

Tigers break stalemate to earn home opener victory



By Jake Courtepatte

It took almost three periods of action, but the Aurora Tigers gave the crowd of over 600 what they came to see when a late goal sealed a 1 ? 0 victory in the Junior A squad's home opener Friday.

16-year old Alex Formenton, a rookie from nearby King City, was able to tip an Alex Boudreau shot from the point through the legs of the St. Mike's Buzzers goaltender, barely crossing the goal line and setting up a late reaction from the crowd.

?It doesn't always have to be a nice goal,? said head coach Mark Joslin. ?The two points are all that matters.?

Despite only finding twine once in the game, the Tigers directed 32 shots on the St. Mike's net, while rookie goaltender Alex Brooks-Potts stood tall for Aurora to earn a 26-save shutout.

?He looked strong in net and that's all we ask for,? said Joslin.

A sleeper of a pair of opening periods came after a season-opening ceremony that included the likes of the Storage Wars Canada cast, members of Canadian rock group Platinum Blonde, and Mayor Geoff Dawe. All were out on the ice for the ceremonial puck drop between the St. Mike's captain and new Tigers captain Jordan DaSilva, with the hundreds of fans earning a chuckle when Storage Wars' Roy Dirnbeck took a tumble on the ice.

?It was all in good fun,? said Dirnbeck with a laugh.

The ceremony also marked the return of Slapshot, the Tigers' old mascot that had not been seen for a handful of seasons. Slapshot will be making appearances at games throughout the season.

The fun continued into the weekend when Brooks-Potts continued to solidify himself as a starting goaltender by stopping all fourteen shots he faced in the first period of a Sunday game against the Whitby Fury. But his streak of four periods of shutout hockey was broken shortly into the second, beaten by American-born rookie Justin Allen who has shone for the Fury in the early season.

Formenton and Nolan Dunn answered back with goals of their own in the period, and the game went to the third tied at two.

That was when the Tigers' offence solidified another win for Brooks-Potts with a bang, as forwards Todd Winder, Daniel Mantenuto, and Liam Neuman lit the lamp, Neuman's coming with an empty net to seal the deal. Brooks-Potts stopped all ten shots

he faced in the period.

After a dismal pre-season, and an opening nail-biting loss to the Newmarket Hurricanes, the Tigers have once again found their groove by racking up three straight wins.

"They're starting to come together," said Joslin. "They're playing as a team, which is what we've been working on."

The Tigers are in Buffalo for a showcase in the days preceding press-time, taking on Burlington and Mississauga in regular season action at the Harbour Centre.

Hometown fans will not get a chance to see the Tigers at the Aurora Community Centre again until next Friday, when the rivalry is reborn with the Kingston Voyageurs, who stunned the Tigers in seven games in last season's OJHL quarterfinals.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com.