

Minor Bantam Express fall short at Shanahan Tournament



By Jake Courtepatte

Over 100 teams from across North America converged on Toronto last weekend for the prestigious Shanahan Tournament, among them the Minor Bantam York Simcoe Express.

Entering as one of the hottest teams in AAA hockey, undefeated in five games dating back to mid-October, the Express made an impact early in taking down the Halton Hurricanes 4 ? 2 on Friday morning at Chesswood Arena.

William Poot was the only goal scorer of the first period before a scoreless second, while a pair of quick goals from Owen Sculthorp and one from Ronnie Wiersema in the third gave the Express a four goal cushion.

Halton notched two with time running out.

Taking on the Lambton Jr. Sting later that afternoon, Kyle Leggo earned a shutout between the pipes, while Poot and Wiersema found the back of the net in a 2 ? 0 win.

They maintained their perfect streak with a 5 ? 1 thumping of Victory Honda on Saturday morning, thanks to goals from Poot, Sculthorp, Murray Boland, and a pair from Shane Bondy.

The real challenge came for the Express on Saturday afternoon, when they met the powerhouse Mississauga Reps, playing to a 2 ? 2 tie that set up a Sunday morning showdown between the two in the tournament quarterfinals.

Mississauga took a 2 ? 0 lead into the first intermission, a score that held until the twelve-minute mark of the third period before the Reps grew their lead to three.

Boland scored late to give the Express a sense of hope, but they bowed out of the tournament with a 3 -1 loss.

Mississauga was knocked out of the tournament in the semifinals by the Buffalo Jr. Sabres, who went on to win the championship.

Poot finished tied for ninth in tournament scoring, finishing with an impressive five goals and two assists through five games played.

The Express hold a record of 7-3-3 in the Eastern AAA division standings, and next host the Central Ontario Wolves at LaBrier Arena in Aurora on Sunday.