

Tigers pushing for Northeast Conference final berth



By Jake Courtepatte

The Junior A Aurora Tigers are two wins away from their first conference final appearance since 2014.

A pair of wins over the weekend against the Cobourg Cougars has the Tigers up two games to none in the OJHL's Northeast Conference semifinal, besting the Cougars at the Aurora Community Centre on Friday before earning a road win on Sunday.

The fifth-seeded Cougars opened the scoring early at the ACC in front of close to five-hundred Tiger fans, doubling their lead early in the second period.

The Tigers followed up with a scoring frenzy of their own, potting four straight goals off the sticks of Zach Wilkie, Jake Bricknell, Christopher Giroday, and James Thomson before the second intermission to take a 4 ? 2 lead.

Aurora goalie Bradley Van Schubert stopped eleven of the twelve Cobourg shots he faced in the third period, securing a 4 ? 3 game one victory.

He returned between the pipes for game two on Sunday, where, once again, four straight Tiger goals was the key factor in a 5 ? 2 win.

A goal apiece in the second period followed a scoreless first, before Thomson, Bricknell, Joseph Mizzi, and Evan Bidenti combined in the third to take a commanding lead.

After taking down the perennial powerhouse Trenton Golden Hawks in round one, the Tigers have gone deeper in the postseason than any season since 2013-14 when they lost the OJHL final to the Toronto Lakeshore Patriots.

A pair of Tigers were honoured last week as well for helping the Tigers to their first regular season conference championship since the 2013-14 year, with forward captain Jake Bricknell and defenseman Christopher Giroday named to the OJHL's first and second All-Star team respectively.

Bricknell was also recently named the KEWL Hockey OJHL Player of the Month for February.

?This team has been on fire all year,? said OJHL analyst Alan Corkum. ?The Tigers are showing that a rebuild can happen in an instant, going from one of the worst records last season to a contender this season.?

Corkum said Aurora has been one of the most ?dominant? teams in this postseason, after taking down the reigning league finalist Trenton Golden Hawks in six games in the opening round.

Aurora also had Cobourg's number in the regular season, earning the win in three of their four matchups.

Game three returned to the ACC for a rare Tuesday home game following press time, while game four will return to Cobourg on Thursday night.

If necessary, game five goes Friday night in Aurora for a puck drop of 7:30 p.m., while game six would be played in Cobourg on Sunday.

If the series goes the distance, Aurora would host game seven on Tuesday.

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