

SPORTS

Spartans like
York U track

The York Region Athletic Association outdoor track and field championships won't take place until May 21 and 22.

But the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans squad is preparing.

The results were very positive at last week's YRAA indoor championships at York University.

Highlighting the Spartans' results was the junior boys' track team, which swept the 800 and 1,500-metre events.

Liam Mitro was first to cross the finish line in the 800m in a time of 2:11.88. Teammates Michael Bourgeois and Mitchell Price were second and third respectively while Jon Wiseman was fifth.

JUNIORS LEAD

Bourgeois captured the 1,500m in 4:30.11 while Mitro was second and Price, third.

Mitro also ran the 400m and was first with a clocking of 57.67.

Jessica Bartle captured the junior girls' 1,500m in 6:12.50 and was third in the 800m.

Olivia Bolender won the midget girls' triple jump with a leap of 9.33m and was seventh in the high jump.

Brittany Dunbar was second in the senior girls' 1,500m and fourth in the 800m.

In the girls' shot put, Emily Clarkson was second in the junior event while Rebecca Muir was third in the senior field. Kate Schlusser was third in the senior girls' long jump.

In the midget girls' high jump, Wylla Jury-Standish was fifth and Nicole Thompson sixth.

Chris Daniels was third in the junior boys' long jump.

In the senior boys' 1,500m, Kyle O'Brien was fifth and Kohl McVicar, seventh.



STAFF PHOTO/STEVE SOMERVILLE

Stouffville Secondary's Michael Bourgeois edges teammate Liam Mitro in 1500m heat at the York Region high school indoor track and field championships at York University last week. They both won finals during the meet.

Former assistant
takes over Spirit

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
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Once a member of the Stouffville Spirit, always a member.

Craig Donovan served as an assistant coach with the tier two Jr. A hockey club from 1997 to 2003.

Now 42 years old, the Newmarket resident has returned for his second tour of duty with the Ontario Junior Hockey League club.

Only this time, Donovan is the club's new head coach.

Succeeding Mark Joslin, who was the club's head coach for the last half of the 2008-09 season before stepping down in March, Donovan was officially announced Tuesday.

Describing his return to Stouffville as a "homecoming", Donovan is glad to be back.

"I've always had a soft spot for Stouffville because I was there for so long and I enjoyed working with a lot of people there like Ken Burrows (Spirit general manager). He knows what's happening and with Ken being there it was big from my point of view," he said. "There's a lot of good people in the community who are gravitating back to the team."

