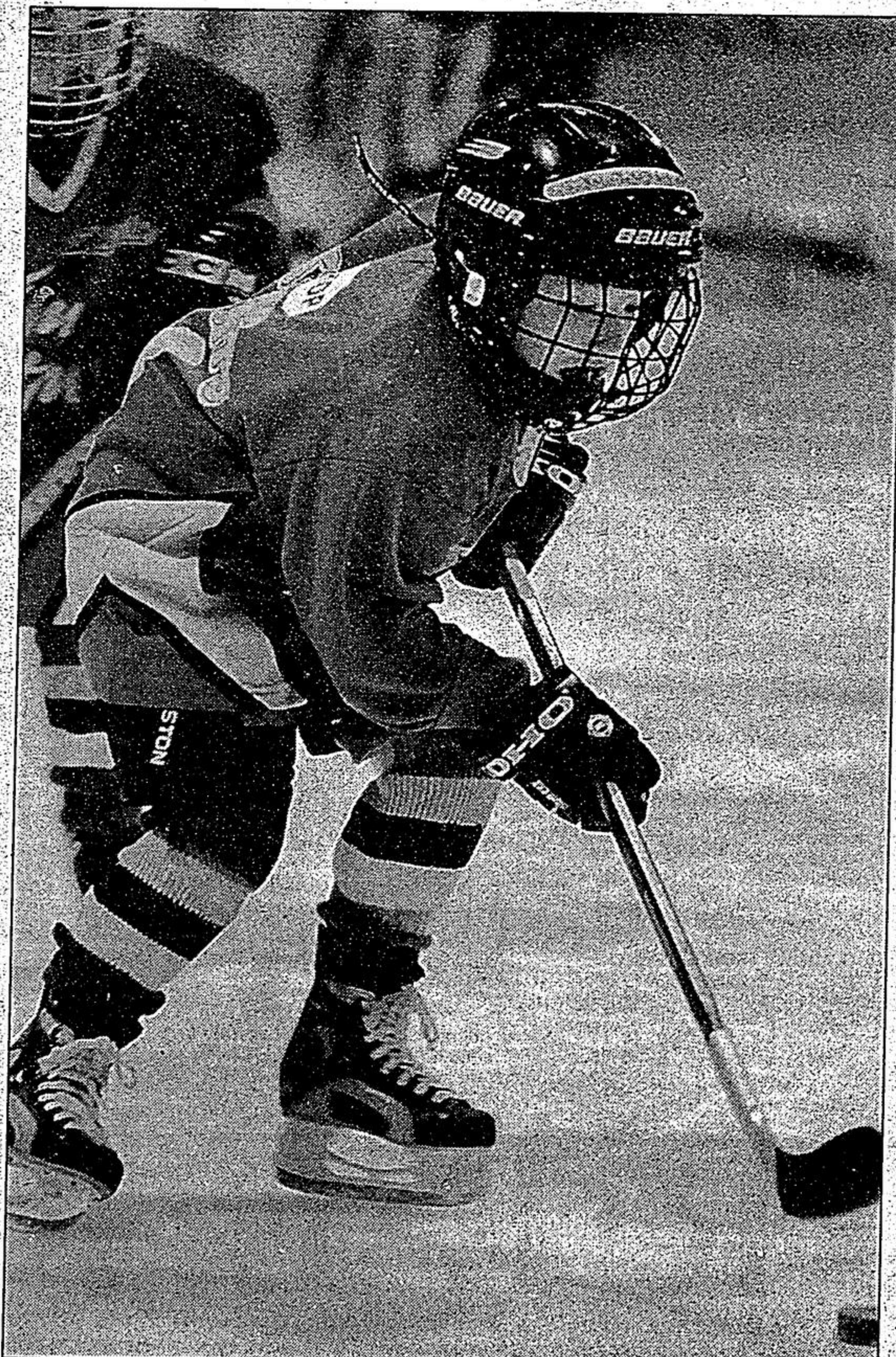


SPORTS

GOING GREEN

William Keith of team Green heads up ice during Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association house league playoffs in the Tim Hortons mite division at Stouffville Arena Saturday. This Saturday is championship day for the house league.



STAFF PHOTO/BILL ROBERTS

To Russia with love for his country

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

Sam Carrick has watched many hockey games on TV that involved Team Canada entries playing other countries in high level international competition.

And he's often dreamed of donning the Team Canada jersey.

Next week, the 15-year-old Stouffville resident will be fulfilling that fantasy.

Carrick was among 20 of the top major bantam players from the Greater Toronto Hockey League chosen to be on an all-star team that will participate in the Tretyak Cup in Moscow from April 8 to 14.

For Carrick, this will be his first overseas trip for an international competition.

Needless to say, he's pretty hyped up about it.

"(To play for Team Canada) is something that I've dreamed of doing," Carrick said.

