

## SPORTS

## Spirit hopes to avoid controversy when it travels to Ajax

### Police lay charges after Axemen's last home game with Thornhill

The Stouffville Spirit hopes history doesn't repeat itself.

The Spirit takes a Provincial Jr. A Hockey League road trip to Ajax Sunday afternoon.

It will be the hometown Axemen's first home game since an ugly incident erupted and charges were filed at their game last Sunday after they posted their first win of the season over the visiting Thornhill Thunderbirds 2-1.

The melee started when Axemen forward Lucas LaBelle, the son of Axemen owner and head coach Larry LaBelle, was hit from behind by Thunderbirds' forward Steve Tamaridis.

LaBelle lay on the ice unconscious for more than five minutes and later complained of numbness in his feet and hands. He was put on a stretcher and transported by ambulance to the Ajax site of the Rouge Valley Health System.

Lucas was released from hospital Monday suffering from a concussion and severe whiplash.

*A woman threw a metal bar at Tamaridis and attacked the mother of a Thornhill player...*

A former member of the Axemen last year, Tamaridis was automatically ejected from Sunday's game after receiving a match penalty and will serve an immediate four-game suspension.

"Hopefully, he should be gone for the rest of the season. That kid could have been paralyzed for life. We'll see how the OHA handles it and go from there. We're looking for some serious sanctions to come out of this," said Larry LaBelle, adding the league's director of officiating was in attendance, which could speed up the suspension process.

#### LEAGUE AWAITS FULL REPORT

OHA president Brent Ladds says he'll have to wait on a full report from the game officials, which could take upwards of two weeks, before rendering any further suspensions. He does, however, regard the matter as serious.

During the incident, Durham Regional Police laid five charges against LaBelle's wife and daughter.

Sgt. Paul Malik said police were called to the arena after reports of fighting in the stands involving spectators.

Police said a woman threw a cup of hot coffee on Tamaridis, a 19-year-old

East York resident.

Hot coffee and hot chocolate was also thrown on Ms. LaBelle and her daughter Belinda.

A woman threw a metal bar at Tamaridis and attacked the mother of a Thornhill player checking on the evicted player in the dressing room, say police. It's alleged the woman had her clothing ripped and her arm injured during the incident.

Jennifer LaBelle, 47, was arrested and charged with assault with a weapon and two counts of assault. Belinda LaBelle, 18, was charged with assault with a weapon and uttering threats.

#### POSSIBLE DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Ladds also noted there may be fines or disciplinary actions levied against the Axemen in the aftermath of the charges being laid against Jennifer and Belinda LaBelle. But, he cautions neither are registered with the OHA as they are volunteers.

Jennifer is listed on the club's website as an executive assistant, and Belinda as the team's special events co-ordinator.

"If there's a connection with the hockey club (fines or disciplinary action) would be the general consideration. We're not discounting it," says Ladds.

But, he notes it's too early in the process to consider what, if any, fines or disciplinary action would be taken against the club. He says the OHA would not interfere with the ongoing police investigation.

"The investigation has to play itself out first, rather than interfere with the process," says Ladds, adding that the OHA's current focus is on what, if any, security was in place during Sunday's game that could have prevented the series of events from escalating.

At the game, no special security request was made by the Thunderbirds, says Ladds, as there were no issues up to this point.

Thornhill head coach and general manager Sean Carney could not be reached for comment.

Both accused are to appear in court Jan. 13 in Oshawa.

