

Tigers halt losing skid with third period burst

By Jake Courtepatte

A marathon week of hockey came to a pleasant close on Monday for Aurora's Junior-A Tigers.

The action kicked off on Thursday with their third meeting in four games with the Kingston Voyageurs, the Veeps coming out the victors in both. With head coach Mark Joslin calling the game a "must win" before the opening faceoff, he expected his team to come out harder at home than they had the last two meetings.

The Tigers almost broke the streak, only to give up a shorthanded goal in the final minute of regulation to lose 3-2.

The Buffalo Jr. Sabres were in town the following night in what will be their only meeting of the year, with the Tigers coming on strong early. Rookie Darren Iwai, impressive early on in his Tigers stint, blocked a shot at the Tigers' point just over five minutes in, sending himself on a breakaway where he roofed a pretty backhand over the Sabres goaltender.

Daniel Mantenuto was the key component in building the Tigers' lead later in the frame, as he has been all season. After playing the victim of a roughing call on the Sabres' end, he buried a juicy rebound off a point shot by Kyle Locke to double the lead.

He buried an almost identical goal on the powerplay less than two minutes later.

The Sabres replied with their own powerplay goal before the end of the period, a shot from the point that beat a screened Alex Brooks-Potts for a 3-1 score after two.

Disaster struck with just over two minutes left in the game the extra frame, as the Sabres scored twice with the goaltender pulled to force overtime.

Despite the majority of chances going the Tigers' way in overtime, a beautiful move by Sabres captain Zach Evancho to get around Locke and beat Brooks-Potts on the backhand sealed a win for Buffalo.

After a loss in another late breakdown to the Markham Royals on Sunday, the Tigers took to the Cobourg Cougars looking to curb their recent losing skid.

This time it was the Tigers who came to life late, trailing 1-0 in the third period. Three straight goals, including a powerplay notch in the final minute by newcomer Mark Rozanov, earned the Tigers a 3-1 victory on the road.

Despite a less-than-stellar showing by the Tigers last week, they remain in second place in the OJHL's North Division, five points behind the Royals.

There is no home game for the Tigers this week as they hit the road to face the Wellington Dukes on Friday and the league-worst Mississauga Chargers on Saturday.

And don't miss another Battle of Yonge Street, coming next Friday, when the Newmarket Hurricanes pay a visit to the Tigers at the Aurora Community Centre.

Titled "Pink in the Rink", proceeds from the game will be going towards the Southlake Regional Cancer Care Centre.

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