A centre for the Toronto Red Wings, Carrick's selection was well warranted as he had compiled 65 goals in 44 games for his club this season before they were eliminated in the playoffs.

Carrick said he found out about his selection a couple of weeks ago after practice, when his coach Mike Galati gave him the official word. Carrick acknowledged the news caught him off guard. But it was a pleasant surprise.



SAM CARRICK: Stouffville hockey prospect picked to play in Tretyak Cup in Moscow next week.

team and we have high expectations of doing well," Carrick said.

A Grade 9 student at Stouffville District Secondary School and a key component of this year's Spartans' Ontario championship team, Carrick was introduced to the game when he was five years old in Whitchurch-Stouffville.

After starting in house league hockey, Carrick worked his way up the ranks to the Clipper tyke and mite teams locally before going to Markham to play at the AAA level.

Last season, he joined the Red Wings' organization in the GTHL and was with their minor bantam club.

"I haven't had one specific individual or coach but all of the coaches that I've had have helped me," he said.

Jamie Hewitt, Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans' head hockey coach, predicts good things will be in store for Carrick down the road.

"He's the total package," Hewitt said of the centre who kills penalties and was on the power play for the Spartans. "There's not one part of Sam's game that is lacking."

"He sees the ice well, he's a good skater and he has a hard shot. He also makes others around him better. As a first-year Grade 9 player, he's been an important player for us."

While noting his selection to the all-star team represents a high water mark, Carrick's larger goal is to have a good season next year when he is eligible for the OHL draft.

"I'm kind of looking forward to (the OHL draft)," he said, "and to some day make it in the NHL."

'He's the total package.'

SDSS coach Jamie Hewitt on Spartan centre Sam Carrick

"I'm definitely looking forward to it. It's great," he said.

While Carrick said he knows little about other teams in the event, he anticipates it will be highly competitive. "And it should be fun," he said.

Carrick said he hopes to continue with a tradition of being on a team that will do the country proud.

Two of his Red Wings teammates were also chosen along with Markham's Jeffrey Skinner, who Carrick has played with and against.

The team, which was chosen by Ontario Hockey League director of scouting Rob Kitamura will be coached by ex-Leaf and former OHL and minor pro coach Rick Vaive.

"We should have a pretty good team. There's a lot of good players on this

Pearce rides back to World Cup final

Ballantrae equestrian John Pearce has earned top spot in the Canadian League World Cup standings and will represent Canada at the 2007 FEI Jumping World Cup Final in Las Vegas April 18 to 22.

Pearce overtook the lead with a win in the final qualifier, the \$50,000 Orange County Register Grand Prix at the CSI-W Oaks Blenheim Spring Tournament in San Juan Capistrano, Cal.

Riding Forestview Farm's 10-year-old Belgian Warmblood gelding Urioso, Pearce's win earned him an additional 20 World Cup points to give him 80.

SPORTS DIGEST

Pearce, who also competed at World Cup finals in 1992 and 1999, will head to Las Vegas with Urioso, as well as Archie Bunker, a nine-year-old Oldenburg gelding also owned by Forestview, his Hwy. 48 equestrian centre.

Big week for Sullivan

Stouffville's Mike Sullivan received the Richmond

Unsung Hero Award at Clarkson University's awards banquet Saturday.

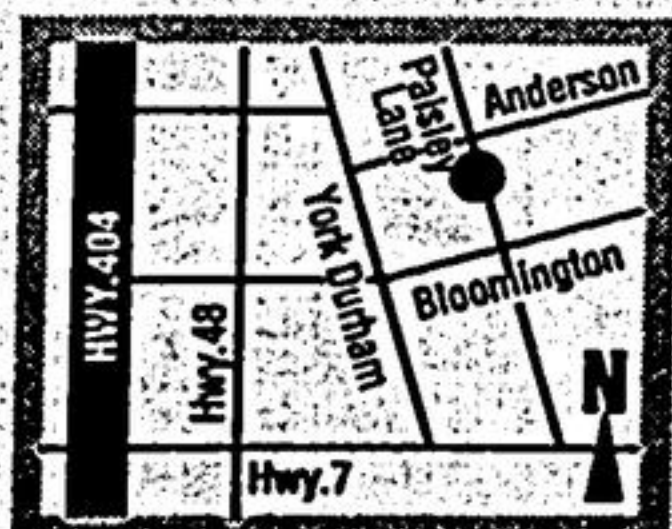
The Stouffville Spirit graduate skated in a school record 152 career games and made a solid offensive contribution during his four years at the Potsdam, N.Y., school.

One of nine Knights from the 2006-07 squad to have been drafted, he was selected in 2003 by Los Angeles in the eighth round following his only season with the Spirit.

Sullivan is one of 32 NCAA men's and women's players taking part in the Pontiac Frozen Four Skills Challenge in St. Louis tomorrow.

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