

SPORTS

One gold to go for skater Brittany

One Stouffville competitor has earned all four medals

BY JIM THOMAS

Three gold and one to go. For Brittany Dunbar, the triple crown in figure skating was achieved Nov. 15 when she completed her gold free-skate test with flying colours.

All that now remains for the 16-year-old Stouffville resident to attain is her gold interpretive, a level of excellence she hopes to reach in 2008.

Only Kim Hord of the Stouffville Skating Club has scored gold in all four.

Completing her gold dance and gold skills earlier, Dunbar began figure skating at age three, first under the guidance of Jean Barclay and Julie Wilson, then Cindy McNeil and now Janet Williams.

"Figure skating is something I've always loved," Dunbar said, "to be a quad-gold skater is my goal."

SCHOOL SPORTS, TOO

While Dunbar practises up to five hours a week, always after school, she also enjoys basketball, rugby, cross-country, track and field, water-skiing and triathlon. She also completed this year's Angus Glen Half Marathon on behalf of Markham Stouffville Hospital.

In attaining her free skater gold, Dunbar acknowledged she was under considerable pressure.

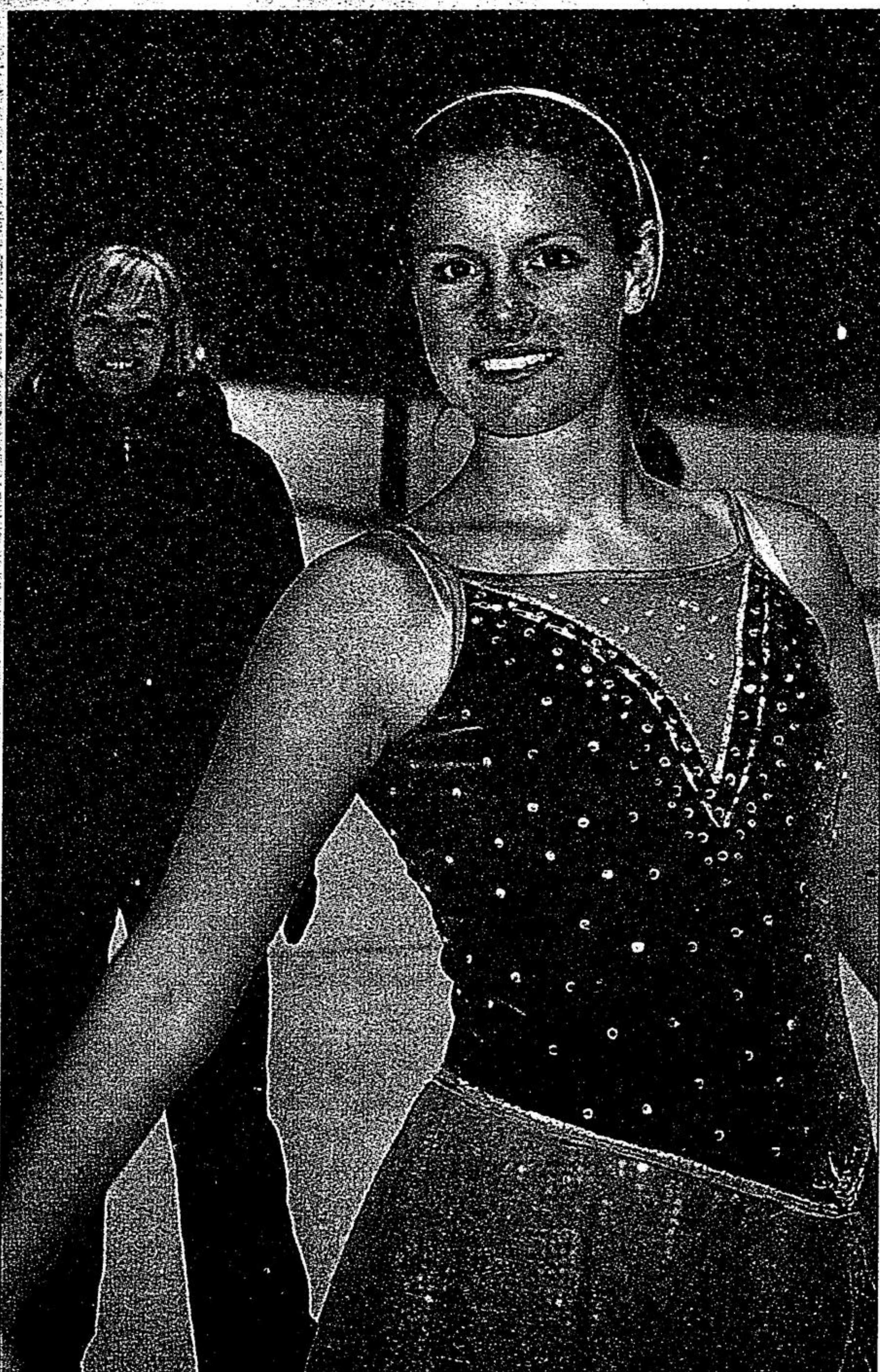
"But I was pleased with the result," the Grade 11 Stouffville District Secondary school student said.

