

SPORTS

Sheppard is glad he chose to play hockey in Stouffville

Spirit fall 2-1 to Waxers, play host to Ajax tonight

Nothing personal, Stouffville, but Joel Sheppard was hesitant about playing here this season.

But after two months with the Stouffville Spirit Jr. A Hockey Club, he couldn't be happier.

"Loving it," the smiling power forward from Sutton said this week.

After two years with the arch-rival Newmarket Hurricanes, Sheppard was dealt to Stouffville last spring for fellow 19-year-old Carson Devine.

"(The Spirit) was a team I wasn't sure I wanted to come to," he said, recalling the rivalry between his old and new team and anticipating the six

games they would play against each other this year in the Provincial Jr A league.

"But it's been a very easy transition. Everyone here has welcomed me with open arms. It's one of the few teams I've played for where there are no cliques. Everyone — new guys to veterans — talks to each other here.

"I like everyone here, including the coaching staff. There's respect here and that's what builds winning teams."

After graduating from the York Simcoe Express midgets two years ago, he narrowed his choice of junior teams to Stouffville and Newmarket, opting for the latter.

But after two years with the Hurricanes, "I just felt I wasn't being used in the right situations," Sheppard said.

He asked out last spring.

Spirit general manager Ken Burrows jumped at the chance

to get the six-foot, two-inch, 195-pounder.

"I think Joel underachieved last year and we can get a little more out of him," he said. "He's already putting the puck in the net and I think we'll see more of that."

Sheppard has seven goals and eight assists in 13 games.

The Spirit fell 2-1 to the Markham Waxers Saturday at home, ending a streak of 11 games of earning at least one point.

Rick Schrank scored the lone goal for the Spirit, now 6-3-2-3.

The Spirit hosts the Ajax Attack tonight at 7:30 at the Stouffville Arena and travels to Orillia Friday to play Couchiching, which is tied with the Spirit for fourth place in the North Conference.

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

Bell second in YRAA junior golf finals

One stroke.

That's what denied Dave Bell the opportunity of earning a share of this year's York Region Athletic Association junior boys' golf title.

The Grade 10 Stouffville District Secondary School student fired an even-par 72 last Thursday at the YRAA championship at Angus Glen Golf club.

He was just one shot behind champion Jeff Goodier of St. Theresa of Lisieux in Richmond Hill.

Spartans' head coach Steve Kinsella had a good feeling the 15-year-old Bell would make his presence felt at the Unionville-based public course.

"He had the low score at the junior qualifiers. I was just hoping he would hold it together. But you know how golf is. One day you can shoot good and the next day you might not," he said. "But Dave usually shoots in the 70s. We were happy."

As part of the Spartans' junior boys' entry, Bell helped the club earn a fourth-place finish in the team standings with a 343.

Other members of the team included Grade 9 students Jamie Wise, who fired an 84 and Gavin Worden 89. Mark Whittingstall, a Grade 10 student had a 98. Kevin McKay, a Grade 9 student, did not play due to a shoulder injury.

Newmarket's Sir William Mulock Secondary School captured the junior title with a 324.

In the senior division, the Spartans finished ninth with a 355.

Matt Easter, a Grade 11 student, recorded the best score for the Spartans with a 12-over 84.

Other team members included Grade 12 students Adam Craig, C.J. Stevens, Eric Gainsbrook and Luke Harrison.

Thornhill's St. Robert Catholic High School won the

team title with a 308.

Seniors spike third place

The Spartans senior boys' volleyball team gained a split in YRAA action last week at Unionville High School, dropping a two-game set to the host Wolves 2-0 (25-13, 25-22) before defeating Middlefield Secondary School 2-0 (25-20, 25-19).

Now 7-3 on the season, the Spartans were to play one final regular season league match yesterday at Milliken Mills Secondary School in Markham against the host Knights and Unionville High School.

Most likely to finish the season in third place in the East Division, the Spartans will face Unionville High School or Markville Secondary School in a division playoff at the site of the first-place finisher Nov. 9.

For more on high school sports, log on to: www.yraa.com.



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Getting in arms way

Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans' Bethany Chekay (centre) is all tied up in a web of arms as she tried to get her hands on a loose ball in Monday's YRAA senior girls' basketball game at Newmarket High School. Also getting in on the free-for-all are Spartans' Laura Moller (left) and Newmarket High School's Elise Shubert. The Spartans won the game 40-11. Sam Sheridan was high scorer for the Spartans, now 4-2 on the season, with 12 points.

Novice Clippers are sailing along

The Stouffville Novice A Clippers have roared out of the starting gate in York Simcoe Hockey League season action having reeled off seven wins in their first eight outings.

The Clippers defeated Innisfil 5-0, Richmond Hill 9-2, Bradford 5-3, Aurora 3-0 and Beeton 7-1 before suffering a 4-3 loss to TNT. The Clippers rebounded to turn back Newmarket 4-2 and Oakridges 9-3.

Coached by Mike Sear, Dave Witherspoon and Steve Ryan, the team is comprised of goalies Andrew Riopel and Tyler Ryan along with Tyler

Wright, Duncan Allen, Lukas Burkholder, Josh Carlin, Chris Carter, Chris Evelyn, Chad Harbour, Carter King, Liam McMahon, Ryan Nelson, Taylor Peterson, Mario Rosano, Ben Sear, Shane Stallybrass and Mitchell Witherspoon.

FUNDRAISING DANCE A SUCCESS

The Whitchurch Stouffville Minor Hockey Association's recent novice, atom and bantam fundraising dance at the Markham Fairgrounds received some assistance from Wild Wing, which donated food, staff members and a silent auction prize.



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