

Year 1 in Detroit has been a pain for Weiss

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Stephen Weiss has incurred a variety of injuries during his lengthy National Hockey League career that was launched during the 2001-02 campaign with the Florida Panthers.

But none of them have been more frustrating for the now 30-year-old Stouffville resident and Detroit Red Wings' forward than one he's in the throes of trying to overcome this season.

Diagnosed with a sports hernia in December, Weiss underwent surgery just before Christmas.

After undergoing rehabilitation, Weiss had a target date to make a return to active duty with the Red Wings just after the Olympic break.

That did not happen.

The injury resurfaced and placed him back on the sidelines where he remains to this day.

With the regular season winding down, Weiss revealed it's unlikely he can return in time make a contribution with the Red Wings in their push for the playoffs.

In fact, the ailment could place him

on the shelf for the rest of this year.

Needless to say, it's been a frustrating season for Weiss, who was inked by the Red Wings this past offseason as an unrestricted free agent after spending the rest of his NHL career with the Panthers. He was their first round pick and fourth player chosen overall in the 2001 NHL entry draft.

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"This (injury) is definitely the worst one that I've had for sure," he said. "It's been tough and not being able to recover. Sometimes the body just doesn't agree with you."

Amassing two goals and two assists in 26 games while making his debut with the Red Wings, Weiss revealed the injury he's battling surfaced rather innocently during training camp and continued to progress from that point forward.

Weiss said he probably should have taken corrective measures earlier on.

But in joining a new team and trying to get acclimatized to new teammates and coaching staff, Weiss conceded he might have pushed through things a little too much.

"It was probably my own fault," he said. "I played with it a little too much

and when we got into the season it was sore at the start of the year. I was wrapping my groin for the first 10 to 15 games of the season. Then I took a week off and tried to let it heal. It felt a little better, but it ended up getting progressively worse where it got into my stomach. Then in late December we had surgery."

To this day, Weiss said he does not know how or what caused the injury to resurface.

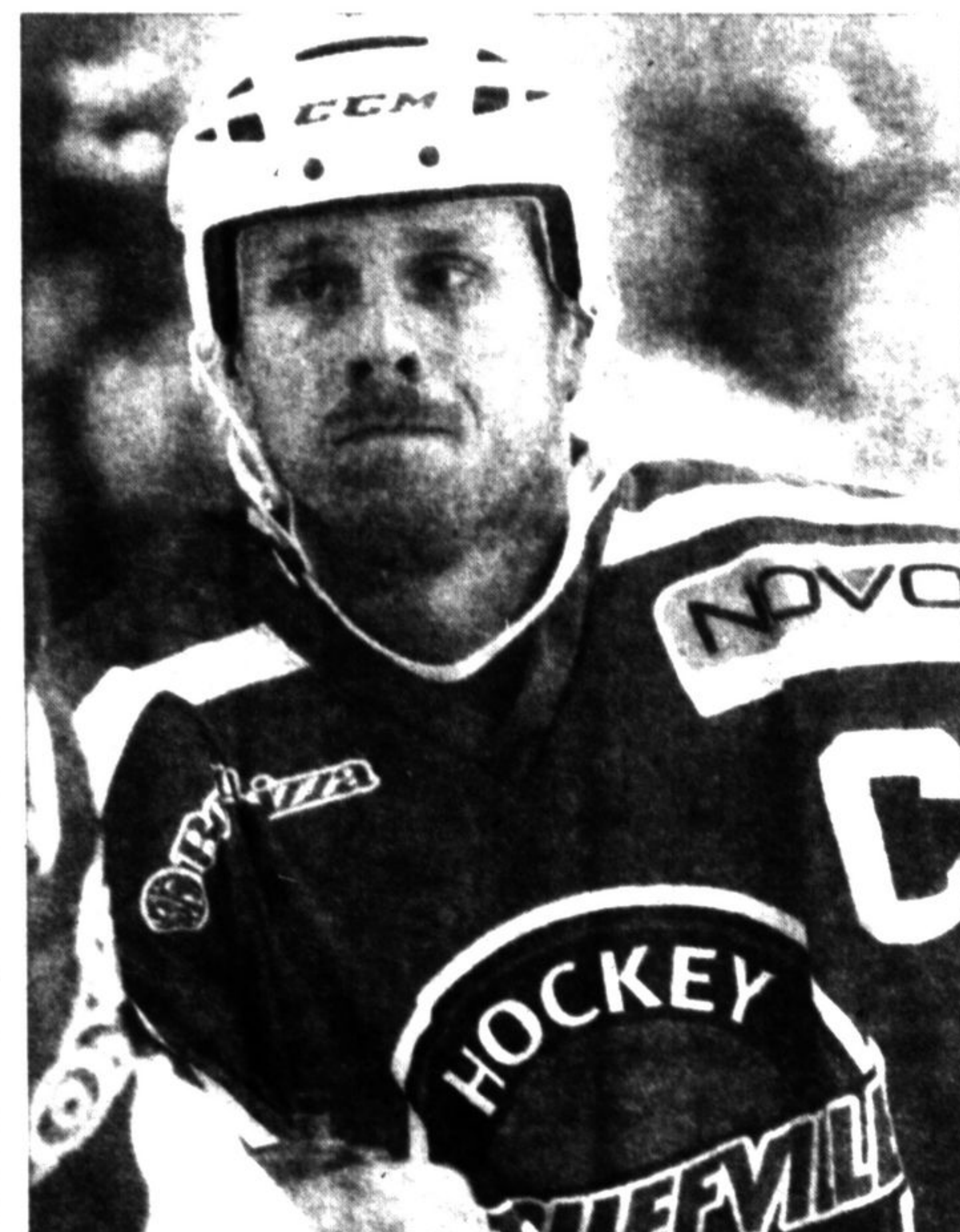
In the meantime though, he's just trying to find the right mix of rest and treatment with the hope of returning to full health.

Uncertain as to when he will be able to participate in full practices, Weiss said he will have further consultations with the club's medical staff to see what direction to take.

But in any event, he vows to get over his latest setback and try to assist the Red Wings whether it be if they can play well into this spring or next season.

"Right now, I don't have a definitive plan if I will shut it down for the rest of this year or go in for another minor surgery.

"Hopefully, we can turn this thing around. I'll overcome it."



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An injury could prevent Stouffville resident Stephen Weiss from seeing NHL playoff action with Detroit.

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