

# SPORTS



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

## TAKING THE LOW ROAD TO GET THINGS DONE

Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans Sarah Steiner bends low in attempt to clear the ball away from her team's goal during last week's York Region high school girls' field hockey crossover playoff game against the Unionville High School Wolves at Stouffville. The visiting Wolves won 2-0. Relegated to the tier two playoff quarter-final round last Friday, the host Spartans defeated Langstaff Secondary School 1-0 in overtime on a goal by Jen Carroll. The Spartans were to face Markville Secondary School (Markham) in one semifinal game yesterday at Stouffville. The other semifinal pitted King City Secondary School against Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School (Aurora). The winners will advance to today's tier two championship at Dr. J.M. Denison Secondary School in Newmarket at 2 p.m.

## Spirit bears down to extend win streak

**LAST WEEK:** Saturday — won 4-2 against Seguin Bruins. Now 7-6-0-1 on season, third place in North Conference.

**COMING UP:** Today vs. St. Michael's Buzzers at Stouffville Arena, 7:35 p.m.; Friday at Orangeville Crushers, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at Huntsville-Muskoka Otters, 3 p.m.

**GAME NOTES:** The Stouffville Spirit won its fourth straight game Saturday with a 4-2 decision over the hometown Seguin Bruins. The Spirit jumped out to a 2-1 lead after one period and padded it to 3-1 after two. The Bruins cut its deficit to a goal before Brock Van der Gulik put the game on ice with an unassisted marker at the 14:13 mark of the final period. Trevor Smith, on a power-play effort, Donovan Munro and Mike Cudmore added the other markers for the Spirit. Randy Johnston and Corey Trivino collected two assists each. Mark Kubicz picked up the win for the Spirit net, which outshot Seguin 39-37. Ex-Spirit forward Shane Baxter had both goals for Seguin, including one on



a power play.

**NOTEBOOK:** The Spirit played Sunday's game without veteran forward Joel Sheppard, who was out with the flu, Spirit head coach Dan West said. As for his return, West said it will be a game-time decision if he can play tonight against the defending Provincial Junior A Hockey League champion Buzzers. Sheppard wasn't the only member of the Spirit who has been inflicted with the bug. West

noted assistant coach Tom Milne and general manager Ken Burrows missed a couple of practices and athletic therapist Drew Laskoski was absent from Saturday's game. Fortunately, West said no other players have been affected by the bug.

**GENERALLY SPEAKING:** "We're playing much the same way now as we did when we were losing," West said in trying to explain his club's sudden reversal of fortune. "We're just working harder and paying more attention to fine detail. We've really just kept going with the same stuff, but the guys are trusting each other and the systems more. We knew we could turn things around if we stuck to our guns. It's really a credit to our team."

**INSIDER:** For live scoring and updates, go to [pointstreak.com](http://pointstreak.com). Tonight's game is broadcast at [whistleradio.com](http://whistleradio.com).

For more on the Spirit, go to [stouffvillespirit.com](http://stouffvillespirit.com).

## Allen runs hard to earn silver

*Ballantrae Public School student who trains twice daily with his dog finishes second at York Region meet*

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA  
Staff Writer

When Duncan Allen prepared for last Thursday's York Region elementary public school regional cross-country meet at Bruce's Mill Conservation Area in Whitchurch-Stouffville, the Grade 4 Ballantrae Public School student felt he was ready for the 1.5-kilometre race.

In training, the nine-year-old recalled he could keep pace with fellow students who were older than him.

That turned out to be a good omen for Allen as he proceeded to finish second in a field of 174 fellow male tyke division students from schools across York Region.

Making Allen's feat even more remarkable was that it was his second-ever cross-country race.

In his first competition, just a couple of weeks prior, he finished fourth in the area finals at Milne Park in Markham.

"I felt that I could do well because when I was training at school, I was able to keep up with the older kids. Only one or two of the Grade 8 students would be in front of me each time," Allen said.

Entering the race, which was held under treacherous conditions due to the rain, Allen revealed he had a strategy mapped out.

And it went pretty well according to plan. It was a lesson, he said, that came from his participation in his racing debut at the area finals.

"I wanted to sprint at the beginning so that I could get out in front of the other kids. I tried to pace in the middle and then sprint at the end. In the areas, where I didn't pace myself properly I ran out of gas at the end," he said.

Encouraged to take up the sport through his older brother Connor, 11, who ran cross-country last year at Ballantrae Public School, along with his father Mark, who also ran cross-country in his youth, Allen attributed his success to several factors.

Among them, he said, was in running long distances with his dog, Shadow, a white shepherd, twice a day to and from their home.

Just as important, he was quick to credit his cross-country coaches at Ballantrae, Alison Williams and Katherine Ivic, and Grade 8 student Michael Bourgeois.

"We run every lunch recess on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays," he said.



**DUNCAN ALLEN:** Ballantrae cross-country silver medal winner comes from running family.

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