

SPORTS

Spirit ices roster with veteran presence

Five players with junior experience sign with defending champions

While the Stouffville Spirit will return a good nucleus from last year's squad that captured the 2005-06 Provincial Jr. A Hockey League's North-West championship, the roster for the upcoming season has been bolstered with the arrival of five new players.

Although they are new to the Spirit, Michael Cudmore, Curtis Johnston, Trevor Smith, Matt Hansell and Josh Domingues all have junior level credentials.

A 17-year-old Whitby native who was selected by the Sudbury Wolves in the 2005 Ontario Hockey League draft, Cudmore was a centre with the 2006 Central Jr. C Hockey League champion Port Perry Mojacks. He played lacrosse this summer for the Clarington Green Gaels.

Johnston, 19, and Smith, 18, toiled for the Owen Sound Saugeen Shores Greys Jr. B team last season.

A resident of Southampton, Ont., Johnston was the second-leading scorer on his team with 45 points and 44 penalty minutes in 46 regular season games in the Mid Western junior loop.

Chosen by the Owen Sound Attack in the fourth round of the 2004 OHL draft, Smith is a hard-hitting defenceman from Shelburne.

GOALTENDER FROM JR. B

Goaltender Matt Hansell has Jr. B experience in Welland and Listowel. The 17-year-old from Ridgeville, Ont., was a seventh round selection of Kitchener in the OHL draft and made the final camp for the Ontario under-17 program, all last year.

Another player in that camp was Domingues, who was acquired by the Spirit in a trade with the Pickering Panthers for third-year forward Scott Brown last week. Another Owen Sound draft pick (fifth round in 2005), the Markham resident had 14 points in 25 games in Pickering last year.

The Spirit has also signed Brad Knapp, a six-foot, two-inch defenceman from the Markham Islanders midgets.

A former teammate of Spirit veteran Daniel Spivak, the 18-year-old Markham native was released from the camp of the Val-d'Or Foreurs of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League this week.

The Spirit has sold the rights to

defenceman Dustin Howard to the Mississauga Chargers of the Provincial league.

The Spirit, which opened training camp Aug. 11 at the Stouffville Arena, has won its first two exhibition games, 10-4 over Orangeville and 5-3 over the St. Michael's Buzzers Saturday.

In Saturday's game, with both teams icing rookie-laden rosters, the Spirit received goals from Myles Gomes, Dustin Laren, Cudmore, Greg Oliver and Ethan Werek. Patrick McEachen had two assists. The Buzzers play at Stouffville Aug. 31.

