

SPORTS: Good signs from struggling Stouffville Secondary squads Volleyball boys rounding into shape

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
Staff Writer

The way Steve Jimmo sees things, he would prefer to lose games in the early going of the York Region Athletic Association campaign, rather than later on when crunch time rolls around.

In taking early-season lumps, the veteran Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior boys' volleyball coach feels it's a learning process in which his players can work on their shortcomings and develop cohesion.

With just four players returning from last year's senior entry, the Spartans are indeed in the midst of developing a system that will enable them to contend in a highly competitive tier one East Division.

The schedule includes heavyweights Unionville High School, Milliken Mills Secondary School and first-year senior Bill Crothers Secondary School.

After losing their first two matches of the YRAA season against Pierre Elliott Trudeau Secondary School 2-1 and Bill Crothers 2-0 last Monday, the Spartans played host to a six-team tournament last Thursday and advanced to the semifinals before falling to eventual champion St. Thomas Aquinas (Oakville) 2-0.

While the Spartans failed to reach the final, Jimmo was pleased with the progress his club has

made.

"I thought we played pretty well. We had some moments where we played as if we know what it takes to be ready," he said.

"But we have some players who are new to our system and they're still learning.

"We just need to fine tune some things like our blocking and our defence is coming along."

With setter Max Muir, middle Jeremy Brownridge and left side players Rob Triano and Nick McEwen the lone returnees, Jimmo hopes the addition of several junior graduates and newcomer middle Brandon Hussain, a transfer from Whitfield Christian Academy in Scarborough, will bolster their roster.

Those first-year seniors include: six-foot, four-inch middle Connor McDonald, right side players' Nathan Schneider, Peter Wideman and Bill Sutton and left side players' Kyle Pontone and Adam McGillvary.

"Right now, everyone is contributing," Jimmo said. "I think we're just starting to come together and we'll be competitive."

After yesterday's games at Unionville, the Spartans will resume league play Oct. 19 at Father Michael McGivney Catholic Academy in Markham at 3:30 p.m.

Seniors girls caged again

Eliminate the first quarter of last Thursday's senior basketball game against the visiting Markham Marauders and the Spartan girls might have recorded their first win of the YRAA season.

The Spartans dug themselves into a deep hole and lost 43-36 to last year's regional finalists.

Despite the loss, Spartans' head coach Sharon MacFarlane was pleased with the gritty effort her club gave after falling behind 19-6 through one quarter.

"We made a couple of changes after we fell behind and the kids settled down. If we had just played that way the whole game.

"It was nice to see them come back. Things are starting to come together," she said.

Brooke Kiatipis was high scorer for the Spartans with 16 points.

Now 0-3 to start the tier one East Division campaign, the Spartans are scheduled to resume league play Friday when they head to Unionville to play the St. Augustine Titans at 4 p.m.

In junior hoop action last Thursday, the Marauders defeated the Spartans 26-12.

For more on high school sports, log on to: www.yraa.com

Young swimmers make splash

SPORTS BRIEFS

Fifteen members of the Stouffville Ducks stroke developmental squad put their water skills into action at the recent Stroke Development Fun Meet in Aurora.

Leading the pack of returning swimmers was Caleb Vincent, 9, who dropped more than 40 seconds off his previous best times in his six swims.

Grace Harris, 9, took part in her first 100 m individual medley and dropped more than 20 seconds in her other six races.

Megan James, 6, shaved 13 seconds off in her 50 m backstroke event and four seconds off in her 25 m freestyle.

Erin Wagg, 8, made her debut in the 100 m individual medley and 50 m freestyle, and dropped more than 13 seconds in her other four races.

Tori Rapp, 8, showed strong swimming skills and improvement in each of her seven events.

Ten first-year Stouffville swimmers also competed at the meet for the Ducks.

They included: Ravine Pinter, 13, Emmanuel Hayes, 12, Ernest Chiu, Owen McNeil, Aliana Piedrahita, Oscar Tsui, 8, Celestina Hykel, Ethan Brennan 7, Nate McNeil, 6, and Hayden James, 4.

The next meet for the development squad will take place in

Aurora on Oct. 31.

The Ducks swim out of the Lebovic Centre in Stouffville Memorial Park.

For more information about the Stouffville Ducks, call (905) 888-9994 or visit www.ducksswimming.ca

Minor peewee AE Clippers bounce back for first win

After losing their first six games, the Stouffville minor peewee AE Clippers skated off with their first win of the Ontario Minor Hockey Association season with a 4-3 road win over East Gwillimbury Sunday.

Cole Gunathunge and Tyler Sinclair each recorded a goal and one assist to lead the Clippers' offence. Tyler Perrett-Swirla and Marcus Ivanovski added single tallies. Robbie Krawczuk collected one assist.

Ethen Rehel played a solid game in goal to help preserve the win.

The Clippers resume league play against Georgina at the Stouffville Arena Saturday at 6:25 p.m.

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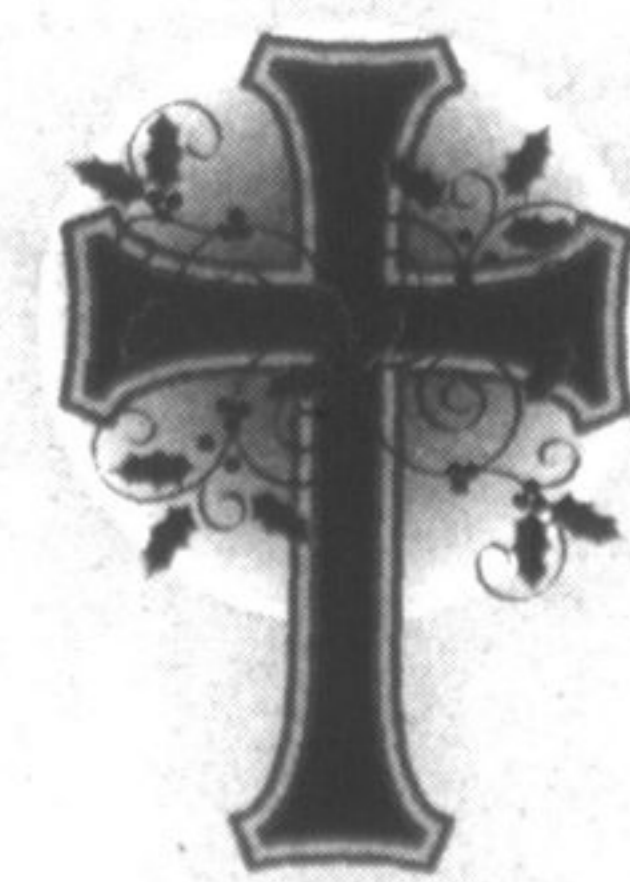
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