

Van Berkel delivers dramatic game-winner in Junior Panthers? 3-2 win over Barrie Sharks

For the second consecutive Wednesday, Annabella ?Big Goal? Van Berkel scored a dramatic game-winner to impel the U22 Central York Panthers to a critical victory at SARC.

Last week, Van Berkel fired home the game-winning-goal in a climactic shootout to sink the Burlington Barracudas 2-1.

This week, the speedy forward's go-ahead goal broke a 2-2 third period tie with the Barrie Sharks to help secure the Panthers' sixth consecutive win.

The 3-2 regulation win earned Central York three points and moved them past the Sharks into second place in the OWHU U22 Elite standings. Van Berkel described the keys to victory over Barrie: ?We played them earlier and lost a close game in a shootout. Tonight, we didn't get too high and didn't get too low. We stayed with what we know.?

?I thought we played for each other tonight. Our team knows we have something special here and Coach Steve [Dempsey] has done such a good job building our team.?

Central York opened the scoring early in the first period when Lily Paisley capitalized on a defensive turnover by the Sharks. She snapped the puck past Sharks goaltender Ryleigh Maxwell at 1:27 to give the Panthers a 1-0 lead. Paisley's unassisted marker was her fourth of the season.

Less than two minutes later, speedy Sharks forward Tayah Wallace took a long lead pass from Simone Swanson, cut in from the right wing past the Panthers' defenders, and fired a wrist shot from between the circles that beat Central York netminder Claire Hicks' high glove side to pull the Sharks even at 1-1.

Less than two minutes into the middle frame, Abby Pak cradled a chipped pass from Catelyn Clark in the neutral zone, stormed down the right wing, and ripped a shot past Maxwell inside the right faceoff circle to restore CYP's lead. It was the hard-working forward's second of the season.

The Sharks knotted the game at 2-2 when Wallace created space between the circles and snapped the puck off the right pipe?picking the corner over Hicks's blocker?to register her second goal of the game.

With 11:54 left in the third period, the Panthers' arduous forechecking paid off when Zoe Ordanis fed Van Berkel a pass just above the blue ice of the crease.

Van Berkel one-timed the pass past Maxwell for her sixth of the season and gave her playmaking teammate much of the credit for creating the opportunity to score the game-winner.

?We were working on a set play and we saw a chance to take it. Zoe did a great job to get the puck to me.?

Ordanis's assist was her sixth of the season?tying her for the team lead with third-year Panthers' veteran Keira Johnson.

The Panthers' 3-2 lead was tenuous, especially when the Barrie coaching staff used its timeout, removed Maxwell for the extra attacker, and created numerous scoring opportunities in the slot. However, Hicks held the fort in the final frantic seconds of play and earned the W by stopping 23 of 25 shots.

Van Berkel complimented her goaltender for the game-saving stops in the final two minutes of play:

?Claire really stood on her head. Knowing that she's there to back us up gives our team lots of confidence. It shows how strong a goaltender she is. She played phenomenal.?

The Panthers welcome the Ridley Tigers on Saturday, October 18 at 1.55 p.m. and the Ottawa 67's on Sunday, October 19 at 1:35. Both games are at SARC.

Circled on the calendar is an OWHA U22 Elite Showdown on the final weekend of October.

The second-place Junior Panthers (8-1-0) will host the first-place Etobicoke Dolphins (9-1-0) on Saturday, October 25. Puck drop at SARC is 1:55 p.m.

First-year Junior Panther Audrey Martone leads CYP in scoring

One of the many strengths of second-place CYP is their depth of scoring.

Seven Panthers are among the Top 50 scorers in the 25-team U22 Elite Division. Remarkably, five of these players?Martone, Ordanis, Lewington, Lazarou, and Paisley?are in their first season with the Junior Panthers:

#13?Audrey Martone-- 8G + 3A = **11** points in 9 games

#22?Keira Johnson--3G + 6A= **9** points in 9 games

#23?Zoe Ordanis--3G + 6A = **9** points in 9 games

#30?Annabella Van Berkel?6G (+ SWG vs Burlington) + 2A = **8** points in 9 games

#31?Ellie Lewington?3G + 5A = 8 points in **9** games

#46?Demi Lazarou?6G + 1A = 7 points in **9** games

#47?Lily Paisley?4G + 3A = 7 points in **9** games

By Jim Stewart