

Tigers head into Christmas break on a high note



By Jake Courtepatte

Aurora's Junior A Tigers survived the month of December with a 5-3-1 record, despite a large gap in the roster.

Four key players in Saskatchewan for the Junior A World Challenge meant a number of call-ups on the ice for the Tigers all month, resulting in four losses through five games heading into last week.

With a two-week break looming for the holidays, they hit the ice for back-to-back-to-back games over the weekend.

The Tigers hosted the Toronto Jr. Canadiens at the Aurora Community Centre Friday night, a team they had previously stomped 7 ? 1 earlier in the season.

However, the Canadiens, winners of their last five, were a much more difficult matchup this time around.

Marcus Semiao, getting his tenth start in net, was beaten just over a minute in which put the home team down early 1 ? 0.

Luckily, he got some help a few minutes later from Johnny Curran, who potted his team-leading twentieth goal of the year.

With defenceman Sam Quaranta off for cross-checking midway through the second, the Canadiens restored their lead heading into the final frame.

Eric Williams countered with a powerplay goal of his own, making it look like the game was heading to an overtime period.

But, Nicholas Erb robbed Toronto of a point in the standings with just ten seconds left in regulation, with a helper from Curran for his second point of the game.

They hit the road the next night to take on the Orangeville Flyers, a position they were comfortable with having only lost once in regulation on the road this season.

After building a sizable three-goal lead in the first period, Williams tallied another powerplay marker when he one-timed a Noah Delmas pass at the point, beating the Flyers goaltender blocker-side for a 4 ? 0 lead.

With starting goaltender Andy Munroe back between the pipes the Tigers were able to shut down the Orangeville team offensively, with Munroe making a couple of key point-blank stops near the end of the second period.

He was finally beaten midway through the third, on a nice toe drag that went bar-down that he barely even saw.

Erb and Curran each added another, giving the Tigers a 6 ? 1 victory.

They finished the week with a divisional matchup against the Pickering Panthers, in what turned out to be their toughest outing.

Munroe was given the night off again, as Semiao took to the ice for his second start in three nights.

He showed fatigue early, giving up two goals in the first period on just eight Panther shots.

However he came out for the second determined, stopping the next 25 of 26 shots en route to a 4 ? 3 Tigers win.

Goals were scored by Mack Lemmon, Keaton Ratcliffe, and two for Williams.

Curran also had two helpers on the night.

Semiao remains unbeaten in regulation this season, posting a 9-0-1 record with an incredible 1.89 goals against average.

?He's the future of our goaltending,? said head coach James Richmond. ?He's got a bright future.?

The Tigers are not back in action until Jan. 3 against the Toronto Patriots, and return home on Jan. 9 against the Stouffville Spirit at the A.C.C.