

Aurora Tigers tamed in losing streak



By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Tigers Junior A club is already looking for answers in a young OJHL season.

They are yet to find any seven games into the regular season, winning just one game and adding two more to the loss column over the weekend and another on Monday.

Aurora was in for a tough week's schedule, beginning with the undefeated Markham Royals in a road game on Friday. Markham put an astonishing 58 shots on net, including 27 in the second period alone, leaving Aurora netminder Brayden Lachance to stand on his head.

Lachance made a valiant effort in stopping 53 pucks, but gave up three goals in an exhausted third period for a 5 ? 3 loss.

On a positive note for the Tigers, Eric Holland notched his first hat trick in a Tigers uniform, scoring all three of his team's goals. Holland joins the Tigers after a successful year with the Oakville Blades last season, where as a 17-year-old he put up 29 points in 51 games.

At the other end of the rink, Marcus Semiao stopped 17 of the 20 Aurora shots he faced. Semiao cut his teeth as the Tigers' backup goaltender in 2014-2015, before leaving to become the starter in Markham last season.

Sunday's home game featured the Tigers taking on the reigning OJHL champion Trenton Golden Hawks, but it was the Tigers who struck early. Rory DiNiro kept the puck on a two-on-one five minutes in, sending a wrister to the far corner.

Lachance made a number of highlight saves in the opening frame, allowing his team to hold onto a 1 ? 0 lead.

He was finally beaten on the powerplay early in the second, with Trenton striking again at the ten-minute mark to take the lead.

Team leading scorer Mel Melconian tied the game at two before the end of the period, winning an offensive draw cleanly to maintain Tigers possession. His fifth of the year came when he received a return pass in the slot and beat the Trenton goaltender far side.

That would be the end of the Aurora offence, with Trenton adding two late goals for a 4 ? 2 win.

Despite the lopsided shot total, Trenton head coach Jerome Dupont said it was a hard-fought game against his CJHL number-one ranked Golden Hawks.

?There was a lot of puck movement on both sides, it was a back-and-forth game,? said Dupont. ?Aurora is a good club.?

A third loss in a row for the Tigers came at the hands of the Buffalo Jr. Sabres on Monday, the hosts of the annual Junior A showcase.

Playing in the feature 8 p.m. game of the showcase, the two clubs exchanged a goal each in both the first and second periods, before Buffalo took the lead for good with twelve minutes to go in the third period and a final score of 3 ? 2.

Holland and Connor Rider scored for the Tigers.

The owners of a 1-6-0-1 record, the Tigers sit in fourth place in the six-team North division, ahead of only the winless Pickering Panthers (0-4-0-1) and the Lindsay Muskies (0-5-0-1). They will be hoping to find their first win on the road on Wednesday following press time, continuing the Buffalo showcase with a matchup against the St. Michael's Buzzers (4-2-0-1).

Returning home on Sunday for the weekly home game in the Tiger den, Aurora hosts the division-leading Stouffville Spirit. Puck drop is at 7 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre.

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