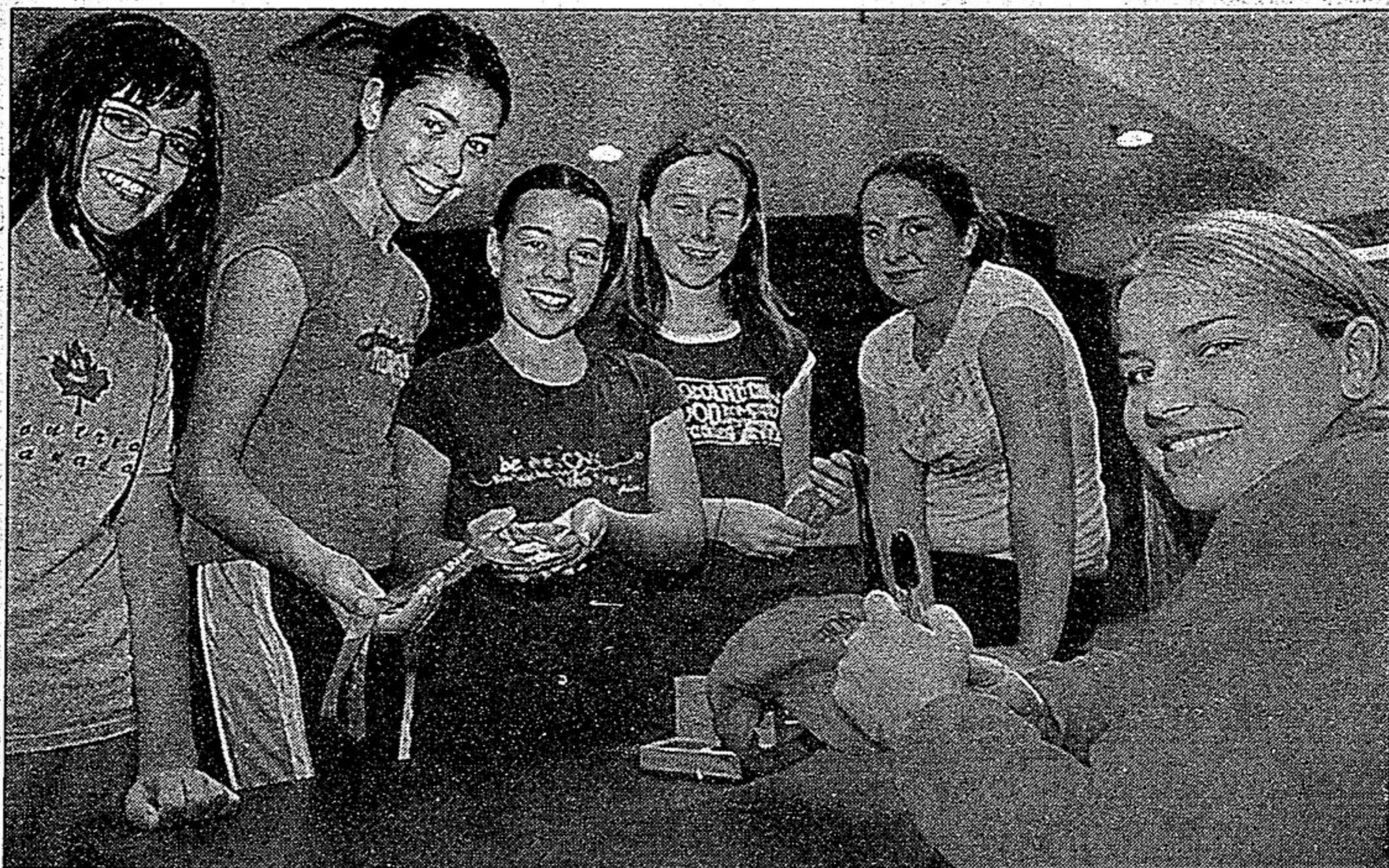
WEEKEND MARKHAM GAMES

The Spirit also plays a pre-season home-and-home series with the Markham Waxers this Saturday at the Stouffville Arena and Sunday at Markham Centennial Arena and against the Lindsay Muskies Aug. 30 at Lindsay and Sept. 1 at Stouffville. All pre-season games are 7:30 p.m. starts.

The Spirit's regular season opener goes Sept. 10 at 7:30 p.m. against the Huntsville Otters on Sun-Tribune championship team picture night.

SPIRITED NOTES: Spirit forward Ryan Oliver was part of a Whitby Warriors Intermediate A lacrosse team that won the provincial title in Burlington last weekend. It was capped off with a 6-5 upset win over Orangeville in the final. With the lacrosse season now over, Oliver returned to the Spirit's training camp Monday...former Spirit forward Jon Smyth, 24, signed a one-year contract to play for the Idaho Steelheads of the East Coast Hockey League. Smyth was captain at Colgate University last year. The Steelheads are the affiliate of the NHL's Dallas Stars and American league's Iowa Stars...with the Couchiching Terriers and Toronto Thunderbirds taking a one-year leave of absence, the Newmarket Hurricanes purchased the rights of several players from both teams. Arriving from the Terriers were forwards K.J. Ramolla, Leiland Gauley, Josh Cousineau, goalie Matt Milne and defenceman Grant Burke. Former Thunderbirds players included defencemen Daniel Bolton and Daniel Maggio. A Bolton native, Maggio played with the Spirit when he was 16 years old and is now with his fourth team in the league...several Spirit players will try out at Ontario Hockey League camps next week.

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



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

GOLDEN OLYMPIC MOMENTOS

Two-time Olympic gold medallist and Markham resident Cherie Piper meets and displays her medals to girls who took part in the New Ice Age Female Hockey School at the Stouffville Arena Tuesday. Posing with Piper are Carlee Schoolen (from left), 12, Sarah Dunn, 13, Brittney Chalk, 12, Brittany Allison, 12, and Samantha Burt, 14.

Craig hopes to score big in Iowa

Stouffville resident earns golf scholarship to Graceland College

BY JIM THOMAS
Correspondent

A putting green placed in the back yard of Adam Craig's Stouffville residence gives every indication golf is a game he likes to play.

