

# Minor bantam Knights add a win and a tie to their record

*Submitted on behalf of the NobleKing Knights minor bantam hockey team*

After a successful tournament two weeks ago the NobleKing minor bantam Knights were back to regular season play again with two games this past weekend.

Friday evening saw them playing at the Nobleton arena, facing the Aurora Tigers for the first time this season. Similar to other games so far, the Knights came out strong and put the Tigers back on their heels to take the early lead. While killing a penalty, forward Nick Heintzman won puck control as two Tiger defencemen worked hard to put him off balance and get it back. But Heintzman hung in there and won the battle forwarding the puck to Thomas Martin, who pulled ahead on a breakaway and stuffed it in the Tigers' net, stick side low.

The second goal of the night was made after some nice puck control and passing in the Tigers zone as the line of Heintzman, George Stepanis combined to give Martin his second goal of the night, leading to the 2-0 victory.

It was a nice shutout for John Salome, who made some tremendous saves throughout the game to secure the win for the Knights.

Saturday evening saw the Knights travel to Innisfil to take on the Hawks.

After one period, there was no score, but with only a few moments to play in the second the Hawks score the first goal of the game. The Knights respond moments later with an unassisted goal by Michael Noblegreen, who showed his great stick handling ability to tie things up.

Late in the third period, after a battle in the Hawks' corner Tyler Burtt slides one under the Hawks' goaltender to put the Knight up by one.

Moments later the Hawks get one back and end the game tied 2-2.

Again, the team benefitted from some very solid goal tending by Ben Rossetto who face many hard shots from the Hawks and keep the Knights in the game.

Although there was doubt about whether or not NobleKing would be able to play at the A level this year, because of the inability to field a major bantam team (an OMHA rule), the league ruled in favor of Knights and an appeal for an

exemption was granted.

Back this year is coach Ray Martin, who has been joined by assistant coach Frank Maccarone and trainer Fausto Rossetto.

The first game of the regular season Sept. 7 had the Knights facing off against Innisfil, and the Knights came out flying!

The effort and energy level of the boys put Innisfil back on their heels early in the game.

Midway through the second, Innisfil popped in the first goal to put them ahead by one, but that would be it for offence from Innisfil, as the Knights stepped it up a notch and scored one back just a few minutes later, thanks to some sweet stick handling by Martin in front of the Innisfil net, who then put the puck on the stick of forward Victor Mifsud who fired one past the Innisfil goalie to tie things up.

Later in the second, Martin put another one on the scoreboard for the Knights, assisted by Heintzman. It was now 2-1 in favor of the Knights.

In the third period, another goal was scored by Martin, assisted by Heintzman and Stepanis, and that pretty much secured the fate of Innisfil. Stepanis worked hard and showed determination throughout the entire game. His effort on the ice gave the Knights many offensive opportunities.

Salome was between the pipes for this game and made many brilliant saves to keep the Knights out front. Throughout the game, he faced some tough shots and practically stood on his head for the season opener.

Two days later, the Knights faced off against the Bradford Bulldogs in a high-scoring game that led to a defeat for the Knights.

The Bulldogs pulled ahead by the end of the first period with two goals, but the Knights responded in the second with a loan goal by Martin to come back within one. With only a few minutes on the clock in the second period, the Bulldogs put another one away to make it 3-1, but with 13 seconds, left Burtt pulled one out from behind the Bradford net, and defenceman Robbie Pizzicorola blasted one over the head of the Bulldogs' goalie and into the net to end the period 3-2.

In the third, the Bulldogs put two more goals up on the scoreboard which the

Knights responded to when Stepanis dug one out from the corner, passed to Mifsud who fed the puck to Martin to put in his second goal of the night.

The Bulldogs went on and put two more on the scoreboard and ended the game with a score of 7-3. Great efforts were put forward by goaltender Rossetto, who faced many tough shots from the Bulldogs and kept the Knights' hopes alive.

A great effort in the first tournament of the year is a clear indication that the Knights can compete with the best of them.

They were taking part in the Hillcrest Summits Brian Steele Memorial tournament last weekend.

In game one against the Goudling Park Rangers, the Knights come out strong. In the first period, Stepanis scored off a beautiful pass from Heintzman who was fending off two Rangers to make the spectacular pass as he fell to the ice.

In the second period, forward Heintzman scored

for the Knights, assisted by Stepanis and Martin to make it 2-0. A few moments later, Noblegreen scored, assisted by Robbie Pizzicorola and Marco Mussato to pull ahead 3-0 and set the tone for the balance of the game.

In the third period, Martin also found the net, assisted by Stepanis and Heintzman. The Rangers managed to put one in near the end of the game to make the final score 4-1 in favor of the Knights. With some great goaltending by Salome, the Knights took their first win of the tournament.

In game two, the Knights faced off against the Downsview Beavers and early in the game it was clear that the Beavers were outmatched by the hard-skating, quick-passing Knights.

In the first period, Christian Shortill scored a nice goal from the point, assisted by Heintzman and Stepanis, to go ahead by one. From there, the Knights dominated the game, with constant forechecking, solid

passing and ended up frustrating the Beavers, who took many penalties throughout the game. The only strength the Beavers could come up with was sharp goal tending that ended up shutting the Knights offense down through the second and third periods. Rossetto got the Knights' first shutout of the season.

The third game saw the Knights take on the Toronto Avalanche in one of the most evenly-matched games of the tournament. Again, the Knights showed great determination and effort to take an early lead when Mussato scored, assisted by Noblegreen to go ahead by one. The Avalanche countered quickly to tie things up.

In the second, period Martin won control of the puck in front of the Avalanche goal and made a nice pass to Stepanis who put one high in the net for the Knights to go ahead 2-1.

In the third period, while shorthanded, forward Mussato gained puck control

and headed toward the offensive zone, skating around two Avalanche defenders, and slid a nice little shot under the goaltender to put the Knights up by two.

Later in the third, Noblegreen and Mussato made a nice play to put the puck on the stick of Luke Di Marco, who capitalized and scored the last goal of the game, ending it 4-1 in favor of the Knights. Nice work was turned in by defenceman Austin Maggiacomo who carried the puck well and set up some nice plays.

Salome was solid in net and helped NobleKing secure their third win of the tournament.

The next game, later that evening, put the Knights against the Goulding Park Rangers again, but despite dominating the entire game they come up short and lost 1-0. Many great opportunities fell short as the Knights came up against another hot goalie and that ended their hopes of moving to the championship game.

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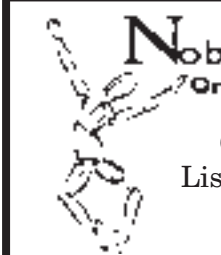
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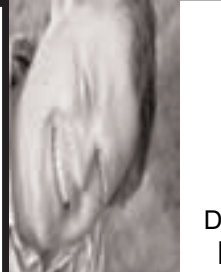
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