

Golden Hawks win first game of quarter-finals

By Brian Lockhart

When you've got to shoot, shoot!

Caledon Golden Hawks forward Steven Klomp wasted no time with fancy footwork or passing when he scored Caledon's fourth goal in the first game of the quarter-final series against the Schomberg Cougars at Caledon East Sunday.

With a slim 3-2 lead at the mid-way mark in the third period of Sunday's game, Klomp took the feed from linemate Cody Forgione just as he crossed the blue line, then fired a shot from the point that beat Schomberg goalie Taylor Ewart and gave the Hawks a 4-2 lead with eight minutes left on the clock.

In what started as a pretty evenly-matched game, the Schomberg squad took the lead with a single with just 40 seconds left on the clock in the first period.

Klomp scored Caledon's first goal at 4:44 into the second period on a powerplay, followed up by another power-play goal less than two minutes later from Daniel Cafagna.

The Cougars notched a man-advantage goal of their own at the midway mark.

With just less than two minutes left in the second period, Chris Smith scored to give the Hawks a one-goal lead going into the final 20 minutes.

It was the third period where the Hawks took control and started playing a fast game against the Schomberg squad, who seemed to be running out of gas as the game went on.

After Klomp's bullet from the point to score, the Hawks took a two-goal lead when Patrick Savella found the perfect spot and passed across the net to Derek Czech, who was waiting in the zone and placed the puck into the open side of the net.

A final empty netter gave the Hawks a 6-2 win in their first game in the quarter-final round.

"I think we match up good against Schomberg," said Hawks' head coach Sandy McCarthy prior to Sunday's game. "I think we've battled them good all year. They've been good physical games."

"As long as the refs don't ruin the games, they'll be good one or two goal games all series," he added. "They're a good hockey team, they've proved that this year. I think it's going to be a close game every game. As long as we're treated fair, we'll be in every game."

The refs have been a problem for a while, as far as McCarthy is concerned.

In their last match of the regular season, the Hawks fell 4-3 Alliston Hornets.

The teams met Saturday night (Feb. 1) for a game that was rescheduled after it was cancelled in December due to weather. The Alliston squad arrived fresh from a win the previous night over the Stayner Siskins.

As for the result, the game made no difference in the final outcome of the league standings or either team's place in the playoffs. Even so, both squads came to win.

The Hornets opened the scoring in the first period, and that was answered with a goal at the 10:45 mark by Brett Bloor.

The Hornets took advantage of a power-play opportunity late in the second period to lead 2-1.

Caledon's Klomp notched his own power-play goal two minutes later.

A third Alliston goal made it a 3-2 game going into the final 20 minutes.

The game ended with another Hornets' goal early in the third that was matched by a single from Caledon's Savella at the 15:35 mark, but the Hawks couldn't make up the difference and had to take the loss.

The Hawks will now go on to face the Schomberg Cougars in the quarter-final round of the Georgian Mid Ontario Hockey League playoffs.

At the end of the regular season, McCarthy didn't hold back when it came to summarizing the season and what he referred as questionable reffing.

"It's frustrating, trying to beat hockey teams and referees all year," he said. "I don't know what's going on with the league or what's happening, or what's been said."

"I don't have a problem with what they call, but the stuff they've let go on my boys this year is ridiculous," McCarthy added. "Some of the shots my kids have had to take - and no calls - it is so frustrating as a coach and as a player. I don't know how to keep them calm when they have to take these shots and they're not getting the calls."

This is McCarthy's first season on the Hawks' bench, after leaving the Hornets last season.

He worked hard this year, instilling discipline into the Hawks' roster, but said he's not happy about the way the penalties have been assessed against his team.

"The first five shifts of this game we should have been on the powerplay three times," he commented. "Instead, we were short

handed. I don't understand.?

?I played hockey for 30 years of my life, and I've never seen this type of refereeing in Junior level hockey in my life,? he added. ?I don't know what the hell's going on here, but something's going on and it has to change, because if it doesn't I going to make a big stink about it. What happened this season was off side.?

McCarthy is known for maintaining a pretty calm and cool demeanour when it comes to working on the bench, but his frustration is evident when it comes penalties being assessed.

Game two of the series will get underway in Schomberg tonight (Thursday)

The puck drop is scheduled for 8:30 p.m.