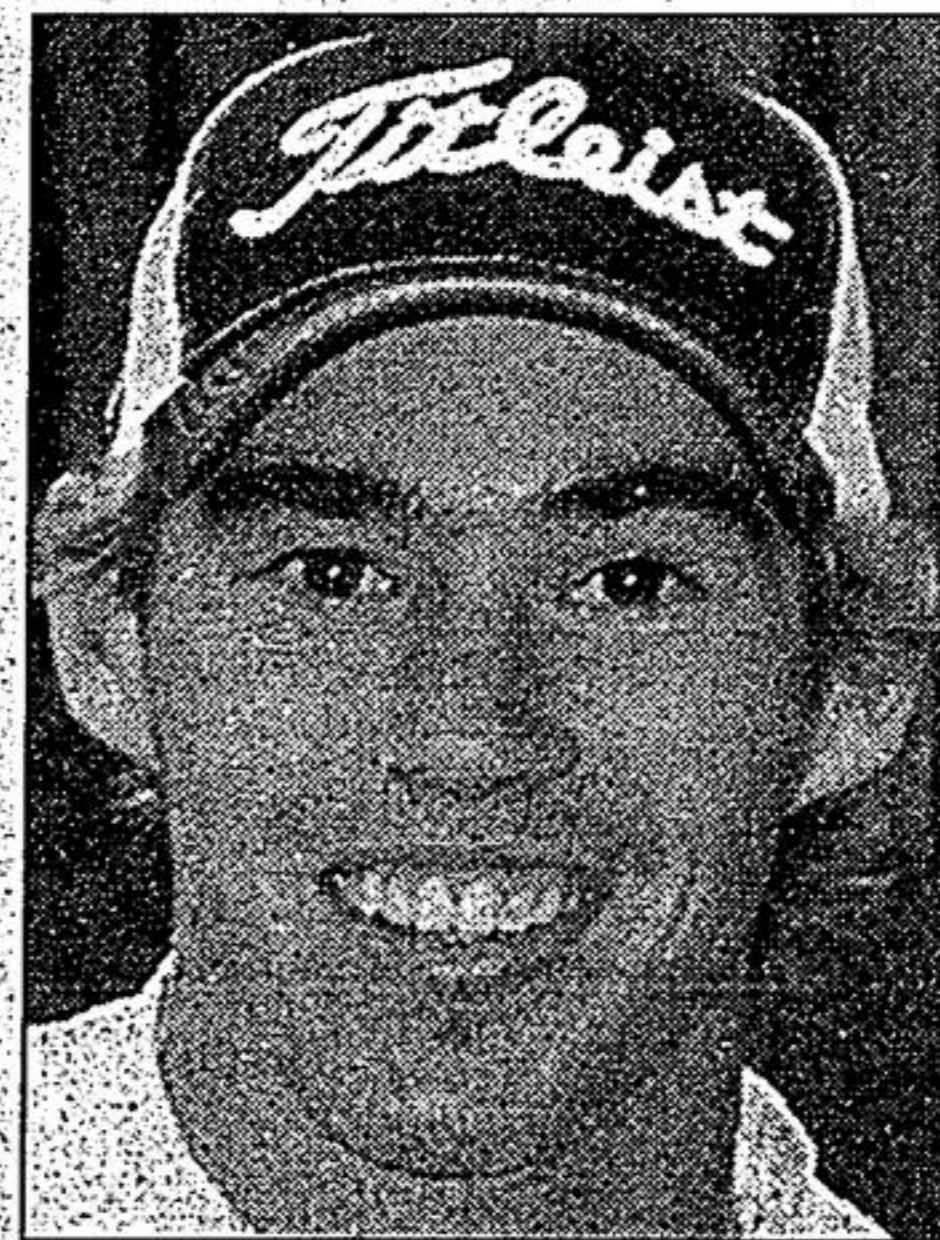
It is indeed.

And he's been able to parlay his favourite sport into a university education.

Later this month, the 18-year-old Stouffville District Secondary School graduate will be heading for Lamoni, Iowa, where he will enrol at Graceland College on a golf scholarship.

First bitten by the golf bug at age 10, Craig began taking the game seriously three years later, gaining sufficient credibility to join the Canadian Junior Golf Association tour.

Currently boasting a six handicap on the fairways, Craig received further incentive to



ADAM CRAIG: Stouffville Secondary graduate credits his father for teaching him about golf.

escalating his golf game through his summer place of employment, Stouffville's Sleepy Hollow Golf and Country Club. While working there, he could practise and play for free, which he did, at every opportunity.

Craig was a member of the Stouffville District Secondary School golf team, winning the most valuable player award three out of four years. He also

played hockey with SDSS and through the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association.

"Since winning my first tournament, I was hoping for a scholarship," Craig said.

Three weeks ago, he received the good news.

In crediting the progress he's made in the game, Craig praises his father, Jeff.

"We'd be out on the course almost every weekend," he said. "I soon learned to love the game."

"I can now beat my dad," he says with a smile.

Craig claims that without parental support he couldn't have realized his dream.

"My dad and mother have been with me the whole ride," he said. "They made it happen."

The five-foot, nine-inch, 150-pound righthander admits feeling intimidated attending a new school, where he intends to major in business administration. And to be doing so in another country.

At the same time, he is confident he will fit in at a university with an enrollment of only 2,300 students.

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