

Tigers hang on against Markham to open lead in Northeast Division



By Jake Courtepatte

They had to cool down eventually.

After a stint in which new head coach Thomas Milne won six of his first seven games in the role, the Aurora Tigers settled into their new spot as division leaders with a 1-1-1 record last week.

It is certainly difficult to blame the coaching staff for Friday's 4 ? 3 overtime loss to the Kingston Voyageurs, however. Milne is the third Tigers coach unable to solve the Voyageurs since their 2015 game 7 loss, one that ex-coach James Richmond would like to forget. Mark Joslin, who lasted thirteen games as Tigers' bench boss, had an 0 ? 2 record against Kingston.

Milne came close to breaking the six-game losing streak to the Voyageurs, a back-and-forth affair that had Drake Board tie the game in the third period to send it to overtime, but Kingston's Anthony Rinaldi scored the winner to give his team a 4 ? 3 victory.

?They're a hard working team that just has our number,? said Milne. ?They play a similar style of game that we do, and Friday's game could have gone either way.?

Coming off only his second loss behind the bench, Milne and the Tigers hosted the Markham Royals on Saturday, having recently knocked the Royals off of top seed in the OJHL's Northeast Division.

Starting goaltender Alex Brooks-Potts was solid between the pipes, making two huge toe saves on the penalty kill less than a minute into the game with Nolan Dunn in the box for interference.

Austin Gerhart opened the scoring for the Tigers on the powerplay in the second period, picking up his own rebound in the slot and beating the out of position Markham goaltender.

He added another one six minutes later, taking a feed from Ryan Shaw from behind the net, with plenty of time in the slot to send a wrist shot into the top corner.

Up 2 ? 0, the game seemed over in the final minute of play, but the Tigers got a scare when Brooks-Potts' shutout was broken with twenty seconds to go.

He was forced to make a number of stops in the dying seconds to hang on to the 2 ? 1 victory, earning second star of the game behind Gerhart.

"I had a great chance in the slot," said Gerhart of his second goal. "I kind of snuck in behind the defence and had a lot of time to make the play."

Gerhart, an ex-Mississauga Steelhead of the OHL, has put up points in nine of his eleven contests this year.

The Tigers have lost only one game in regulation at home this season.

A successful penalty shot proved to be the winner Sunday for the Whitby Fury, whose goal in the final minute of regulation was enough to beat the Tigers 3 ? 2.

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