

Field hockey Spartans perfectly happy

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
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Sarah Langandoen acknowledged it definitely helps to have good talent to win games.

But at the same time, the veteran Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans varsity girls' field hockey coach was quick to note another asset stems from possessing the intangibles.

In the case of her team, which sports a 3-0 record and is tied with defending York Region Athletic Association champion Aurora in first place in the Tier One Central Division, leadership has been an essential ingredient.

Especially from Grade 12 players including co-captains Jenna Monk and Peyton Gray.

"With a varsity team we have players who range from Grade 9s through to 12 and this early in the year a lot of the players don't really know each other since some of them are new to the school being first-year high school students.

"We've been fortunate in that our Grade 12 players have provided strong leadership and the team has been pulling together," she said.

The team is scheduled to conduct a players-only lunch next week to further enhance team spirit.

During games, Langandoen

noted the senior players have created a successful line of communication with whoever is on the pitch. She had an inkling her 20-member team might be competitive prior.

"We ended last year well and the girls were learning things and they started this year where they left off last year. They're more experienced now and it's been nice to see," she said.

Langandoen has benefitted from having a three-member coaching staff. While Sarah Bunnick has returned to assist Langandoen, she's also received help from first-year coach Tatjana Ivanovic.

"Having three coaches definitely helps. In the past I was the only one coaching the team," recalled Langandoen.

Coming off a 1-0 win over King City at Bill Crothers in Unionville Wednesday, Langandoen noted a measuring stick for her team will be in their next game when they face Aurora in a first-place showdown at Bill Crothers Tuesday at 3:30 p.m.

"(Aurora) went to OFSAA last year and they're the defending champions. We know it'll be a tough game," she said.

Scoring for the Spartans was Lauren Raithby. Colleen Welch, a Grade 9 student, handled goaltending duties to record the shutout.



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stouffville Spartan Lucy Lombardo (left) fights St. Theresa of Lisieux's (Richmond Hill) Jessica Lomberg for the ball in YRAA girls field hockey in Stouffville Monday. Stouffville won 1-0 on a goal by Jenna Monk.

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