

Acton battles losing blues with college club

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

As a first-year student at Lake Superior State University, Will Acton is having a rewarding experience.

For the most part, that is. If there's one thing that would make the 20-year-old Acton's stay at the Sault Ste. Marie, Mich. campus more enjoyable, it's success on the ice.

As a forward with the Lake Superior State Lakers, the six-foot, two-inch tall, 190-pound Acton and his teammates have been on the losing end of the scoreboard way too often.

Entering the Christmas holidays, the team has a 2-11-3 overall record and is in last place in the Central Collegiate standings.

'But the biggest difference is the mistake-free type of hockey that's played here. You can't make mistakes at this level or you'll get exposed.'

That's a far cry from his days with the Stouffville Spirit junior A club.

He was quick to point out this year's edition of the Lakers has 17 freshmen and sophomores.

Compiling one goal and

one assist in 15 games, Acton acknowledged there's a big difference in the calibre of play from the Provincial Junior A loop. Like night and day, he said.

"The game here is a lot faster and more skilled and the players are bigger, too," he said. "When you get hit, it hurts a lot."

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Acknowledging he had concerns about being on his own for the first time, Acton said his transition into post-secondary school was made easier through the assistance of teammates.

Among them is sophomore defenceman Simon Gysbers, who played with Acton with the Spirit two seasons ago.

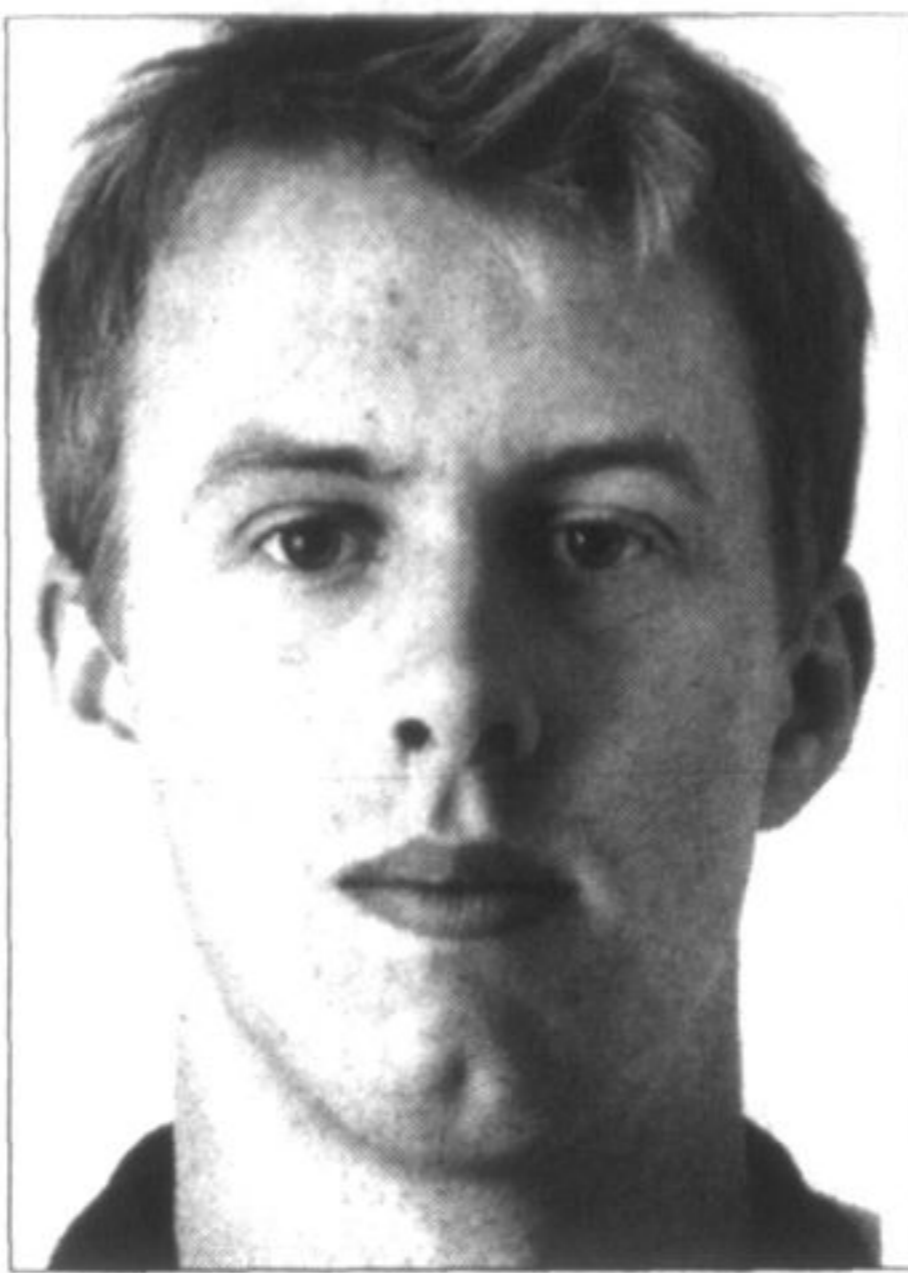
"When I found out I was going to the same school as Simon, I relied on him for a lot of advice," Acton said of the Richmond Hill native.

