

Tigers roll to seventh straight win in division-clinching matchup



By Jake Courtepatte

For the third year in a row, the Aurora Tigers are OJHL North Division champs.

They clinched the title in dominant fashion last Friday night, continuing the success they've had over the Lindsay Muskies with an 8 ? 3 win on the road.

The Tigers entered the game having won both matches against the Muskies, and went back to work early in this one as Nicholas Erb opened the scoring less than two minutes in.

Three goals on nineteen shots in the second period was the clincher for Aurora, going up by a 5 ? 2 score after forty minutes ? capped off by a successful penalty shot by Mack Lemmon with only eight seconds left in the second.

Sam Quaranta, Keaton Ratcliffe and Johnny Curran all found twine in the third period, as the Tigers put a total of 44 pucks on the Lindsay net.

The win was the nail in the coffin for the North Division, as the two points put the Tigers fifteen points up on the second-place Stouffville Spirit.

With a record of 36-7-3, the Tigers are on pace to put together their fifth best season in the team's 42-year history as a Junior A franchise.

They cemented their position with a 4 ? 2 win over the Mississauga Chargers on Saturday, who are headed in the opposite direction on the standings board. The Tigers handed them their fifth loss in a row.

With seven games left on the regular season schedule, the Tigers will be competing with the likes of the Trenton Golden Hawks and the Cobourg Cougars for top dog in the North-East Conference.

The Golden Hawks currently lead the Tigers by a mere two points.

Other than a lacklustre and shorthanded month of December, the Aurora squad has been firing on all cylinders both offensively and defensively all season.

The team has amassed the second most goals-for out of any team in the OJHL, averaging almost 4.5 goals per game.

The success comes behind the hot hands of a number of rookie players, like 19-year old Curran, who spent the last three seasons with the GOJHL's Niagara Falls Canucks. Curran leads the team in goals and points with 56.

Veteran defenceman Eric Williams has been putting up almost a point-per-game in his sophomore season, even earning the first hat trick of his career back in October.

At the back end, the Tigers sit second-place in goals-against, as starting goaltender Andy Munroe and his rookie backup Marcus Semiao have made for quite a tandem.

Named goaltender of the month in January, Munroe has put together a .922 save percentage this year to go along with his three shutouts.

Remarkably, Semiao is yet to lose in regulation as his record sits at 11-0-1. He has allowed only 1.95 goals per game.

Next game is Friday at the Aurora Community Centre against division rivals the Newmarket Hurricanes.

The Tigers will be without hometown defenseman Kyle Locke, who was handed a two-game suspension in Friday's contest.

Puck drop is at 7.30 p.m.