

Spirit graduates can't wait for school to start in States

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

For many students, the thought of returning to school in the fall doesn't generate a lot of enthusiasm.

But in the case of Trevor O'Neill and Jonathan Cristini, they can't wait for September to arrive.

That's because the two former Stouffville Spirit players will continue with their hockey careers south of the border in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division III ranks.

A Keswick native, O'Neill, 20, will don his goalie gear at the State University College of New York at Potsdam.

Cristini, a six-foot, two-inch, 190-pound forward,

will be attending Neumann College in Aston, Pa.

Both received financial packages that will cover boarding, meals and hockey equipment.

"It feels great," O'Neill said. "I'm so excited I can't wait for September to go back to school. I don't like working full-time for now."

O'NEILL JOINS EX-MATES

Adding to O'Neill's excitement is the fact he will be joined on the team by former Spirit teammates Mark Sullivan and Mike Foy.

"I feel comfortable in knowing you have close friends with you. It sure makes things easier," he said.

Recording a 2.93 goals

▶ Go to stouffvillespirit.com for more information.

against average and a Provincial Junior A Hockey League-leading six shutouts in 36 regular season tilts with the Spirit this past regular season, O'Neill didn't garner much attention from the U.S. collegiate ranks.

It came during the playoffs, when O'Neill played an integral role in helping the Spirit advance to the North Conference finals by recording a 2.52 goals against average in 15 outings.

"When they (the Bears) talked with Mark (Sullivan) he heard they were looking for a goalie and he men-

tioned my name to them," recalled O'Neill, who vowed to pay back Sullivan in some form in the near future.

While Ryerson University and the University of Toronto had talks with O'Neill, deep inside he wanted to play collegiate hockey in the U.S.

"The coaches (Spirit) tried to convince me to come back because they felt they could try to get me a Division One scholarship. But this (the Bears offer) was a sure thing," he said.

Joining the Spirit part way through the 2007-08 season in a trade with the Oakville Blades, the 21-year-old Cristini wanted to pursue a scholarship with an NCAA Division One program.

"It's tough to get a scholarship because the American-born players are getting better and schools down there are looking at those players first," he said.

"But I always had it in the back of my head to try and earn a scholarship.

"When I walked into junior when I was 17 it started from there and by my fourth year I wanted to be a factor in the league. Right now I'm proud of what I accomplished," he said.

After 17 goals and 18 assists in 23 regular season games in Stouffville, Cristini was noticed by Neumann during the postseason in which he had three goals and seven assists in 15 matches.

While Cristini had heard from other Division III schools during the season, he elected to attend Neumann due to their persistence in talking with him in person and on the telephone.

"I wanted to play somewhere where I'll become a better player and do so in the fastest manner," Cristini said. "This was definitely a great place for me to be at."

He was forced to play a bit of a waiting game. Three courses he took at York University last year were reviewed by the World Education Services and deemed eligible.

SPIRIT SCHOLARSHIPS

Sullivan, O'Neill and Cristini are three Spirit grads going to NCAA Division III schools this fall

Teammates Corey Trivino (Boston University), James McIntosh (Bowling Green) and Daniel Spivak (Rochester Institute of Technology) will play Division I.

Ethan Werek (Boston University), Pat McEachen (Maine) and Jarred Seymour (Cornell) have scholarships for 2009.

Markham Economist & Sun

Carrier Parent/Guardian of the Year Award goes to Kathy Jin



Left to right: Carrier Amy Liu, District Rep. Linda MacFarlane & Carrier Mom Kathy Jin.

My Mom

By Amy Liu

I'm sure that in everybody's life, there's someone they look up to because of their character, whether it's an uncle, a sibling, a friend or a famous person. But the person I look up to is my mom. Your wondering "Why your mom?" Well, my mom might not be a famous superstar or Beverly-hills millionaire, but she taught me some important rules of life, something no superstar or millionaire can teach me.

First, she taught me that money and life doesn't just come to you, you have to work hard for it. She said "You can't be lazy and depend on someone all the time, you need to learn to depend on yourself." Sometimes, I don't want to do the route because I rather watch a T.V. show or I'm just lazy, she reminds me that I have a responsibility and I must make myself committed to it.

