

Tigers? offence continues to struggle



By Jake Courtepatte

All is not well in The Jungle.

Nine goals found the back of the Aurora Tigers net in the finale of the annual OJHL Buffalo showcase, a 9 ? 2 loss to the St. Michael's Buzzers last Wednesday. The Tigers followed up with a 4 ? 1 loss to the Stouffville Spirit at the Aurora Community Centre on Sunday, their fifth loss in a row.

Wednesday's loss to the Buzzers actually saw Mel Melconian, one of few bright spots on the Aurora offense so far this season, open the scoring just over two minutes into the match. From there, St. Mike's rattled off nine straight past Aurora goaltender Brayden Lachance, who made 29 stops on 39 shots in the game.

Whitby native Connor Rider potted his third of the season with the score out of reach late in the third period.

Returning to the Aurora Community Centre on Sunday, the Spirit rode a strong powerplay unit to a 4 ? 1 score over the home team. Connor Evans opened the scoring late in the first period with a one-timer from the top of the slot, while Melconian was stopped by a few highlight saves from Stouffville goaltender Hunter Jones in the opening frame.

Brandon MacKinnon tied the game for the Tigers midway through the second, a doorstep rebound off a shot from Daniel Tomassetti for his first of the year. Stouffville took the lead back just a few minutes later, adding two more in the third for the win.

Holding on to a 1-8-1 record through the first fifth of the season, the Tigers are on the wrong side of an extremely lopsided north division of the OJHL.

While the Spirit and Markham Royals have jumped out to extremely successful starts, posting records of 7-2-0 and 6-2-1 respectively, the Tigers, Newmarket Hurricanes, Pickering Panthers, and Lindsay Muskies have combined for just nine points ? and three wins.

To put it into perspective, Aurora's next opponent, the Kingston Voyageurs, are at the bottom of the east division with eleven points on the season.

The game goes down Thursday at 7 p.m., with the Tigers in search of their first road win. They then visit the Whitby Fury on Friday, before hosting the Muskies for the weekly Sunday game at the Aurora Community Centre at 7 p.m.

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