

St. Andrew's College Saints take care of business

The St. Andrew's College Saints defeated the Ridley College Tigers and Trinity College School this past week.

The Saints went on a road trip to St. Catharines last Wednesday, earning a hard-fought victory against the Ridley College Tigers 6-3.

The top two teams in CISAA did not disappoint.

A silent first period for goals, the Tigers and the Saints spent an ample amount of time in the box. A total of 28 minutes' worth of penalties filled the stat sheet including two 10-minute misconduct penalties awarded to Tigers forward Luke Haymes and Saints defenceman Luke Vardy.

With high tensions and animosity boiling on each of the two benches, goals began to take over this penalty-ridden festivity in the second period.

Saints forward Cole Galata opened the scoring under two minutes into the period. 14 seconds later, Tigers forward Brady Hildreth equalized.

Luke Vardy got his chance to get on the scoresheet to make it 2-1 for the Saints. Then on the power play the Tigers Colton Chipman tied it up once more.

It came down to Mark Hillier to take over this one for the Saints. The Labrador City native made it 3-2 by the end of the period and added one early in the third for a 4-2 lead. The Tigers pulled one back thanks to Luke Haymes, yet the Saints proved to be too much to handle.

Braeden Donnelly made it 5-2 and Saginaw Spirit draft choice Kieran Draper added one more to seal it.

32 more minutes of penalties in the 3rd period shadowed a great scoreboard.

The Saints returned home for their next game on Saturday against Trinity College School.

The Saints put on display an ostentatious performance, dominating possession of the puck, controlling the game from puck drop and outshooting their opponent by a country mile 48-19. After conceding an early breakaway goal, the Saints bounced back on the power play. Devlin O'Brien deflected Kieran Draper's pass right by goaltender Josh Nadler to tie it up.

Josh Orrico made it 2-1 early on, only for his finish to be

equalized by Trinity's Henry Gay.

Closer to the end of the period, Aurora's very own Liam Taylor capitalized on a golden opportunity to retake the lead into the 3rd period.

?My right winger goes right, puck squared loose at the line and he drove the net hard,? Taylor said. ?I just tried to keep up with him and I got the second chance and buried it.?

Throughout the final frame, there was no sign of trepidation towards conceding a goal by the Saints. St. Andrew's boys were poised and defensively sound holding on to the lead and sealing an empty net goal at the end to cap off a 4-2 victory.

With a 5-1 record to begin the Conference of Independent Schools Athletic Association (CISAA) season, the Saints have 15 OHL draft picks and six players committed to Division-1.

Taylor shares what it is like to play for the school and his teammates.

?I've been looking up to these guys since I was young because I've been to the school since grade eight. These guys have always been something I've looked up to and it's great to be a part of this team.?

Head Coach David Manning said he was satisfied with the performances this past week. It has been a successful beginning to this year and he sheds light on what the responsibility is of the school to prepare students for the rest of their lives in and out, of hockey.

?Our job is to prepare them as people and as students and as athletes, to make whatever step that is next, a really fruitful one,? said Manning. ?I think for us it is a matter of challenging them and creating an environment where they have all the resources they need to continue to build on their games and build on their people.?

St. Andrew's College Saints will continue their season in the new year, hosting St. Michael's College Majors at La Brier Family Arena in Aurora, Wednesday, January 8 at 4 p.m.

By Robert Belardi