

Spirit adds D-men to experienced crew

Back-up goalie spot up for grabs with Jr. A team

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

On paper, first-year Stouffville Spirit general manager Matt Gibson likes his roster for the Provincial Junior A Hockey League season.

With 12 returnees back from a lineup that went to the North Conference final a year ago, it's no wonder Gibson is smiling.

Add a solid cast of at least 10 new faces to that roster.

While having potential is one thing, Gibson knows all too well it's what you do on the ice is what counts the most.

'FORMIDABLE LINEUP'

"At the start of the year every team is good on paper," said Gibson, a former league player and assistant coach.

"I think we have a formidable lineup. It looks good on paper. We've got an experienced lineup and we're excited with what we have."

"But we've got to do it on the ice."

While the Spirit still have at least three more exhibition games to play starting today against the Mississauga Chargers at 6 p.m. in the OHA Pre

Season Tournament at the Al Palladini Community Centre in Vaughan, Gibson has all but finalized his roster.

He likes the team's depth.

"I feel we have eight or nine guys up front who can contribute offensively and this year, our top five defencemen can rival any other team in our division," Gibson said.

Returning up front are team captain Randy Johnston, James McIntosh, Corey Trivino, Tyler Gubb, Corey Fulton, Michael Foy, Mark Sullivan and Donovan Munro.

Daniel Spivak, Tom Kokelj and Trevor Smith are back on the blueline.

To bolster the defence, the Spirit acquired two seasoned players in Matt Westlake, who played last year with the Port Hope Predators of the league's East Conference, and Michael Gillen, a member last season of the St. Mary's Lincolns of the Western Ontario Junior B loop.

In goal, Trevor O'Neill has returned to the fold.

Who will back him up is still undetermined.

Of the first-year players in camp, Gibson was impressed with forwards Ethan Werek prior to his knee injury last week, Dustin Laren and Taylor Law, along with defencemen Tim Halloran, Jarred Seymour and Patrick



TREVOR O'NEILL: Veteran goalie returns for second season with Stouffville Spirit Jr. A team.

McEachen.

"We've got some talented guys," Gibson said of the rookies.

BIG SURPRISE

The biggest surprise in camp, though, was the emergence of forward Darren Archibald. A Newmarket resident who played last season with the Richmond Hill Rams of the rival Greater Metro league, Archibald's performance warranted an invitation to camp last week with the Barrie Colts of the Ontario Hockey League.

"He was unbelievable," Gibson said of the 17-year-

old Archibald.

"At first we didn't know who he was. But he worked hard all summer and in the fall he was there. His work with us gave him a chance to try out with the Colts. He had a good camp there and could be called up by them during the year if they need him."

Gibson may still add one more forward in addition to the backup netminder.

Spirited Notes: The Spirit rounds out its participation in the six-team OHA Pre-Season Tournament with games Friday against Milton at 6 p.m. and Saturday against Burlington. Should the Spirit finish first or second in their pool, they will play Sunday in a semifinal tilt at 9:30 a.m. or 11:30 a.m. The tournament final is slated for 5 p.m....the Spirit swept its two-game pre-season series against the Markham Waxers last Friday with a 7-5 win at Markham Centennial Arena. Foy, a Markham resident, ignited the Spirit offence with three goals while Trivino added two. Adam Sgulia and McEachen each had singles...the Spirit opens its regular season Sept. 13 when they host the Collingwood Blues at 7:30 p.m. at the Stouffville Arena.

For more on the Spirit, go to stouffvillespirit.com

Wise finish at junior golf tournament

Jamie Wise finished in a two-way tie for fourth place in last week's Canadian Junior Golf Association Junior Series event at Lakeridge Golf Club near Oshawa.

Competing in the boys' 14-16 division, the 16-year-old Stouffville resident carded a two-round 17-over par 161. He finished three shots behind Kelvin Ho of Richmond Hill.

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