

SPORTS

Converted goal scorer happy to be in Spirit net

Juniors host Collingwood tonight, Wexford Saturday

Dan McWhinney was a goaltender in forward's clothing.

For 12 years, he played centre on hockey teams in his home town of Sault Ste. Marie.

"But I always wanted to be in net," the Stouffville Spirit goalie said. "My brother would take shots on me at home and I was always the goalie in street hockey."

His parents had other ideas. His dad, Jeff, coached many of those youth teams, including some at the AA level.

"How can I put my top scorer in net?" he'd tell Dan.

Then there was the issue of forking out a few thousand dollars for equipment.

One day three years ago, White Pines High School was short a netminder for practice.

Dan volunteered, telling the coach he'd played before, not explaining it was only in the family driveway.

He never returned to centre, eventually backstopping the school to the city championship.

He spent last year in Terrace Bay Ont., with the Aguabason River Rats Jr. B team.

A highlight came in a 10-0 loss in the Western Canada



DAN MCWHINNEY: Sault Ste. Marie native was late cut by hometown Greyhounds before coming to Spirit.

championships. McWhinney, who had just stopped more than 80 shots, was named player of the game.

AUDITIONS IN WELLINGTON, SAULT

His route to Stouffville this fall included stops in Wellington, where he thought he had a spot with the Jr. A Dukes, and back home in the Sault where he was a late cut of the Ontario Hockey League's Greyhounds.

The Spirit's Thunder Bay scout, John Mason, was talking to a colleague in Sault Ste. Marie in early September when McWhinney's name came up.

The goalie drove to Stouffville and the next day

was spectacular in a triple overtime win over Brampton at a pre-season tourney.

The Spirit signed him immediately.

"It's been good here," he said. "The guys are great and we're playing well. It will only get better."

SPIRIT DOWN HURRICANES

McWhinney, 19, drew the attention of at least one U.S. college scout Sunday when he beat the Newmarket Hurricanes 5-3 in Newmarket.

Ty Raine had a goal and two assists for the Spirit, which trailed 2-1 after one period but led 3-2 after two.

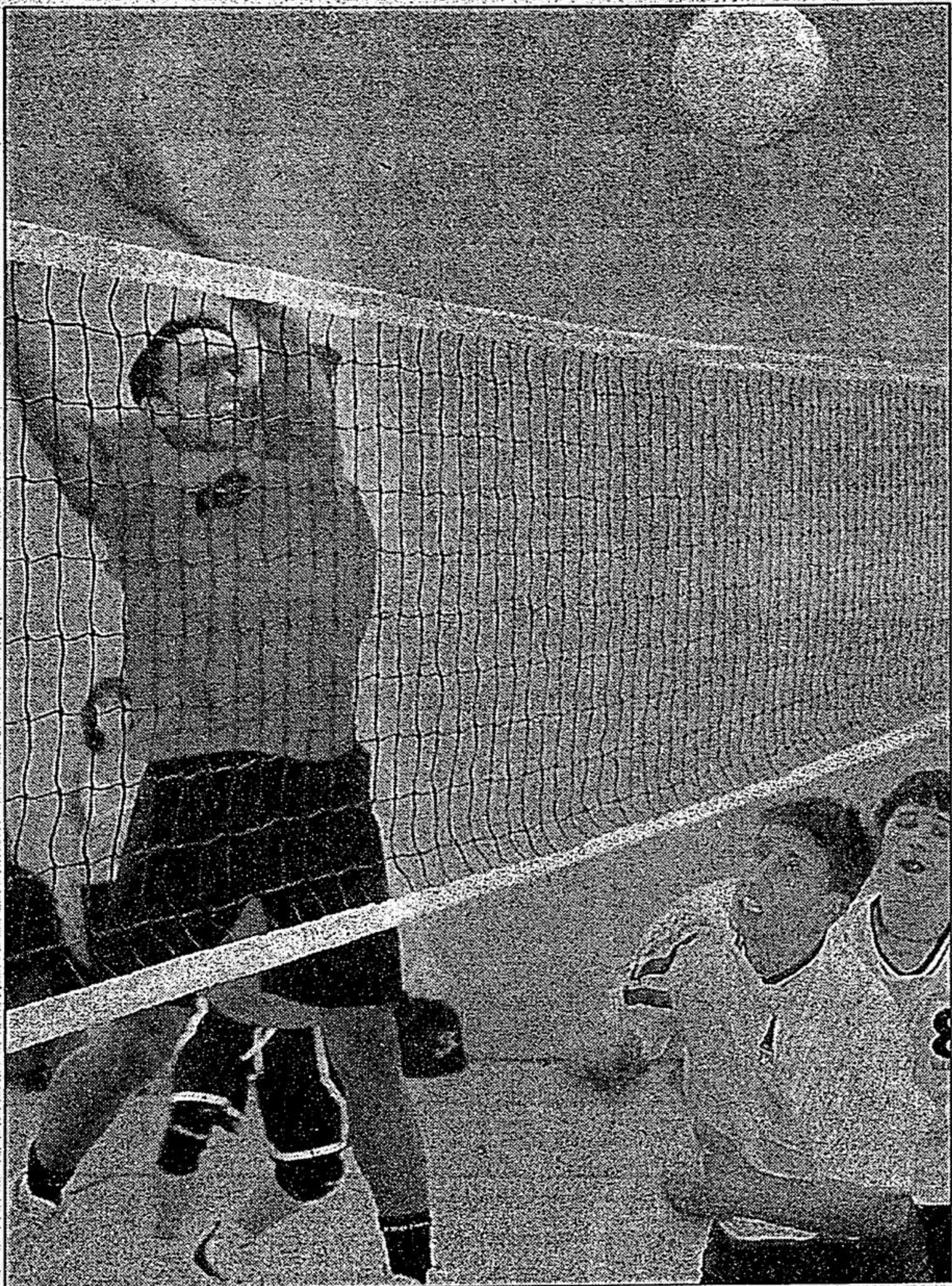
Rick Schrank, Jake Van Allen, Carson Devine and Simon Gysbers accounted for the other Spirit markers.

