

## Aurora Tigers will be in the playoffs despite tough week



It turns out that the saying is true: there always is light at the end of the tunnel.

The Aurora Tigers have had quite the rough week to say the least without some of their top players on the roster.

Captain Luc Reeve, Connor Van Weelie, Nolan Boyd, Peter Lopes and Tomasz Szczerba have all been sidelined with injuries. Not to mention, the Tigers have played six games in the last nine days due to rescheduling.

'I'm really looking forward to the playoffs, to be honest with you,' said Greg Johnston, Head Coach of the Aurora Tigers.

'I actually saw our names that we've qualified for the playoffs already. You set goals off at the start. Your goals have to be realistic. Ultimately one team is going to win the league, the Buckland Cup, but everybody strives for that. But your first goal is to make the playoffs. History has shown once you make the dance, anyone can win.'

With a healthy roster, Johnston has full confidence in his group. For the game this upcoming Friday, Nolan Boyd is expected to make his return between the pipes. He's hoping to have Reeve back in the lineup. The others will be out for a little while longer.

Brighter days are ahead for the Tigers with one month left to go in the regular season. Of course, this past week, was anything but that.

Following a tough 3-2 loss in overtime last Thursday in Pickering, the Tigers welcomed the Milton Menace to The Jungle on Friday. The Tigers fell 7-0.

'We did not play well. We were our own worst enemy. We made mistakes that typically we don't make. We weren't moving the way we can move and we did not respond,' Johnston said.

'I've been very complimentary of our guys because we've had a really good season up until now, typically. We as a group did not respond to Milton. That will be addressed this week. We need to be better if we want to consider ourselves in the upper echelon. Games like that can't happen.'

It was a scrappy game against Milton and one filled with a plethora of penalty calls and suspensions. Tigers forward Ty Roberts

received a penalty for head contact in the second period and later received a game misconduct for abuse of officials.

In the third period, a scary moment occurred. Tigers call-up Zack Christie was checked in the head by Menace defenceman Blake Riddall. Christie hit the ice and was knocked out for several seconds. He would get up and was helped off the ice and into the locker room. Riddall was given a game misconduct for head contact and for inciting an opponent.

Lucas Stanojevic and Justin Biraben would go on to receive game misconducts later on in the period.

Johnston said on Monday that as tough and frustrating games go on like this it is up to the coaching staff to discipline the players.

On Sunday, with players suspended and others still injured, the Tigers went into Brantford to take on the 99ers and fell only 2-1 in a tight game. The boys played very well, despite having 10 players in the stands with injuries and suspensions.

The Tigers look forward to a much-needed break from Monday through Thursday. The Tigers will host the Collingwood Colts Friday night at 7 p.m. before hosting the Pickering Panthers Saturday night at 7.30 p.m.

**By Robert Belardi**