

# Spirit stars skating to Central Canada Cup

**LAST WEEK:** Saturday: Stouffville Spirit 9 vs. Milton Icehawks 0. Spirit record: 9-9-1-19, fourth place in North Division, Ontario Junior Hockey League.

**COMING UP:** Saturday vs. Hamilton Red Wings at Stouffville Arena, 7:30 p.m.

**GAME NOTES:** The Stouffville Spirit played what head coach Jeff Perrin described as a complete game when they played host to the Milton Icehawks at the Stouffville Arena Saturday. That turned out to be good for the Spirit as they cruised to a resounding 9-0 win over the Icehawks. Nick Thomakos and Tyson Bruce each scored a pair of goals while rookie netminder Connor McColm stopped all 25 shots directed at him to record his first Jr. A shutout.

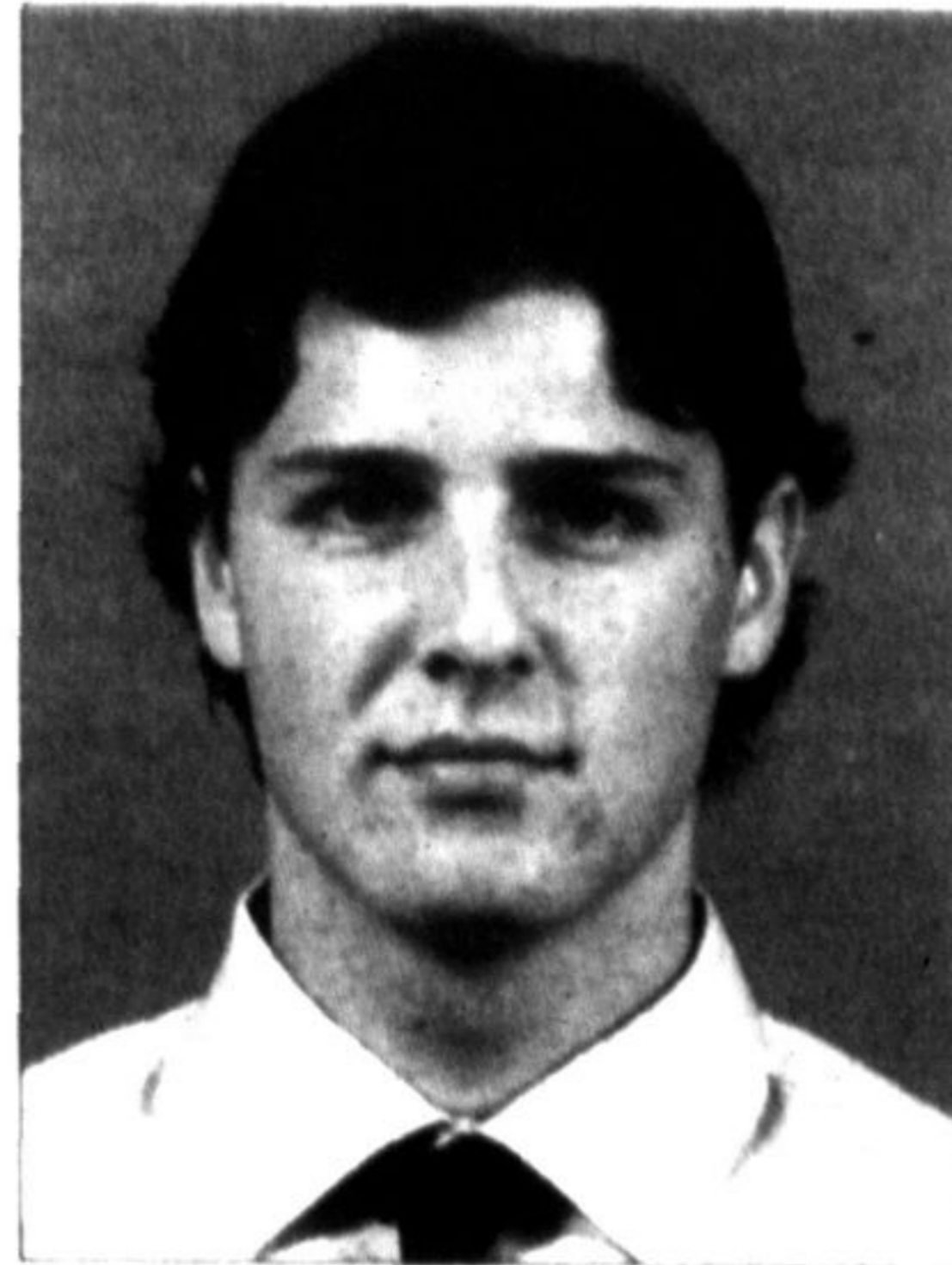
The Spirit opened the scoring just past the midway point of the first period on a goal by Bruce. Just 40 seconds later, Thomakos netted the first of his two goals to give the Spirit a 2-0 lead. Before the period concluded, the Spirit got goals from Matt Tustin and Chad Burrows on the power play with just 37 seconds remaining to take a 4-0 lead. Peppering the Icehawks net with 22 shots in the second period, the Spirit made three of them count when Bruce, with his second of the game, Ben Jones,

