

Tigers wrap up undefeated OJHL preseason ahead of next week's season opener

By Jake Courtepatte

The Aurora Tigers Junior A hockey team didn't skip a beat in the offseason, continuing their stellar play where it left off last season.

The St. Michael's Buzzers came to Aurora on August 22 to open the preseason schedule. Down 3-2 after two periods, the Tigers rallied to score five goals in the third against the 2013 OJHL champs.

Three days later, the Buzzers hosted the Tigers, where the scoring frenzy continued as the Tigers won handily 6-0. Andy Munroe picked up the shutout in the win.

The Newmarket Hurricanes then made the short trip to Aurora last Wednesday, to face off for the first time since the Tigers swept the Hurricanes in the first round of the OJHL playoffs last season.

Eric Williams led the way for the Tigers, scoring a goal and three assists in a 5-1 win. The rematch two days later saw a much closer competition game, with the Tigers squeaking out a 2-1 victory in overtime to end the preseason schedule with a 4-0 record.

Despite their impressive preseason performance, the 2014-2015 Tigers team experienced a big roster turnover from last season. All in all, the team added one goalie, four defencemen and eleven forwards.

"If you're doing your job of moving kids onto higher levels, then you're going to be adding new guys every year," said James Richmond, Tigers head coach and general manager.

"On the whole, the team looked great," said Richmond. "We're happy with everybody."

"We've got a real strong character in the room already this year. We've got good speed, we're strong on the puck—those are the things that make a difference."

The Tigers finished first in the North Division and second in the OJHL last season with a 38-12-1-2 record, good for 79 points.

However, they met a strong Toronto Lakeshore Patriots team in the Buckland Cup finals, falling in six games while looking for their first league title since 2007.

The team now heads to Vermont for an NCAA showcase, before opening the regular season in Stouffville on Saturday, September 13.

Fans will be able to get their first look at the 2014-2015 team at their home opener against Hamilton on Sept. 19.

For full schedules, stats, and information, check out www.auroratigers.pointstreak.com.