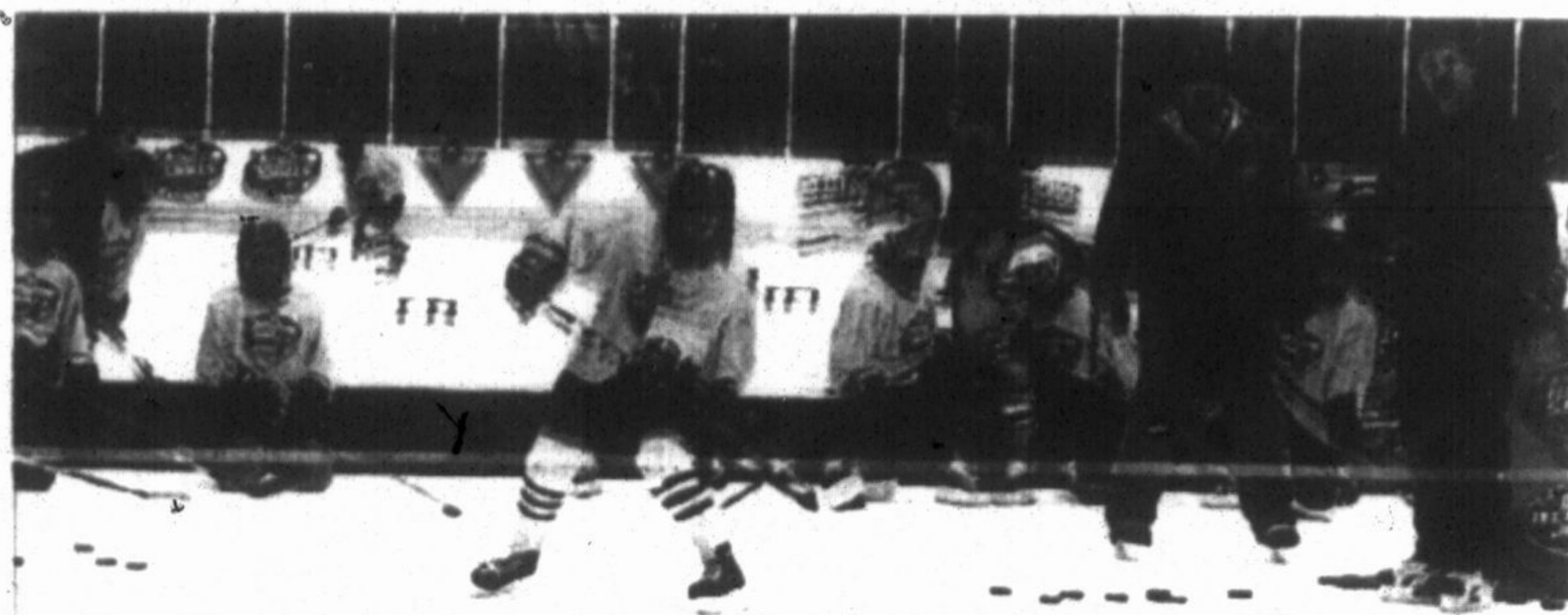


**SPORTS:** Stouffville youngsters, ex-NHLers meet



Stouffville's Nicholas Pelowich, 12, takes part in the Canadian Tire NHL Jr. Skills event in Oshawa last weekend. Stouffville native and ex-NHLer Brad May is at far right.

**Kids shooting for NHL all-star game**

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA  
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Nicholas Pelowich along with his sister Katia and Ethan Yakimchick would like to be in Ottawa to attend the National Hockey League's all-star game Jan. 29.

During that weekend, the Stouffville youngsters hope they can showcase their hockey skills in a competition to be held in conjunction with the annual event.

Just recently Nicholas, 12, and Katia, 9, took the first step towards reaching their objective when they participated in the Canadian Tire NHL Jr Skills Competition in Oshawa.

Ethan, 8, did the same in another regional qualifying event, of which there's 15 in total across Canada, in Brampton.

Tamara Pelowich, Nicholas and Katia's mother, said her youngsters entered the contest online at the Canadian Tire Hockey School web-

site and were selected by random draw.

In the competition, each contestant enters four skill events comprised of passing accuracy within a 25-second period, a timed puck control event, a timed backward-forward skating event and shooting at five targets within 25 seconds.

