

Minor Bantam Tigers claim York-Simcoe Championship



By Jake Courtepatte

It was a struggle, but the Minor Bantam A Tigers tasted glory in the fifth and deciding game of the York-Simcoe Hockey League Championship.

Going down two games to none in the first-to-six-points series, Aurora had to rattle off three straight wins to take the title.

After a 3 ? 2 win in Game Three and a 4 ? 2 win in Game Four, parents, coaches, and players were on the edge of their seats when Game Five went to overtime: the fourth game to do so in the championship series.

The team was in tough, dealing with three key injuries including a broken collarbone and what is most likely to be a severe charley horse, needing a stretcher brought in during the overtime period.

Mentally, the Tigers were able to overcome their diminished roster and eventually pot the overtime winner, off the stick of Riley Pearl.

Head coach Mike Dunbar said he was proud of his team's 'no quit' attitude.

'The boys consistently showed a no-quit attitude all season long and that was very true in our last series against NobleKing,' said Dunbar. 'They could have folded up after going down two games to none early but they didn't. They also could have looked at our key injuries and used them as an excuse as well to say 'it wasn't meant to be' but they chose otherwise.'

The trophy was brought to Southlake Health Centre after the game to share with their injured teammates.

It wasn't the first time the Tigers felt championship glory this season, after taking home the Silver Stick Qualifying Tournament in Sudbury.

Dunbar also wants to thank the team's parents for their 'fantastic support' over the year, as well as the support from the other Tigers teams during their final game at the Aurora Community Centre.

Congratulations to Ben Charette, Calum Ormond, Charlie Huxley, Chris Koulouras, Gianluca Pannozzo, Jacob Roach, Jonah Spataro, Kurtis Gipp, Mateo Papasodaro, Max Reeves, Michael Crowe, Michael More, Noah Ruscica, Riley Pearl, Ryan Dunbar, Ryan Weeks, and Todd Cook.

Coaches are Chris Charette, Mike Dunbar, Geoff Gipp, and Tom More, trainer Frank Pannozzo, and manager Jeff Ruscica.