

SPORTS

Knapp bowls them over in Stouffville

Nanaimo lefthander is big shooter on mixed league team

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

A 39-year-old Markham mother of three is setting the Stouffville Bowling Centre ablaze.

Debbie Knapp of the Tuesday Night Mixed League, is burning up the alleys with an average of 254.

Knapp's high single here is 398, but her personal best is 410, established in Surrey, B.C. where she once resided.

A native of Nanaimo, B.C., Knapp honed her skills in Youth Bowling Council there, beginning at age six.

On arriving in Markham, she called John White, owner/operator of Stouffville Bowl.

"I wanted a night out so asked what leagues were available," she recalls. "The Stouffville alleys are perfect, just like I knew back home; I'm happy here."

Her teammates, Al Edwards, George McKay, Chic Minaker and Shirley Mahoney are happy also.

Not only does Knapp pad their totals, she adds a social lustre to the sport that everyone enjoys.

The Markham lefthander favours nothing fancy but depends mainly on straight balls to chalk up points. If it ain't broke, don't fix it is her motto.

Knapp comes with a reputation.

While in Surrey, she placed fifth in a provincial ladies singles division. Her other sporting interest is ladies fast-pitch.

Knapp says she's not intimidated by mixed league play.

"I love beating the boys," she laughs.

Apart from the social aspect of the game, Knapp says bowling is excellent exercise.

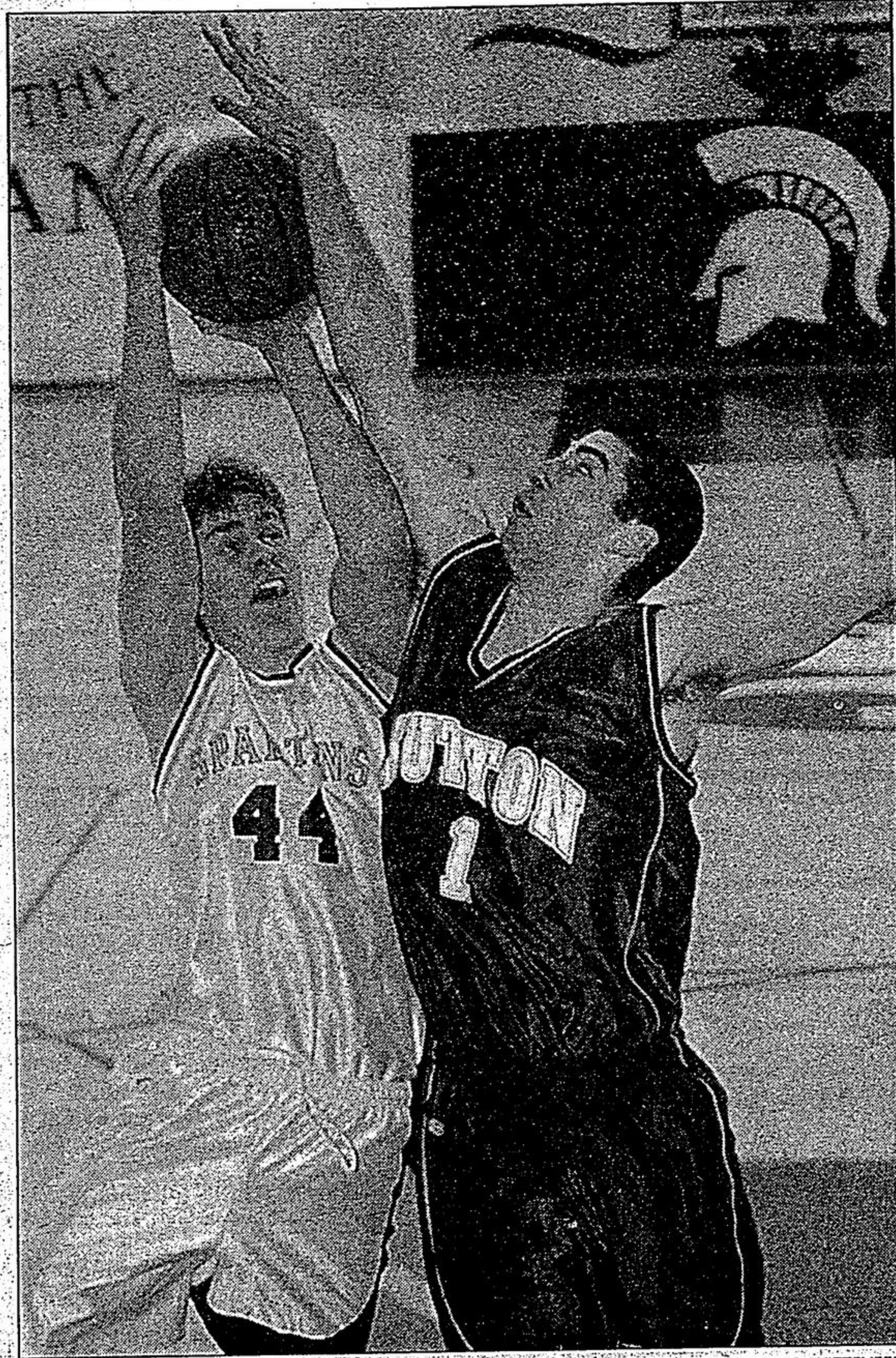
Her youngest, a four-year-old, is already taking up the sport. He uses two hands.

