

Comeback win has Tigers clawing at top spot in OJHL



By Jake Courtepatte

After a blip in their defence that halted an eleven-game winning streak at the end of October, the Junior A Aurora Tigers are determined to put it behind them.

Following the loss to North York, the Tigers have now won four in a row, including three over last week's busy weekend.

The Orangeville Flyers came to town Friday night for their first matchup of the 2014-2015 season.

The Tigers came out flat in the first, allowing Orangeville to open the scoring just over six minutes in. This was followed by a flurry of Tigers chances, including Jordan DaSilva being robbed by the glove of Orangeville's Nicholas Latinovich midway through the frame.

A whack at the pads of Latinovich and some post-whistle shoving led to a double-minor for Keaton Ratcliffe, a key component of the Tigers' special teams.

As the penalty expired, three Orangeville sticks in front of Andy Munroe's net were able to force the puck in for a 2 ? 0 Flyers lead after one period.

The second period was a different story. Under three minutes in, Eric Williams made a nice interception in the offensive zone to set up Todd Winder with a cross-ice feed, redirecting it with his skate for the Tigers' first goal.

It was also Winder's first goal in a Tiger uniform.

?It feels like a monkey off my back,? said Winder. ?There's still room for improvement, but I feel like I keep getting better and better each game.?

With momentum on the Tigers' side, Nicholas Erb potted his eleventh goal of the season less than a minute later to tie the game.

To add insult to injury, two frustrated Orangeville players then picked up simultaneous minor penalties for a two-minute 5-on-3 Tigers powerplay.

Johnny Curran went five-hole for Aurora's third goal in a little over a minute.

The Tigers outshot the Flyers 17 ? 6 in the period.

With time winding down in the third and the Orangeville net empty, Munroe showed his appreciation with a desperation diving stop

to preserve the 3 ? 2 Tigers victory.

It was a battle of the cats the next night as the Tigers hosted the Burlington Cougars, in the first of a home-and-home series over the weekend.

The 1 ? 1 tie after the first was not indicative of the play, as shots were 17 ? 6 Tigers.

The Aurora offence was able to capitalize on their chances in the second period, notching five unanswered goals, including three points for Curran.

The third was much the same, highlighted by Curran topping off the hat trick ? his second of the season. At the final buzzer, the Tigers had won 9 ? 2.

It seemed like déjà vu the next night in Burlington, as five goals in a row from the Tigers gave them a 5 ? 2 road win.

The Cougars are now 2-11 at home this year. Meanwhile, the Tigers are 9-1-1 on the road.

?We're feeding off each other's energy, we get one and we just keep piling it on,? said Winder of his team's recent play. ?Everyone in the room's pretty tight, so the energy gets pent up.?

With the current four-game winning streak, the Tigers have further cemented their position atop the OJHL North Division and sit one point back of the league-leading Trenton Golden Hawks.

The team hits the road this week for back-to-back games on Thursday and Friday, facing off against the Kingston Voyageurs and St. Michael's Buzzers, respectively.

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