

## Panthers capture Bronze, Tigers snap losing streak, Saints split

### Junior Panthers capture bronze at USA-Canada Cup with 5-0 record

The Central York Junior Panthers captured a Bronze Medal at the 38-team USA-Canada Cup in Kitchener- Waterloo on Sunday.

The U22 Panthers accrued a pristine 5-0 record in K-W. The potent squad showed off its offensive and defensive prowess by outscoring their opponents 19-4 in the prestigious international tournament.

The Junior Panthers, who have earned a 12-8-1-1 record in OWSA U22 Elite play this season and hold down ninth spot in their 25-team league, defeated the Ottawa Lady 67's 3-1 and Gilmour Lancers 5-1 on Friday.

They followed up on Saturday with wins over Balmoral Hall (6-1) and Windy City Storm (3-0).

On the strength of Clara Williams's game-winning tally, they defeated the Nepean Wildcats 2-1 to complete their five-game sweep on Sunday afternoon.

Panthers' goaltender Samantha Whittle preserved the precarious Game 5 victory, according to Assistant Coach Mark Dubeau, with several incredible saves in the third period with Nepean's goaltender pulled for an extra attacker. Even though the Aurora-based Panthers ran the table on the weekend in Kitchener-Waterloo, the tourney featured no playoff round due to the range of teams registered so pool play determined Gold or Bronze medal award winners.

The Junior Panthers host the East Ottawa Stars on Sunday, December 15. Puck drop at SARC will be 1.15.

In concert with the Aurora Junior Tigers, the Junior Panthers are co-hosting a Teddy Bear Toss for charity at the Tigers versus Markham Royals game on Saturday, December 14. Puck drop at the ACC is 7.30.

### Junior Tigers snap 14-game losing streak by upsetting the Lindsay Muskies 6-2

The Aurora Junior Tigers ended a six-week string of futility with a decisive 6-2 win at the ACC on Saturday night over the playoff-bound squad from Lindsay. The Muskies are 13 points ahead of the Tigers in the OJHL East standings and dispatched Aurora 4-1 on Friday night.

However, the Tigers avenged that loss in dramatic terms with six goals and a stellar performance by Erik Powers who made 32 saves to earn his first victory for Aurora since being acquired in a trade with the King Rebellion for Justin Pavese in November. Powers was selected as the First Star of the Game by OJHL staff.

The Tigers, who had not won an OJHL game since defeating the Wellington Dukes 6-3 on October 26, broke out of the doldrums by hooking and landing the seventh-place Muskies in convincing fashion. Nolan Shaw's goal?assisted by Cayden Smith and Avery Grant?tied the game 1-1 midway through the first period. The Tigers took the lead with 3:18 left when Antonio Cerqua and Jack Rispin set up Domenic Battaglio's first of the season.

Cerqua?with assists from Luke Howard and Matthew Johnson?gave the Tigers a 3-1 lead four minutes into the middle frame. Luc Warner's power play goal at 13:31?assisted by Smith and Captain Nicholas Brady?provided the Tigers with a 3-goal lead heading into the final frame.

Owen Fitzgerald's 10th of the season narrowed the Muskies' deficit to 4-2 at 14:32, but Rispin fired the puck past Muskie goaltender Noah Kraus four minutes later to restore the Tigers' three-goal lead.

Michael Piao's fourth of the season rounded out the scoring with Liam Longo and Warner earning assists on Aurora's sixth goal. Warner, an Aurora resident, was selected as Second Star of the Game for his offensive performance.

In concert with the U22 Junior Panthers, the 10th-place Tigers (7-21-0-3) are co-hosting a Teddy Bear Toss for charity when they host the 11th-place Markham Royals (6-22-1-2) on Saturday, December 14. Puck drop at the ACC is 7.30 p.m.

### **SAC Saints split doubleheader in Indiana**

The SAC Saints split a Prep School Conference doubleheader with Culver Academies in Indiana this weekend.

The Aurora-based hockey powerhouse defeated Culver 4-3 in OT on Saturday, but dropped a 7-2 decision on Sunday.

Aiden Lane's OT game-winning-goal at 5:33 assisted by Luca DiPlacido and Michael Dec secured Saturday's dramatic victory for SAC.

After Culver opened the scoring with a power play goal by John Crawford at 13:32 of the first period, Kieren Dervin's marker knotted the game 1-1 heading into the first intermission. Lane and Dec earned assists on the tying goal foreshadowing their OT heroics.

Culver reclaimed the lead with a power play goal at 13:17 of the second period. Undaunted, SAC struck sixteen seconds later when Jaxon Cover with help from Luke Sinclair found the back of the net to tie the game 2-2.

Jacob Hansen re-established Culver's lead with 9:21 left in the middle frame, but SAC's Jake DiCapo made it 3-3 with 12:58 remaining in third period to send the game into overtime and set up Lane's heroics in the extra period.

A pair of Prep Hockey Conference heavyweights will square off at the La Brier Family Arena on Saturday, December 14 and Sunday, December 15 when the Saints host Shattuck-St. Mary's from Minnesota. Puck drop at La Brier will be 4.00 on Saturday and High Noon on Sunday.

**By Jim Stewart**