

Former Olympic rider opens cup with victory

Whitchurch-Stouffville's John Pearce and Chianto, a 12-year-old Dutch warmblood grey gelding, won Phase One of the \$175,000 John Deere Canada Cup Championship at the Caledon Equestrian Park near Caledon Friday.

The 48-year-old Ballantrae resident and 2004 Canadian Olympian was one of the last riders to compete from the field of 32. He rode Chianto in 74.82 seconds.

Although Pearce and Chianto pulled a rail during their ride and were penalized four seconds, they still finished ahead of 2008 Olympic silver medallist Ian Millar and his mount In Style, who completed the course with a faultless ride in 75.04 seconds.

Pearce, who had been riding Chianto since January, feels his mount has plenty of potential to do bigger things before the season comes to a close.

"He's a smart horse, he's got a big heart and I think he really likes me," he said.

"I get a really good feeling from this horse and I think he'll go on and do a lot of good things. He's got lots of energy and could have done 10 rounds today. And if he stays calm and doesn't get rattled, he's really smooth."

Zack attack paces Clipper win

Zack McMahon scored two goals to propel the Stouffville minor bantam AE Clippers to a 3-1 win over TNT in their Ontario Minor Hockey Association home-opener at the Stouffville Arena last week.

Matt Renzoni scored the other marker for the Clippers. Stephen Schweighardt collected two assists while Joel Leuschner and Matthew Rundle each had one.

SPORTS BRIEFS

Alex McKean played a steady game in goal to help preserve the victory.

Gibbons ninth on Antingonish track

Peter Gibbons drove his way to a ninth-place finish at last Saturday's NASCAR Canadian Tire Series Atlantic Dodge Dealers 300 race at Riverside International Speedway in Antingonish, N.S.

Driving his Canadian Tire/Mobil Super Chevrolet, the Stouffville-area resident began the 300-lap event in fifth place and held the lead on two occasions for 49 laps.

Among other local entrants, the Stouffville-based Team 3 Red/EHR entry driven by Jason Hathaway finished 11th.

Driving the entry's Snap-on Tools/Super 8 Dodge, Hathaway began the race in the 19th position.

Don Thomson Jr. took the checkered flag in the second-to-last event of the series.

Among overall point standings, Gibbons is in eighth place with 1,652 points. Scott Steckley leads the series with 1,953.

The final race of the series is slated for Saturday at the Kawartha Speedway Dodge Dealers of Ontario Ram 250 near Peterborough.

- Mike Hayakawa

Field hockey girls christen field

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

Sarah Langendoen did something this season she didn't have to do last year as coach of the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans girls' field hockey team.

She had to make roster cuts before the York Region Athletic Association tier one season began.

Not happy to say farewell to several prospects, she is enthused that field hockey is alive and growing at Stouffville.

The 23-member squad made its debut Monday on their new home field, battling Alexander Mackenzie Secondary School (Richmond Hill) to a 0-0 tie and suffered a 2-1 loss to King City Secondary School.

Erica McConamy scored the lone goal for the Spartans.

"This is a dedicated team," Langendoen said of the mix of seniors and first-year players. "I like their attitude, they have good spirit and they're having a good time."

Langendoen feels the strength of her squad is on the defence that's anchored by Sarah Steiner, a Grade 12 student, and Christine Barkey from Grade 11.

Tending goal is rookie Clara Hoover, who earned the shutout Monday.

Playing in a four-team Central Division that includes Dr. G.W. Williams Secondary School (Aurora), Bayview Secondary School (Richmond Hill) and Alexander Mackenzie, the Spartans are faced this season with a challenging schedule.

Some schools, including the new Bill Crothers Secondary School (Unionville) and Sutton District High School,

SCHOOL SPORTS

have a late October break. That means some teams, including the Spartans, are being forced to play gruelling two-game sets.

"This was the first doubleheader that I've coached," Langendoen said of Monday's games. "But this will be an interesting season. So far I'm happy with our team."

The Spartans resume league play today with a game at Dr. G.W. Williams at 4:30 p.m.

Rugby teams tackle fall season

The Spartans senior boys' rugby team will take part in a 7's tournament today at Fletcher's Field in Markham.

They'll play Leaside High School of Toronto, Scarborough's Sir Oliver Mowat High School and Bradford District High School.

The Spartans bantam team, coached by Tom Mintchev, were to have participated in a 7's tourney yesterday at Fletcher's Field.

The junior fall program was scrubbed due to a lack of commitment, Spartans head coach Jamie Hewitt said.

However, he said they could field a team during the spring schedule if there's a commitment.

"We'll see if things are different in the spring," he said.

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