

Peewee Hawks all square in Tri-County final series

By Jake Courtepatte

A pair of tough battles over the weekend has the Caledon peewee AE Hawks in a winner-take-all scenario with the Ancaster Avalanche.

The two finalists in the Tri-County championship series each won on the road, earning a 4-4 tie in the number of points, with either team needing just one win to clinch.

After sweeping their way through the Dundas Blues, Stoney Creek Warriors, and Orangeville Flyers in round-robin play, Caledon opened the penultimate series with a 4-3 win in Caledon East last Monday.

They experienced their first loss of the Tri-County playoffs in the second game, setting up a tie-breaking third match back in Caledon East Friday.

The game was a goaltenders' battle from start to finish, with Caledon's Nicholas Barbuto going toe-to-toe with his Ancaster counterpart. Caledon came close to opening the scoring in the first, thanks to Peter Tullio, whose backhand on a breakaway barely caught the shoulder of the Ancaster goalie.

Barbuto was really challenged in the second, when the Hawks were down two men for more than a minute of play. They kept the game scoreless by keeping Ancaster to the outside, never giving the offence much to shoot at.

In a situation where it seemed the first goal would be the game winner, Barbuto stacked the pads to make a highlight-reel save in the opening minute of the third on a shot from the hashmarks.

Disaster seemed to strike with just more than four minutes left on the clock, when the Hawks were caught not paying attention on a change and were forced to the penalty kill. It was actually Caledon that would get the best chance on the kill, with Tullio speeding past two defenders for his second breakaway of the game, only to be stopped again on an impressive save.

The game headed to overtime in a scoreless tie, and would remain scoreless for the first seven minutes, until Ancaster managed to beat Barbuto over his glove with little time left on the clock.

On the ropes for the fourth in Ancaster Monday, the Hawks finally solved their scoring woes, besting the Avalanche 3-1 to once again tie the series.

The Peewee Hawks are the last Caledon organization standing, with the bantam AEs and minor midget AAs bowing out of their respective Tri-County finals late last week.

The fifth game was set for last night (Wednesday) in Caledon East following press time, while a sixth game is scheduled for Friday night back in Ancaster.



The Caledon peewee AE Hawks are battling the Ancaster Avalanche in the Tri-County championship series. Photo by Jake Courtepatte