun, Ivan Walmsley and Gordie Howe.

### PLAYED AND COACHED OVERSEAS

During his 10-year stint overseas, McNeil played in Czechoslovakia and Russia.

He also served as a coach in Switzerland and Austria.

"He was brilliant," said Dummett, then a stick boy with the Tigers. "He had a fiery temper, but everyone loved him, fans and players, too."

"The fastest skater I've ever seen," said Parisi, an ex-Brighton netminder. "He could fly."

Parisi admitted it was his good fortune to play with McNeil rather than against him.

A video, 'Forever Young,' was created by daughter Cindy and shown to the audience of well-wishers.

Bob and Sheila also have a son, Tim, and eight grandchildren. A younger son, Danny, died in a motor vehicle crash 11 years ago en route home from a junior hockey game in Port Perry.

Bob's reaction to the whole affair? "Unbelievable."