on the power play, and Alex Gilmour scored to give Stouffville a commanding 7-0 lead going into the third period. During the final 20 minutes, Brodie Tutton and Thomakos, with his second of the game, lit the red light to round out the scoring. The Spirit directed 53 shots on the Milton net.

**INSIDER:** Jones and Elijah Roberts were called up from the Toronto Marlies minor midgets. Both had assists Saturday. They're expected to be early-round picks in next year's Ontario Hockey League draft.

The Spirit had two players named to take part in the 2014 Central Canada Cup Challenge, the OJHL announced Monday. Team captain Matt Heffernan was chosen to play for the OJHL Nieuwendyk entry while Thomakos was named to the OJHL Coffey roster. For Heffernan, it represents the second straight year he will participate while Thomakos will make his debut. Nine teams representing the OJHL, Northern Ontario Junior Hockey League, Central Canada Hockey League and Quebec Junior Hockey League will participate at the MasterCard Centre in Etobicoke from Nov. 14 to 16.

Thomakos leads the Spirit in scoring with 29 points (12 goals and 17



**NICK THOMAKOS:** Spirit's top scorer heading to all-star event in Toronto with captain Matt Heffernan.

assists) in 19 games played and in the OJHL scoring race is in eighth place overall as of Monday.

On the injury front, defenceman Brady Baker incurred a lower body injury in an off-ice accident. Frank Robinson, Spirit director of player personnel, revealed Baker is expected to be out six to eight weeks. On positive side, forwards

Nathan Hudgin and James Mense-Dietrich could be back from their upper body injuries when the club plays Hamilton Saturday.

Former Spirit forward Drake Caggiula scored a goal with 29 seconds remaining in regulation time, setting the stage for the University of North Dakota to emerge with a 3-2 overtime win over the Air Force Academy Falcons before a sellout crowd of 11,895 in Grand Forks, N.D. Saturday. Caggiula, who attended Buffalo Sabres' prospects camp this year, is the club's leading scorer with two goals and six assists in seven games so far this season.

Stouffville resident Chris Porter, a Spirit teammate of Caggiula's, collected a pair of helpers in American International College's 4-2 road win over Niagara University Saturday. Former Spirit forward Matt Neal earned one assist in helping Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute down second-ranked Union College 6-1 in Troy, N.Y. Friday.

**GENERALLY SPEAKING:** "We played well right from the start to the end," Perrin said. "This was a game we definitely had to win, the guys knew it and they did. Everyone played well. We didn't give them (Milton) many good scoring

opportunities."

What also pleased Perrin was his club's resolve in rebounding from a disappointing 5-0 road loss against the Kingston Voyageurs last Thursday.

"To beat Kingston, you have to be at your best and we weren't and they took advantage of our mistakes," Perrin said.

In looking ahead to their next game against Hamilton, Perrin said this is another outing they need to get two points. To do that, would enable the Spirit to get above the .500 mark.

"They (Hamilton) started out the year strong but lately they've been struggling a bit. It's a game we have a good chance to win and hopefully we can get above .500."

In hearing the news of Thomakos and Heffernan earning spots on the OJHL teams taking part in the Central Canada Cup Challenge, Perrin felt his players were well deserving of the recognition.

"We knew that Nick (Thomakos) would be one of our top players this season and for Matt (Heffernan), this is his final year of junior hockey and this is another good opportunity for him to impress the scouts that will be there," Perrin said.

- Michael Hayakawa

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