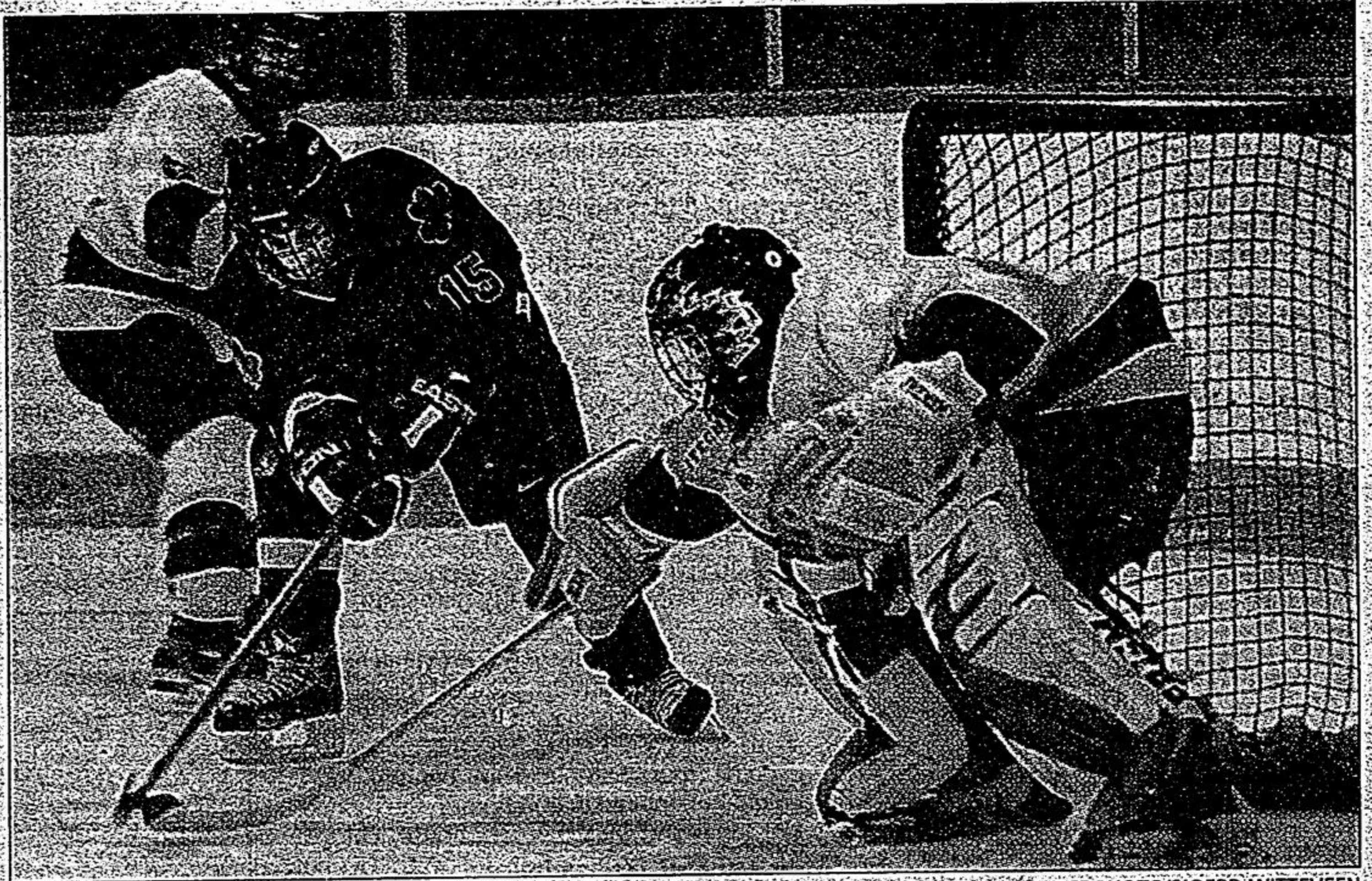
#### SPIRIT HOSTS OSHAWA TONIGHT

The Spirit (16-10-2-1), the third-place team in the North Conference, hosts the South's Oshawa Legionaires (4-19-3-1) tonight at the Stouffville Arena. Game time is 7:30.

The Spirit completed a two-games-in-two-nights sweep of the Collingwood Blues with a 5-2 win in Collingwood Friday.

Patrick Lee, Mark Boyce, Michael Aiello, Simon Gysbers and Brock Ouellet had the Spirit goals. Ouellet and Ty Raine each had two assists.

For more on the Spirit log on to [stouffvillespirit.com](http://stouffvillespirit.com)



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior boys hockey team will rely heavily on the work of veteran goalkeeper Shawn Gibson, shown here poking the puck away from Cardinal Carter Catholic High School forward Anthony Simone during last week's 6-1 loss at Stouffville Arena, if they hope to retain the York Region Athletic Association title.

## Hockey Spartans hope youth will serve up another YRAA title

### Senior hockey club has won two of its first three games

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior boys' hockey team is in the process of attending a course which head coach Jamie Hewitt describes as "Spartan hockey."

With just four returnees from last year's York Region Athletic Association championship team, the Spartans are in a bit of a transition period.

"We're kind of in a rebuilding process," Hewitt acknowledged. "It's hard to bring guys in from different places and put them on the same page."

If the Spartans hope to make an impact this season, which has them placed in a six-team north division that includes Cardinal Carter Catholic High School, Huron Heights Secondary School, Dr. J.M. Denison Secondary School, Keswick Secondary School and King City Secondary School, Hewitt said his club must take care of business in their own end first before even thinking about

scoring goals.

"We're definitely not as offensively talented as we were last year. We need to be in games where it's 1-0 or 2-1. We've got to bang and crash. All of our results will be due to hard work and sticking to a system," he said.

So far, it appears as if the players are buying into what Hewitt is teaching as they sport a 2-1 record in their first three YRAA regular season outings.

#### GOALTENDING A FORTE

Hewitt feels the strength of this year's team is between the pipes as Shawn Gibson returns for his third season with the senior squad.

Backing him up is Jake Baldson, who played with the junior Spartans last season.

Anchoring what Hewitt describes as a solid defence is returnee Jon Wonch.

Alex Bruno and Matt Mulder are the lone returnees up front.

But also catching Hewitt's attention are centre Kyle Miller and winger Craig McDowell.

In utilizing his forward lines, Hewitt will employ four lines this season as compared with three last year. He feels his

depth, comprised primarily of first-year seniors, could pay dividends down the stretch in games.

"It's taken a while for the guys to learn the system. But they're learning Spartan hockey. They're getting it and they've been working hard."

#### Spartans caged at OFSAA

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior girls' basketball team were eliminated in quick fashion at last weekend's Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations' AA playdowns in Belleville.

The Spartans, who entered the tournament unseeded, lost their opener to second-seeded General Amherst 64-36 and were then eliminated by host Moira Secondary School 66-50.

Pearl Coleshill had 17 points for the Spartans against General Amherst while Erin Button was high scorer against Moira with 14.

Placed in the consolation round the Spartans suffered a 58-55 overtime loss to Blessed Trinity Catholic High School (Grimsby).

Button had 19 points for the Spartans.

## Youth hoop and volleyball camp to start Jan. 5

A co-ed youth volleyball and basketball camp will take place at Stouffville District Secondary School starting Jan. 5.

The camp, which will run from 6 p.m. to 7 p.m. is tailored for youngsters between the ages of seven to 14.

The cost is \$150 and enrol-

ment is limited.

For further information, contact Jim Fletcher at 905-985-1542 or e-mail him at [fletcher@idirect.com](mailto:fletcher@idirect.com)