Blowout doesn't bother coach

For the record, a touring youth rugby team from Brecon, Wales defeated the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans senior boys 42-7 in a friendly Friday.

But in the estimation of Spartans' head coach Jamie Hewitt, there were plenty of positives for his club to draw from in the

The visitors from Wales also had an easy time of things in their first two friendlies after manhandling Dunbarton (Pickering) 97-14 and Streetsville 55-22.

Playing their friendly under a 15-aside format and three, 30-minute halves, the Spartans gave the 31-member Brecon contingent everything they could handle for the first 20 minutes as the match was scoreless.

Unfortunately for the Spartans, that proved to be a wake-up call for Brecon as they scored the game's first points just a few minutes later to take 7-0 lead that stood until halftime.

While the Spartans played the game minus a few regulars due to injuries, they received another setback later in the match when their physically imposing lock, six-foot, four-inch, 220-pound Brandon Hussain, who was playing in just his second-ever rugby match, went out with an injury.

Hussain's absence appeared to take the wind out of the Spartans' sails as Brecon scored their second try just four

minutes into the second half to take a 14-0 lead and never looked back.

Rylan Desjardines accounted for all of the Spartans' scoring after recording a try and booting a convert.

"I thought it was one of the three best games that we played when we faced an international team," Hewitt said. "Especially in the first 10 minutes when we really controlled the game and our kids were really fired up.

'To arrange these type of games makes us the program that we are and it makes us better.'

"But then Brecon started to come at us hard and when Brandon (Hussain) got injured, that hurt us size wise and then they wore us down."

Praising the efforts of his players, Hewitt was quick to note playing international friendlies is a great opportunity for his club to learn the game and, at the same time, make them a better

"Brecon is the best touring side that we've played," Hewitt said. "To arrange these type of games makes us the program that we are and it makes us bet-

– Michael Hayakawa

Not enough senior players to ice boys team at SDSS

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA mhayakawa@yrmg.com

When Jamie Hewitt directs the fortunes of the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans boys' ice hockey program for the upcoming York Region Athletic Association season, he acknowledged it will feel just a little different.

The school that won the second of backto-back Ontario small-school championships two years ago won't be icing a senior team. Juniors only for 2010-11.

A recent meeting and audition for what was supposed to be a senior team brought out 18 players. Of that group, 13 students were in Grade 9 or 10.

"I had a meeting with the Grade 9s and 10s the following day and I let them decide what they wanted to do," Hewitt said. "My biggest concern though was the safety factor."

In particular, if an opposing team is comprised primarily of more mature and physically stronger Grade 11 and 12 players.

From his past experiences in playing against those type of teams, Hewitt said if he carries Grade 9 or 10 players on his senior roster and the game gets a little too physical he normally sits them down for the remainder of the game.

In-allowing the players to decide, Hewitt said the decision was made to go with a junior team for this season.

Why so few Grade 11 and 12 players this year? Five players who were with the senior team last year have moved up to junior A or

C. Junior players cannot play high school hockey. Minor hockey players can.

"If I had those five players we would have had a senior team," Hewitt said.

None of the Grade 11 or 12 players who also play rep minor hockey were pressured by their rep coaches not to go out for the high school team, Hewitt said.

For whatever reasons, the Grade 11 and 12 students just didn't want to attend tryouts, he said.

Where Hewitt feels bad, though, is for the few Grade 11 and 12 players who will now be without a senior team to play for. Especially those who played with the senior team since they were in Grade 9.

"I feel bad for a guy like James Mcleod, who was our captain last year and was with us since he was in Grade 9," Hewitt said.

Although there will be no senior team on the ice this year, Hewitt noted the team he will be directing this year will move up to the senior ranks next year.

"It's just a one-year thing," he said of the decision to go with just a junior boys' hockey program this season.

In the meantime, Hewitt is excited with this year's group of juniors and feels they can contend for the YRAA tier one title.

"This is a pretty talented group and they're coachable," he said. "It'll be fun and a little different because I've never coached junior before."

The Spartan juniors will play an exhibition game at the Clippers Complex today against Newmarket at 2:30 p.m.

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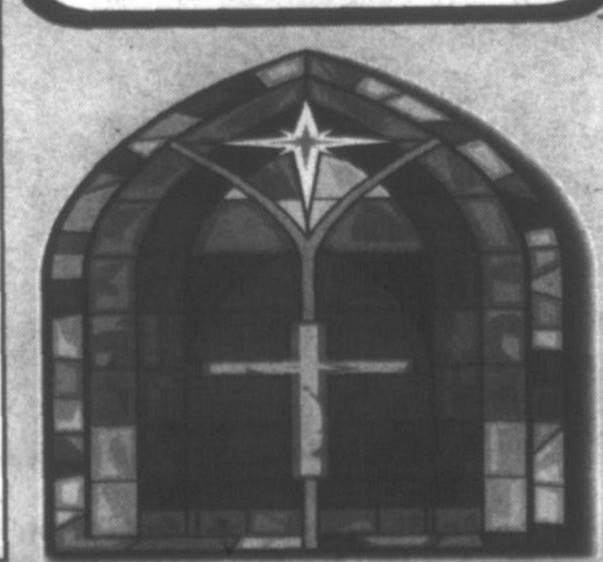
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11:11am Sunday School for All





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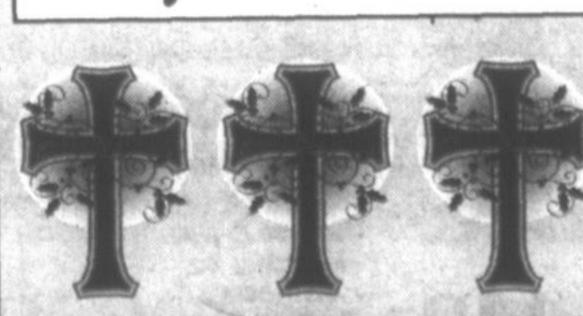
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