



SDSS PHOTO

Stouffville's Greg Barker was ninth in the discus and 13th in the shot put at the provincial high school track and field championships in Mississauga last week.

Moral wins, no medals for SDSS at OFSAA

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It wasn't for a lack of effort that three members of the Stouffville District Secondary School Spartans track and field team could not return with medals from last week's Ontario Federation of School Athletic Associations track and field championships in Mississauga.

Rather, cited Spartans head coach Steve Jimmo, there was some formidable competition on hand that came not just from York Region and the Central Region — but from across the province — that raised the bar of difficulty.

Such was the case for Jackson Savery, who after winning the OFSAA gold medal last year in the midget boys' discus and shotput, failed to advance through the preliminary round in each discipline this year in the junior boys' division.

In the discus, Savery finished 10th after recording a best effort on the day of 43.79 metres on his second attempt.

He was also 15th in shot put with a toss of 14.35m, which he made on his second throw before fouling on his third and final attempt.

For Savery, this marked the first time he was defeated in both disciplines this season after winning the York Region Athletic Association and OFSAA Central Regional qualifying events prior to OFSAA.

Citing Savery was not battling any injuries prior to his participation at OFSAA, Jimmo felt it was just a case of the competitors being more consistent in their performances during the preliminary qualifying.

With Savery facing more opponents from across the province at OFSAA and being one of the favourites in the hunt for gold in both events, Jimmo speculated he might have also had some added jitters.

Spirit graduate shines on ice, in classroom at New York college

Jack Caradonna had a vintage season with the State University of New York at Geneseo men's hockey team.

Not just on the ice where he served as an assistant captain and played an integral role in helping the Knights tie a school record with a 23-7 won-loss mark and advance to the National Collegiate Athletic Association Division Three semifinals.

Off the ice, the 24-year-old Markham native and former Stouffville Spirit defenceman was named to the 2014 Capital One Academic All-America Division Three At-Large Team.

A biology major with a 3.92 grade point average, Caradonna was just the fourth Academic All-America in school history and only the second at-large pick ever.

A three-time Dean's List and five-time President's list honouree at Geneseo, Caradonna was also a two-time SUNYAC Commissioner's List and three-time Academic All-Conference member.

Also a recipient of the SUNYAC Chan-

"If Jackson would have made the top eight, which would have enabled him to advance, he would have done better," he said.

In the senior boys' competition, Greg Barker finished ninth in discus with toss of 43.19m, which he made on his second throw before fouling on his third and final attempt during the preliminary round.

Also qualifying for shotput, the Grade 12 student was 13th after making a personal best toss of 13.95m, which he made on his third and final attempt.

Noting Barker missed qualifying for OFSAA last year, Jimmo felt he achieved a moral victory of sorts after qualifying to compete in this year's championships.

In leading up to Barker's participation, Jimmo felt he would have a good opportunity in reaching the medal podium as he was throwing well and was injury free.

"He had a good practice Thursday and a great warmup Friday for the discus," he cited. "But after his first couple of throws, I think he was nervous because he usually throws in the 45s."

In the girls' field, the Spartans had one representative in Thianna Taylor, who finished fifth in the junior high jump after tying her personal best outdoor leap of 1.60m.

The Grade 10 student could easily have been in second or third and even fourth as those rivals also cleared the bar at 1.60m.

The only difference separating Taylor from those who were in those placements was their ability to execute their jumps with fewer faults.

Despite missing out on a medal, Jimmo was pleased with her OFSAA debut as a member of the Spartans' track and field squad.

"She could easily have finished second, third or fourth but she lost out on more faults in the earlier rounds and that's how ties are broken," he said.

cellor's Award For Student Excellence, Caradonna volunteered at Mt. Sinai Hospital in Toronto as a scientific assistant processing HIV infected tissue last summer.

Toiling with the now defunct Markham Waxers in the Ontario Junior Hockey League for two seasons starting in 2008-09 before being dealt to the Spirit where he played in the 2010-11 campaign, Caradonna was voted a First-Team Academic All-District selection two weeks ago and moved on to the national ballot with the first-team honourees from the eight total districts across the United States.

Caradonna was tied for 13th in the NCAA Division Three circuit among defencemen with 20 points as Geneseo was ranked fourth in the final NCAA Division Three polls.

The 2014 Academic All-America At-Large Team was comprised of 15 first, second and third-team picks for a total of 45 honourees.

The at-large division is chosen from student-athletes who participate in fencing, field hockey, golf, ice hockey, lacrosse, rifle, swimming and diving, skiing, tennis, water polo, wrestling and volleyball.

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