

BEST ON ICE



The future appears to be in good hands for girls high school hockey in York Region. Judging that is, by the six players selected for the 2008-09 season all-star team.

The roster includes three players who are still in Grade 9 or 10, including Keswick Cougars goaltender Rebecca Clark and defenceman Erin Ambrose, and Aurora Golden Eagles defenceman Kathryn Schilter.

That trio should be able to provide its share of highlights in coming

seasons.

Veterans round out the squad led by Julie Hebert of the YRAA champion Aurora Golden Eagles, Brittany Crago of the Stouffville Spartans and Steph Dovaston from the Markham Marauders. All are in Grade 12.

Read on for more about the 2008-09 YRAA senior girls hockey all-star team as selected by coaches in the league.

— By John Cudmore



REBECCA CLARK Keswick Cougars
Goalie

Grade: 10

Club team: Aurora Panthers, Senior A

Player most admired: Sami Jo Small

High school highlight: This season's playoff run, including series wins over defending champion Sacred Heart and Markham ... Posted four shutouts this season.

Future goals: Hopes to make Ontario under-18 team next season.

Strengths: Handles puck well. Good rebound control. Plays stand-up style.

Coaches thoughts: "Rebecca is the reason we made it to the (YRAA) final," head coach Brad Shadlock said. "She's a low-key leader, but when you look at her eyes, you know she will compete. I think every single playoff game we played, the other coaches were befuddled. She was the difference between us getting knocked out early or moving on."

KATHRYN SCHILTER Aurora Golden Eagles
Defence

Grade: 10

Club team: Toronto Aeros midgets

Player Most Admired: Geraldine Heaney

High school highlight: Winning York Region Athletic Association championship and advancing to OFSAA finals.

Future Goals: Plans to attend tryouts for under-18 Ontario team ... Hoping to earn NCAA Division I scholarship.

Strengths: Possesses one of the hardest shots Golden Eagles head coach Marcus Olson has seen in girls high school hockey ... premier puck handler.

Coaches thoughts: "She's the anchor of our defence corps," Olson said. "In any pressure situation on the ice, we build around her. If we need a clutch play or shut down, she's there."

ERIN AMBROSE Keswick Cougars
Defence

Grade: 9

Club team: Toronto Aeros, PWHL ... a former member of the highly touted York Simcoe Express bantams, Ambrose played for Team Ontario Blue at under-18 national championships in Napanee earlier this season.

Player Most Admired: Cassie Campbell

High school highlight: First Keswick team in York final.

Future Goals: Hopes to earn a U.S. scholarship and play for Team Canada.

Strengths: Ability to see the entire ice and anticipate.

Coaches thoughts: "It's a difficult decision to make a Grade 9 student your captain, but she's a real leader," Cougars head coach Brad Shadlock said.



STEPH DOVASTON Markham Marauders
Forward

Grade: 12

Club team: Markham-Stouffville Stars, PWHL

Player Most Admired: Hayley Wickenheiser

High school highlight: As Grade 10 student, won York Region championship and competed at OFSAA in 2007, where Marauders lost in quarter-finals.

Future Goals: Plans to study psychology or kinesiology at a Canadian university, but is considering a fifth year at Markham.

Strengths: Hockey sense and playmaking skills.

Coaches thoughts: "She responds to everything you suggest and will try anything that needs to be done to win," Marauders head coach Phil Howard said of his assistant captain.



BRITTANY CRAGO Stouffville Spartans
Forward

Grade: 12

Club team: Whitby Wolves, PWHL

Player Most Admired: Alexander Ovechkin, "He has fun out there and that's what it's all about."

High school highlight: "Being able to go to OFSAA every year is pretty crazy," said Crago, a member of Spartans' OFSAA gold medal-winning teams in 2006 and 2007.

Future Goals: Plans to study kinesiology at Laurier, Western or Queen's.

Strengths: Leadership, stickhandling, strong shot, plays both ends well.

Coaches thoughts: "She's a fabulous captain," Spartans head coach Brian Shankman said. "She's not noisy, but leads by example. She's absolutely selfless. She's all about team-first and what's best for the team."



JULIE HEBERT Aurora Golden Eagles
Forward

Grade: 12

Club team: Aurora Panthers, PWHL

Player Most Admired: Hayley Wickenheiser

High school highlight: Scored three-game winning goals during the YRAA playoffs ... Winning York Region Athletic Association title this season and advancing to OFSAA championships.

Future Goals: Has received a scholarship at Wayne State University in Michigan.

Strengths: Scoring prowess ... On-ice awareness and sees ice well

Coaches thoughts: "She's been solid for us the whole year," coach Marcus Olson said. "Whenever we've needed a goal she seems to get it. She's a fantastic teammate and great to have on the team."

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