

Royals and Canadiens roar over the Aurora Tigers

The Aurora Tigers fell to the Markham Royals and the Toronto Jr. Canadiens this past week, with 2nd and 3rd period woes costing them a chance at victory.

Last Friday night, in a cold Markham Centennial Community Centre arena, the Tigers came off the bench, seeking redemption from the last 8-3 defeat.

There were plays in the first period when the team seemed rankled by the Royals. Entering the zone resulted only in the puck deep behind the net without players in the right positions.

The Royals, on the other hand, carried the puck into the zone and pushed towards the net. The home team got on the board first.

While the Tigers were on the power play, a mishap in the offensive zone let speedster Zac Sirota charge in on goaltender Andrew Barwinski to bury the free opportunity.

Nick Davis powered home the second goal of the period near the 14-minute mark. The Tigers mentally sharpened their blades tightened the tape on their sticks, and immediately revived themselves.

On the power play, Sebastian Tamburro shelved the puck past Aiden Hosein and two minutes later, Jalen Balbosa added a second to stun the Royals.

In the second period, the Royals regained the advantage. Vincent Bonaiuto and Dylan Scriver deprived the Tigers of their momentum. That was until Sebastian Tamburro batted the puck out of mid-air past Hossein for his team-leading sixteenth goal of the season.

In the third period, tired legs and mental errors got the best out of the Tigers, eventually falling 8-3 on the night.

This past Monday, the Tigers hosted the Toronto Jr. Canadiens in a rare afternoon game during the week.

In the first period, the home town this time came out strong.

Aurora native Jalen Balbosa found the back of the net on the power play. The moment the Tigers were gifted with a second power play opportunity, Braedon McKinnon fired home a goal of his own to give the team a 2-0 lead. Jonathan Balah assisted on both of those goals for his team-high 30th point of the year.

Experience will teach the Tigers two aspects of the game. They are a resilient team and have come back in tight games playing from behind. In contrast, playing with the lead is different and if stymied, is arguably more difficult to overcome.

The Jr. Canadiens retaliated with two goals of their own from Trevor Andrews and Stephen Calisti, in the last three minutes of the frame.

Preventing that momentum is crucial, because in the second period, the Jr. Canadiens added two more goals from Matthew Di Cesare and Connor Lepage. The Tigers froze up, only amassing five shots on target.

In the final period, newcomer Nicholas Primomo got his first of the year, providing a new edge to the end of the game.

Canadiens player Liam Fedak, ended a chance at a comeback.

With just one more month left in the year, Aurora has seven games left to end the season very strong.

The boys have a few more games this week that will truly test their character and their wits.

Taking on the North York Rangers and the Stouffville Spirit back-to-back will enhance their work ethic further than it already has.

Friday night's game is at 7.30 p.m. in the Aurora Community Centre against the Spirit.

By Robert Belardi