

## Tigers roll into OJHL conference semis



Goaltender Andy Munroe has been the "backbone" of the Junior A Tigers club this season, according to head coach James Richmond. Here he is presented with the Gongshow Goaltender of the Month award for the second time this season, after posting a .952 save percentage in January.

**By Jake Courtepatte**

A hard-fought series with the Newmarket Hurricanes ended much closer on the ice than it did on the scoreboard.

The five-game series win by the Junior A Aurora Tigers saw three games decided by one goal, as well as a double overtime, on the way to the Tigers second Eastern Conference semifinal berth in two years.

Up two games to one and headed back to Newmarket on Wednesday, Aurora found themselves in an uncomfortable position with the opponent playing at their level.

Joseph Mizzi opened the scoring for the Hurricanes just two minutes into the game, met by strikes from Aurora's Keaton Ratcliffe and Taylor Joseph just a few minutes later.

After some back-and-forth exchanging in the second, Drake Board put the Tigers up by two with his fourth goal of the postseason just a minute into the final frame.

But the Hurricanes, behind the strong performance of goaltender Tyler Richardson, came storming back with two unanswered goals, capped off by Mitchell Duggan's tally on the powerplay with under three minutes to go to send it to overtime.

It wasn't until the second overtime that the score was settled, when captain Michael Laidley beat the goal scorer Duggan twenty seconds in to secure the win for the Tigers.

"We needed that win," said Laidley. "They've been putting the pressure on us all series."

They closed out the series in overwhelming fashion Friday in a 7-3 win, highlighted by a hat trick from rookie Cameron Morrison.

Morrison added his third of the game on an empty net with over six minutes left to play, eliminating the desperate Hurricanes team.

"They came out and gave us a good series," said Morrison. "We didn't want to go to a Game 6 in their building and it was nice to finish it here."

Nicholas Erb, Johnny Curran, and Drake Board also found the back of the net for the Tigers.

Their next challenge lies with the Kingston Voyageurs, winners of nine of their final ten regular season games. Aurora swept the season series with the Voyageurs 2 ? 0.

The series will be a rematch of the Northeast final one year ago, when the Tigers swept the Voyageurs to reach the league final.

The Eastern Conference held no underdog surprises, as each top-tiered team handily made their way to the conference semifinals. In fact, the Tigers were the only higher ranked team to lose a game, with Cobourg, Trenton, and Kingston all sweeping their series in four games.

The Voyageurs dominated the Stouffville Spirit, scoring twenty goals over their four game series.

Game 1 will go this Friday at the Aurora Community Centre. Puck drop is at 7.30 p.m.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit [www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com](http://www.auroratigers.pointstreaksites.com).