

Golden Hawks end losing skid with shutout of Terriers

By Jake Courtepatte

The Caledon Golden Hawks have stopped the bleeding from their worst losing streak since September in the Georgian Mid-Ontario Hockey League.

After almost a month's absence from the win column, in which the junior C squad lost four straight games in regulation, back-to-back wins over the weekend have the Hawks almost back to the .500 level.

Hosting the last-place Orillia Terriers at Caledon East Friday, it was forward Ben Ardis who stole the show in only his third game since returning to a Hawk uniform. Ardis, who put up 16 points in 38 games with Caledon in the 2014-15 season, scored the game's only even strength goal in the dying seconds of the first period, with assists from James Pitsadiotis and Cameron Frail.

Captain Nicholas McNutt added an empty-netter in the last second of regulation for a 2-0 victory.

Goaltender Brendan Macham wasn't tested often, but he was a wall in net when needed. He stopped 19 shots in the contest, while his counterpart Gordie Weiss was forced to contend with an incredible 55-shot onslaught from the Hawks.

In Erin to face the Shamrocks Sunday, six different Hawks had a multipoint game in a 6-2 winning effort.

Caledon scored on four of their 14 shots in the first period to take a 4-1 lead, while McNutt scored the second period's only goal.

Ryan Mouser scored his second of the game in the third, while Erin squeaked one more by Macham in the dying minutes in a 34/36 performance by the goaltender.

McNutt, who added two more goals to his stats page in the contest, has combined with linemate Daniel Cafagna for 50-point performances so far this year. Cafagna, who rode a 15-game point streak lasting almost two months at the end of 2015, has slowed down of late, putting up only three points in the last five outings.

However, others have stepped up. Forward Michael Andrews more than doubled his season point total in one game against Erin, earning three assists to add to the two he had. Defenceman Matthew Pyz earned a goal and an assist against the Shamrocks, bringing his season point total to five.

The four-point swing has once again bridged the gap between the Hawks and the top teams in the GMOHL, while putting some space between them and a possible first-round date with the 29-2-2 Alliston Hornets. A 16-17-1 record has Caledon sitting in fifth place in the nine-team league.

If the playoffs were to start today, the Hawks would first face the Stayner Siskins, sitting one point higher in the standings while Caledon has a game in hand. As it stands, six games remain on the regular season schedule, which culminates the last day of January.

This week marks the final meeting with the Midland Flyers (17-15-2) on the road Friday, and the Huntsville Otters (18-13-3) on the road Sunday afternoon. Both teams are in reach if the Hawks can control special teams play: they hold the two highest penalty minutes totals in the league, while Caledon boasts the lowest.

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



Caledon's John Cyfko just misses a wraparound attempt on Orillia goaltender Gordie Weiss. The Golden Hawks shut out the Terriers 2-0 at Caledon East Sunday. Photo by Jake Courtepatte