

Golden Hawks soar past Kings to fifth place in GMOHL

By Jake Courtepatte

With a perfect four-point pickup over the weekend, the Caledon Golden Hawks have strung together their first three-game winning streak of the season, and have won five of their last seven.

These numbers are an enormous turnaround for a team that struggled out of the gate with seven losses in a row in the Georgian Mid-Ontario Hockey League season.

Visiting the Erin Shamrocks Saturday, the Hawks earned all five of the final goals in the game to come out on top 6-3.

Erin led 2-1 heading into the second, despite putting just six shots on net in the opening frame. After Caledon goaltender Brendan Macham allowed another shorthanded marker for a two-goal cushion, he settled back in shutting out the Shamrocks for the rest of the game.

Nicholas McNutt and Randy Chen each scored twice for the Hawks, while Tyler Whitten and Christian Mariconda notched a single apiece.

Chen was arguably the hardest working player on the ice Sunday, when Caledon hosted a tilt with the Penetang Kings.

With the Hawks up 1-0 in the first, he doubled the lead with a pretty deke through the final defenceman's legs, before snapping it home.

Later in the frame, Chen outskated two King defenders for a loose puck for a partial breakaway that he just missed the bottom corner of the net.

Up 3-0 in the second, the Hawks got a scare when Penetang clawed back to 3-3 going to the final 20 minutes.

It was Daniel Cafagna, the team's leading scorer, who scored the game winner with a nice deke to his backhand.

James Pitsadiotis added another on the power play, as the Hawks took the game 5-4.

What those wins over Erin and Penetang mean for Caledon, combined with a Schomberg Cougars loss in their only matchup of the week, is a deeply impactful shakeup of league standings.

For the first time this season, the Hawks are better than eighth in the nine-team league, climbing above the Shamrocks, Kings and Cougars into fifth place.

Along with the goal-scoring prowess of the team's top forwards, the Hawks can play the onus on a newfound knack for discipline in their recent success. Caledon was in the box for only five minor penalties over the weekend's pair of games, and boast the lowest penalty minutes in the league.

If anyone happens to think that doesn't make a difference, close behind the Hawks for second lowest is the league-leading Alliston Hornets.

Caledon will welcome back-to-back home games this weekend, holding a winning record at Caledon East. The Shamrocks (7-11-1) are in town Friday, while the Orillia Terriers (2-18-1) visit Sunday.

Puck drop Friday is at 8:30 p.m.

Also looking ahead, the GMOHL has announced the rosters for the Junior C All-Star and Prospects games to be held Saturday in Mitchell. Caledon will be represented by Cafagna, McNutt, and Pitsadiotis, all to play in the All-Star competition.

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



Daniel Cafagna dekes out Penetang goalie Hunter Ferguson to score in the third period of Caledon's 5-4 win over the Kings at Caledon East. Photo by Jake Courtepatte