## **SPORTS**

STAFF PHOTOS/SJOERD WITTEVEEN

Experience

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## GOT GAME

Stouffville's Matt Nighswander of the Newmarket & District Challengers hits a two-run homer in his first at-bat against the North **Bay Bad News Bears** in the B competition third place game at the 2013 Special Olympics Ontario Summer Games softball competition Saturday in Richmond Hill. Nighswander (right) celebrates with coach John Robinson.

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### Spirit players happy to chip in at Games

For the Stouffville Spirit, there's more to life than just trying to win hockey games.

Just as important, officials with the Ontario Junior Hockey League club said, is to maintain a high profile in the community and be of assistance.

With York Region serving as host for the Ontario Summer Special Olympics last weekend, the Spirit did its part to assist the participants.

Brad Barton, Spirit assistant coach and director of player development, led a group of Spirit players at Rolling Hills Golf Club in Gormley where golf was introduced to the summer Special Olympics.

Barton said officials became interested after reading about how the games was looking for volunteers.

Ten players, including Daniel Mannella, Chad Burrows, Matt Dunlop, Mike Morgan, Stefan von Engelbrechten, Joe Deveny, Nick Thomakos, Liam Odette, Brady Baker and Chris Brill-Morgan, volunteered.

"The feedback from all the players was tremendous," Barton said. "It was an amazing experience and we were all blown away by the level of play, sportsmanship and camaraderie the athletes displayed."

Barton was quick to thank the host York Regional Police.

"I can honestly say that we all came away from this, exceeding our expectations and with a lot of new friends," he said.

—Michael Hayakawa

