

Junior A Orangeville Northmen lose in Game 6 of championship series

By Brian Lockhart

The Burlington Blaze are the 2023 Ontario Junior Lacrosse League champions after a 9-6 win over the Orangeville Northmen in game six of their best-of-seven final series.

The win took place on Burlington's home floor at Central Arena.

At the end of the regular season, the Northmen were in first place with a perfect 20-0 record, including one overtime win. Burlington finished in second place with a 14-6 record.

The final series got underway on August 2, in Orangeville. Game one ended with a 12-10 Burlington win.

Game 2, on August 4, saw the Northmen have a stellar third period where they scored five unanswered goals to win the game 10-6 and tie the series.

The Northmen pulled ahead in the series with a 12-11 in the third game, holding on in the third period after the Blaze put out a strong third-period effort and came within a goal of tying it up.

It was another close game in game four, and it all came down to the final period when the Burlington squad outscored the Northmen 5-4 for the period to win the game 8-7.

Tony Rose Arena saw a massive crowd in attendance when the series returned for Game 5 on August 10. The first period made all the difference in this game when the Northmen could not score in the first period but gave up three goals to trail going into the second.

The final was a 10-8 Burlington win.

This put all the pressure on the Northmen to come out on top in Game 6 to tie the series and force game seven in a final battle to see who would be the 2023 champions.

Game 6 got underway in Burlington on August 12.

The Blaze came out strong, scoring three times before the first period was half over. The Northmen had one goal from Trey Deere late in the period.

The second period had a lot of scoring, with both teams hitting the back of the net four times.

Northmen goals came from Liam Matthews and Koleton Marquis for three.

Returning for the final frame, the Northmen had their work cut out for them. They were trailing by two goals with 20 minutes left to get back into the game.

The Blaze scored to make an 8-5 game.

Orangeville's Liam Matthews got the only Northmen goal for the period.

Burlington capped off the game with a final late goal to win the game 9-6 and claim the 2023 OJLL title.

The Burlington Blaze will go on to compete for the national lacrosse Minto Cup.