

SCHOOLS: SDSS putting top ranking on line at provincials

Latest title team may be best yet: coach

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
mhayakawa@yrmg.com

Jamie Hewitt has had the fortune of coaching some good Stouffville District Secondary School Spartan senior boys' rugby teams in the past — six of which were York Region Athletic Association champions.

But in describing this year's squad, which cruised to a 20-0 win over the Huron Heights Warriors (Newmarket) in Thursday's regional final at Fletcher's Field in Markham, he said it might be the best.

And with good reason.

Along with winning their fifth straight and seven of the last eight York titles, the Spartans went undefeated this season.

Included in those triumphs were three tournament titles.

In their league games this season, the Spartans surrendered just one try.

"The only difference this year is that we're bigger and we can play a tight game or a wide game," Hewitt said of his top-ranked team in the province. "It's tough to defend both at the same time."

In the final, the Spartans utilized their speed as Kurt Batty scored two tries on runs of 40 and 60 metres.

Curtis Crago added one try and James McLeod booted a penalty kick and convert on a pitch that was far from ideal to play on due to the heavy rains that invaded the area Thursday night and early Friday.

"Our outside speed was definitely



STAFF PHOTOS/JOERD WITTEVEEN

Stouffville Spartan Kevin De Vogel gets tackled by Huron Heights Warriors J.J. Lam (left) and K.C. Blight in YRAA senior boys rugby final at Fletcher's Fields in Markham Thursday. The Spartans won 20-0.

a key," Hewitt said. "And our kicking was good. James (McLeod) and Theron Coetsee's box kicks were excellent that set up our tries."

Having defeated Huron Heights earlier in the season 41-0, Hewitt insisted his club was not overconfident entering the game.

In fact, he was quick to credit Huron Heights, not to mention the effort given by his own club.

"They played us hard. I was afraid we might come away with injuries. But fortunately we didn't.

"Our guys worked extremely hard. It was a total team effort."

With the victory, the Spartans earned the York berth in the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations tournament June 1 to 3 in Oakville.

Hewitt sees no reason why his

club cannot maintain its top seed. "That's what we're hoping for," he said.

To reach the final, the Spartans downed Alexander Mackenzie (Richmond Hill) 27-0 in their semi-final match earlier in the day.

Batty, Crago, Paul Geiger and Kevin Devogel each had one try. McLeod booted one penalty kick and two converts.

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