

Rollercoaster ride for Tigers taking on Orangeville and Whitby



By Jeff Doner

This young hockey season has been a rollercoaster ride for the Aurora Tigers, who are struggling to string together a couple wins.

Thursday night at home, the Tigers defeated the Orangeville Flyers 6 ? 3, but the score wasn't the best indicator of the game itself as the home team seemed to stumble out of the gate.

?It was a little slow and the boys kept the shots low, after the first two periods they only had 15 shots, so I was just trying to keep my head in it and keep loose and warm,? said rookie goalie Andy Munroe.

Munroe, who came to the Tigers from the Pembroke Lumber Kings last year, had 20 saves for the win and looked sharp between the pipes for the Tigers.

?I've got a level head and my nerves are pretty calm right now,? he said. ?The boys are scoring goals right now, so as long as they keep that up, it's going to be a good year.?

Orangeville scored the only goal of the first period as they capitalized on some defensive miscues by the Tigers.

As the second period rolled along, the Tigers seemed to have a little more pep in their stride and a chip on their shoulder.

?[Coach James Richmond] told them between periods to just go in and play; stop trying to think and just play,? said assistant coach Tom Milne. ?We were gripping the sticks tight, hadn't scored a lot of goals, in the first period pucks were bouncing and they want to make excuses, but he just said go out and play.?

And that's what they did. Veteran Tiger Adam DiBrina started the onslaught for the Tigers by capitalizing on the power play to tie the game.

Rookie Alex Gilmour then scored his first goal on the way to a hat trick.

?I had a hat trick last year in the playoffs, but that was my first Jr. A hat trick and goal, so it was pretty special,? Gilmour said postgame. ?I feel great right now.?

Before all was said and done, Michael Laidley and Calvin Higley added goals for the Tigers to solidify the win.

Munroe gave his new teammates a vote of confidence after the game.

?Gilly had a heck of a night and I know Higley did before too,? he said. ?It's always nice to see some new talent really put it up for me, so that's awesome. It was great.?

On Saturday the Tigers welcomed Whitby to the ACC and were unable to walk away with the win.

They did, however, collect a point as they dropped the decision in a shootout.

Munroe got the call in net once again and came up big for his team, allowing only one goal on 29 shots in regulation.

Whitby would be first to draw blood in the first period and Aurora did not respond until the start of the third period when Kory Kennedy potted his first goal of the season while at even strength.

The game would go into sudden death overtime, but neither team was able to score, sending the game into a shootout. Whitby would score two to the Tigers one, giving them a 2 ? 1 win.

Earlier in the week, Milne said his team needs to improve in certain areas including winning puck battles, but was confident that would get better as the season moves forward.

?We've got eight 20-year-olds and it takes a while for them to get going after a long summer and I think sometimes they just come to the rink and think it's going to be easy, but if they don't work, they're not getting anywhere,? he said.

?We are early into it, but I think we've still got to gel a little bit, even the guys from last year. Going forward I think we'll be fine, we've got good speed and Higley and Gilmour are going, now we've got to get Angiolella and McCloy going. They've had chances, but have been snake bitten.?

The Tigers will rekindle their Yonge St. rivalry with the Newmarket Hurricanes on Thursday night before returning to the ACC for a Saturday matinee against Cobourg.