Second, she helps me organize flyers when I'm loaded down with schoolwork or suddenly have something important on my schedule. She understands that I'm in need and lends a supporting hand. She showed me that she loved me by helping me in a difficult situation that no one else would bother to do.

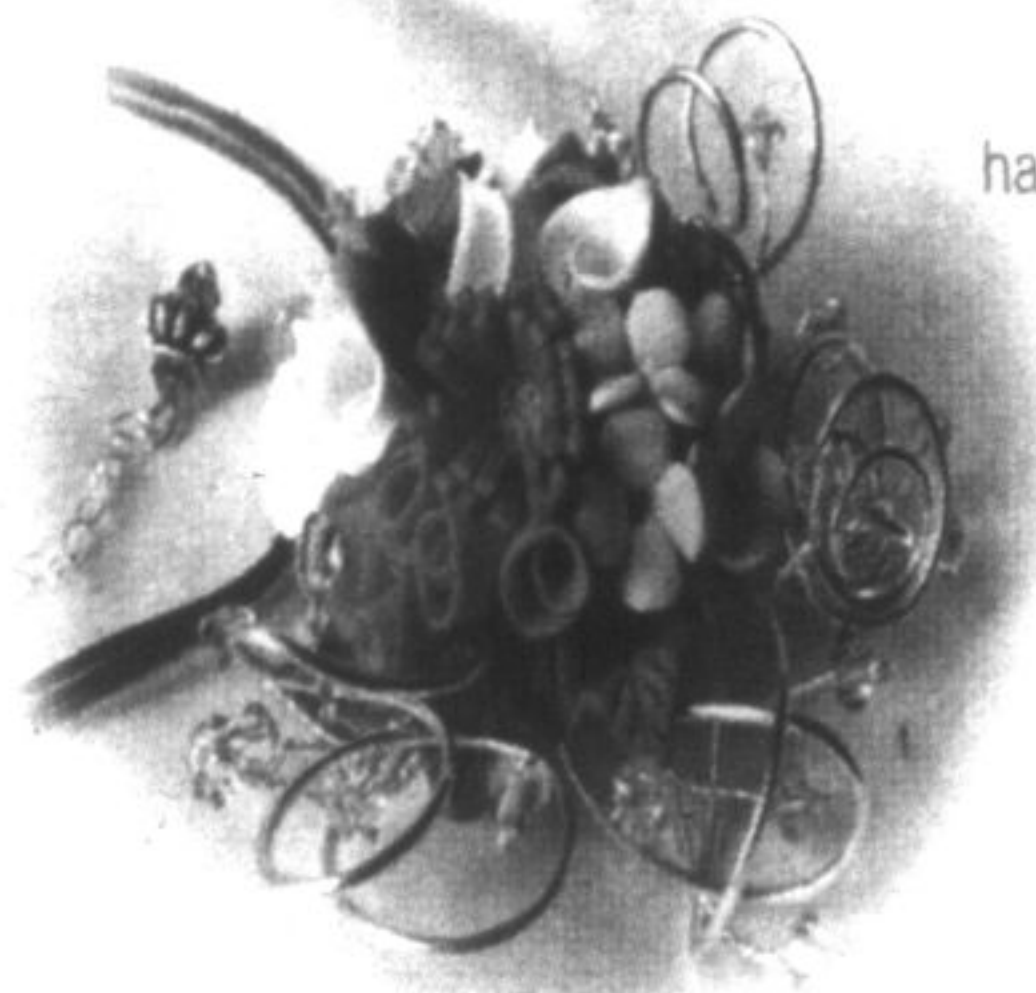
Last but not least, she helps me check to make sure that every single house on my route gets all the necessary flyers. My mom told me that the Economist & Sun works very hard to make sure that the carriers and the customers gets the flyers on time. The E & S has to make the flyers, count it, bundle it, and deliver it. That is a lot of work. My mom taught me to respect other people's work and even though there are tons of flyers, I have to make sure each and every house gets a flyer and not just throw it away.

Overall, my mom taught some amazing things such as commitment, responsibility, helpfulness, love and respect. My mom may not be some millionaire or super star, but I'm proud of her and love because of the way she is.

Mom, Thank You!!!!!!

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