

## 26th Annual International Silver Stick Tournament draws 76 teams to Aurora for high-level hockey competition



The Opening Ceremonies of the 26th Annual International Silver Stick Tournament were rolled out on the red carpet at the Aurora Community Centre on Friday afternoon.

This year's tourney featured seventy-six hockey teams competing in seven divisions: U9-8UA, U11-10UAA, U11-10UA, U11-10UBB, U15-14UAA, U15-14UA, and U15-14UBB.

The Central York Panthers U11A and U15A squads welcomed the Midland Hornets 10U and Farmington Hills Little Caesars 14U to centre ice.

The four hockey teams lined up on the ACC's blue lines exchanged pins and Mayor Tom Mrakas officiated the ceremonial puck drop.

The national anthems were performed instrumentally by 'The Imperfect Fifths', a talented quintet from Dr. GW Williams Secondary School. There was no booing of the American national anthem as has been the case across Canada in NHL arenas to signal collective disgust with the Trump administration's tariff tactics.

A group photo of the four teams rounded out the ceremonies at centre ice.

After the ceremonial faceoff and photo, Little Caesars from Farmington Hills, Michigan took on the Central York Panthers U15A squad.

The red-clad Panthers prowled for most of the opening frame at the ACC, but could not capitalize on their chances. The U15s battled to a scoreless tie after the first period and some spectacular glove saves by Panthers' netminder Erin Scholl kept the visitors from Michigan off the scoreboard.

With 1:03 remaining in the middle frame, Little Caesars forward Addison Lineham launched a quick wrist shot through a maze of players that beat a screened Scholl and gave the Michigan squad a 1-0 lead.

The Panthers got on the scoreboard with 4:41 left in the third period when Kayla Merrick evaded her check, wheeled from behind the net, and slid the puck between Michigan goaltender Halland Urbain and the left post.

The entertaining, close-checking game at the ACC ended in a 1-1 deadlock.

Central York Girls Hockey Association President Mark Dubeau, speaking reflectively after the Silver Stick's Showcase Game between the Junior Panthers and the Toronto Leaside Wildcats on Sunday, noted that the best part of the tourney was 'the bookends of the three-day event.'

?The play of our youngest group?the U9s who competed so well in their games and in the skills competition?all the way to the other end of our program: a 4-1 win by our U22 Panthers this afternoon in our Showcase Game. It was great to see our U9 and U22 teams on the ice together during the closing ceremonies today. The skills that our young players demonstrated throughout the weekend showed that they're getting better and better.?

The scores from each championship game at the 2025 Silver Stick were as follows:

U11-10UAA: London Devilettes 3, Clarington Flames 2;

U11-10UA: Midland Hornets 2, Kincardine Kinucks 1;

U11-10UBB: Southpoint Stars 2, Cleveland Lady Barons 1;

U15-14UAA: North York Storm 2, London Devilettes 1;

U15-14UA: Barrie Sharks 1, Peterborough Ice Kats 0;

U15-14UBB: Bluewater Hawks 2, Colorado Arapahoe Lady Warriors 0.

**By Jim Stewart**