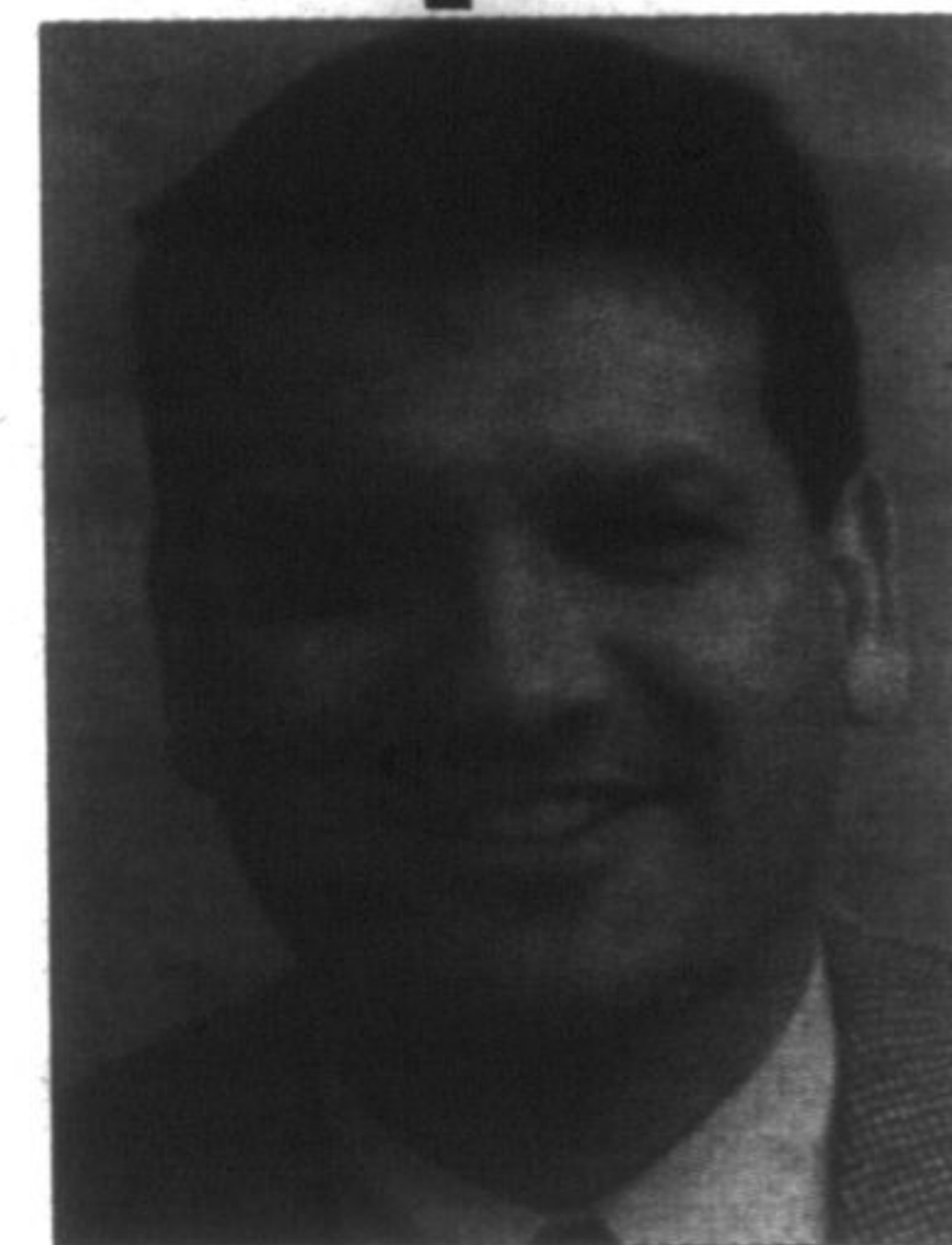
Zeev Werek, who owns the Spirit with David Laren, Steve Roest and Chris Tambos, is happy, too.

"Most of the players that have been with us want to play collegiate hockey and Craig played for Cornell University (from 1984 to 1988 and was a four-year letter winner).

"In my opinion we needed someone who has a real structure and he's been with us before and knows what the Spirit are all about and he knows the game. He has a lot to offer. He oozes with confidence and he's the type of a coach you would want your son to play for," Werek said.

For the better part of the last three seasons, he was head coach of the Uxbridge Bruins Jr. C club.

Wins were scarce and the Spirit was in similar dire straits prior to his



CRAIG DONOVAN: Cornell graduate coached Jr. C in Uxbridge after leaving Stouffville Spirit staff.

first tour of duty in Stouffville.

The club's last-place Central Division record in 2008-09 was deceiving as it lost a number of one-goal games in the early going, he said.

"With the guys who can come back, there were a number of them who were just in the league for the first time. I expect we will be strong up front and we have one of the better goalies in the league (in Kori Coelho). But our challenge will be to find some defencemen who can play," said Donovan.

A team leader with Great-West Lifeco Inc. by day, Donovan just wants to give back.

"I don't have any illusions that I'll be coaching in the NHL," he said. "Someone did this for me when I went through junior A and went to Cornell. My greatest thrill is to help kids realize their goals."

One of Donovan's first tasks will be to have his coaching staff in place by the time the Spirit conducts its spring auditions May 8 to 10 at the Stouffville Arena.

For more on the Spirit, log on to: www.stouffvillespirit.com

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