



STAFF PHOTO/NICK IWANYSHYN

Stouffville Spirit forward Christian Finch fights for the puck with Georgetown Raiders defender Luke Shiplo during Jr. A hockey action at the Stouffville Arena Sunday. The Spirit, which won 5-3, plays Markham twice this weekend minus two of its top players.

Geiger, Caggiula to Worlds; Hutchinson to QMJHL

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Paul Geiger and Drake Caggiula were the chosen ones.

At least, the two members of the Stouffville Spirit were, in part, when the Team Canada East squad officially announced its 22-member squad in preparation for next week's 2011 World Junior A Hockey Challenge in Langley, B.C. Monday.

The third-leading scorer on the Spirit with six goals and 17 assists, Geiger, 19, was one of seven defencemen named to the roster.

Recently returning to the Spirit after starting this season with the Des Moines Buccaneers of the United States Hockey League, Caggiula, 17, was one of 13 forwards selected.

While the Spirit will miss Geiger and Caggiula from their roster when the Canada East team is intact for the tournament, Spirit head coach Craig Donovan was elated to see them earn berths on the squad.

"Very few players have the opportunity to wear a Team Canada jersey and play at an international tournament, but they are two players who deserve it as they have established themselves as two of the top players in our league at their respective positions," Donovan said.

"Paul (Geiger) is ideal for Team Canada as he is able to play in all situations," Donovan

said. "He is a big and strong skating defenseman, who moves the puck well and can play an offensive role."

"Drake (Caggiula) is an exceptional playmaker who is very skilled with the puck. He can play both centre and wing and is physical for his size. He is very responsible without the puck as well," he said.

The Canada East team, which was finalists in last year's event, will begin play in the six-team event against the Czech Republic Monday at 7 p.m. EST.

Other entries in the tournament include Canada West, defending gold medallists United States, Sweden and Russia.

The final will be broadcast on TSN Nov. 13.

Hutchinson leaves for Gatineau

Don't look now, but the Spirit has another hole to fill on its blueline.

Rookie blueliner Cole Hutchinson has signed with the Gatineau Olympiques of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, the Spirit announced Monday.

The Stouffville resident played three games with the Spirit last season as an emergency call-up from the Mississauga Senators mid-jets. A defensive type of blueliner who can take the opposing forward out of harm's way and move the puck well, Hutchinson had zero points in 17 games with the Spirit this season.

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