

**SPORTS:** Can spring be far behind?



Stouffville Spartan Eric Reid goes over the bar in the senior boys high jump at the York Region high school indoor track and field championships at York University's track Thursday. Spartan



Josephine Lipari (right) finished seventh in senior girls 1500m. Athletes head to outdoor meets next month, including the York finals May 22 and 23. See yorkregion.com for more photos.

STAFF PHOTOS/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

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**Hockey pool that took off nets \$1.25M for charity**

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA  
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When Bob Nicholson and some of his friends began a charity hockey playoff pool out of the old Time Out Lounge at Exhibition Stadium in Toronto in 1988 he figured it wouldn't last much beyond a few years at best.

The Stouffville resident who once served as president of the Toronto Argonauts and vice-president of the Toronto Blue Jays though, grossly underestimated its popularity.

In fact, the Wizard Foundation Hockey Playoff Draft remains as popular as ever with this year's 25th anniversary event taking place at the Angus Glen Golf Club in Unionville April 29.

"I sure never thought I'd still be doing it," Nicholson said. "Back when we first started it I had no children. But I now have three children and they've all volunteered to help out with this year's event."

In the 2013 Wizard Foundation Hockey Playoff Draft, four-member teams select a roster of players to be competing in the National Hockey



**BOB NICHOLSON:** Former Blue Jays' VP and friends founded hockey pool at Exhibition Stadium in 1988.

League's postseason with the hope their squad will rack up enough scoring points to finish ahead of any rival entries once the Stanley Cup is presented.

With each team parlaying a \$2,850 entry fee, or \$2,500 if two or more teams are purchased, the funds will go to Special Olympics

Ontario.

Anticipating they will reach a cap of 40 teams for this year's event, Nicholson said they should raise more than \$70,000 for a charity they've worked with since the draft's inception.

That would bring the total contribution from this event to Special Olympics to in excess of \$1.25 million.

Making this year's event even more special, Nicholson said, is that York Region will be the host site for this year's Special Olympics Summer Games from July 11 to 14.

In celebration of this year's event, Nicholson said several dignitaries will be on hand at Angus Glen Golf Club including former NHL great Marcel Dionne, hockey dad Walter Gretzky, York Regional Chairman Bill Fisch and York Region Police Chief Eric Jolliffe.

Unionville resident and long-time voice of the Toronto Maple Leafs Joe Bowen will serve as commissioner.

While the event has experienced participation primarily from the

Greater Toronto Area, Nicholson has pondered the possibility of making it a national event.

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"I'm hoping to find a partner that could help make it work," he said.

Citing there's still a couple of openings remaining if someone wishes to enter a team, Nicholson said further information can be obtained by logging on to: www.wizardfoundation.com

Or for further information, Nicholson can be reached at bob.nicholson@wizardfoundation.com or 416-402-8510.