

Tigers holding on to OJHL North lead



By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Tigers are weathering the storm atop the high-powered OJHL North division.

With the Newmarket Hurricanes knocking at the door, Aurora pulled off a two-point weekend to stay one point up on the Canes, who have won a division-best five games in a row.

Bradley Van Schubert returned between the pipes on Friday after a five-game break to record his fourth win of the season, a 5 ? 2 victory over the host Pickering Panthers.

After a scoreless opening period, the two sides exchanged a goal each in the second, before a four-goal third period opened the floodgates for the Tigers.

Zach Wilkie scored twice in the third, while Jason Stechelback, Christopher Giroday, and Jake Bricknell all had multi-point efforts. Saturday's home game with the Wellington Dukes was a battle of the conference's first-place teams, with both points going to the Dukes in a 4 ? 1 effort.

Stachelback and Wellington's Andrew Rinaldi traded goals in the first period, but it was all the offense Aurora could muster, as Van Shubert was forced to contend with 44 shots in the contest.

Tigers brass were busy over the weekend making roster changes as well, adding both a skilled veteran to the mix and an up-and-coming rookie.

Evan Bidenti was transferred from the Central Canadian Hockey League's Cornwall Colts to the Tigers, adding depth up the middle with the 19-year old centre.

Rizvan Mansurov, a sixteen-year old who cut his teeth with the Richmond Hill Coyotes AAA program, also joins the Tigers after a brief eight-game stint last season.

Newmarket picked up a pair of wins over the weekend to pull within one point of the Tigers at a record of 7-3-2, albeit with a game in hand.

The Tigers record of 8-4-1 is good for second in the NorthEast conference, behind only the Dukes, who have only one regulation loss so far this season.

The local rivals meet each other for the first time this season on Thursday, when the Hurricanes host the annual Pink in the Rink charity game at the Ray Twinney Complex.

The game has raised over \$125,000 for the Southlake Regional Health Centre since it was first played in 2009.

Newmarket mayor Tony Van Bynen called the event ?a great cause?, and one to ?look forward to every year on the hockey calendar.?

Aurora returns home on Friday to host the 4-10-1 Stouffville Spirit, with puck drop set for 7.30 p.m. at the Aurora Community Centre.

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