

Golden Hawks draw Huntsville in first round of PJHL playoffs

By Jake Courtepatte

Wrapping up their best season to date Sunday, the Caledon Golden Hawks enter the Provincial Junior Hockey League post-season with high hopes.

With eight wins in 11 games since the turn of the calendar, the junior C club made a rapid climb up the Carruthers division standings to earn a third-place finish, and a meeting with the Huntsville Otters in the best-of-seven first round series.

Both teams got a good look at each other Friday in the second-to-last game on the Caledon schedule, with the Hawks coming out on the wrong end of a 5-3 score.

Eighteen-year old Ethan Olenchuk got his second look between the pipes after a strong showing in a win over the powerhouse Alliston Hornets in his debut. The new Hawk was impressive in stopping 24 pucks, but ultimately fell short after a late-game rally was ended with an empty net goal.

Matt Magliozzi, Dante Zucarro and Sean Nottle found the back of the net for Caledon.

The final game of the season saw the return of the explosive offence that has marked Caledon's successful season, downing the Penetang Kings 8-4 to secure third place.

Zucarro had a two-goal night for the Hawks, the defenceman finding his offensive stride lately with a three-game point streak.

Olenchuk returned to the net for his third straight start, chasing away 25 pucks in a winning effort, to finalize the first round date with the Otters.

The Otters, who spent the majority of the season occupying one of the bottom two spots in Carruthers division standings, won three of their final four games to move ahead of the Schomberg Cougars for sixth in the division.

The season series between the Hawks and Otters ended in a 3-2 decision for Caledon, who won the first three meetings of the season before dropping the final two.

With the first round set to kick off Sunday in Caledon East, it will mark the first time in the team's eight-year history they will hold home ice advantage. Finishing third in the division with a record of 23-17-2-0, the 2018-18 season was the most successful campaign for the franchise to date.

Sunday's game time is set for 7 p.m., before the action moves to Huntsville for game two Wednesday.

Caledon will host game three next Friday, and if necessary, will also host games five and seven.

Elsewhere around the division, the first-place Stayner Siskins will battle with the last-place Orillia Terriers, the Alliston Hornets clash with the Cougars, and Penetang will meet the Midland Flyers.

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