

Lions defeat Mustangs 5-3 at the Trisan Centre



The St. Maximillian Kolbe Mustangs fell to the King City Lions 5-3 in quite a nail-biter in YRAA Tier 1 hockey last Thursday afternoon.

The Mustangs went up against a Lions team in good form. The Lions were coming off a 7-3 victory against Newmarket High School.

On the other hand, the Mustangs were coming off two consecutive defeats against Stouffville and St. Theresa Of Lisieux.

The Lions came out swinging in the first period and took advantage on the power play. Gavin Torkhoff ripped a point shot that trickled through Mustangs netminder John Paul Prohilo.

It took the Mustangs a little bit of time to get into the game and a few saves from Prohilo surely helped with that. He denied Christian Velocci on the breakaway.

In the second period, Mustangs forward Zaid Soliman showcased to every spectator that he is able to create moments of magic.

Soliman went coast to coast, bobbing and weaving through Lions players before sniping one past Blake Bowler to tie it up.

Shortly after, the Mustangs briefly took the lead. On the power play, a slick pass from Gabriel Oldenhof found Cayden Connelly at the point. The defenceman saw his shot hit the back of the net.

The Lions, unfazed by going down by one goal, seemed to have taken their game up a notch. Captain Michael Critelli dispossessed a Mustangs defenceman in the offensive zone thanks to his relentless forecheck.

Critelli found David Paglia all alone in front and he tied the game right up at two.

In the third, the Lions opened up the floodgates. Critelli, Velocci and Paglia added three goals as the Lions downed the Mustangs in Schomberg.

After the game, head coach and team manager Bradley Matwijec said that defensive zone is the biggest area of improvement.

?Big time. The first three games (of the year) we were trying to sort that out. We are now figuring that out. The guys feel I have the best defenceman in David Paglia. It's just getting him ice, but not overusing him,? Matwijec said.

?I have a couple of other kids that are good hard workers. Then it's team defence. It's your forwards getting back and helping. When we play team defence, we feel we can be a really good hockey team.?

In the other locker room, the Mustangs have lost some players from their starting lineup due to hockey commitments outside of school. Assistant coach Sal Di Maria praised the call-ups for their efforts.

?Our AP players really stepped up today. They helped us in the back end. Tight game all game. Couple of bad calls. Couple of bad changes. It could have been a different game,? Di Maria said.

?We have two games left, both winnable games. We can come out with two wins and hopefully finish mid-table in order to play a decent team in the playoffs. Everyone makes the playoffs.?

SMK took on Cardinal Carter this past Tuesday as one of their final games of the season. Results are up on YRAA.com. Prior to the game, the Mustangs were 1-4 on the year.

As for the Lions, the boys are 2-4.

They play Sacred Heart at the Trisan Centre Thursday at 2:30 p.m.

By Robert Belardi