

Panthers win back-and-forth clash with Bluewater



By Jake Courtepatte

A relatively slow start to the season for the Aurora Panthers of the Provincial Women's Hockey League was ended by a high-scoring affair at the Aurora Family Recreation Complex on Saturday, with the Panthers besting the Bluewater Hawks 4 ? 3.

With Aurora looking to pick up their second win, and hoping to hand Bluewater just their second loss, it was Aurora that provided the majority of the pressure throughout the first period.

The momentum faded, however, when Bluewater forward Jessica Forcey scored five-hole on Carmen Lasis with six minutes left in the period after a nice sidestep around the defender. They doubled the lead just two minutes later, beating Lasis on a screened shot from the point she never had a chance to see.

It was Tyanna Best, with her first of the year, that got the Panthers on the board in the final minute, keeping the puck on a 2-on-1 and snapping it top corner.

With no rest between the first two periods, Aurora tied it up one minute into the second following some nice digging in the corner by Mia Rogers who sent the puck to Maddy Miller in the slot.

Bluewater retook the lead shortly after with Emerson Elliott in the box for boarding, following a huge scramble in front of the net and leaving Lasis stranded on her back.

Before the end of the second, the back-and-forth effort continued when Andre Elia got the puck out front to a wide open Jayden Thompson, whose deke to backhand fooled the Bluewater goalie.

It was Elliott, the team's leading scorer, that redeemed herself by going in on a shorthanded breakaway in the third, beating the Bluewater goalie up high for Aurora's first lead. Lasis stood tall to preserve the victory and kill the clock.

After six games, the Panthers sit in the middle of the pack among the twenty-team, division-less PWHL with a 2-3-1 record. Despite scoring only eight goals so far this season, the goaltending duo of Kristen Caporusso and Lasis account for some of the top stats in the league, allowing only eight goals against in that time frame as well.

Next up for Aurora is a weekend trip to the Ottawa region to face a pair of teams on opposite ends of the spectrum, in the Ottawa Lady Sens and the Nepean Wildcats. They will be looking to take two points Saturday night from the 0-3-1 Lady Sens before challenging the 6-1-1 Wildcats on Sunday afternoon.

The Panthers return home next Saturday to the AFLC with an 11.55 a.m. start against the Southwest Wildcats.