Acton also credited the time spent rooming with fellow freshman forward Rick Schofield.

Last year, they got to know each other while attending York University part-time.

As well, Acton played against Schofield when the latter was with the Pickering Panthers junior A club.

Yet to complete his first season, Acton said he's been a part of some memorable moments on



WILL ACTON: Son of Leafs' assistant coach playing at Lake Superior State University in Michigan.

the ice.

The biggest was recording his first collegiate goal Dec. 8 against the University of Nebraska-Omaha that resulted in a 3-3 tie.

As well, he said the atmosphere surrounding the collegiate game has been an eye-opening experience.

"Playing at home is special. We have a good student section and great support from fans. And to play on the road like at Notre Dame, it was a cool experience. We got to go to a football game and they have a nice campus. Even Northern Michigan has a great set up.

"Everywhere you play is unique and special," he said.

As the son of Toronto Maple Leafs' assistant coach Keith Acton, Will said his father hasn't seen watch him play due to his hectic National Hockey League schedule.

'The game here is a lot faster and more skilled and the players are bigger, too. When you get hit, it hurts a lot.'

But the younger Acton noted the Internet and Blackberry have enabled him to maintain close contact with his dad.

At the same time, Acton said he keeps track of the Spirit.

While enjoying a break from school, Acton remains optimistic the Lakers can reverse their fortunes.

"We had a tough first half where we played some tough teams and we're definitely not where we want to be. But our record doesn't indicate our play because we lost a lot of close games.

"We feel as a team, though, we'll be better for it."

"We still have a second half to play and we've been putting in the time. Hopefully that will pay off down the road."

Hockey win no. 28 for red-hot bantam Clippers

The Stouffville major bantam Clippers concluded their York Simcoe Hockey League regular season on a positive note.

With a 4-2 road win over Richmond Hill, the Clippers extended their unbeaten string to 28 games and finished atop the standings with a 26-0-2 mark.

Steven Tait supplied a goal and an assist. Robbie Acton, Connor Cadaret and Steven Tait added single markers. Chris Smith and Taylor Clifford collected assists. Sal Rabito handled net-minding duties.

The Clippers were in the Czech Republic during the Christmas holiday to play exhibition games.

Stouffville hockey tourney features 5 Clipper teams

Minor pee wee A, minor pee wee AE, pee wee AE, midget A and minor midget AE rep teams hit the ice for a Whitchurch Stouffville Minor Hockey Association tournament tomorrow to Sunday.

First-round games are at Stouffville Arena, Markham Centennial Arena and Crosby Arena in Unionville.

Semifinals and finals are Sunday at Stouffville Arena starting at 8:10 a.m. and continuing through the day.

The Clippers will field teams in the minor pee wee A, minor pee wee AE, pee wee AE, midget A and minor midget AE divisions.

Check out www.wsmha.com for more information.

—Mike Hayakawa

Stouffville Churches Welcome You

Springvale Baptist Church
Stouffville Rd. at Kennedy Rd.
905-887-5651

www.springvale.org

Senior Pastor: Bob Flemming
Youth & Family: Jay Sandiford
Student Ministries: Alex Street
Children's Ministries: Sharon Russell
Counselling Services: Karla Kamerman

January 6th, 2007
9:45 am

Communion Celebration Service
Pastor Bob Flemming & Dave Armstrong

6:00 pm

Fellowship Groups in homes

HARVEST BIBLE CHAPEL
at Middlefield Collegiate
525 Highglan Ave., Markham

Questions? Call us at (416)725-6155

Visit us at www.harvestmarkham.ca

Email us at info@harvestmarkham.ca

Pastor Leo Klus

Welcome to...
ST. JAMES PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Rev. Kathryn Strachan, Minister
6432 Main St. Stouffville
Phone - 905-640-3151
email: st.james.stouffville@bellnet.ca

Sunday, January 6
Pre-service hymn-sing 9:45 a.m.
Service of Worship 10:00 a.m.

