

# Rugby Spartans set to retake pitch

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Some students at Stouffville District Secondary School appeared to possess a far happier outlook than has been the norm in recent days.

Especially among those who were members of the school's various varsity sports teams.

With the Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation imposing a directive in December calling members to work to rule and thus shutting down varsity sports offered during the winter session, student athletes were rejoicing after hearing the mandate was lifted across the province among public secondary schools last Friday.

Based on that decision, students are crossing their fingers that a return of varsity sports will be in the works for the upcoming spring term.

That, however, will depend largely on if the teachers want to return to coaching extracurricular activities.

While some teachers are still undecided, it appears the Spartans' senior boys rugby team will be up and running after they held an indoor practice after school Thursday.

"It's awesome that we're back. We had a good time and a good turnout," said Matt Rundle, a 17-year-old Grade 12 student who is a member of the senior Spartans' rugby squad and serves as the school's student council president. "I'm sure some of the students who played sports that were offered in the winter like hockey, volleyball and basketball were disappointed there was no season."

"We're hoping that all of the sports will come back in the spring at our school. Right now, though, I don't know if the other sports will be running."

In hearing the federation's latest actions, other students said it caught them by surprise.

"I'm really excited sports are back

for the spring," Hayley Desjardines, a Grade 11 student said. "The timing is great since sports usually start right after March break."

Laura Monk, a Grade 11 student who was affected by the ruling as a member of the Spartans' girls' varsity ice hockey team, was also glad the federation had a change of heart.

Being a rugby player, Monk said the timing couldn't have been better, since that sport is offered during the spring season in the York Region Athletic Association along with badminton, track and field, girls' soccer, field lacrosse, boys' baseball and girls' slo-pitch.

Monk also remained confident a return of after-school sports would be imminent.

"It was only a question of when," she said. "These situations can become prolonged, and it's fortunate that this was not the case."



STAFF PHOTO/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Stouffville Clipper Ryder McIntyre wins the battle for the puck over Richmond Hill Star Matthew Nardi (centre) as Stars player Andrew Rizzi looks on.

## Novice AA Clippers win series opener

The Stouffville novice AA Clippers won the opening game of their first-to-six-point Ontario Minor Hockey Association semifinal series over the Richmond Hill Stars with a 3-1 win in Stouffville Wednesday.

Ryder McIntyre and Jaiden Katsoras each had a goal and

one assist for the Clippers.

Connor Little added the other marker, while Ethan Hawko and Nathan Shears each had one assist.

Noah Pitura played a sound game in net for the Clippers to help preserve the win.

The series is scheduled to resume in Richmond Hill today and return to the Clippers Complex Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

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