The Spirit lost 3-1 to the Aurora Tigers Friday night with four regulars out, including McWhinney and two defencemen from a fight two weeks ago with Thornhill.

Rugged winger Cory Battista had the Spirit goal and scored a TKO of a Tiger in a fight.

The Spirit has three games in three nights, hosting Collingwood tonight, visiting Couchiching tomorrow and meeting Wexford Saturday at the Stouffville Arena at 7:30 p.m.

For more on the Spirit, log on to www.stouffvillespirit.com



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Here, take that!

St. Elizabeth Catholic High School's Randolph Fajardo (left), blocks the ball back into the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans' court as John Chaput (right) and Allan McGrath look on during Tuesday's YRAA senior boys volleyball game at Stouffville. The Spartans, however, won the match 2-0 (25-19, 25-16). The Spartans also defeated Richmond Hill Secondary School 2-0 (25-16, 25-22).

Spartan senior golfers finish third at York Region championships

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior boys' golf team finished third at last Thursday's York Region Athletic Association championships at Angus Glen Golf Club in Unionville.

The team of James Castle, Adam Craig, Adam Gainsbrook and Justin Hitchen, fired an 18-hole score of 326 on the south course.

Castle had the best round among Spartan golfers with a four

over 76 while Gainsbrook had a 78, Craig 85 and Hitchen 87. Also on the team was C.J. Stevens.

St. Robert Catholic High School of Thornhill won the event with a 313.

In the junior boys event, which was held on the Angus Glen Golf Club north course, the Spartans finished fourth with a 346. Sir William Mulock Secondary School of Newmarket was first with a 317.

The junior team included Matt Easter, Fred Bell, David Bell, Dennis O'Shaughnessy and Brendan Wise.

Bantams tackled in final

The Spartans bantam boys' rugby team advanced to the final of last Thursday's Rugby Ontario's High School 10's tournament at Fletcher's Field in Markham before they were blanked 5-0 by

Bracebridge and Muskoka Lakes Secondary School.

In reaching the final, the Spartans won all three of their round-robin games by shutouts while scoring 86 points.

The Spartan juniors reached the semi-finals before they were defeated by Port Perry High School 10-5.

The Spartan seniors lost their first game to Westmount

Secondary School (Vaughan) 15-0 but came back to defeat Leaside Secondary School 35-0 and Bramalea Secondary School 17-0.

Despite winning two of three games, the Spartans failed to advance to the playoffs.

The Spartan bantams, juniors and girls' teams are slated to be at Fletcher's Field today for the high school 15's event.

UXBRIDGE TRAIN STATION

"THE NEW" HALLOWEEN SPOOKY TRAIN RIDE

Saturday, October 30, 2004

WEAR YOUR SCARIEST COSTUME

ALL TICKETS \$15.00 each

Train #1 The Friendly Ghost Train

Boards at 5:30pm Departs at 6:00pm Returns at 7:30pm

- Scary entertainment
- Hot chocolate • Hot dogs

Train #2 The Scary Ghost Train

Boards at 8:00pm Departs at 8:30pm Returns at 10:00pm

- Prizes for best costumes
- Treasure Hunt • Scary loot-bags

Tickets may be purchased in advance at the Uxbridge Train Station

For information call our hotline at 905-852-3696 or www.ydhr.on.ca