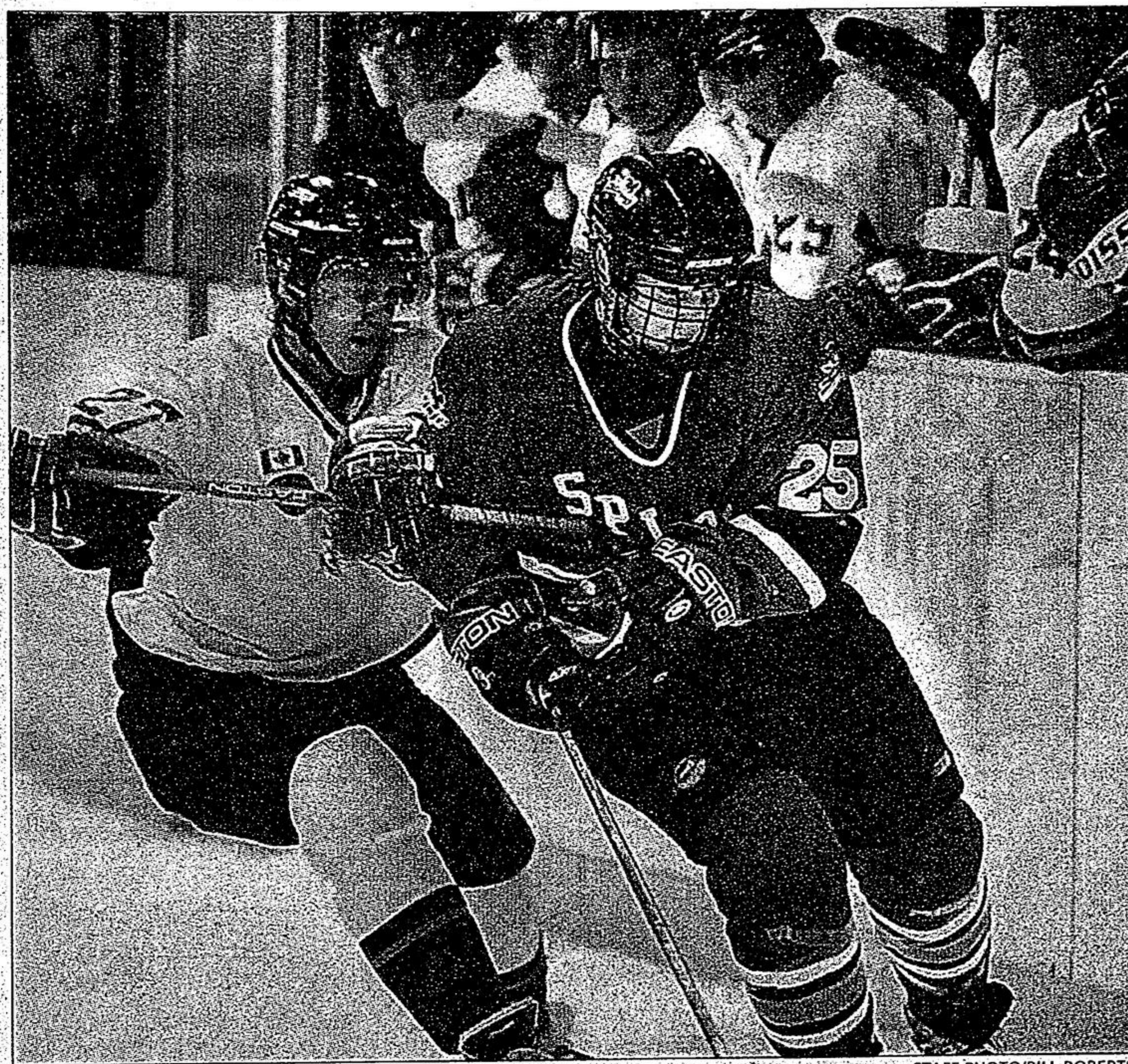


Stouffville Sun-Tribune

# SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

Newmarket Hurricane Jeff Moor uses the butt end of his stick to impede the progress of Stouffville Spirit defenceman Daniel Spivak during Newmarket's 5-2 win over Stouffville in Newmarket. The Spirit hosts the Couchiching Terriers tonight at the Stouffville Arena.

## Spirit struggle continues in '05

So much for a happy new year. The Stouffville Spirit opened 2005 with a 5-2 loss to the Newmarket Hurricanes Sunday in Newmarket.

The Spirit (18-15-2-1) remains tied for third place with the Huntsville Muskoka Otters who fell 6-3 to Aurora Sunday.

Newmarket remains in first, one point up on Aurora.

Stouffville hosts Couchiching tonight and visits Huntsville tomorrow.

Sunday, Randy Johnston and Brandon Walker scored for the Spirit who led 2-1 early. The Spirit outshot Newmarket 38-31. Dan McWhinney picked up the loss.

"Our guys have to learn to play through adversity a little better," said Spirit general manager Ken Burrows, before leaving on a scouting junket this week. "They seem to stop short every time something bad happens. We have to get over that."

With the trade deadline Monday at midnight and the playoffs a month away, Burrows is also looking at trades, with reservations.

