

## SPORTS

## Spirit thriving in foreign environment

**LAST WEEK:** Sunday - won 3-1 against North York Rangers. Now 13-8-1-2 on season, third place in North Conference.

**COMING UP:** Today vs. Huntsville-Muskoka Otters, 7:30 p.m.; Friday at St. Michael's Buzzers 7:30 p.m.

**GAME NOTES:** Just call the Stouffville Spirit kings of the road. At least for the time being. The Spirit racked up their seventh straight win on the road Sunday with a 3-1 victory over the North York Rangers. James McIntosh scored the game-winner shorthanded and unassisted 36 seconds into the third period. Corey Trevino and Will Acton had the other goals for the Spirit, which trailed 1-0 after the first period. Mark Kubicz played in goal for the Spirit and earned the win. The Spirit was outshot 39-38.

**NOTEBOOK:** With the Spirit playing just one game last weekend, they avoided any serious injuries. Forward Brock van Der Gulik saw a specialist last week and was told to avoid any physical contact for at least two weeks. Forward Josh Domingues, who incurred a knee injury during the pre-season, is beginning to skate with a track suit on. No timetable is set for his return. Forward Joel Sheppard, who was thought to have had mononucleosis, was not diagnosed with it. Spirit head coach Dan West said he was just run down physically and is expected to begin skating this week. Former Spirit head coach Brian Perrin was hired Monday to coach the Newmarket Hurricanes. Relieved of his duties with the Spirit after the 2004-05 season, the Ballantrae-area resident was on the Hurricanes' bench staff for five seasons as an assistant coach, including their run to the Royal Bank Cup in Melfort, Sask. in 1996.

**GENERALLY SPEAKING:** "I've always been



proud of the way we played on the road. Someone said to me even last year that we were a team that played well on the road. For that, everyone deserves credit. We're proud of how we prepare to go on the road where we try to keep things simple and try to work hard. At least I do and I try to bring in onto our team," West said.

As for playing at home, West can't figure why his team hasn't had the same degree of success. But he noted his club this season has been involved in several one-goal affairs in which they've come out on the short end.

"Maybe we're feeling a little too comfortable?" he speculated. "I think though that we're running into teams that come into our rink and they take the same approach as us when we go on the road. They feel it's a challenge to beat us on our ice based on how successful we were last year."

**INSIDER:** For live scoring and updates, go to [pointstreak.com](http://pointstreak.com)

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

## Sheffield students earn high marks

Members of the Sheffield Judo Club took to the mat in two recent events and came away with some impressive results.

At the Ajax Budokan monthly tournament, which involves youngsters and first-time entrants, seven Sheffield members took part and each finished no worse than in fourth place.

Tressa Sheffield led the Sheffield contingent with a first-place finish in 12-year-olds (boys and girls combined).

Second-place finishes came from Mitchell Vendrov, who made his debut in the seven-year-old white belts (boys and girls combined), Josh Altomare, another first-time performer in the

eight-year-old boys (white/yellow belts), Naomi Mishan nine-year-old orange belt girls, Sarah Mishan 11-year-old orange/green belt girls and Marcus Chan 11-year-old orange/green belt boys.

Sean Long, also competing for the first time, was fourth in the eight-year-old boys white/yellow belts.

In another competition at Brampton, the Tora Monthly Tournament, three Sheffield students came home with top-three placements as Naomi Mishan was first in the nine-year-old orange belt girls and Sarah Mishan in the 11-year-old orange/green belt girls. Sean Long was third in eight-year-old boys white/yellow belts.

## Junior Spartans cage berth in York Region tier two final four

*Decision to go tier two this season pays off with good season*

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA  
Staff Writer

Last season was one which the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans junior girls' basketball team would just as soon forget about.

Playing in the highly competitive York Region Athletic Association tier one circuit, the Spartans took their lumps more frequently than not.

Making a decision this season to go the tier two route has proven to be a wise move for the Spartans.

And it's enabled them to move into some uncharted waters as they gained a berth in the YRAA tier two semifinals.

The Spartans did so after defeating Richmond Hill's Langstaff Secondary School 37-36 in Monday's quarter-final contest at Stouffville.

The Spartans were to face Thornlea Secondary School in a semifinal tilt yesterday at the Thornhill school. The winner would advance to the final to be played later that day.

"The girls have certainly come a long ways," Sandy Bush, Spartans coach, said of her club's accomplishments this season. "In our first tournament in late September we didn't do that well, but we've improved since that time."

Indeed they did as they won the south division regular season title with an unblemished 9-0 mark.

In explaining the club's success, Bush attributed it to several factors.

Among them, she said, is the work ethic displayed by the team.

"The girls are anxious to learn new plays and they have great heart," she said.

As well, Bush said much of what the club has done this season wouldn't have been possible without the presence of coach Jack Hammond.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans Tracey Veletri shoots the ball over Langstaff Secondary School's Alyssa Bialavas in Monday's YRAA junior girls' tier two quarter-final game at Stouffville. The Spartans won the game 37-36 and advanced to yesterday's semifinal.

Hammond, Bush noted, possesses a great wealth of knowledge of the game.

"He's brought in a new dimension for our team," she said of Hammond. "He's introduced a trap defence, which the girls have done quite well this season."

Led by co-captains Jessica Veletri and Brittany Crago, the Spartans have received timely

contributions from almost their entire roster that also includes guards Tracey Veletri, Nicole Kiatipis, Emily Aprile and Laura Lehming, forwards Amanda Raguseo, Natalie Kondovski, Brittany Dunbar, Natasha Deacon, Dale Wilkinson and Felicia Penanen.

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