

?Lightning? Lazarou?s four-goal performance leads Junior Panthers to 10-3 comeback win over Ridley Tigers

The Central York Panthers?hot off a 10-1 thrashing of the Canadettes in Brampton on Tuesday night?roughed up the Ridley Tigers 10-3 at SARC on Saturday afternoon.

Annabella ?Big Goal? Van Berkel lit the lamp four times to lead Central York's offense versus Brampton and Demi ?Lightning? Lazarou provided her own four-goal outburst to lead the Panthers over Ridley.

Van Berkel and Lazarou moved into sixth and ninth place in the U22 Elite Division scoring race with 17 and 15 points, respectively.

Although the final score on Saturday would suggest a blowout game from start to finish, the outcome was very much in doubt for most of the first period. Exactly one minute in, the Tigers struck first when Elouise Syer's wrist shot from the right point skittered through a maze of players and eluded Panthers' goaltender Jamie Sanford.

25th-place Ridley came to play versus the 2nd-place Panthers.

Although the Panthers were peppering Tigers' netminder Jennifer Murphy in the opening minutes, the athletic ?tender was up to the task. Murphy's strong play early in the game reinforced her Ridley teammates. Exactly five minutes into the first frame, Tigers' forward Ivy Morrissey banged in a rebound on the right doorstep past Sanford to stake the visitors to a surprising 2-0 lead.

Midway through the first period, Sanford repelled a breakaway by the Tigers, but a wrist shot moments later by Lola Timmons from the left circle eluded the Central York netminder and gave last-place Ridley an unlikely three-goal margin at 11:03.

Remarkably, the Tigers didn't get on the scoreboard again on Saturday as Sanford transformed into a wall for the remaining fifty minutes of play. Simultaneously, the Panthers scored ten unanswered goals in a display of raw offensive power.

It was the lightning-fast Lazarou who catalyzed Central York's comeback. At the 6:40 mark of the first period, Lazarou took advantage of extra space created by offsetting penalties, found open ice in Ridley's end, and displayed impressive marksmanship by beating Murphy high glove side from a sharp angle in the left faceoff circle to pull the Panthers to within two.

It was a goal-scorer's goal and foreshadowed Lazarou's big afternoon.

The speedy forward with the quick release described the importance of her opening marker versus Ridley.

?The first goal really got us started. It got us ramped up. We started winning puck battles and took the extra step we needed.?

With 1:37 remaining in opening frame, Lazarou slid a sweet feed to veteran Elizabeth Janovski who snapped the puck high glove side and bulged the twine behind the fallen Murphy to make it 3-2.

Twenty-eight seconds later, Lily Paisley banged in a rebound on the backhand?lifting the puck over Murphy to tie the game.

The Panthers carried their end-of-period momentum into the middle frame. Less than two minutes in, the tenacious Lazarou scored her second goal from the edge of the crease to give Central York its first lead of the game.

Lazarou discussed the importance of a players-only meeting between the first and second periods to reinforce the team's best traits that have built the Panthers' 11-1-0 record.

?We talked as a team between periods. After that, we settled into our roles and everyone bought into the same systems. We've

focused on our team culture all season. We're able to motivate one another. When things aren't going well as they did in the first period, we hold it together.?

Five minutes after Lazarou's go-ahead goal, Panthers' goaltender Jamie Sanford joined the offensive outburst. On a Central York power play, Sanford earned an assist on a silky 100-foot pass to Zoe Ordanis behind the Ridley defenders at the blue line. Ordanis ranked 11th in league scoring and made a power move off the right wing, and fired a low shot five hole that hit the back bottom pipe behind Murphy to give the Panthers a 5-3 lead.

Midway through the second period and during another four-on-four, Panthers forward Abby Pak used her quickness to find open ice, sold the forehand on her breakaway, and, on the backhand, lifted the puck over Murphy blocker side to make it 6-3.

The Panthers' sixth goal ended Murphy's afternoon and she was replaced between the pipes by Grier Cooper.

Ridley's substitute goaltender kept Central York off the scoreboard for the balance of the second period and half of the final frame. However, at 10:16, Lazarou displayed her defensive prowess when she stole the puck between the circles in the Ridley zone, took one stride to her right, and rifled a wrist shot past Cooper high stick side to give the prowling Panthers a four-goal lead.

With nine minutes left, Van Berkel made it 8-3 when she buried a rebound in a goalmouth scramble. The frustrated Ridley defenders took exception to giving up an eighth consecutive goal, but the Panthers skated away from trouble, suspended their skate-by celly, and lined up for the faceoff.

Lazarou scored her fourth goal with 2:32 on the clock by firing another wicked wrist shot that beat Cooper high glove side and gave the Panthers a commanding six-goal lead. The high-scoring rookie credited her line-mates for her big afternoon.

Our line was on fire. I got great passes from Jano all game. Van Berkel scored Central York's tenth consecutive goal when she backhanded a rebound past Cooper with 40.8 seconds remaining.

On Tuesday night in Brampton, Van Berkel fired two first period goals to pace Central York's offence. After Paisley put the Panthers up by three at 13:52 of the second period, Van Berkel completed her hat trick less than three minutes later. Lazarou notched a shortie at 8:27 to give the visitors a 5-0 lead. Ella Frasca, Pak, Audrey Martone, Van Berkel, and Ordanis scored in the third period to overwhelm the Canadettes.

With three wins in a row in one week, including a 5-4 decision over the Ottawa 67s on Sunday afternoon at SARC during which Lazarou scored the winning goal, the second-place Panthers now trail the first-place Etobicoke Dolphins by one point.

Central York hosts Etobicoke on Saturday, October 25 in a battle for first place. Puck drop at SARC will be 1:55 p.m.

By Jim Stewart