

Tigers fall to Wellington and Collingwood

After winning both games against the Markham Royals in the first week of the season, the Tigers had quite the opposite story line this time around.

The Tigers fell 5-4 on the road against the Wellington Dukes last Friday before dropping another game against the Collingwood Blues 5-3 the following evening.

Yet, despite back-to-back defeats, head coach Greg Johnston said he likes where his team is at.

"I like where we're at. I like our chemistry and the guys staying together. They battled until the end. The key right there is every game, we're battling right until the end and trying to get something out of it," Johnston told The Auroran.

Against the Wellington Dukes, the Tigers went into the third period tied at three before Dukes forward Connor Hunt found the game-winning goal.

Lucas Stanojevic got the first goal for the Tigers and the first goal of the game just 18 seconds in.

Mathison Mason scored short-handed in the second period unassisted and Connor Van Weelie scored a power play goal later on in the period assisted by Khaeden Henry.

"I thought we played very well in the second and third period. If a couple things had gone our way a little bit more I thought we could have come out with a point or two or a win, something like that. We had opportunities to tie it. We had a scramble at the end with our goalie pulled and we came up short," Johnston explained.

"We realized we have to play 60 minutes and if we don't we're going to come up short."

Against the Dukes, the Tigers shut them out, leaving the opposition 0-8 on the power play. It was much of the same story against the Blues, seeing Collingwood go 0-4 on the power play as well.

The special teams unit kicked into gear, however the game against the Dukes was far closer than against the Blues.

Heading into the third period down 4-2, Van Weelie pulled the game within one, but the Blues managed to slither one in five minutes before the buzzer to pull the game out of reach.

Ryan Evanhuis scored on the power play in the first period for the Tigers. Matteo Iacovelli is credited for the group's second goal.

This week, the Tigers took on the Oakville Blades and the Brantford 99ers on the road in Cobourg as part of the OJHL Showcase.

Scouts from NCAA colleges were in attendance to scout players from all teams in the league. It takes place during the week to prevent an interference with NCAA schedules.

The Tigers will spend the night in Cobourg for this event, which Johnston said he was looking forward to when speaking to The Aurora on Monday.

"It's a nice thing for the team to have a bit of a bonding trip. A real nice getaway really. I know guys have been competing in training camp and everything, it's a nice break to compete as a team and hang out and do all that team stuff. We don't have a schedule that requires an overnight trip."

The OJHL Showcase games count towards the league record. Results to come next week.

By Robert Belardi