

Stouffville Sun-Tribune

# SPORTS

## HORIZONTAL HOOPS



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stouffville Spartan Ryan Boyle is pressured by Markham Bur Oak Bulldog Kush Patel as he passes the ball to Adam Prokop in York Region high school senior boys basketball at Bur Oak Monday. Boyle's teammates look amused while the opposition coach appears to be signalling a travelling call for the referees. Stouffville won 46-42.

## Midgets motoring to Michigan after winning Silver Stick qualifier

BY MIKE HAYAKAWA  
Staff Writer

Joe Sutherland believes winning hockey games boils down to a combination of factors.

For starters, the Stouffville Clippers midget coach said the players have to exhibit a strong work ethic.

At the same time, he noted clutch goaltending is a necessity.

It also doesn't hurt to have the puck bounce in your favour.

All of those ingredients worked in the Clippers' favour when they ventured to Sudbury last weekend to participate in the 39th annual Sudbury Silver Stick Regional Hockey Tournament.

For their efforts, the Clippers skat-

ed off with the midget A championship title after downing Orillia 3-1 in the title tilt.

By winning the championship, the Clippers earned the right to compete at the International Silver Stick Championship in Sarnia and Port Huron, Mich., Jan. 16 to 18.

### GOALIE SINGH MVP

"It really came down to the hard work the players put out," Sutherland said. "But you also need to get the breaks and good goaltending to be successful and we got that."

Steve Demelo paced the Clippers' offence in the finale with two shorthanded goals while Lloyd Davis added a goal and one assist. Lee Averill collected two assists.

Helping to preserve the win was goaltender Ben Singh, who was named the tournament's most valuable player.

To reach the final of the 10-team field, the Clippers won their first game over Valley East 4-3. After suffering a 4-2 loss to Orillia in their second game, the Clippers rebounded to defeat Valley East 4-2 and advance to the semifinal.

Facing South Porcupine, the Clippers received a pair of goals from Phil Wood and singles from Ryan Brown, Averill and Davis to skate off with a 5-3 win.

Peter Wideman earned two assists while Peter Lebuffe and Marten Cushing each had one.

Goaltender Sean Gibson played a

stellar game in goal for the Clippers.

Entering the tournament, Sutherland said his club had a quiet, confident feeling they could win it.

### RETURN TRIP FOR COACHES

"We had set some goals for ourselves as a team and I believe we went into the tournament feeling we could win the whole thing," he said. "We went up to Sudbury and I don't think we ever lost that confidence during the tournament. It was nice to have it come to fruition."

During the 2005-06 season, Sutherland was an assistant coach to Andy Cartwright's minor bantam team that won the Silver Stick event. This time around, the pair switched roles with Cartwright assisting him

along with Brad Hulshof.

"There's always strong competition at the Silver Stick and this title felt just as good. Most of all though, I'm happy for the boys. They worked hard. It's a big thing for them. You play a lot of hockey, but might not get into the finals of a Silver Stick, let alone win it. We as a coaching staff are proud for what they achieved," he said.

He knows his team will be put to the test as there will be clubs from across Canada and the United States in attendance.

"The Silver Stick final is an extremely challenging tournament. There's nothing but good hockey teams that show up. But we're looking forward to it," he said.



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