

# No shortage of high school track, rugby athletes

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Bigger can be better.

In a sport like track and field, the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans feel possessing a large contingent of participants is encouraging.

While fielding a squad of 53 students indicates the sport has an enthusiastic following at the school, it also enhances the Spartans' opportunity to make their presence felt in individual and relay events leading up to this year's York Region Athletic Association outdoor championships.

And with some good fortune, the Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations championships.

Coming off a successful YRAA indoor championship meet in which they finished fifth out of 19 schools at York University last month, the Spartans hope to sustain that momentum when they make their outdoor debut at the Sacred Heart Track and Field Classic at Etobicoke Centennial Stadium tomorrow and Saturday.

Spartans' head coach Steve Jimmo hopes it will serve as a building block for their participants with

a goal of peaking in time for the YRAA championships.

Jimmo remained cautiously optimistic that several team members will be contenders when the YRAA championships arrive — including the boys' throwing team led by Jackson Savery in shotput and discus.

Moving into the junior ranks this year after winning the OFSAA midget gold medal in both events last year, Savery continued his strong campaign by winning the YRAA indoor shotput title.

Following Savery was teammate Braden Amin, who Jimmo feels has the potential to give Stouffville a big one-two punch.

With Greg Barker concentrating on throwing, he recorded a second-place effort in the senior shotput field at the YRAA indoor championships.

As a midget in 2011, he won OFSAA bronze in the discus and was fourth in shotput. The following year as a junior, he was fourth in the OFSAA shotput and discus.

In the senior javelin, Jimmo feels Eric Reid could be a contender in the YRAA championships.

On the track, Jimmo feels their strength lies in hurdles as Eric Tammisto was third in the YRAA

indoor senior 60 metre low hurdles after setting a school mark of 9.62 seconds.

In the YRAA junior 60m indoor hurdles, Ray Alibux was second after completing it in a school record time of 9.78.

The Spartans' long distance team will be anchored by junior Emmanuel Lipari and Jacob deRooy in the midget field.

Among hopefuls on the Spartans girls' team include senior runners Emily Goodwin, who was third in the YRAA senior indoor 60m and Elizabeth von Zuben, fourth at the YRAA indoor 60m low hurdles.

Placing third in the junior 800m at the YRAA indoor championships, Alycia Holt could vie for high honours in longer distance events while Laura Currie could do the same in the midget field after finishing third in the YRAA indoor 800m.

First-year students Julianna Hutton and Laura Currie are expected to carry the hopes in long distance events.

In field events, Thianna Taylor could vie for honours in the junior high jump after placing second at the YRAA junior indoor championships with a school mark of 1.61m.

Junior Vanessa Zak and senior

Amanda Romano will head the Spartans' medal hopes in discus, javelin and shotput.

Adding to Jimmo's optimism is the addition of coaches Melissa Quinn, Scott Artindale and Catherine Chartrand.

"We're looking pretty good so far and we've had strong attendance at practices," Jimmo said.

After the Sacred Heart meet, the Spartans will take part in a two-day event hosted by Bill Crothers Secondary School May 9 and 16.

That will be a precursor to the YRAA championships that will also be held at Crothers May 22 and 23.

## Spartan rugby girls fielding two teams this spring

When the Spartans varsity girls began tryouts for their spring rugby team earlier this year they faced a bit of a quandary.

Intending to field just one varsity team, the Spartans had 46 players show up for their first practice.

Adding to that dilemma was the varsity team lost just a couple of players from last year's entry that tackled the YRAA tier two title.

To remedy this situation, the Spartans did something they have

not done before by creating a second team.

Janice Monk, a Spartans' co-coach along with her husband Jim, Ken Jorgenson, Emily Aprile and Tara LaBar, cited the new entry will compete in the YRAA tier two circuit.

"We have a lot of younger and experienced players, mostly in Grade 9 and 10, but we also have some Grade 11s and 12s playing for the first time," she said. "For those players we felt it would be good to play at the tier two level."

Although the two teams compete in separate tiers, Monk noted they conduct practices as a collective group.

It's even reached the point where practices and a preseason tournament they took part in last week in Burlington are used to determine who will comprise the tier one and two rosters.

"The girls are really committed and that's great," she said. "They're fast learners."

The Spartans tier two girls were scheduled to open their season at St. Brother Andre in Markham yesterday.

The Spartans tier one team is slated to play at Crothers today at 3:30 p.m.

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