

Bantam Tigers stage comeback to stay alive in OMHAs



By Jake Courtepatte

The Minor Bantam A Tigers are in a fight to keep Aurora's hopes of a provincial championship alive.

Falling behind two games to none in their first-to-six-points OMHA semifinal series with the Quinte West Hawks, one more loss meant elimination for the Tigers.

A 4 ? 1 win on the road Saturday kept Aurora in contention, sending the series back to the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex on Saturday.

No strangers to setting themselves up for a comeback, the Tigers fell behind 1 ? 0 in front of a large and raucous crowd just over three minutes into the game, but were able to shut down the Hawks for the remainder of the period, taking a 1 ? 0 deficit into the first intermission. Their best chance in the first fifteen minutes came off the stick of Justin Just, who was frustrated after ringing one off the crossbar.

Heavy pressure from the Tigers was the story of the second period, but it was the Hawks who struck again in the final minutes of the frame, an end-to-end rush for a 2 ? 0 lead heading to the third.

The Tigers, refusing to give up after failing to capitalize on a two minute 5-on-3, finally broke the goose egg with four minutes to go, a sneaky wraparound by Lucas Wilhelm.

Less than a minute later, Gavin Hunter used some impressive hand-eye coordination to bat a rebound out of the air in front of the Hawks' crease, sending the game to overtime.

The extra frame solved nothing as the series heads to a sixth and deciding game, set in Trenton after press-time Wednesday. The winner will go on to face the Amherstburg Stars in the championship series, set to kick off next week.

The Midget AA squad, Aurora's top minor team and the only other one still alive in the OMHAs over the weekend, bowed out in four games to the Ajax Knights in four games culminating on Saturday.