"If we can do something, we'll do it," he said. "But the players on the block out there really aren't a good fit for us."

"There won't be a lot of big trades within our league. And if you deal outside the league, you pay big bucks, \$10,000 to \$15,000 for a player."

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Ken Burrows  
Stouffville Spirit GM

**SPIRITED NOTES:** Aurora made a move last week, buying flashy scorer Jeremy Whelan from the Pickering Panthers....Spirit defenceman Bret Watters will split the rest of the season between Stouffville and his hometown Uxbridge Bruins Jr. C team.... Stouffville's Keith Acton, an assistant coach with the Toronto Maple Leafs, worked with Spirit players at practice Monday...see North Conference standings on page 19.

## Tournament takes over arena

Forty-eight minor hockey teams from as far away as Sudbury, Ottawa and Windsor will converge on the Stouffville Arena this weekend for a Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association tournament.

The tourney is open to bantam, midget and minor pee-wee teams.

The host Stouffville Clippers will have entries in each of the six tournament divisions.

The action starts Friday at 8 a.m. at the Stouffville Arena on the Ninth Line.

In addition to first-day games being played in Stouffville, three facilities in Markham, including Angus Glen, Mount Joy and Markham Village arenas, will be utilized.

The tournament will wind down Sunday with semifinal contests starting at 9:10 a.m. The division championships begin at 1:15 p.m. in Stouffville.

Admission to all games is free.

For further tournament information, log on to [www.wsmha.com](http://www.wsmha.com)

### Minor hockey

#### AE team on a roll

The Stouffville minor atom AE Clippers have been on a torrid place of late going 5-1-1.

The Clippers began their seven-game foray by posting victories over Ajax (5-3) and Richmond Hill (5-2) before dropping a (3-0) decision to Georgina.

But the Clippers rebounded to edge East Gwillimbury 5-3, battle Clarington to a 2-2 tie and defeat Pickering and Markham by identical 2-0 scores.

#### ROBB LEADS SCORING

Scoring for the Clippers in these games were: Nick Robb four goals, two assists; Alex McKean four goals, one assist; Brendan Clifford three goals, two assists; John Anthony Coscarella three goals, one assist; Hayden Ellison three goals; Marisa Benacquista two goals, four assists; Michael Rabey and Keaton Major one goal, two assists; Jon-Ross Newlands four assists; Joel Leuschner, Ryan Maloney,

Michael Lennie, Anthony Barresi and Carson Nelson one assist each.

#### Tykes take Minden

The Stouffville tyke select Clippers took to the ice in Minden for a Christmas holiday six-team tournament and skated off with the title after routing the host Haliburton Highlanders 9-0 in the championship final.

In reaching the final, the Clippers posted resounding victories over Orillia (14-0) and Woodville (9-3).

Goaltender Tyler Ryan posted two shutouts for the Clippers.

Other team members on the Clippers included: Lukas Burkholder, Christopher Carter, Mario Rosano, Duncan Allen, Jeremy Hughes, Ben Sear, Tyler Wright, Mitchell Witherspoon, Shane Beaulieu, Carter King, Chad Harbour, Andrew Riopel, Jordan Brillinger, Josh Carlin, Chris Evelyn and Shane Stallybrass.

The team is coached by Mike Sear and assisted by Steve Ryan and Dave Witherspoon.

## Rider eyes Olympic debut

BY JIM THOMAS  
Correspondent

When equestrian Fred Thynne of Cedar Valley, Whitchurch-Stouffville first enters the reining ring, eyebrows raise.

For this sport, now recognized at the Olympics, is intended for younger competitors.

But Thynne doesn't mind. At age 54, he feels maturity is more a benefit than a detriment.

"Being the old guy makes me proud," he says, "I enjoy the challenge."

Despite a disastrous outing in Oklahoma City where he placed 13th, Thynne has more than lived up to his own expectations.

"I crashed and burned," he says of his Oklahoma experience, "but it was a great education." He feels he put his quarter horse, Chec, through too rigorous a workout prior to the show, then he couldn't produce when it really counted.

Earlier, he placed third in the eastern Canadian rookie-of-the-year finals at Hamilton.

Thynne began riding back in the 1970s but gave it up until four years ago when a friend encouraged him to get back in the saddle.

The purchase of Chec, short for Smart Little Peppy Chec, set the stage for a comeback.

"He's getting better every day," Thynne says of his mount. "This year, he'll be on top of his game."

Now, that reining is a recognized



Fred Thynne of Cedar Valley on Chec.

Olympic sport, interest is worldwide, says Thynne. It will be officially introduced at the Games hosted by Beijing, China, in 2012. Thynne hopes to represent Canada.

He's a member of the Ontario Reining Horse Association.

In spite of a disappointing showing at the North American Affiliate Championship in Oklahoma City, Thynne's determined to continue.

#### PURSE OF \$1.35 MILLION

The competition attracted 2,000 riders from around the world going after purses exceeding \$1.35 million.

With the Beijing Olympics seven years away, Thynne admits he'll have reached the ripe old age of 61, more than double that of most reining entries.

"One must think positive," he said.