

SPORTS

Blades dull Jr. A Spirit in playoff rematch

LAST WEEK: Sunday — lost 10-5 against Oakville Blades. Now 3-2-0-1 on season and in third place in North Conference standings.

COMING UP: Today vs. Orangeville Crushers at Stouffville Arena, 7:35 p.m.; Friday at Collingwood Blues, 8 p.m.

GAME NOTES: When the Stouffville Spirit faced the Oakville Blades last season, the stakes were high as the Provincial Junior A Hockey League's North-West Conference title was on the line. While the Spirit won last year's battle against the Blades, such wasn't the case Sunday when the two teams met in Bowmanville during the league's Governor's Showcase event. The Blades came out flying from the opening face-off and cruised to a 10-5 win. James McIntosh, Daniel Spivak, Myles Gomes, Mike Cudmore and Randy Johnston scored for the Spirit, who trailed 3-0 after one period and as much as 6-0 just past the midway point of the second period before cutting its deficit to 8-2 after 40 minutes. With the exception of Cudmore's goal, each of the Spirit's tallies came on the power play. Corey



Trivino collected two assists. The Spirit outshot the Blades 35-30. The Spirit played without the services of veteran forwards Donovan Munro, Mike Foy and Josh Domingues. All are injured.

NOTEBOOK: Will Acton, Steve Kaponas and Joel Sheppard were named as the Spirit's assistants to captain Randy Johnston. Tom Milne has joined the Spirit as assistant coach. He was head coach in Couchiching, which has taken a year's leave, last season. He was on the Aurora Tigers' staff when they won the national Jr. A championship in 2004. His son Matt, also ex of Couchiching, is playing goal for Newmarket.

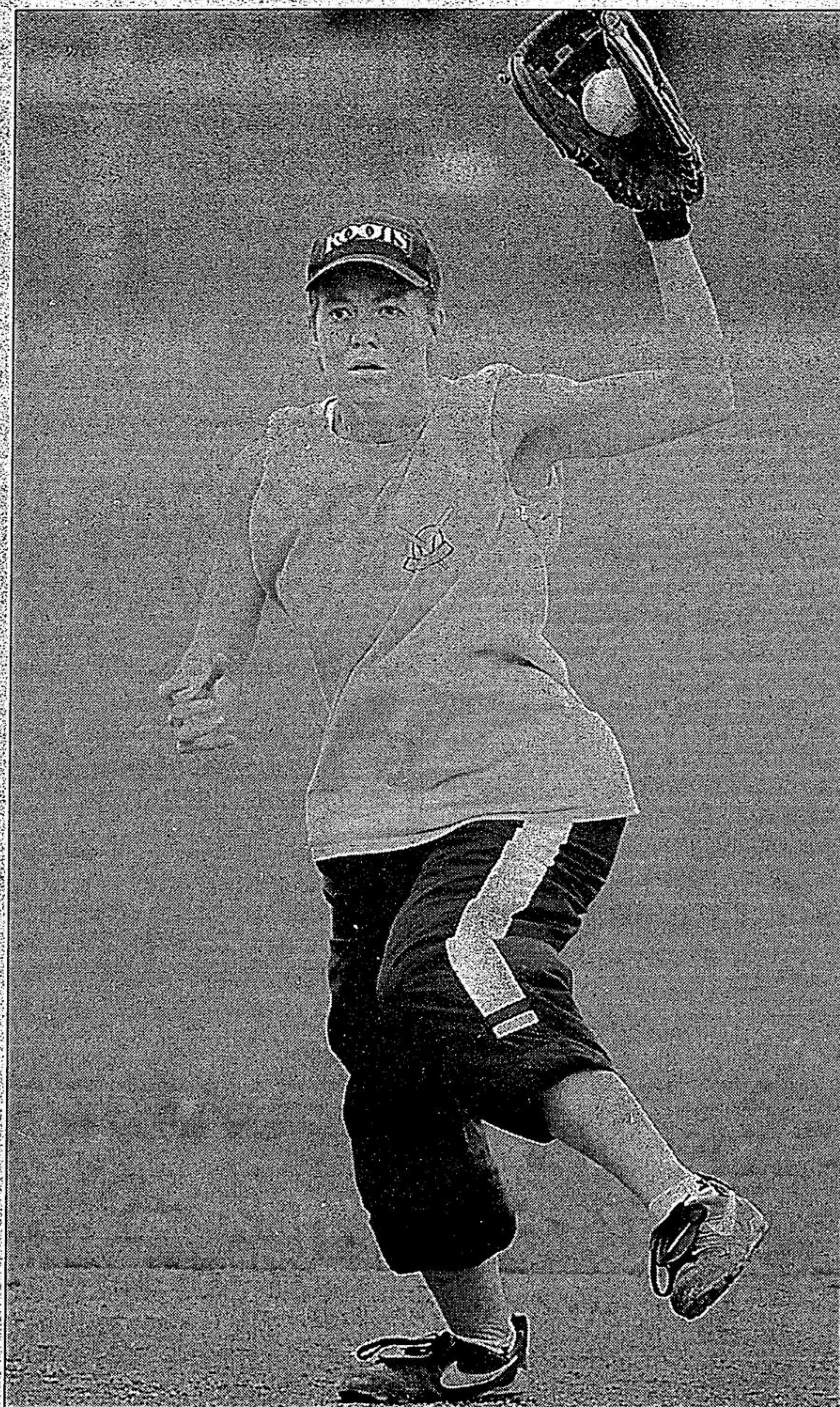
GENERALLY SPEAKING: "The game obviously wasn't great. Oakville is a pretty solid team. They have lots of speed and they humbled us quickly. The work ethic wasn't as high as it needed to be until the third period. But we took a few positives out from the game," Spirit head coach Dan West said. "Oakville was ready to play us. They definitely had revenge on their minds."

