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STAFF PHOTO/NICK IWANYSHYN

Stouffville Spirit players, Michael Morgan and Nathanael Halbert get pumped prior to their final Ontario Junior Hockey League game of the season against the Aurora Tigers at the Stouffville Arena Thursday. Aurora won 4-1 to clinch first place in the North Division.

Spirit season was 'all about next year'

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
mhayakawa@yrmg.com

It would be easy for those following the exploits of the Stouffville Spirit this season to voice their disappointment.

After all, the defending Ontario Junior Hockey League champions failed to qualify for the playoffs — the first time since the 1990s.

But Kenny Burrows and Zeev Werek are

not in that contingent.

When the puck was dropped to start the 2012-13 campaign, Mr. Burrows, who serves as Spirit part owner and general manager, and Mr. Werek, another of the team's four owners, suspected their club would not replicate what they accomplished a year earlier.

Especially since the Spirit lost a number of key veterans from last year's entry that won their first ever league title to gradu-

ation.

On top of that, the Spirit were part of a restructured league, which had just 22 teams as compared with 37 from a few years back and just 16 qualified for the postseason.

Adding a further challenge was their placement in a highly competitive North-East Conference.

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New Chrysler dealer will hire 20

Timing, products right, says Hyundai dealership owner

BY SANDRA BOLAN
sbolan@yrmg.com

Chrysler devotees will once again be able to buy their new cars locally.

Stouffville Chrysler Dodge Jeep is expected to open this fall beside the Stouffville Hyundai Exius dealership in the Hwy. 48 and Millard Street auto mall.

Which will be handy for Pieter van der Griend, as he is the owner of both dealerships.

"We always thought about it. Not sure when the right time would be. We feel this is the perfect time to do it," he said.

That is because Chrysler currently has the right product mix, according to Mr. van der Griend. There are now small cars in the lineup, which there were none of before. The crossovers and minivans are "top sellers" and have some of the highest quality ratings, while the Jeep brand is selling better than ever in Canada.

"The brand has evolved in such a way and has been restructured. Now it's time to bring it back to the community," he said.

This is not the first time a Chrysler dealership has come to town.

There was one in the mid-1990s in the west-end, where Barthau Jewellers is now. More recently, Larkin Chrysler was located at Stouffville and Kennedy roads.

About 20 people will initially be hired. That will take place sometime this summer.

The dealership will offer new and used vehicles, leasing, service and parts.

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