

New hockey training facility will offer alternative to ice time

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

Kolya and Tamara Pelowich were looking for a hockey facility where their son Nicholas, then seven years of age, could work on his goaltending mechanics last summer.

They wanted a surface with ice that was close to their home in Stouffville.

There wasn't much available, so they got busy.

The Pelowichs starting making plans for a centre where their son and other aspiring players could raise their games to the next level.

Their plans are to create a 10,000-square-foot practice facility in the Greenline Forest Products complex, on Hwy. 48 between Sam's Way and 19th Avenue, called The Hockey Lanes.

"We stumbled upon the world of synthetic ice and its many uses from skating shows in Las Vegas to hockey training facilities in the United States and Canada," Tamara said. "Our idea grew from many hours of research, meetings and discussions."

The facility, which is slated to open in December, will have four or five puck shooting lanes, 10-feet by 24-feet each. They will resemble sta-

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tions at a golf driving range, Mrs. Pelowich says.

"My husband, Kolya, decided that the puck shooting lane idea would be beneficial to players of all ages where shots can be practised on a level surface, as opposed to your driveway, with your skates on, using your regular ice stick," she said. "The idea isn't new. But the convenience of having dedicated individual lanes for practicing is something we wanted to incorporate in our concept."

The Pelowichs hope local teams see their centre as an alternative to driving kilometres to other facilities, of the real or synthetic variety, especially during the summer.

Synthetic ice boasts 10-per-cent more resistance than natural ice and provides an excellent venue for training as actual speed increases upon return to refrigerated ice, Mr. Pelowich, a player during his youth in Scarborough, said. "Custom boards and glass built around the synthetic ice provides an alternative to renting ice at a distant arena. Temperature and refrigeration are not concerns with synthetic

ice which affords its users realistic training while on skates."

Besides individual shooting stations, the facility will include a 40-foot by 80-foot training rink, weekly classes and team training.

"A skating treadmill and puck drill area will complement our mission to correct and add power to your skating stride," Mrs. Pelowich said. "An off-ice stretch and strength area as well as board rooms, dressing rooms and a pro-shop will complete the complex."

The Hockey Lanes will operate on evenings and weekends to accommodate team sessions, weekly classes, goalie lessons, reserved puck-shooting lanes, private one-on-one lessons and birthday parties. Full programs are slated to begin in early January.

"The Hockey Lanes gives us a chance to get involved with the development of children and provides a positive environment for the youths in our community to thrive," Mrs. Pelowich said.

"We've made personal commitments to provide a state-of-the-art facility for the development of our youth. This is our passion and we are realizing a dream."

Penalty-prone Spirit paying for disobeying GM/coach

In his pre-game speech Thursday, Stouffville Spirit general manager and head coach Mark Joslin warned his troops they had to be disciplined in their Ontario Junior Hockey League game against the visiting Cobourg Cougars.

Especially since the Spirit are among the league leaders in penalty minutes and the Cougars have one of the top power-play scorers in Patrick Jobb.

Joslin, apparently, wasn't taken seriously as the Cougars erupted with three second-period power-play goals, including two by Jobb, en route to a 6-5 win.

NINE STRAIGHT MINORS

"I preached for 10 minutes before the game that we had to play with discipline. During the game, we got nine penalties in a row between the first and second periods and we give up three power play goals," Joslin said.

"I thought if we stayed out of penalty trouble we would have won the game. Our guys have to learn we can't take penalties."

In a first period that saw several momentum swings, the Spirit held the upper hand on three different occasions only to see the Cougars respond to tie the game at 3-3

through 20 minutes.

Matt Viola scored twice for the Spirit and Myles Gomes once.

When the Cougars tied the game at 2-2, Joslin pulled starting netminder Michael D'Angelo in favour of Kori Coelho.

LAST PLACE

The Spirit mounted a comeback in the third period as Jason Heydon scored a power-play goal and Dustin Laren lit the red light at the 17:46-mark to cut the deficit to 6-5. But that would be as close as the Spirit would get.

Still in last place in the Central Division with three wins and 13 losses, the Spirit outshot the Cougars 36-30.

"We've got to focus on special teams and watch video and try to regroup," he said. "We've got a big week coming with games against Hamilton (Monday), Cobourg (next Thursday at the Stouffville Arena) and Wellington (Friday) coming up."

Joslin also hopes to add two 20-year-old forwards to the roster.

"We've got to try and alleviate some of the pressure on our defence and our young forwards," he said.

- Mike Hayakawa

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