

Tigers fall in first meeting of Yonge Street rivals



By Jake Courtepatte

Both the Aurora Tigers and their stuffed friends hit the ice at the Aurora Community Centre when the Newmarket Hurricanes came to town.

In the Tigers' third annual Teddy Bear Toss, the sky rained teddies in the final minute of the first period when Louis Vlahakis notched the first goal of the game for the home squad, a backhander from the hash marks that fooled Newmarket goaltender Bradley Van Schubert.

It was the tying goal for Aurora, who allowed the Hurricanes to open the scoring just two minutes in, and would be the first of only two in an eventual 3 ? 2 loss.

The second Tiger goal came less than a minute after Vlahakis', off the stick of Luca Esposito with 0.3 seconds left on the clock. Esposito finished off a nice two-on-one with linemate Mel Melconian, to whom Van Schubert had committed before Melconian made a nifty saucer pass.

Newmarket scored twice in the second to tie then retake the lead, while the third period went scoreless.

The Tigers were bitten by the penalty bug in this one, with Tyler Davis kicked from the game midway through for a check from behind. Anthony Pavaglio spent ten minutes in the box for head contact split between the second and third periods, while Vlahakis was sent to the dressing room early after an inciting an opponent call with six minutes to go.

Rizvan Mansurov was called for tripping just over a minute later, essentially icing the game for the Tigers.

Aurora's Brayden LaChance stopped 36 of the 39 shots he faced, while Van Schubert was forced to contend with only eighteen in total.

With the Pickering Panthers earning a point in a tie with the North York Rangers on Friday, the Tigers and Panthers are tied for last in the OJHL's North division. Both remain well back of the Hurricanes for the eighth and final playoff spot in the North East conference.

The Tigers take their 5-26-1-4 to the Ray Twinney Complex on Thursday to clash again with Newmarket.

The game marks a special occasion for both sides, as the Hurricanes host their annual 'Pink in the Rink' benefit game. This incarnation of the Battle of York has raised over \$100,000 for the Southlake Regional Cancer Centre in its nine years, with special guests, prizes, and contests to be won.

The annual event was originally established in 2006 in memory of three people near and dear to the Hurricanes organization.

Kevin Lord spent 36 games with the Hurricanes in 2004-05, who lost a year-long battle with brain cancer the next year.

A year and a half later, tragedy struck the organization and the community once again, when Canes veteran KJ Ramolla was killed in a car accident on the way home from the family cottage. With his number 19 retired by the Canes later that season, Ramolla's parents, Karl and Sonia, have been attending the charity game ever since.

Shortly after his passing, the community was hit again with the passing of 14-year old Josh Sedore.

Though never a player, Sedore's impact in junior hockey was felt off the ice. He was described as the 'heart and soul' of the Georgina Ice, the junior C affiliate of the Hurricanes.

Sedore had just finished Grade 8 when he lost his battle to muscular dystrophy. His father, Steve, has worked as the assistant coach of the Hurricanes.

Both teams will take a two-week break following the action for the holidays.

For tickets, visit www.newmarkethurricanes.com.