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**SPORTS: Big-time debut with OHL team**

## Spirit player follows brother into Knighthood

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA  
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Tyler Ferry recalled travelling to London to watch his older brother Steve play for the London Knights during the 2004-05 Ontario Hockey League season and for a part of the following year.

Last weekend, the second-year Stouffville Spirit forward-defenceman had the opportunity to follow in his brother's footsteps as he donned the green, white and gold Knights' jersey to play in his first OHL contest.

A 15th-round draft pick by the Knights in the 2008 OHL priority selection, the 18-year-old Ferry joined the club for a brief stint in an agreement with the Spirit.

Ferry acquitted himself quite nicely.

In his first game, the Richmond Hill native collected an assist while playing on defence for the Knights in a 6-4 loss against the visiting Erie Otters Friday.

Inserted on a forward line in his second outing against the host Brampton Battalion Sunday, Ferry had three assists and was named the game's second star in a 4-2 victory for the Knights.

For the Richmond Hill native, last weekend was one he certainly won't forget.

"To make my debut

with London, I was extremely nervous, anxious and excited," he said. "I knew that they sell out 9,000 fans a game, because I got to see my brother play there for a year and a half."

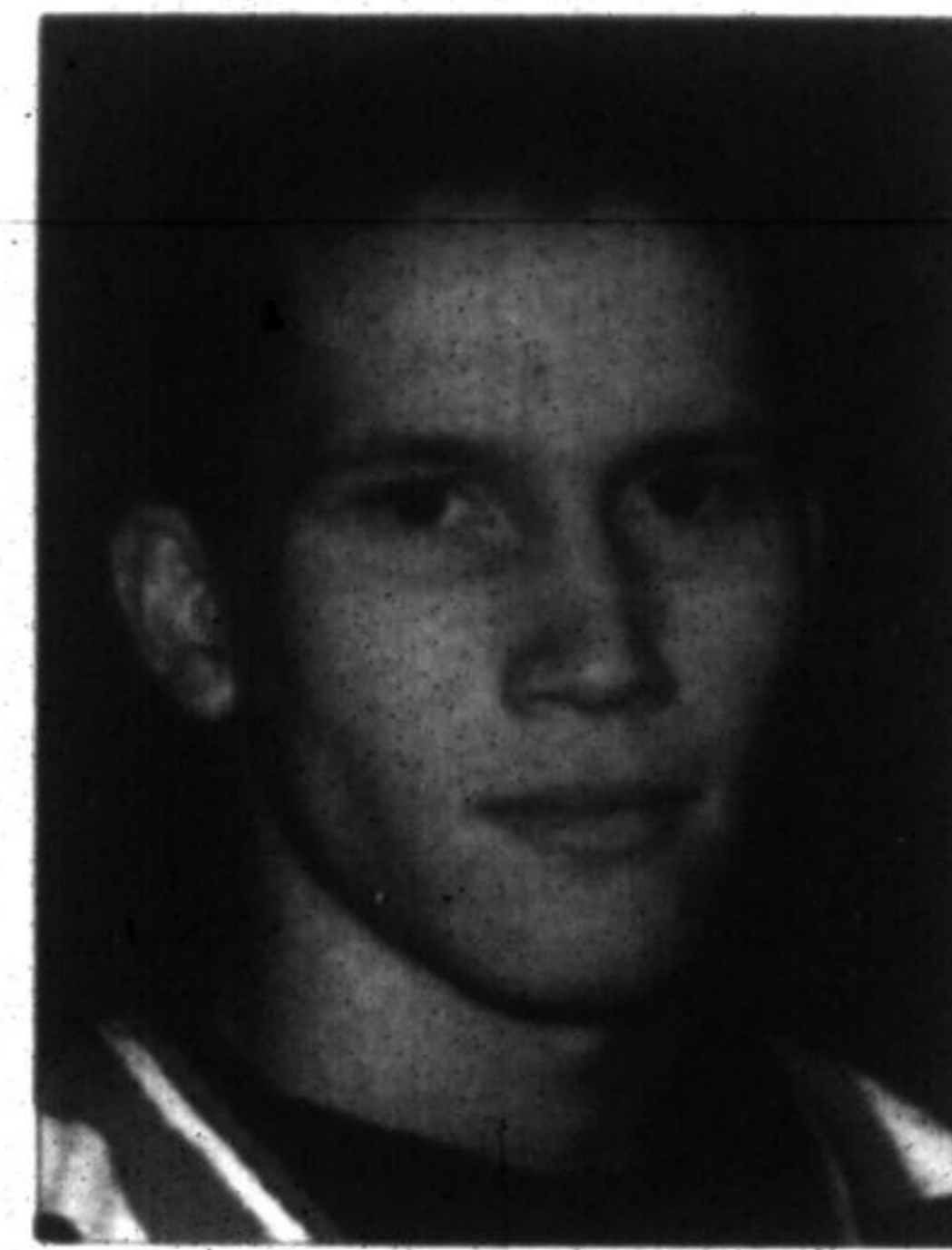
Upon joining the Spirit last season, Ferry originally entertained thoughts of a collegiate scholarship south of the border.

But in seeing his older brother play for the Knights and with the OHL club offering him an attractive educational package just two days prior to making his OHL debut, the chance to play in one of the top developmental leagues was too enticing to turn down.

"I had to decide a day or two after I first got the call from London. It was something that I wanted to do since I saw my brother do it, and the offer was what me and my family were looking for school-wise, so I didn't want to pass it up," the five-foot, nine-inch, 173-pound Ferry said.

Brother Steve, who finished his OHL career with the Sarnia Sting, is in his second year with the University of Windsor Lancers. The 22-year-old is studying business.

While Tyler acknowledged he was taken by surprise when the Knights contacted him last week, Spirit head coach Craig Donovan wasn't.



**TYLER FERRY:** Stouffville Spirit forward expects to be with London Knights full time next season.

Citing he's had on-going discussions with the Knights scouting staff and coaches on how Ferry has performed this season, Donovan noted Ferry has made significant improvements to his game.

Credit much of that to an added year of maturity.

"When he made our team last year we thought he was a good skater and had good hockey instincts," Donovan said. "This year he's faster, stronger and more confident in making plays. It's the usual evolution of a hockey player."

Amassing nine goals and 32 assists in 44 regular season games with the Spirit this season, Ferry's versatility in which he can play on the blueline or as a forward is another valuable asset that made him an attractive player.

As for having a preference to playing as a defenceman or forward, Ferry said it doesn't matter where he's employed. He just wants to play and help his team win.

"I'll just play wherever they put me," he said.

During Ferry's OHL baptism, he noted there's a big difference in playing at that level and with what he's been accustomed to over the last two seasons with the Spirit.

"The biggest difference between OHL and tier two is that everything is happening faster with a lot less mistakes. If there's a mistake, the players are able to capitalize more consistently. Also, the players are much bigger and stronger. Because of this, I had to use my assets to adjust. My quickness and speed," he said.

While Ferry was expected to be back in the Spirit's lineup for road games in Aurora yesterday and Georgetown today, he hopes to be a part of the OHL club roster for a prolonged period next season.

"The plan for me is to be there full time next year," he said.

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