

Bantam AA Tigers victorious in home tournament



By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Tigers found success in the organization's 48th annual Bantam tournament, held over the weekend in rinks across town. A total of 45 teams clashed in six divisions ranging from Minor Bantam AE to Bantam AA, the Tigers having a stake in all but the Bantam AE, who were in Pelham to face off in the International Silver Stick competition.

The Bantam AA Tigers, the highest division of the tournament, were the big winners going 2-0-1 in the round robin before cruising through the playoff rounds.

With 4 ? 3 and 4 ? 1 wins over the Vaughan Rangers and Timmins North Stars respectively to open the tournament, a 2 ? 2 tie with the Northumberland Nighthawks set up a semifinal match with hometown rival Newmarket Redmen on Sunday morning.

After disposing of the Redmen 3 ? 1, the Tigers met the Rangers in the finals for a rematch, of which they won handily 5 ? 3 to take home the trophy.

The Bantam As had a similarly swift run to their championship game, allowing just one goal in three wins over the Clarington Toros, Lietrim Hawks, and Temiskaming Shores Ebert Welding Puckhounds through Friday and Saturday's play. The final was a rematch with the Puckhounds Sunday afternoon, which resulted in a close 2 ? 1 loss.

A combined score of 14 ? 0 in their first three games of the tournament had the Minor Bantam AAs in good position heading into Saturday afternoon, where they met a strong team in the Rideau St. Lawrence Kings. A loss to the Kings set up a tough semifinal game against the Upper Ottawa Valley Aces, in which the Aces moved on.

The Minor Bantam As took down the Mississippi Thunder Kings, Burlington Bulldogs, and Whitby Wildcats in their round robin play, before falling to the also undefeated NobleKing Knights 3 ? 2 in the semis.

The third and final Aurora team to reach their respective championship, the Minor Bantam AEs went 3 ? 1 in round robin to finish second in their division behind the Richmond West Carleton Crusaders, who they met in Sunday's final. The Crusaders, who allowed just two goals all tournament, came out on top 5 ? 0.

All teams return to regular York-Simcoe Hockey League action this week, with the postseason just a few weeks away.