

## Atom AE Tigers fall behind early in OMHA finals



By Jake Courtepatte

It's unfamiliar territory for the Atom AE Tigers.

They find themselves down two games to none in their provincial finals matchup with the Halton Hills Thunder, dropping back-to-back games for, remarkably, the first time all season.

The number-one ranked Atom AE team in Ontario cruised their way to the championship series following a four-game series with the Clarington Toros, having won the final three games by a combined score of 20 ? 1.

Friday's opening game of the series proved to be a goaltending battle, with the score knotted at zero after one period.

A nice rush by Parker Jalbert three minutes into the second was all for naught, as the Thunder turned the puck around for a lopsided break-in, scoring the first goal of the game.

Despite hard pressure from the Tigers, they just couldn't break the goose egg in the middle frame.

Dylan Vasilevski had the Tigers' best chance of the third period with a hard-fought effort to beat two Thunder defencemen and feed Thomas Bradley in front, who was stopped point-blank by the opposing goaltender.

Unfortunately the effort was just not enough, as the Tigers dropped the first game of the series by a score of 2 ? 0 after a late empty-net goal.

Two nights later, the game continued to swing Halton Hills' way with a decisive 5 ? 2 victory, putting the Tigers in a sudden death position.

Game 3 goes this Friday at the Stronach Aurora Recreation Centre. Puck drop is at 6.30 p.m.

The Atom AE Tigers held a remarkable 57-7-6 record this season, winning three tournaments including the Silver Stick in January.