

Tigers find footing against Toronto Lakeshore Patriots



By Jeff Doner

After dropping the first two games of the OJHL championship final against the Toronto Lakeshore Patriots, the Aurora Tigers fought their way back in Game Three on Monday night.

Dropping game three would have put them in a do-or-die situation for Game Four, but the team dug deep and clawed their way back from a 3 ? 0 deficit with four unanswered goals.

Captain Robert Angiolella said it will take more of the same in order to even up the series on Wednesday night.

?We just need to stick to the game plan, get pucks deep, get pucks to the net and our chances will come,? he said. ?I think we need to minimize our mistakes because they seem to be capitalizing on them, so if we just stick to our game plan and reduce our mistakes it will make things easier for us out there.?

In Game Three, the Patriots used a wild first period to gather an early 3 ? 0 lead over the Tigers.

?Once we got down, we knew we had to stay positive and keep our heads up and we were able to grab two goals before the first period ended, so we went into the first intermission with our heads up and we knew we'd be able to come back and win the game,? Angiolella said.

Before the period ended, defenceman Eric Williams made it 3 ? 1 on the power play and Calvin Higley scored his fifth goal of the season to pull the Tigers to within one goal.

The second period went scoreless, but the Tigers upped the ante in the third period with Williams scoring a second power play goal to tie it and then rookie Johnny Curran scored the game winner at 15:56.

?The mood in the dressing room was really good after the win,? Angiolella said. ?It was a tough game being down 3 ? 0, but we were able to come back and win, so we're all really happy.?

Earlier in the week the Tigers didn't fare so well, but it wasn't for lack of trying as games one and two were both one goal games.

Game one was the first for the Tigers at the Canlan Centre and was a close one.

Lakeshore scored the first goal of the series and Dylan Sikura tied it up before the first period was over, but the game remained close until the Patriots pulled ahead with two goals in the first 10 minutes of the third period.

Williams scored a power play goal with just under three minutes left, but it was too little too late for the Tigers in the 3 ? 2 loss. Game two was much of the same, with the Tigers putting together a strong third period.

?The first two periods we weren't playing our game and we kind of got away from the game plan and we did some uncharacteristic things,? said defenseman Kyle Liu. ?When the third came around we turned on the switch and put the pedal down and we got going, but it was like it was just too late. We need to play a full 60 and got beat in the first two, so it was tough to come back.?

Playoff hero Curtis Warren netted two goals in the 5 ? 4 loss, with Angiolella and Sikura also adding single tallies.

Liu, who returned to the Tigers after missing five games with an injury, said his team is facing a different club than the ones in the previous rounds.

?Toronto is a different team compared to Kingston and Cobourg,? he said. ?The teams in the east are a lot bigger and a lot more physical, but these guys are a lot like us and are built on speed. They're a dangerous team and are quick, but so are we, so that works both ways.?

Heading into game four on Wednesday night, many of the Tigers preached the mantra of sticking to the game plan and playing a full 60 minutes.

The Tigers will now head back to the Patriots home arena for game four on Wednesday night, before returning to their temporary home at the Canlan arena on Friday night.