

Road trip good for Spirit: Coach

LAST WEEK: Sunday: Trenton Golden Hawks 5 vs. Stouffville Spirit 1. Spirit record: two wins, three losses, four points. Third place in North Division.

COMING UP: Friday: at Wellington Dukes, 7:30 p.m. Saturday: vs. Cobourg Cougars at Stouffville Arena, 7:30 p.m.

GAME NOTES: The Stouffville Spirit had trouble putting the puck into the net during their Ontario Junior Hockey League game against the visiting Trenton Golden Hawks Sunday. For the defending league champions, that did not bode well as they suffered a 5-1 loss, their third setback in the last four outings.

After a scoreless first period, the Golden Hawks struck first, just two minutes into the second period on a goal by Conor Carson. But the Spirit tied the game on a power-play goal from rookie Michael Morgan. That would be the last hurrah for the Spirit as Trenton countered with two more goals before the halfway mark on goals by Nolan Martin and Josh Timpano with a man advantage to take a 3-1 lead into the dressing room.

The Golden Hawks put the game away in the final 20 minutes on goals by Mackenzie Scott and Ryan Johnson before the halfway point of the period.

The Golden Hawks, now 3-2 on the season and occupants of third place in the East Division, directed 34 shots on Spirit netminder Braydon Banitsiotis.

The Spirit fired 25 shots on Golden Hawks' goalkeeper Andrew Winsor.

Now 2-3 on the season and occupying third place in the North Division, the Spirit are scheduled to play on the road against the Wellington Dukes Friday at 7:30 p.m. before hosting a Saturday evening tilt against the Cobourg Cougars at 7:30 p.m.

INSIDER: The Spirit received some good news

with the return of goalkeeper Knick Dawe from the Sarnia Sting's Ontario Hockey League camp.

This is not new territory for the 19-year-old from Penetang. He was a late cut by the OHL's London Knights a year ago. During the summer of 2011, the Aurora Tigers traded their starter from the 2010-11 season to the Spirit. Dawe spent last winter in Stouffville, backing up starter Jon Hall and helping the Spirit win its first OJHL championship. His regular-season numbers included a .911 save percentage and 2.74 goals-against average.

GENERALLY SPEAKING: "I thought we played pretty good, it wasn't a 5-1 game," said Spirit head coach Jeff Perrin of his club's performance Sunday. "We had our chances to score in the second period and could easily have been up. The effort was there. They (Trenton) capitalized on their chances and their goalie (Andrew Winsor) played well. But that's what happens.

"When you get chances to score you've got to bury them. And having a bounce here and there would have helped, too. That's the way the game goes."

Perrin expects to use Dawe for their next game in Wellington Friday.

"It's definitely good to have Knick back. He'll be a big help and give us confidence knowing that we have an experienced goalie," Perrin said.

Looking ahead to their road trip to Wellington, Perrin feels the long bus trip should help build team chemistry.

"Wellington is usually a pretty good team but I think they're like us in sort of a rebuilding mode. But the one good thing about Friday is it'll give our guys a chance to bond and to play on the road in a town that loves their hockey. It should be a good experience," Perrin said.

- Michael Hayakawa

NHL lockout hurt goalie's shot

JR. HOCKEY

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
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Knick Dawe acknowledged he was a little disappointed when the Sarnia Sting informed him he would not be a part of their Ontario Hockey League roster Friday.

But the 19-year-old Penetang native wasn't left searching for a place to play.

The Stouffville Spirit welcomed Dawe back to their Ontario Junior Hockey League roster with open arms.

At the same time, Dawe said the first place he would rather be if he did not earn a berth on the Sting's roster was with the defending Ontario Junior Hockey League champions.

"It was definitely tough to stay with the Sting right up to just before their opening game," Dawe said. "But it's definitely good to be back in Stouffville."

Logging time in 22 regular season games with the Spirit last season and recording a respectable 2.74 goals against average and .911 save percentage, Dawe felt he gave a good account of himself at the Sting's training camp.

What might have hurt his chances, he speculated, was the National Hockey League lockout.

With the Sting's No. 1 goalkeeper, J.P. Anderson, signed as an undrafted free agent by the San Jose Sharks, he could not attend their camp and remained with the Sting from the onset.

As well, the Sting had a 1994-born netminder on their roster in Brodie Barrick.

"I thought I played well and had some good outings and the coaches agreed that I played well," Dawe said of his stay with the Sting. "But it didn't work out."

In comparing the OHL with the OJHL, Dawe said there are some noticeable differences.



Knick Dawe could be back in the Stouffville Spirit net this weekend.

In particular, the speed of the game at the OHL level is faster, he cited.

As well, he noted the skill level at the OHL is better since a number of players at that level are drafted by NHL clubs.

"You do notice differences here and there," Dawe said.

While Dawe is back with the Spirit, he still hopes another OHL team might inquire about his services.

"The coaches just told me to play well and to keep my numbers (goals against average and save percentage) at a reasonable rate. You never know what could happen. In hockey you just never know," Dawe said.

Dawe might be called to active duty by this weekend when the Spirit (2-3) plays the Wellington Dukes on the road Friday and the Cobourg Cougars at the Stouffville Arena Saturday. Both are 7:30 p.m. starts.

He hopes his experience will provide a spark for a team that's been trying to establish some consistency in the early going of the regular season.

"I respect everything Stouffville has done for me and they've toughed it out so far and it's great to see that. I hope I can bring something back to Stouffville to help them," he said.

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