West warned his club had better do an about face.

"Orangeville will be the hardest working club we've seen so far and Collingwood is a solid team that usually plays well at home. These two games will be a good test for us."

INSIDER: For live scoring, go to pointstreak.com or whistleradio.com. Orangeville coach Steve Chelios is brother of Detroit Red Wing Chris Chelios. Team president is Hall of Famer Dale Hawerchuk.

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



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

I GOT IT

Nicole Murphy of SCS Consulting Group snares this ball hit off the bat of a Webber Naturals batter during last weekend's Tuesday Night Ladies Slo-pitch year-end tournament at Memorial Park. The SCS team won the tournament title.

Spartans hope to spike OFSAA berth

Seniors advanced to Uxbridge tourney semifinals

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior boys' volleyball team head coach Steve Jimmo says his squad is OK for the time being.

But he feels there's potential for bigger and better things down the road.

Among those expectations, he said, is to qualify again for the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations AAA playoffs.

The Spartans saw some of that promise when they advanced to the semifinals of last weekend's Uxbridge Secondary School tournament.

Finishing atop the standings in their pool with 2-0 victories over Dunbarton Secondary

School (Ajax) and Patrick Fogarty (Orillia) and splitting games with host Uxbridge Secondary School and Notre Dame (Ajax), the Spartans faced Eastdale Collegiate in the semifinals before falling in two straight sets (25-20, 25-23).

"We've got a fairly young team this year," Jimmo said of his club, which went to the OFSAA AAA playdowns last year although they were a AA school. "Our goal is to make it to OFSAA and we know that we'll have to beat some stronger teams this year to get there. I think we have some good potential and a lot of good athletes."

Among the players expected to buoy the Spartans attack are middle Matt Martiniello, who was the club's most valuable player last year, along with setter Fletcher Muir, power Mark Lofthouse, strong middle Fred Bell and libero Kyle Law, whom Jimmo says has "good power and is a smart athlete."

Jimmo was quick to note his club has a nice group of first-year seniors on his roster that graduated from a successful junior Spartans squad from last season.

So impressive was this class that Jimmo noted he was forced to cut some players who were on last year's senior club.

Joining the senior entry this year are power John Reesor, right side Devin Paynter, setter Maverick Muir, Ryan Pontone, Matt Raguseo and Alex Mangotich.

"We've definitely got lots of depth. For us to be successful, the younger guys will have to learn more of our system. Playing at the Uxbridge tournament was a good way to get our feet wet."

The Spartans were to begin York Region Athletic Association action Tuesday.

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

Mennos to face Ravens in semifinals

The Stouffville Mennos were forced to play the waiting game as to who their semifinal opponent would be in the Oshawa City and District Fastball League playoffs.

Now they know.

Starting today, the Mennos will face the Oshawa Ravens in the first game of a best-of-three series at Memorial Park starting at 8:30 p.m. The dates for the remaining games in the series had yet to be determined as of press time.

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