

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Stouffville District Secondary School's Natalie Geiger (second from left) puts some distance between herself and rivals including Katherine Green, (from left) Alexander Mackenzie High School (Richmond Hill), Jillian Scheliga, Brother Andre Catholic High School (Markham) and Thamara Julien, St. Theresa of Lisieux (Richmond Hill) en route to winning the junior girls' 200-metre race at last Thursday's Central Region qualifying track and field meet at York University. A Grade 10 student, Geiger, 15, also won the 100m and 400m races during the two-day event and advanced to the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations championships that begin today and conclude Saturday at Etobicoke's Centennial Stadium.

Golden outing for speedy Geiger

SDSS student runs off with three gold medals at regional qualifier

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

She has no equal—in Stouffville or York Region.

This week, Natalie Geiger, the girl with the flying feet, will defend her record when she competes in the 200 and 400 metres at the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations track and field championships at Centennial Park in Etobicoke.

She will also endeavour to add another first in the junior 100 metres.

The 15-year-old Grade 10 Stouffville District Secondary School student qualified to

advance by winning three gold medals at the York Region Athletic Association outdoor championships at York University.

Last week, the Spartans' speedster trimmed her time down to a personal best in both the 200 and 400m at a Central Regional qualifying meet, also at York University.

She ran the 200m in 24.82 seconds, down from 25.20, and the 400m in 55.29 seconds, down from 56.18.

She was clocked at 12.34 seconds in the 100m, down from 12.42.

"I'm always competing against myself," says the fleet-footed Geiger, "I keep trying to beat my personal best."

Next month, she intends to attend the junior nationals in Sherbrooke, Quebec, going up against the best in Canada, some

four years older than herself.

She placed third in the 400m last year.

She also plans to enter the Ontario relay championships at York, competing in the 200 and 400m plus the 300m hurdles.

The five-foot, 10-inch, 125-pound speedster hopes to obtain a track scholarship to a U.S. college. Steve Jimmo, Spartans' track coach, describes Geiger's achievements as "simply amazing."

"She glides so effortlessly, it gives me goose bumps," he said.

The Ottawa-born Geiger moved with her parents to Stouffville 13 years ago. She has two younger brothers, Paul, 14 and Matthew, three.

A member of the York Flyers track and field Club, Geiger works out on a 400-metre track in King City during the summer.

In the winter, she trains indoors at York University.

On June 15, she will be honoured at the school's annual athletic awards banquet, both for her track accomplishments and for being a member of the Spartan girls' hockey team that won the 2006 OFSAA A/AA championship.

In 2005, she was named junior female athlete of the year.

Coskun also shines

While Geiger stole the spotlight at the Central Regional event, Dan Coskun also qualified for the upcoming OFSAA championships.

Competing in the junior boys' division, the 15-year-old Grade 10 student finished second in the javelin, third discus and fourth shot put.

Girls hope to finally tackle YRAA gold

High school rugby championships go today in Markham

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

The Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans girls' rugby team hope to reverse a frustrating trend when they take to the Fletcher's Field pitch today for the York Region Athletic Association championships.

In the last two YRAA championships, the Spartans advanced to the final only to be denied the gold medal.

This year, the Spartans feel they are on track to taking things one step further as they enter the semifinal in first place in the tier two standings with a perfect 5-0 record.

The Spartans concluded regular season play Monday with a convincing 34-0 win over visiting Unionville High School.

Sam Chefereo and Kathrine McKendrick each scored two tries for the Spartans while Caitlin Ebanks had a try and two converts and Steph Mondaca one try.

Making the Spartans' season even more rewarding is that they've relied heavily on youth after a number of veteran performers over the last two years had graduated.

Because of this, the Spartans elected to go the tier two route this season. The decision appears to have paid off as evidenced by their regular season mark.

"We had lots of Grade 9s and 10s come out to play this year and we're extremely happy with their progress," Spartans head coach Tara Foote said. "But we also have many returning players who have really stepped up their game and filled in the footsteps of those who graduated."

"We have a dedicated team, who have fused together really well."

Among the returning players who have made significant contributions, Foote noted, are team captain Nicole Gammage, scrum half and co-captain Bethany Chekay, inside centre Stephanie McLean and Ebanks, who plays fly half. The latter two players lead the Spartans in scoring, said Foote.

In looking ahead to today's semifinal, Foote, who coaches the team with Dave Turpin, sees no reason why her charges can't continue to play in the manner in which they have during the regular season. The key to success, she said, is hard work.

"If the girls bring their A game and play as hard as they can I think we could give someone a run for their money."

"The girls have said they are tired of being runner-up. So hopefully that will be a big motivator for them. Time will tell," she said.

Gagnon bounces his way to a national title

Stouffville resident is a trampoline convert after doing gymnastics

BY JOHN CUDMORE
Staff Writer

When gymnastics got to be a drag, Thomas Gagnon got hopping.

Actually, bouncing would be the precise term.

The Jump Trampoline Club member scored first-place marks in sweeping compulsory and optional programs as he won the Novice men's over-15 trampoline title at the Canadian gymnastics championships in Quebec City Victoria Day weekend.

The 17-year-old Sir William Mulock Secondary School student finished with a combined score of 57.30 to top the 17-competitor field in his first appearance at a national championship.

"I was definitely surprised. I do put in a lot of hours in training, but there's definitely a lot of talented people at this level," said Gagnon, a Stouffville resident and Grade 12 student at the Newmarket high school. "It's good to see results."

"I didn't know what the other athletes would be like because once you qualify against your own province, that's it. Leading up to it in qualifying, I was placing well, so I was expecting maybe I could get into the top 10."

Gagnon is not sure what to expect down the road, but he is planning to go as far as trampolining will take him.

"If I can keep it up, the sky's the limit," he said. "Right now, with university coming up, I'm hoping to take it through next year."

Moving to the trampoline from gymnastics is a transition usually involving minimal adjustment for

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