

Beam shines in Panthers shutout of Bluewater



By Jake Courtepatte

Strong goaltending was the key to landing the Aurora Panther their second shutout of the year, also their second with in a row Saturday against the Bluewater Hawks.

Two days removed from a tight 2 ? 1 win over Brampton, the Panthers returned home to the SARC to face a Bluewater squad that had wins in three of their last four.

Neither side gained much ground in the first period, taking a scoreless tie into the intermission, despite a ten-shot period from the home team.

Play began to open up early in the second, when a strong box-out kept the Bluewater special teams to the outside, before Maddy Miller picked up the puck just as the penalty expired and potted the first goal for Aurora.

Netminder Taylor Beam unexpectedly had to bail her team out shortly after while on a Panthers powerplay, after a turnover at the far blue line led to a Hawks breakaway and a nice blocker save.

With Bluewater pressing late in the second, Beam kept the shutout alive with a nice sliding save on a one-timer in the final minute. The pressure continued into the third, though it was Aurora who doubled the lead, when Emma Wilson tipped home a nice cross-crease feed from Miller with just under two minutes left in regulation.

The Hawks pulled their goaltender on the next whistle, though Beam stood tall at the other end to preserve her fifth win and sixth shutout of the season.

Jayden Thompson added a late empty-netter.

Just over the halfway point of the Provincial Women's Hockey League season, the Panthers earn a holiday break before returning to the ice on January 6 to face the Nepean Wildcats on the road.

They return home to the SARC on January 14 to host Nepean.

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