

Golden Hawks down 3-1 in first-round series against Schomberg

By **Robert Belardi**

The Caledon Golden Hawks fell behind 3-1 in their first round against their cross-town rivals, the Schomberg Cougars.

Beginning last Thursday at the Trisan Centre, the Golden Hawks ran into a brick wall.

The boys were completely shut down and outplayed by the Cougars. The Cougars took game one 4-1, outshooting the Golden Hawks 42-18.

But in Game Two, fans in the Trisan Centre witnessed a very different affair. The Golden Hawks were vastly more prepared than in Game One, stymieing the Cougars' potent offence.

The Golden Hawks relentless forecheck and their tenaciousness to regain possession ultimately separated the two sides in this game. In this valiant effort, the Hawks were rewarded.

Late in the first period, Justin Calisto scored his first goal of the series, assisted by Darius Lasola.

Moving into the second period, Noah Crispo stripped the puck off of a Cougars defenceman and jammed it past Tristan Szymanowski to make it 2-0 heading into the third. The Hawks, held the Cougars to only 26 shots on target.

Hawks netminder Mason Kameka was a stud in goal.

At the beginning of the third, knowing that the Cougars were going to press, the Hawks began the frame on the offensive side of the puck.

Elias Najem caught the opposition off guard with a goal just under two minutes into the game.

In response, the Cougars began fighting back.

The Cougars forced Kameka to cough up rebounds. On one play, Jordyn Palazzo capitalized.

Just five minutes later, former Golden Hawk Marc Bottero rifled a shot from the point that found its way through traffic and into the back of the net to put the game within one.

But Kameka continued to shine and Kyle Church sealed the game with an empty net goal. Church finished the game with one goal and two assists.

On Sunday, in the first playoff game at Mayfield Arena, the Golden Hawks fell into trouble immediately. The Hawks conceded five penalties inside the first period.

The boys fell 2-0 after the first.

And the same story continued in the second.

The Hawks conceded another five penalties. The Cougars scored another three goals.

In total, the Golden Hawks visited the sin bin 12 times in Game Three. The boys fell to the Cougars 7-1.

After the game, Cougars head coach Stan Kondrotas praised Kameka's effort in goal. Kameka stopped 36 of 43 shots. The Golden Hawks were outshot 43-12.

In Game Four, Brett McCully gave the nod to back-up netminder Markus Stoikos.

The Golden Hawks came out to play in this one, but Cougars netminder Matteo Tarantino stood on his head, stopping 29 of 33 shots.

Nobody could stop Cougars forward Christian Taylor who recorded three goals and two assists on the night. The Cougars thrashed the Golden Hawks 9-3.

With their season on the line, the Golden Hawks are on the road Thursday at the Trisan Centre for Game Four.

Puck drop in Schomberg, is at 7:30 p.m.