

Aurora Tigers rebound from seven game slump

By Jake Courtepatte

If it's broke, fix it.

That was the thought process of Aurora Tigers owner Jim Thomson and his staff when they made a series of roster moves over the past week to try to rebound from a sluggish start.

Following losses of 7 ? 4 to the Kingston Voyageurs and 5 ? 2 to the Whitby Fury last week, the Junior A club found themselves in a rare position in the basement of the OJHL's North division. With one-fourth of the season behind them, and the Markham Royals and Stouffville Spirit quickly gaining a stronghold on the division, the Tigers execs added or dropped six different players since Friday in the hopes of sparking their team.

It paid off so far, at the very least, with the Tigers earning their second win of the season on Sunday, a 6 ? 1 thumping of the Lindsay Muskies.

?It was a great game for our team,? said head coach Nik Poliakov. ?We were able to have balanced offence thanks to new members of our team.?

Lindsay, who has struggled to score more than any other North team all season, opened the scoring just under two minutes in. With a Muskie in the box for high sticking, newcomer Rizvan Mansurov notched his first goal as a Tiger only a few minutes later, capitalizing on a nice toe drag around a defender in the slot and scoring down low.

First linemates Evan Spencer and Eric Holland each added tallies in the first half of the second period, before Konner McMillan, formerly of the York-Simcoe Express and another of Friday's additions, made it a 4 ? 1 lead. Kyle Berry, acquired in a trade with Wellington last week, took a drop pass from Mansurov before sending it cross-crease to McMillan who buried it into an empty cage. Mansurov made it 5 ? 1 early in the third, before Spencer capped off the scoring on the powerplay at the ten-minute mark.

Also to note was the exceptional outing by starting goaltender Brayden Lachance who made 40 stops on the 41 shots he faced for his second win of the season. Aurora has struggled between the pipes this season, giving up three or more goals over the seven games prior.

?Goaltending was outstanding and gave us a lot of confidence,? said Poliakov.

The team will be going through some ?high intensity? practices? this week according to Poliakov, in preparation for a busy weekend, which includes a stop in Pickering to face the Panthers (1-9-0-1) on Friday before a rare Saturday home game hosting the Fury (9-2-0-1).

Puck drop is set for 7.30 p.m.

After a day's rest, Aurora heads to Cobourg to visit the Cougars (9-1-0-0) on Monday.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com.