

Atom AA Tigers crowned Michigan Can/Am Nations Cup Champions



Submitted by Brad McMillan & Bill Hollett

Aurora's Atom AA Tigers have returned home with some gold after taking on the States last weekend. Participating in the Nations Cup creates an amazing feeling of playing not only for your town, but for your country.

All Players receive Team Canada jerseys and socks upon arrival and the dream begins; playing for Canada against the USA in the gold medal game Sunday, December 1.

Hosted by the United States in Troy, Michigan, Canadian Teams are invited to come down and play against their arch rivals, the Americans, in a four game, round-robin series.

The teams are then seeded for Sunday's final, 1 vs 1, 2 vs 2, etc.

The Atom AA Tigers were the number one seed on the Canadian side, so they played the undefeated Macomb Mavericks of the United States for the title of tournament champions.

Overcoming a disappointing start to the tournament with a Game 1 loss to those same Macomb Mavericks, the Tigers went undefeated the rest of the way to finish first in their pool to set up a rematch in the Gold Medal game.

Forced to start the final short-handed by tournament rules, the Tigers had to deal with an early first period 1-0 deficit.

Goals by Myles Graham and Owen Hollett gave the Tigers a 2-1 lead going into the final five minutes of regular time.

A late Macomb goal evened up the score to take the game into 4 on 4 overtime.

Overtime solved nothing, so each team was asked to designate three players for the shoot out.

Strong goaltending from Anthony Russo stopped all the shooters the USA could throw at him and highlight reel goals by Anton Sopov and Jacob Hoffrogge sealed the victory for the Tigers.

Going against some of the best competition that Michigan had to offer in the 2003 age group, the Tigers delivered a true team effort with a 3-2 shoot out win and were finally rewarded with the Gold after two trips to the Gold and Silver medal games earlier in the year.