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Two solid efforts result in Cougars ending their slump

By Bill Rea

If last week's play is any indicator, the Schomberg Cougars are back and ready for action.

The local junior C heroes turned in two very solid efforts, resulting in their first win after posting seven losses (with one incomplete game mixed in).

They notched their victory Friday night, when hot goal-tending from Ty Legrow helped the side to a 6-4 decision in Penetang at the expense of the Kings.

That win was both badly needed and well deserved after what happened the previous evening. The Cougars were tied with the Stayner Siskins with 21 seconds left in the third period when the winning goal was notched, leaving the Schomberg hosts on the wrong end of a 3-2 final.

This was a game that the Cougars were in from beginning to end. And for once, the shots-on-goal figures were reasonably close, with Stayner posting a 42-37 advantage.

The Siskins grabbed the early lead, when one of the Stayner shooters executed a bank shot off of one of the defenders which got the better of Legrow.

The Cougars had the tie restored 13 seconds later, thanks to the work of Thomas Faris, assisted by Eddie Wiederer and Chris Case, then they took the lead later in the frame, when Joe Digirolamo converted an unassisted short-handed effort.

Schomberg didn't lack opportunities to put the match away, especially in

the second period, in which they enjoyed a total of four minutes with a two-man advantage, but they were unable to add to their score. Stayner was the only team able to put a puck in the net during the frame, but that goal was waved off when referee Ken Stubbs ruled it went in off a high stick.

The Siskins tied things midway through the third period on a power play, and bagged the winner in the final minute.

Despite the loss, there was a lot of confident talk around the Cougars' dressing room at the end.

"It's a start," Legrow commented. "We had the game in our hands, and we just sort of let it slip away there."

He also agreed the two man advantages in the second should have been more productive.

Stayner might have trailed in the shots department, but Legrow said his defenders helped make sure that wasn't a factor.

"I was seeing the puck well," he said. "(The defencemen) were clearing rebounds for me, so it was good."

"They didn't win the game," observed veteran Dan Naccarato. "I think we lost it for ourselves."

"Slowly but surely, we're starting to get more veterans into the line-up," he added. "It's only going to continue to get better."

"The guys have got to stop worrying about the number of games we've lost and think about the future," he said.

Head Coach Gary

Waldrum agreed experience is key in a situation like this, adding there wasn't much keeping his men from victory that evening. "If you take two mistakes out of the game, we're the winners," he remarked. "That's hockey."

The team has been victimized with a number of lop-sided losses over the season, and Waldrum thought that could be part of the problem too. They haven't had a lot of experience with close fights late in the game, so some of the younger players might not know what to do.

He also said getting a more consistent line-up will help, especially to get the power play click better.

When it came to Saturday's outing, the only weak spot for the Cougars was in the shots-on-goal department, where Penetang had a formidable 48-19 advantage, including 20 of those shots in the third period.

Schomberg trailed 2-1 after one period, but they had things tied 4-4 at the end of the second. Faris put his mates in front for good in the first minute of the third, with help from Wiederer, and case put things out of reach in the final minute with a goal into the empty Penetang net.

"It was a strong performance by Ty," Waldrum said the following day, referring to the goalie who stood up to so many shots. He said there was a lot of good, smart defensive play from his men, and he added the shooting figures were a little misleading.

The coach was also pleased that the scoring statistics were spread around the line-up. "That always helps," he remarked.

The other goals came

from Jake Whelan, Naccarato, Jason McMann and Luke Maw, with Naccarato, Mike Shurny, Whelan and Shane Jones contributing assists.

Two close wins are added to Wild's record

By Bill Rea

The King Wild posted two more wins over the weekend, but they needed over time both evenings in order to do it.

Friday night saw them in Sturgeon Falls playing the West Nipissing Alouettes, where they trailed for most of the night and finally prevailing after about two minutes of extra time for the 7-6 win.

It was a somewhat different story Sunday at home for the side. They let a two-goal lead slip away in the second period, and needed to come from behind in the third to set up the fourth frame against the Toronto Canada Moose. Jordan Gidaro stepped up to score the winning goal for his mates with 1.5 seconds left on the clock, making the final score 6-5. It was his fourth marker of the evening.

"We blew the lead, but played well," the hero remarked after the match.

Kurt Zdrilich and Marc Zanette collected the other two Wild goals. Mike Bodley contributed three assists, John Sturino got two and Derek Long, Matt Dickens, Gidaro, Piero Petti and Dan Douglas notched one apiece.

Head Coach Paul Hampton had no trouble agreeing it was Gidaro who saved the day for the side. "How can you not smile after a performance like that from that kid," he declared right after the game.

But he was also concerned about the number of penalties his men were taking, especially since at least four of the Moose goals came on the power play (one of Gidaro's goals came while the team was short-handed).

"They're going to kill us," Hampton remarked. "If we play five-on-five hockey, we can beat any team in the league, but that's not going to happen because we do stupid things."

The team has one more match before Christmas, and that's tomorrow (Thursday) night, when they host the Alliston Hornets. The game will start at 8:15 p.m.

Gidaro didn't have a bad outing Friday night either, posting two of the Wild's seven goals. Brendon Farrugia got two as well, and Marc Fortin, Zanette and John Adams got one apiece. Kyle Baulne, Sturino and Zannette each collected a pair of assists, and singles were notched by Douglas, Farrugia, Zdrilich and Long.

"That was a gong show up there," Hampton later commented, stating members of the West Nipissing club were trying to pick fights. He said one of the Alouettes played one shift and drew 12 minutes in penalties. "You tell me what he was out there to do," the coach remarked.

The wild will return to action Friday night when they travel to Gravenhurst for a match with the South Muskoka Shield, starting at 8 p.m.

Saturday night will see them in Deseronto to take on the Thunder, starting at 7:30 p.m.

Bantam reps make it to finals in recent Fergus tournament

The NobleKing bantam rep Knights, sponsored by Ken Gibb Ltd. and Alpine Graphics, recently finished a tournament in Fergus where they played their best hockey of the season as a team.

They played three round-robin games, outscoring their opponents 10-3, and headed right to the finals where they faced off against a very talented Mississauga team. The Knights played well, but unfortunately lost the game 1-0 when Mississauga scored with less than three minutes in the third period.

Last Tuesday, the team played host to TNT in Nobleton. The first period was a close contest, with both teams trading

opportunities, but it was the visitors who made it on the score sheet first. The second period saw the strong defensive play of Elliot Burlon, Brett Cummings, Armand Sanguigni, Calvin Marejka, as well as some key saves by goalie Danton Brinovec which kept the game within reach.

Heading into the third, still down 1-0, the Knights were on a power play, and came close to tying the game on a shot from the blue line that was tipped by Drew Middleton. The forwards continued to work hard, with Adam Gibb, Matt Sovereign and Josh Caruso all getting excellent scoring chances, but they could not get the tying goal.

At 8:10 of the period,

NobleKing finally got rewarded for the hard work when Burlon scored an unassisted goal. Unfortunately, the tie did not last long, as a NobleKing player headed to the penalty box for hooking, which put TNT on the power play. TNT scored with the man advantage and the game ended 2-1.

An honorable mention goes to Taylor Jenkins, an AP player from the minor bantam team, who played a strong game.

The Knights have a busy schedule over the Christmas break, participating in the Niagara-on-the-Lake tournament as well as the tournament hosted by NobleKing, before the playoffs begin in January.



Joe Digirolamo made this shot count on Stayner goalie Shane Owen when he broke in while helping his mates kill a first-period penalty. The goal put them into the lead until the third period.