

Tigers take Battle of Yonge Street, continuing 11-game winning streak



By Jake Courtepatte

It was a long week for the Junior A Aurora Tigers, but one that cemented their position as one of the top contenders in the Ontario Junior Hockey League.

They made the short trip to Newmarket last Thursday for the first of four games on the schedule, taking on the last-place Hurricanes.

The game was over from the start, with the Hurricanes never really putting up a fight in a 6 ? 1 Tigers victory. Johnny Curran picked up a goal and two assists in the match.

There was a feeling of déjà vu the next night facing Mississauga, as the Tigers dismantled the Chargers in front of the home crowd.

With the Tigers up 5 ? 0 heading into the dressing room at first intermission, Curran had already earned two goals and two assists. He would score one more in the third to complete the hat trick, and make it eight points over two nights.

Eric Williams also had a hat trick in the match, scoring the seventh and final goal of the Tigers' 7 ? 2 win.

Williams' hat trick, a rarity for a defenceman, was the first of his career.

?I was having really good luck, the puck was just bouncing the right way for me. It was exciting.?

The marathon week continued the next night once again at the Aurora Community Centre when the Tigers hosted the Lindsay Muskies. The Muskies shut out the Tigers in their only other meeting this season.

Cameron Morrison continued an incredible six-game point streak 47 seconds in, combining with Captain Michael Laidley to put the home team up early.

Off the next draw, Daniel Mantenuto quickly picked up his sixth goal of the year, and the Tigers were up 2 ? 0 a minute into the hockey game.

After the Muskies cut the deficit in half, Drake Board fooled the Lindsay goaltender from down low, sliding the puck along the ice from an almost impossible angle.

Down 3 ? 1 early in the second, Lindsay got their chance to even the game when they were given almost a minute and a half of

5-on-3 hockey.

However, Tigers goaltender Andy Munroe stayed strong in the net, making three tough saves to kill off both penalties.

But the penalty killers almost immediately had to go back to work to kill off a slashing call. On the powerplay, a Muskies defenceman's shot from the point tipped off a number of bodies in front of the net, sending the puck straight up and over Munroe's shoulder on a play he never really had a chance on.

Unshaken, Nolan Dunn went right back to the Lindsay end less than thirty seconds later to return the Tigers to a two-goal lead at 4 ? 2.

Nearing the end of the second, the Tigers got their second chance on the powerplay. Mantenuto was a workhorse, working the puck along the boards and eventually making a smooth cross-ice pass to Williams, who ripped a slapshot top shelf.

“Our powerplay has been unreal,” said Williams. “The forwards are flying, we're drawing penalties well.”

The third period wouldn't change anything, as the two teams exchanged a goal each for a final score of 6 ? 3 for the Tigers.

After a steamrolling of the Cobourg Cougars on Monday, the Tigers are now riding an eleven-game winning streak. They lead the OJHL North Division by six points.

Williams credits the team's success as of late to speed and conditioning.

“Especially late in the game, it seems like the other teams just can't keep up with us. We're playing hard right until the end of the game.”

“We've really improved from the beginning of the year, everyone's hitting their stride. We're coming together well.”

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