

Locke's five-point night leads Tigers past IceHawks in OJHL romp



By Jake Courtepatte

Old veterans are stepping up and new faces are making a name for themselves at just the right time for Aurora's Junior-A Tigers.

General Manager and Head Coach Thomas Milne shook up his recently stale roster with a four-player trade last week, sending team captain Jordan DaSilva and veteran forward Keaton Ratcliffe off to the Trenton Golden Hawks for some big bodies – namely 6'1" forward Nicholas Turenko and 6'2" defenceman Spencer Herbst.

Both made an immediate impact in their first Tigers game at the Aurora Community Centre on Friday.

The club's newest D-man showed his willingness to sacrifice the body as he blocked a point-blank shot shortly into the first period against the Stouffville Spirit, while minutes later Turenko was stopped only by the outstretched toe of Spirit goaltender Aaron Taylor on a breakaway.

Up 1-0 in the second period, they cracked the scoresheet with Herbst sending a hard slapshot from the point to the top corner on the powerplay.

Stouffville made it a one-goal game in the third, but second-year Tiger Kyle Locke found a path to the net and scored through a couple of bodies with twelve minutes left off a pass from Turenko.

Alex Fotinos, meanwhile, seemed to finally be settling in to his groove with the Tigers, picking up his first win by stopping 26 of 27 pucks.

All eyes may have been on the fresh faces in their Tigers debut, but hosting the Milton IceHawks Sunday was a chance for the veterans to shine.

Aurora exploded for seven goals in the third period in a 10-0 shutout, led by the hot hands of Locke and newly-minted team captain Daniel Mantenuto.

Locke earned a goal and four assists in the competition, while Mantenuto added four points of his own.

The 18-year old, 5'9" Mantenuto has proved in his two years with the club that height doesn't measure heart. Willing to go into the corners with the largest of opponents, he's put up almost a point-a-game pace in his tenure.

"He's one of the hardest workers we have," said GM and head coach Thomas Milne. "He puts himself out there every night and

knows how to set a good example.?

The shutout was earned by Josh Boyko in a 20-save performance.

Turenko had a goal and an assist of his own in the contest, bringing his point total to three through two games.

?We needed to get bigger,? said Milne of his new acquisitions. ?They're both hard-working guys, we needed to get more physicality for the playoffs.?

DaSilva had nine points for the Tigers this year, while Ratcliffe has been riddled with injuries most of the season.

?They've both done a lot for this team, but a change of scenery won't hurt,? said Milne.

Back-to-back victories could not have come at a better time for the Tigers: the Markham Royals, chasing Aurora in the OJHL's Northeast Division, are riding their own three-game winning streak.

That leaves the Tigers holding on to a slim two-point advantage in the division, a 16-8-5 record now just over the halfway mark of the season.

They take to the road for the first time in three weeks this Friday, visiting the Lindsay Muskies (6-16-5) before facing their old teammates DaSilva and Ratcliffe when hosting the Golden Hawks on Saturday.

The week closes out with a visit to the Pickering Panthers (8-15-4) on Sunday.

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