Saturday January 12
Burns' Supper 5:00 p.m.

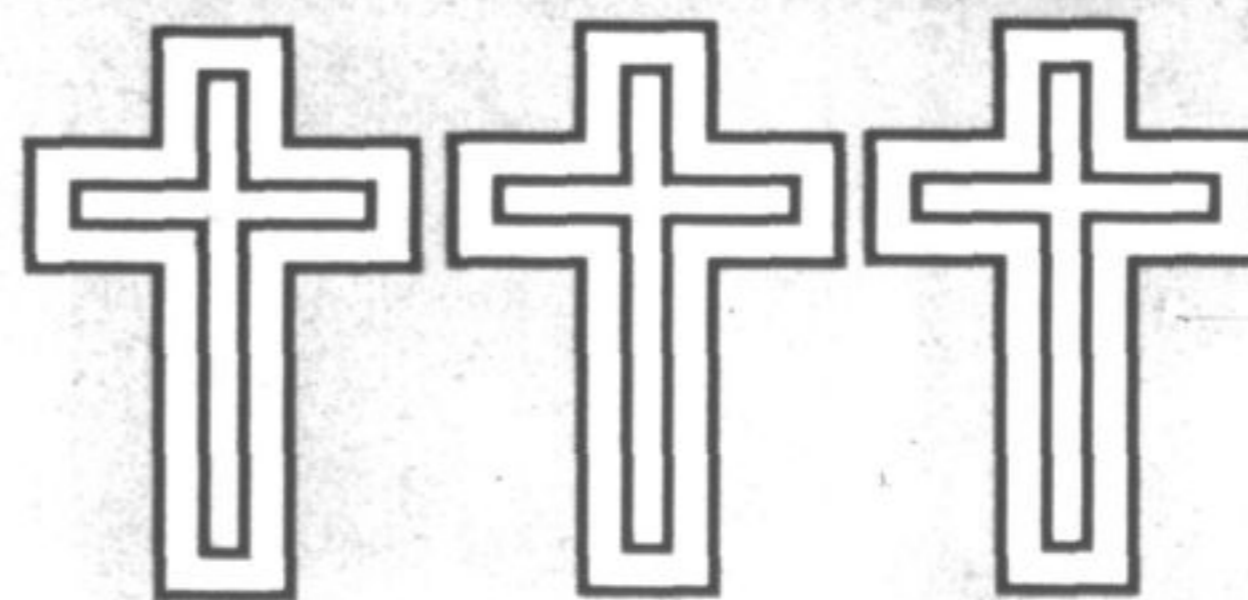
Parkview Village
Adults \$16; Children under 12 free
Tickets - (905) 640-2481
'A Friendly Family Church'

STOUFFVILLE UNITED CHURCH
34 Church St. N. 905-640-1163
Minister of Worship: Rev Vicki Cousins
info@stouffvilleuc.ca

SUNDAY
JANUARY 6, 2007

10:30AM
WORSHIP SERVICE
Baby Fold

EVERYONE WELCOME
Website: www.stouffvilleuc.ca



Parkview Village
12184 Ninth Line South,
Sunday, January 6th, 2007
Rev. Harvey Sider
Heise Hill Brethren in Christ Church
7:00 pm

BLOOMINGTON GOSPEL CHURCH

13660 Ninth Line N.
(905) 642-4414
Rev. Peter Pallant

Sunday, January 6th, 2007
9:30 am ~
Sunday School
11:00 am ~
Morning Worship Service
6:30 pm ~
Evening Service

Everyone Welcome

THE ANGLICAN PARISH of CHRIST CHURCH

254 Sunset Blvd., Stouffville
The Rev. Canon Robert Shields
The Rev. Jason Prisley, Associate
(905) 640-1461

Sunday, January 6th

The Epiphany of the Lord
Services at

8:00 am & 10:00 am

Nursery and Church School
at 10:00 am

Come & See

www.stouffvilleanglican.ca
e-mail: admin@stouffvilleanglican.ca

STOUFFVILLE PENTECOSTAL CHURCH
6853 Main Street

Sunday, January 6, 2007 10:00 a.m.

"R U READY?"
- Pastor Paul Hilsden -
Lords Table

Kidsville for ages 2 - Grade 8

Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
Illuminate - Grade 9 - 12

Wednesday at 7:00 p.m.
Kidz Club - Ages 5 - Grade 5
Junior Youth - Grades 6, 7, & 8
Ladies Exercise Class

Call church at 905-640-5696 for information
www.spckids.ca