

Spirit hopes to keep playoff drive alive for Paddy

Wins series opener after moment's silence

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

The Notre Dame University Fighting Irish football team once won one for The Gipper.

Likewise, the Stouffville Spirit captured Thursday's Provincial Junior A Hockey League first-round playoff opener against the visiting Couchiching Terriers 5-0 for Paddy the former long-time Spirit volunteer Pat Madigan, who died suddenly Feb. 8.

Mr. Madigan, a player mentor and former Spirit president, assistant coach and equipment manager, was remembered in a pre-game moment's silence.

"For Paddy, for sure," said Spirit goalkeeper Trevor O'Neill, after

earning the shutout to go with a league-leading six during the regular season after stopping all 23 shots. "This team's playoff run is dedicated to him. Tuesday was our day of mourning where we talked a lot about him. Today, not a lot was said.

"Paddy loved the playoffs and his Spirit is definitely with us in that dressing room."

A stick signed by the players with the popular Mr. Madigan's name on it hangs in the room as a reminder.

After some early jitters, the Spirit found their composure and jumped out to a 2-0 lead through 20 minutes on powerplay markers by Daniel Spivak and Darren Archibald.

The Spirit padded its margin to 4-0 after two periods on goals from defenceman Tom Kokelj and Archibald 27 seconds apart.

Archibald, who joined the Spirit from the Barrie Colts' Ontario

Hockey League camp, then completed his second hat trick of the season with a powerplay marker to round out the scoring.

A Newmarket resident, Archibald felt one of the keys in Thursday's win was the club's ability to remain out of the penalty box. The Spirit finished with 14 power plays to Couchiching's five.

HAT TRICK FOR ARCHIBALD

"In the past, we took too many penalties and allowed them to come back on us," said Archibald, who did take two minors in the first period. "Tonight, we were more disciplined after getting into a little early penalty trouble."

Forward Jonathan Cristini collected three assists while rookies Ethan Werek and Patrick McEachen each had a pair.

Spirit general manager Tom Milne warned that the Terriers have

the potential to come back when the best-of-five series resumes in Couchiching today at 7:30 p.m. before returning to the Stouffville Arena Sunday at 3:30 p.m.

"I thought we moved the puck well and went to the net hard. I was happy with our special teams play, especially in seeing that Couchiching didn't score on their power-play chances," he said.

"But the whole key to Thursday's game was that we had seven or eight guys who haven't played a playoff game before and they withstood the storm early and stuck to the game plan. Couchiching is a team that won't roll over and die. They've got more of a veteran team with some OHL experience."

SPIRITED NOTES: The Spirit signed Donny Maloney Thursday. The son of Phoenix Coyotes general manager Don Maloney, the 20-year-old from Rye, N.Y. played

last season with the Cambridge Winterhawks of the Southwestern Jr. B Hockey League, but did not play this season. He could make his debut in Game 2 at Couchiching at 7:30 p.m. B

Prior to the start of Sunday's game, the Spirit will honour former director Jim Mason for the time and effort he logged with the club during the past 10 years. Spirit general manager Tom Milne said the recognition is long overdue.

"He's put in a lot of hours with the club and what we are doing is an appreciation thing," Milne said of the Sun-Tribune editor, who resigned last year. "A lot of times things that volunteers do get left out. Volunteers keep a team close to the community and they are the backbone of any organization."

For more, go to: stouffvillespirit.com

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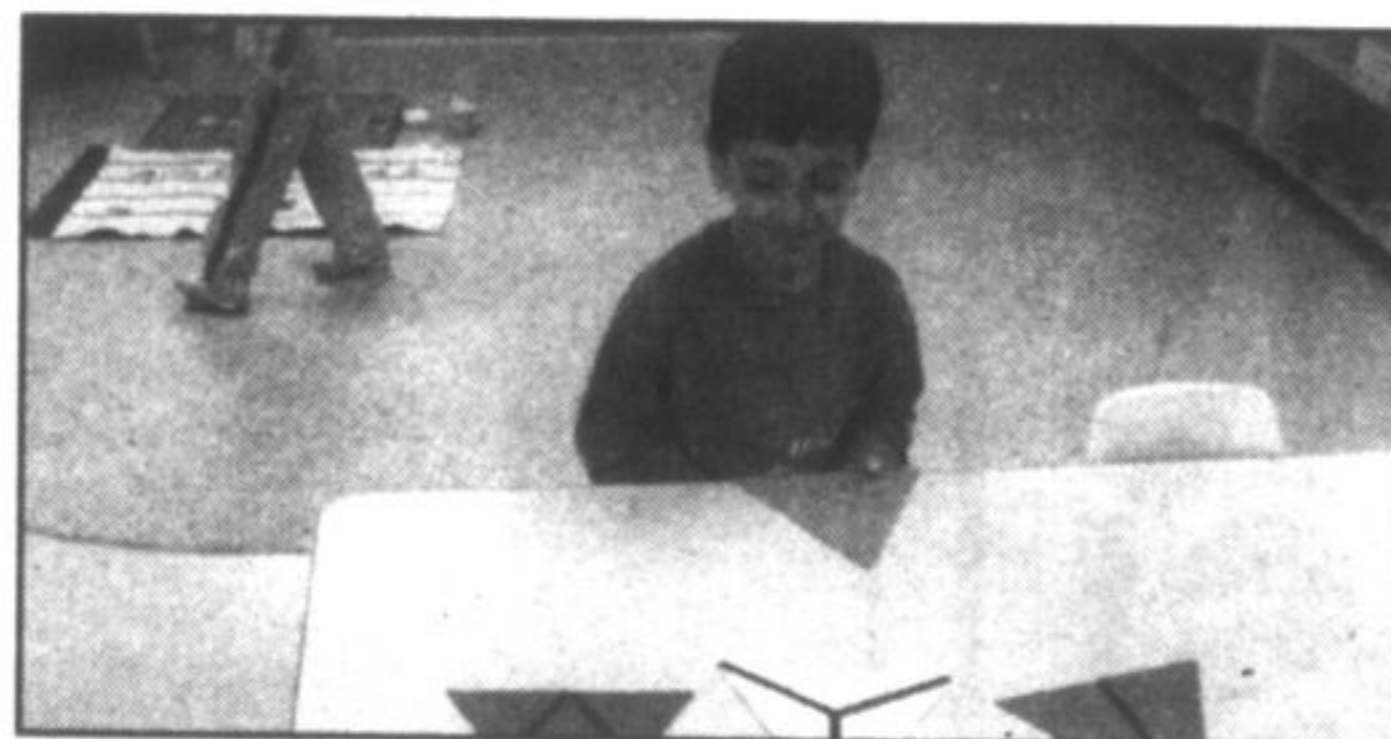
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