

Tigers take first in the North with sixth straight win



By Jake Courtepatte

Seven games into his reign as head coach of the Junior A Aurora Tigers, Thomas Milne is the talk of the town.

A mediocre 6-5-0-2 start to the season saw Milne replace the short-tenured Mark Joslin in his position, and the new bench boss has impressed his employers enough to be named the team's new General Manager.

Behind the bench for his fourth game, Milne saw the Tigers take down the OJHL's top team Wednesday, the Trenton Golden Hawks.

Despite being badly outshot in the third period, Alex Brooks-Potts held on for a 3 ? 2 victory to secure the Tigers' fourth win in a row, stopping 30 of the 32 shots he faced in the match.

He was back between the pipes Friday at the Aurora Community Centre, taking on the visiting Stouffville Spirit. James Thomson potted his second of the year just a few minutes into the contest, taking advantage of an errant kneeling penalty early on.

With the score tied at one in the second period, Evan Kearns scored the Tigers' second powerplay goal of the game to give them a 2 ? 1 lead.

Stouffville tied the game with Keegan Matthew in the box late in the second period, making way for Alex Formenton to earn the game-winning goal for the Tigers midway through the third period.

Hallowe'en night's matchup with the Pickering Panthers was a bit spooky, with the Panthers tying the game at two midway through the final frame. But it was the veteran Kyle Locke who scored his first goal in a month with under two minutes to play, earning himself the first star of the game.

?He's been a clutch player when we need him,? said Milne of his defenceman. ?He's a big guy, and he's not afraid to throw his weight around, but can still make the play.?

Under Milne, the Tigers have now gone an impressive 6-0-1, moving into first place in the Ontario Junior Hockey League's north division. Their 12-5-0-3 record puts them three points up on the second place Markham Royals.

?It's a good feeling,? said Milne. ?This team has the potential to be the best, and it's good to see everyone performing at that level.?

A large portion of their return to form can be attributed to their return to the disciplined hockey that earned them the 2014-15 regular

season title, a turn in the right direction from the penalty-laden start the Tigers had to the season.

“Five-on-five, we're one of the best teams out there,” said Milne. “We can show how good we are without putting players in the box.”

It's a triple-header this weekend for the Tigers who host the Kingston Voyageurs on Friday and the Markham Royals on Saturday. They move to Whitby to face the Fury on Sunday afternoon.

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