

Tigers blank Hurricanes in Battle of York game



By Jake Courtepatte

With only two games left on the OJHL regular season schedule, the Junior A Aurora Tigers know they can enjoy the support of a hometown crowd through at least the first two playoff rounds.

All that remains for the Tigers to tame is the Trenton Golden Hawks for home-ice advantage straight through to the Buckland Cup, the crown jewel of the Ontario Junior Hockey League.

The Tigers entered Sunday's 'Battle of York' matchup with the Newmarket Hurricanes riding an eleven-game winning streak, the longest of Aurora's successful season.

Andy Munroe blanked the Hurricanes in a 2 - 0 victory, stopping all 23 shots he faced while earning his fourth shutout of the season.

Eric Williams looked to cap off his break-out year, continuing his point-per-game pace with a powerplay marker late in the second period.

It would turn out to be the game winner, as Nicholas Erb put the Hurricanes away for good midway through the third period.

Newmarket goaltender Tyler Richardson was named Most Valuable Player for the home team, while Williams took home the honours for the Tigers in front of almost 600 fans at the Ray Twinney Complex.

The annual charity game sent all proceeds to support the Southlake Regional Health Centre's Cancer Centre, with the home team Canes auctioning off their pink jerseys post-game.

While the raucous crowd showed their support of the action on the ice all game, fans from both sides knew the night was about more than just hockey.

'Games like this are what makes local hockey so enjoyable,' said Darryl Yurichuk of the Canes fan base. 'It's about bringing together the community.'

Hundreds of Tigers fans made the short trip to neighbouring Newmarket, showing support not only for their team, but for a great cause.

'It's really exciting to see so many people here with their kids,' said Audrey Johnson, who was there with her son Eric. 'It's good to

know that both teams have such a good group of fans.?

The win gave the Tigers a six point cushion atop the Golden Hawks in the NorthEast Conference, as the two powerhouse teams battle for the title of regular season league champions.

In a climactic and certainly competitive finale to the regular season, the Tigers hit the road for their final scheduled away game Friday to take on the Golden Hawks in Trenton. A win would secure the top record in the OJHL for the Tigers.

They return to the Aurora Community Centre for the final home game of the season the next night, taking on the Oakville Blades at 7.30 p.m. All fans are encouraged to come out and show support for the top-ranked team as they await their first-round matchup.

This Saturday, all Tiger fans are invited to help celebrate the life of long-time fan and supporter Judy Sherin, whose family will be on hand for a special tribute at the game.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com.