While Knapp has enjoyed her time on the lanes since she first took up the game, any thoughts of retiring in the future are far from her mind.

"No way," she says. "It's what I want to do the rest of my life."



DEBBIE KNAPP: First took to the bowling lanes when she was six years old in British Columbia.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Arm up on the action

Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans' Dan Locksley (left) gets fouled by Sutton District Secondary School's Taylor Sillito during action in Monday's York Region Athletic Association tier two senior boys' basketball game at Stouffville. The Spartans prevailed 56-44. Kyle Law was high scorer for the Spartans with 17 points.

Minor peewee AE Clippers host British team in friendly

The Stouffville minor peewee AE Clippers will take on the role of diplomats Friday when they will play an exhibition game against a team from Great Britain at the Stouffville Arena at 7 p.m.

The Clippers will face the Flintshire Flyers, who made Stouffville a stop on an exhibition tour of Southern Ontario.

Spectators are welcome to attend.

EAST GWILLIMBURY ELIMINATED IN SIX-GAME PLAYOFF SERIES

In York-Simcoe playoff action, Taylor Clifford scored two goals, including the game-winner with 1.2 seconds remaining in regulation time, to propel the Clippers to a 4-3 win at the Stouffville Arena. The win gave the Clippers a first-round



series victory in six games over East Gwillimbury.

Trailing 3-2 with 30 seconds remaining in regulation time, the Clippers knotted the count on a goal by Robert Spencer to set the stage for Clifford's heroics.

Mitch Price accounted for the other Clippers' goal.

Gabe Grunwald played a superb game in goal.

SPIRIT SETS OUT TO TAME TERRIERS

First game in best-of-seven series goes tonight at Stouffville Arena

Stouffville Spirit players reported for practice Monday with the prerequisite playoff haircuts, plus a few unplanned touches.

Added to the Mohawk cuts, some dyed red, was a chipped tooth and other ailments picked up in a 3-3 tie with the Couchiching Terriers Sunday afternoon in Orillia.

It was a meaningless final game of the regular season for the Spirit (25-20-3-1), which finished in third place in the six-team North Conference of the Provincial Jr. A Hockey League. (See final standings on page 27.)

The Spirit will meet the same Terriers (12-32-3-2), who ended up in last place but still had a mathematical shot at fifth with a win Sunday.

Game 1 in the best-of-seven conference quarterfinal goes tonight at 7:30 p.m. at the Stouffville Arena, with the second game tomorrow in Orillia. The third game will be played next Thursday in Stouffville, with Game 4 Feb. 18 in Orillia.

Sunday's game may have been a post-season preview.

The Spirit rested several players, playing with fewer than three forward lines, and endured what team officials called cheap shots.

"They were going after our key players," said third-year defenceman Ian Brunt, a member of the Spirit squad that swept Couchiching in the first round two years ago.

"It was just playoff hockey. They went after me. They jumped (leading scorer) Ty (Raine). They hit Chris Harris from behind. Lombardo lost part of a tooth to a stick."

Jeff Barbieri, Randy Johnston and Jake Van Allen scored for the Spirit, who trailed 2-0 in the first period. Dan McWhinney was in net for his second straight start

DIDN'T PLAY WELL SUNDAY

"We didn't play our best," said Brunt. "We'll have more Thursday."

The Spirit won the other five games played between the teams this season.

It was playoff-like the night before in Stouffville. Brunt scored with four seconds left in overtime to give the Spirit a 3-2 win over the Newmarket Hurricanes. Newmarket still had a shot at first place going into the game.

Raine and Simon Gysbers gave the Spirit leads of 1-0 and 2-1 with goals. Jake Van Allen had two assists. All three goals were scored on the power play.

