SPORTS: Player at Maple Leafs prospect camp

Acton auditions with team that axed dad

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Will Acton is searching for employment.

Not just any type of work, though.

The Stouffville resident, who turns 24 today, is looking to move up the hockey rank-and-file in the upcoming season.

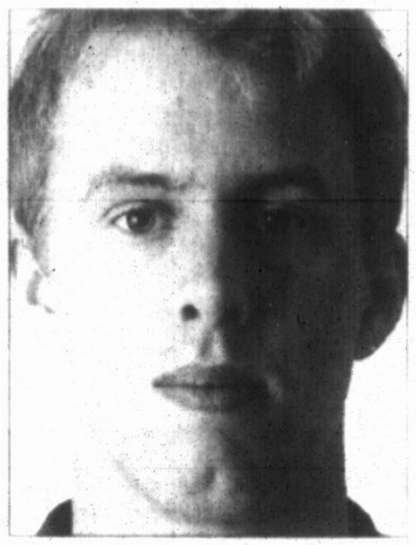
Last week, Acton was among 42 players invited to the Toronto Maple Leafs five-day Prospect Camp at their MasterCard Centre training facility in Toronto.

A forward with the Stouffville Spirit from 2003-07 before playing four collegiate seasons at Lake Superior State University, Acton hoped he made a good impression with the Maple Leafs' brass to earn a berth in their feeder system.

"I didn't have much when I came into the camp. I just wanted to show my best and hope to see where things might fall," he said.

As for the camp itself, Acton said it was a good educational experience and the scrimmages were intense.

"We were kept really busy. There were a lot of seminars on subjects like nutrition and the mental side of things. I was just trying to soak things in like a sponge," he said.



WILL ACTON: Stouffville Spirit grad played for Toronto Marlies after career at Lake Superior State.

While some of the hopefuls at the camp were draft picks, free agents out of college and some who played professionally in Europe, Acton, who was one of the elder attendees, wasn't exactly a stranger.

He received a five-game try-out with the Leafs Toronto Marlies American Hockey League affiliate last season upon completing his college career.

"When I was with the Marlies, they said that they liked what I did and they mentioned that I would be invited to their Prospects Camp."

Acton's father Keith, was an assistant coach with the Maple Leafs for 11 years before he was unexpectedly relieved of his duties in late June.

Despite the recent events involving his father, the younger Acton said he had enough on his plate to worry about.

Sure, it was tough, he said.

But life has to go on.

"With him being my dad and us being close, sure it was hard (when he was let go)," Acton said. "But I'm not in an uncomfortable position here. It was more awkward when I first joined the Marlies last year. But we had a good talk and said that we would keep our professional lives separate.

"I had enough here (at the Prospects Camp) to focus on what I had to do," he said. "Right now I'm just going day-by-day and not trying to get ahead of myself and we'll see where things go."

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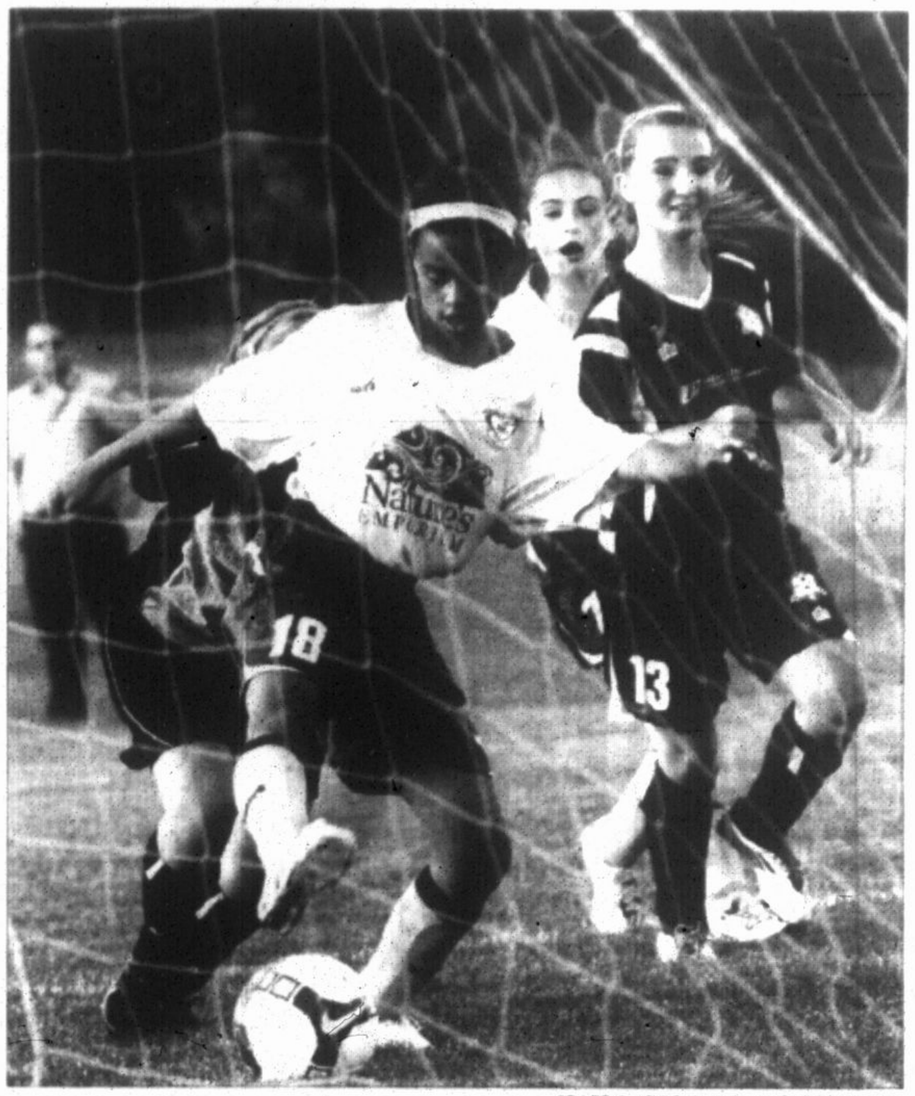

STAFF PHOTO/SUSIE KOCKERSCHEIDT

Stouffville U-13 Mustangs Daniella Grant scores against Innisfil as teammate Cambria Brown follows up in rep soccer action at Bethesda Park Tuesday. Katrina Kovacic scored a pair and Angela Panacci, Emma Ongman and Jacqueline Rintjema had one each in the 6-0 win. Kristen Caporusso stopped every shot for the 6-1 Mustangs.

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