

## St. Max Mustangs lasso fourth-straight YRAA title



By Jake Courtepatte

Count 'em: that's four York Region championships in a row for the St. Max Mustangs girl's hockey squad.

One of the YRAA's most dominant dynasties once again took home the division title in a 5 ? 4 overtime win over Stouffville High School, with the winner coming off the stick of Claire DiLosa, her second of the game.

?With our success in the last four years, the players have really bought in and want to win every year,? said head coach Kate Treacy. ?They have had a taste of OFSSAA for the last three years and it's an amazing experience for the girls, so they are driven to get there every year.?

Tied at one game apiece in the best-of-three series after both sides won on home ice, the third and ultimate game returned to Stouffville in front of a packed house of students, staff, and parents. The Mustangs entered the third period down in a 3 -1 deficit, though returned with three straight of their own to take the lead in a rollercoaster final period.

Stouffville scored with just over one second left on the clock to send the game to overtime, though DiLosa gave the Mustangs the championship around six minutes into the extra frame.

Julia Cuccia also added a pair for St. Maximilian Kolbe, while Nicky Rice potted a single. Erynn Visser was between the pipes for the win.

Treacy credited the team's veteran leadership with providing the energy for the victory.

?We have an amazing group of seniors who are leaders on the team,? said Treacy, giving a nod to captains Jacey Dane and Jayden Thompson, who she said ?contribute each and every game with their

leadership, hard work and skill.?

?Our other seniors Nicky Rice, Megan

Anderton, Katie Howe, Natalia Forrester, and Melissa More are also key components to our success. Both goalies, Erynn Visser and Olivia Tonelli, have been competitors all season. For Jacey, Jayden, Nicky and Meghan this will be their fourth year in a row as YRAA champs and also their fourth year in a row going to OFSAA! ?

The OFSSAA girls championship will go

later this month in Midland, where the Mustangs drew the third ranking out of sixteen teams, something Treacy said is ?well deserved? for her team.

?The coaches, myself and Katherine Peat

are extremely proud of these girls and how hard they work for these achievements,? said Treacy. ?They never gave up on themselves against a very tough Stouffville team.?

Placing second in OFSSAA last season,

the Mustangs are hoping to improve on what was already an incredible feat.

?It will be a tough battle this year but

the girls are looking forward to it and have the experience from the last few years on their side. We have a shorter bench with nine forwards and four defence, so the key to our success is short strong shifts and battle every shift which they have proven they can do.

?We'll be looking to our goalies to have

a strong tournament as well.?