

Spirit season ends tonight at home

The Stouffville Spirit complete their Central Canadian Hockey League regular season tonight when they host the North York Rangers at 7:30.

It may take until tomorrow, the final day of the regular season, to find out who they will open the playoffs with.

The Spirit moved closer to clinching fourth place in the East Conference with a 5-2 win over the Ajax Attack at home Thursday. Stouffville's Evan Bruno had a goal and two assists.

The Spirit will likely play the Peterborough Lifflock Stars or Lindsay Muskies in the first round, which could start Thursday in Stouffville. If they slip to fifth place, they'll start on the road.

Starry rookie hopes to lift RMC to first win

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When Norah Collins enrolled at the Royal Military College in Kingston, she wanted to play hard for the Paladins women's volleyball team.

While the Paladins occupy the cellar in the Ontario University Athletics' East Division with an 0-11 mark, the 18-year-old Cedar Valley resident has lived up to her side of the bargain.

In fact, Paladins' head coach Carolyn Welden says Collins is quickly becoming a triple threat in the OUA.

So far this season, Collins leads the team in kills, with an average of nine per game, blocks and total points.

Collins was also named player of the match in a Jan. 8 contest against the University of Guelph with 13 kills and 10 digs.

"I really haven't thought about making an impact, but just contributing the best that I can do to the sport I love and to a team that is a lot of fun, hard working and supportive," the five-foot, nine-inch Collins said. "I'm just glad to have had the opportunity

to contribute to the RMC volleyball team."

A graduate of Sacred Heart Catholic High School in Newmarket, Collins' interest in attending RMC began last year after meeting Welden and assistant coach Kara Mazerolle.

What intrigued Collins about attending RMC was what she felt was the school's unique atmosphere in which daily challenges are encountered.

"The school pushes you to be your best all the time and achieve things that you never thought you would have been able to," she said. "The chance to participate in that competitive environment and also be able to play volleyball was one that I couldn't pass up."

While satisfied by what she's accomplished on the court so far in her OUA maiden campaign, Collins attributed part of that success to the nature of RMC. With RMC being a small school in terms of enrollment, Collins felt that's enabled her to make an easier transition into life away from

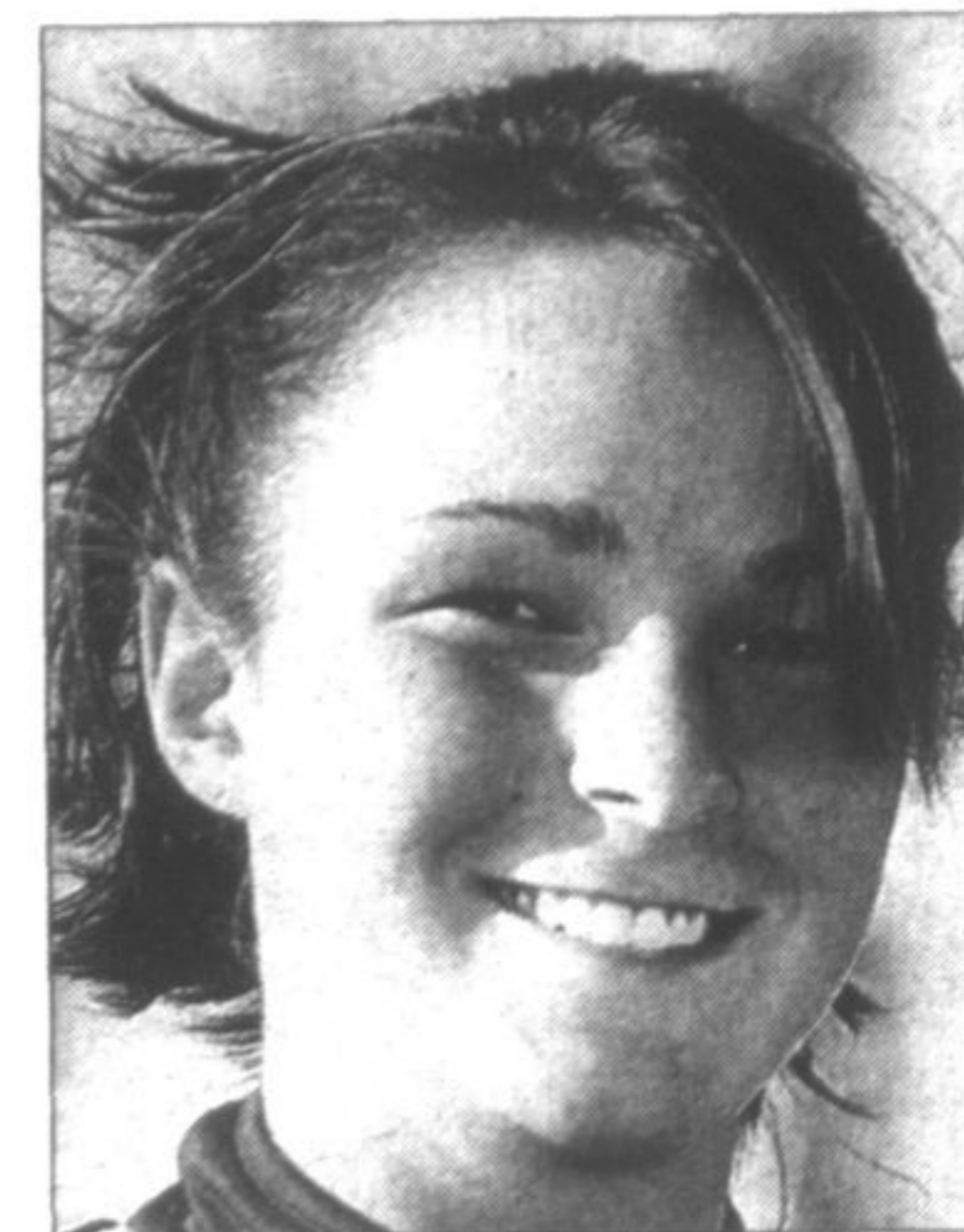
home. The team, she said, is almost like her family away from home.

"Because RMC is a small school our team spends a lot of time together, which I feel helps us bond together," she said.

While Collins has produced impressive statistics for the Paladins, Welden also noted she does other things on the court that have provided a lift to the team.

"She's also a primary passer and has been successful with her defensive game. She's an aggressive player and has stepped into a leadership role on the court," Welden said. "I've spent the last two years watching Norah perform on the Ontario club circuit and enjoyed her easy-going demeanor on the court. She's a pleasure to coach and enjoys being challenged with new tactics and strategies."

Hoping to attain a degree in history while at RMC along with a bachelor of physical education degree, Collins hopes she can continue to contribute to her team's progression on the court.



NORAH COLLINS: Whitchurch-Stouffville resident picked RMC because of competitive atmosphere.

And more important, try to help the Paladins record their first win of the season.

"I hope that we can continue to improve throughout the remainder of the season and hopefully that will provide us with a strong starting point

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