

Three brothers played in OHL

Fourth Carrick signs with Barrie Colts

BY MICHAEL HAYAKAWA
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Josh Carrick played just one season on defence with the Stouffville Spirit.

But the 17-year-old Stouffville-area resident's time with the Ontario Junior Hockey League club last year enabled him to develop his game.

It was more than enough time for Carrick to take it to the next level when he signed with the Barrie Colts of the Ontario Hockey League after attending their rookie camp last week.

"I'm really excited to be with the Colts and Barrie's a great place to play hockey," said Carrick, a seventh round pick of the Colts in the 2012 OHL priority selection.

All three of his brothers have played in the OHL.

Oldest brother Jake, 22, spent four seasons with the Soo Greyhounds and Windsor Spitfires.

He's played the last two seasons for the Lakehead University Thunderwolves in Thunder Bay.

Sam, 21, played four years with

the Brampton Battalion.

A fifth-round selection of the Toronto Maple Leafs in the 2010 National Hockey League draft, he finished last season with the Toronto Marlies of the American Hockey League.

Sam is scheduled to play in a rookie tournament hosted by the Leafs in London, Ont., starting today.

NHL DRAFT PICKS

Trevor, 19, the other defenceman in the family, also played a season for the Spirit before signing with the Mississauga St. Michael's Majors (now Steelheads) two years ago.

He was a fourth-round NHL pick (115th overall) of the Carolina Hurricanes.

All four Staal brothers from Thunder Bay also played in the OHL.

Josh insisted there's no added pressure from outside the family ranks to play at the level his brothers did.

"But there's a little bit from my brothers," he said with a smile.

Amassing one goal and six assists in 51 regular season games last year with the Spirit, Josh said his time with the OJHL club definitely enhanced his game and confidence to play at a higher level.

It also enabled Carrick to showcase his on-ice skills when he was chosen to participate in the Canadian Junior Hockey League's Prospects Game in Yarmouth, N.S. last season.

"Playing with the Spirit definitely prepared me for the next level," he said. "I was able to play in key situations, the coaches gave me confidence in my game and I think I'm more physically stronger this year."

Josh said he went to camp in Barrie not expecting the Colts to hand him a spot on the roster.

Rather, he anticipated it would present a challenge.

"It was about what I had expected," he said of the camp. "Barrie was a strong team last year (OHL finalists) and I knew that I had to work hard to have a chance to make the team."

-with files from Jim Mason

Mannella, Challis back from camps for Spirit loss

The Stouffville Spirit concluded its Ontario Junior Hockey League preseason schedule with a 4-3 overtime loss to the host Whitby Fury Tuesday.

Jeff Murray's goal at the 2:43 mark in the five-minute extra session enabled the Fury to win the game.

Trailing 1-0 after one period and 2-0 early in the second, the Spirit trimmed their deficit with just one second remaining in the stanza on a goal by Michael Morgan.

After the Fury restored their two-goal advantage with a goal just past the midway point of the third, the Spirit rallied with goals from Joseph Deveny and Kyler Challis, who returned from the Plymouth Whalers' Ontario Hockey League camp to tie the game and set the stage for overtime.

Tim Bester began the game in goal for the Spirit and handled 25 of 28 shots, while veteran Daniel Mannella, who returned from the Ottawa 67's OHL camp, played the final 12 minutes and stopped five of six shots.

The Spirit directed 31 shots on Fury netminder Tyler Feaver.

The Spirit finished the preseason with a 2-3-1 mark.

The Spirit is scheduled to open the regular season with a game against the Milton Icehawks at the Stouffville Arena next Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

The team will be minus the services of two players to open the season, as Josh Carrick and Jacob Busch remained with their respective OHL teams.

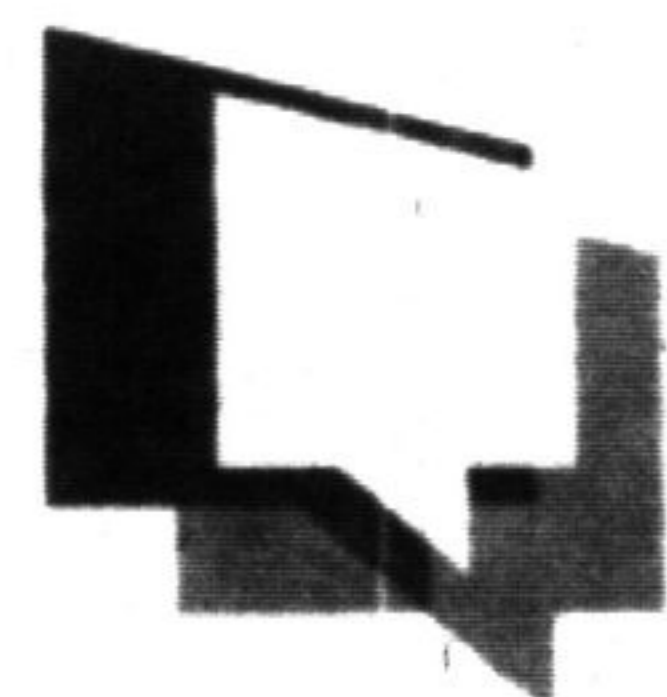
A Stouffville resident, Carrick was a seventh round draft pick of the Barrie Colts in the 2012 OHL priority selection. (See story at left.)

Busch, a native of Port McNicoll, was a seventh round selection by the Oshawa Generals in the 2012 OHL priority selection.

Last season, he played with the Midland Flyers Jr. C club.

For more on the Spirit, go to stouffvillespirit.com

-Michael Hayakawa



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