

Tigers? powerplay crushes Spirit

By Jake Courtepatte

A quiet week for the Aurora Tigers was anything but on Saturday night in Stouffville.

In their only game of the week, the Junior A club exploded for four goals in the third period of their OJHL matchup with the Stouffville Spirit, earning their third win in a row and avenging a loss to the Spirit at home in late October.

It was a perfect comeback for a team that lost 6 ? 3 to the Spirit on home ice, taking it to the Spirit 6 ? 3 at Stouffville Arena.

A constant shuffle to the penalty box plagued the entire sixty minutes, with bad blood spilling over after animosity grew from their first meeting.

However, it was Aurora that was capitalizing on the man advantage situations, going an impressive four-for-ten on the powerplay while holding the Spirit to just one powerplay goal in eight opportunities.

With the Spirit serving a bench minor for too many men midway through the first period, Luca Esposito opened the scoring for the Tigers, though the Spirit tied it up in the final minute with Eljiah Gonsalves serving four minutes on a spearing call.

Chris Giroday scored Aurora's only even strength goal of the night in the second period, before a pair of powerplay notches from Giroday and Esposito early in the third gave the Tigers a sizeable lead.

Christian Monachino added one shorthanded, while Esposito completed the hat trick on the man advantage with under two minutes left on the clock.

Giroday and Esposito both finished with four points in the contest. The newly-acquired Esposito, picked up two weeks earlier in a trade with the Milton IceHawks after leaving the Tigers in the offseason, has fit back in nicely in the Tigers lineup with six points in his first two games.

With the Newmarket Hurricanes picking up a pair of wins last week, the top of the North division of the OJHL remains a logjam. Luckily for both clubs, the Markham Royals were bested Sunday by the St. Michael's Majors, allowing Aurora to leapfrog back into second place in the division standings.

Their record of 11-6-1 is good for 23 points, two back of the Hurricanes and their record of 11-5-3.

The Wellington Dukes hold a sizeable lead in the Northeast Conference with 36 points, though their 24 games played is six more than the Tigers have seen so far this season.

Aurora enters week eight of the OJHL schedule with a clash against the reigning league champion Trenton Golden Hawks, who they last saw in September in a grueling 0 ? 0 double overtime final.

The week does not get any easier when the Dukes visit the Aurora Community Centre on Saturday, with puck drop set for 7:30p.m. They close out the week with a trip to Kingston on Sunday to visit the Voyageurs.

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