

Tigers take commanding lead over Golden Hawks

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Tigers are proving their number-one overall seeding was no coincidence.

Two games into the OJHL playoffs, the Tigers are only a pair of wins away from moving on to round two, after two high-scoring affairs to open their best-of-seven series with the Trenton Golden Hawks.

Close to 400 fans packed the Aurora Community Centre on Friday night for game one against the eighth-seeded Hawks, where it was only fitting that leading point scorer and captain Jake Bricknell opened the scoring just over a minute in.

The Tigers yet found themselves down 3 ? 2 at the end of the first, before three straight Aurora goals from Tyler Davis, Joseph Mizzi, and Anthony Romano gave them a 5 ? 3 lead after two.

Bricknell scored twice more in the third, while Davis added his second, for a final score of 8 ? 5 for the Tigers.

Bradley Van Schubert, who was issued a game misconduct for shooting the puck over the glass early in the third, made 17 saves on the 21 shots he faced.

Jack Irvine came in in relief, making four of five saves.

?When you're in the playoffs, you've got to have outstanding goaltending,? said Tigers analyst Kevin Dean.

Irvine got the call between the pipes for Game Two, played at the rowdy Duncan Memorial Arena in Trenton, in which Dean said ?it's always hard to win.?

Aurora took a 4 ? 1 lead late in the game thanks to goals from Austin Eastman, Davis, and another pair from Bricknell.

Down by three, Trenton desperately pulled their goaltender with over three minutes remaining, beating Irvine to make it a two-goal game.

But with the Golden Hawks pressuring, the Tigers survived the final two minutes thanks to a Trenton misconduct in the final minute of play after some heated exchanging of words from the Trenton bench.

Irvine made 24 of 26 stops in his first OJHL playoff start.

?Just an outstanding effort by the goaltender,? said Dean. ?It was one dandy of a hockey game.?

Game Three returned to the Aurora Community Centre on Wednesday following press time, where if the Tigers can scratch out a win, can put the series to bed on Friday back in Trenton.

If needed, Game Five will go in Aurora on Saturday, with a puck drop set for 7:30 p.m.

Elsewhere in the NorthEast, the Wellington Dukes lead the Pickering Panthers two games to none, while the Cobourg Cougars are one game away from moving past the Kingston Voyageurs.

The Markham Royals trail the Newmarket Hurricanes two games to one as well.

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