So was her judge. On an evaluation sheet, Amy Hiscock-Kelly wrote:

"A fantastic program — a delight to watch." She described the brilliance of Brittany's jumps and spins.

Dunbar's mother, Sheila, was a spectator at the free-skate event and was confident her daughter could pass the test.

"I knew she had it," Sheila said, "she



Brittany Dunbar and coach Janet Williams of the Stouffville Skating Club at the Stouffville Arena after Dunbar won her third gold skating medal.

skated really well."

Williams, who also choreographs Dunbar's routine, described her student as a treat to teach because of her positive attitude and a desire to continually try something new.

COACH HELPED HER GROW

Her enthusiasm, Williams said, spills into other areas as well including academic achievement.

In addition, she said, Dunbar's attitude and words of encouragement provide support for others in the club.

"She's truly a role model for the community," Williams concluded.

"My coach is wonderful," Dunbar said, "she's helped me grow as a skater."

Dunbar also claims none of what she's attained could have been possible without the support of her parents and brother.

Following graduation, she plans to attend university.

But first and foremost is the desire to become a quadruple gold medalist, the highest honour in test competitions offered by Skate Canada.

Spirit trio jets back for tonight's game

LAST WEEK: Friday - won 5-3 against Orangeville Crushers. Now 16-10-3-35 on season, fifth place in North Conference.

COMING UP: Today vs Newmarket Hurricanes at Stouffville Arena, 7:35 p.m.; Friday at Villanova Knights, 7:30 p.m.; Sunday at Newmarket Hurricanes, 2:30 p.m.

GAME NOTES: The Spirit did something in Friday's road game against the Orangeville Crushers that head coach Dave D'Amazio hadn't observed in a while. That was to see his club get off to a good start.

Goals by captain Randy Johnston and newcomer Jonathan Cristini just 45 seconds apart staked Stouffville to a 2-0 lead before the Crushers countered before the first period concluded. The Spirit padded their lead to 4-1 through two periods on goals from Cristini and Ethan Werek on a power play.

Reed Smith opened the third period scoring before the Crushers made a late rally with two goals. The Spirit outshot the Crushers 39-25 to win their second straight game and second in three head-to-head encounters against Orangeville this season.

NOTEBOOK: The Spirit dealt veteran forward Mike Foy to the Welland Junior Canadians of the Golden Horseshoe Junior B League for cash last week. Foy made his debut Sunday for Welland and recorded three points in a 10-2 win over the Niagara Falls Canucks.

Spirit general manager Tom Milne said he still hasn't made a deal for 20-year-old defenceman Mike Gillen, who left the club to return home to London. Gillen had played with the St. Mary's Lincolns of the Western Ontario Hockey League for three seasons before coming to the Spirit to start this season. Gillen is reportedly interested in returning to play for the Lincolns.

Although Spirit forwards Corey Trivino, James McIntosh and Werek were playing in the Heartland Credit Union - CIAHL Prospects Game Tuesday and Wednesday in Winkler, Man., D'Amazio said the trio will return in time to play in



tonight's home game against the North Conference-leading Newmarket Hurricanes.

A pair of Spirit graduates played a key role in helping the Lake Superior State University Lakers hockey club salvage a 3-3 overtime tie against the University of Nebraska-Omaha Saturday in Omaha, Neb.

Freshman forward Will Acton scored a goal in the third period that staked the Lakers to a 3-2 lead before host Mavericks scored to tie the game. Sophomore defenceman Simon Gysbers also scored for the Lakers, who sport a 2-11-3 record this season and are 0-8-2 in the Central Collegiate Hockey Association.

GENERALLY SPEAKING: "We did what we had to do," D'Amazio said of his club's win over the Crushers. "In the past, we've lost the majority of first periods. This time we had a good first and second period and it put the game in our hands. We were able to use our speed and skill early."

"It'll be crucial for us to get off to a quick start when we play a good team like Newmarket."

In explaining his club's early-game woes, D'Amazio couldn't put a finger on it. But he speculated it could be attributed to jitters among his younger players or in the players trying to get a feel for the game.

He also thought the absence of several key players to major events such as the World Junior A Challenge and CIAHL Prospects Game has prevented the team from being accustomed to playing as a unit.

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— Mike Hayakawa

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