A defenceman in the Whitchurch-Stouffville Minor Hockey Association's house league after having tended in goal for five seasons at the rep level, Nicholas competed in the peewee division.

Playing on defence with the Stouffville minor atom Clippers, Katia was entered in the atom division.

Ethan is a forward with the Markham Waxers AAA novices and was entered in that novice grouping.

During Nicholas and Katia's participation, Stouffville natives Keith Acton and Brad May were among several former NHL players on hand to offer support to the participants, which had 40 youngsters for each of

the three age groups.

The final results will be based on a combined score of all four events. The Stouffville players' scores won't be unveiled until all of the qualifiers are completed.

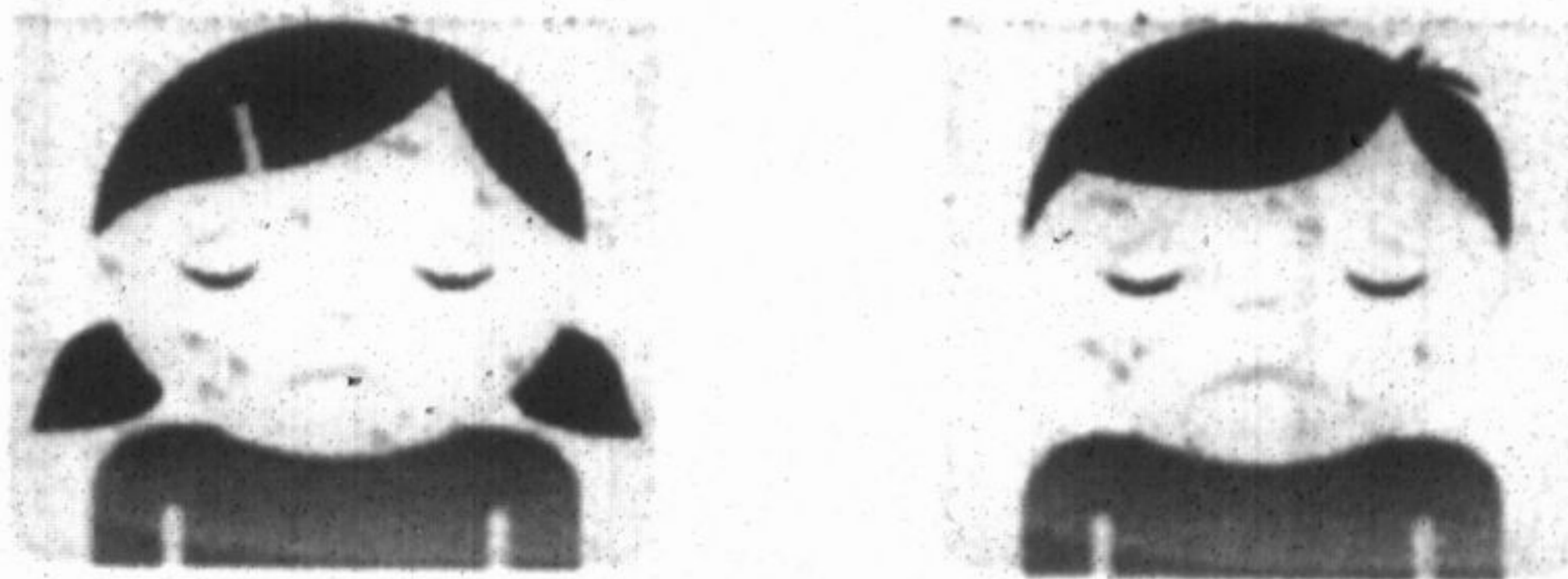
In the contest, the top five girls and boys from each age group will earn the right to compete in Ottawa during the NHL All-Star weekend that includes two tickets to the All-Star skills competition and game.

Canadian Tire will select 10 additional random winners from the participants.

Nicholas and Katia acknowledged the butterflies were churning. But they enjoyed their time on the ice.

"It was fun," Nicholas said. "I was nervous because I was competing against people across the country. But I would definitely do it again."

"I felt really good about all my scores," added Katia. "Because it was my first time, I was kind of nervous. But I would do it again next year, too."



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