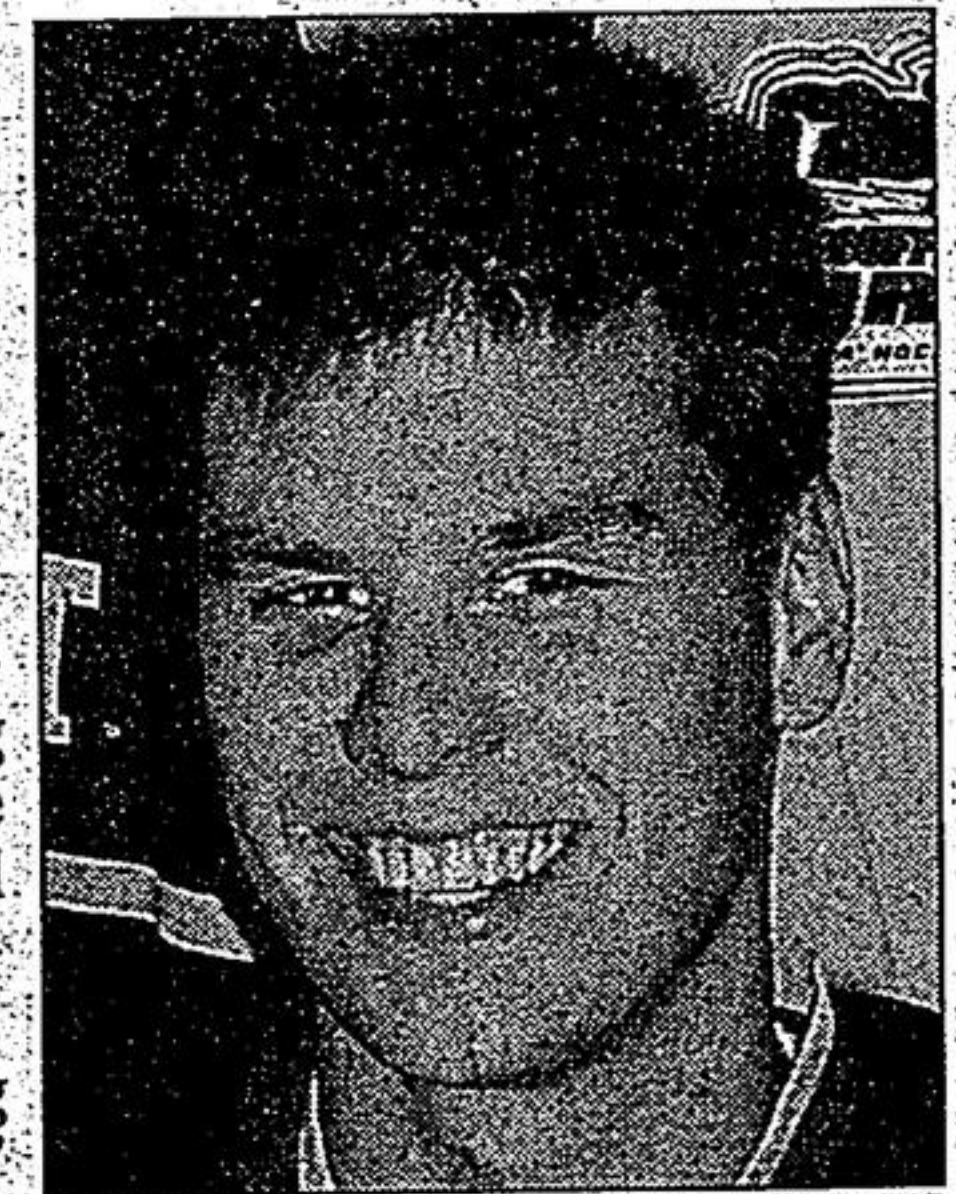
McWhinney made several outstanding saves for the Spirit, who outshot Newmarket 36-32.

Brunt and McWhinney shared MGH Office Repairs player of the game honours.

First-place Aurora must cross over and play Syracuse in its first-round series beginning tomorrow. Elsewhere in the North, second-place Newmarket meets Streetsville starting tonight and Huntsville opens with Collingwood tomorrow.

SPIRITED NOTES: Stouffville finished with the lowest penalty average (21.71 minutes per game) in the North and the second best goals against average (3.20) to Aurora...Markham (35.29) had the most penalties in the 35-team league and Bomanville the best goals against (1.98).

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



IAN BRUNT: Scores game-winning goal for Spirit in Saturday's 3-2 victory over Newmarket.