Caledon Hawks claim OMHA midget AE title

By Jake Courtepatte

The midget AE Caledon Hawks dismantled their opponents enroute to the provincial final series, but took it to the wire to defeat the Ajax Knights and earn the title of OMHA champions.

A late goal from Jordan Monaco was all the Hawks needed to finish the series Monday, going the distance in a winner-take-all Game 6 at Caledon East.

Each team had two wins and a tie in the series that began one week ago, tied at five points apiece in a first-to-six contest.

The Hawks came out of the gate with a hard-hitting attitude, getting into penalty troubles a number of times in the first period. But despite a full two-minute two-man disadvantage, Greg Placenza stood tall in the Caledon net to keep the game scoreless after 15 minutes.

He was the best player on the ice throughout the middle frame as well, making a few highlight reel saves on the penalty kill late in the second to escape the period still tied at zero.

It was with six minutes to go, with both teams buzzing, that Monaco played the hero with the game's only goal. A bouncing puck and chaos in front of the Ajax net led to the puck dropping over the goaltender's shoulder. The goal was the first for Caledon in more than five periods.

Caledon held on through the final minutes to claim a 1-0 victory and the OMHA championship.

Before meeting Ajax in the final series, the Hawks had won 12 straight postseason games. They swept the Woolwich Wildcats in the quarter-final before handing the same fate to the Amherstburg Stars in the semis.

Monaco and Ryan Eccleston led the Hawks with two goals apiece in the final series. Colin Sinclair, Morgan Pace, Chris Hunter, Gavin Stone and Jake Buth also found the back of the net for the Hawks.

Overall, the Hawks managed a healthy 15-2-1 record in the playoffs, outscoring their opponents by a 98-22 margin.

The midget AE Caledon Hawks took the OMHA championship by a score of 1-0 over the Ajax Knights Monday night at Caledon East.Photo by Jake Courtepatte