

Polaczek leads Golden Hawks to 4-1 win over Midland Flyers

By **Jim Stewart**

The Caledon Golden Hawks ushered in 2024 with an emphatic 4-1 win against their North Carruthers Division rival Midland Flyers on Friday night.

Caledon leading scorer Patrick Polaczek tallied a pair of goals—his sixteenth and seventeenth of the PJHL campaign—and Tyler Von Dehn and Liam Noonan scored one goal each to lead the Golden Hawks to their tenth victory in front of 150 fans at the North Simcoe Sports and Recreation Complex.

The Golden Hawks jumped out to a 2-0 lead in the first period in Midland.

Von Dehn—with assists from Sebastian Byrne and Noonan—opened the scoring at 14:10.

Four minutes later, Polaczek fired the puck past Flyers' netminder Owen Moreau to give the visitors a two-goal lead heading into the intermission. Nicholas Volpe earned his fourteenth assist of the season on Polaczek's team-leading sixteenth.

After a scoreless middle frame, Midland defenseman Dominik Stoikos—the PJHL Third Star of the Game—pulled the Flyers to within a goal three minutes into the third period.

The Golden Hawks clung to their narrow 2-1 lead for sixteen minutes of clean, hotly-contested hockey during which only one minor penalty was called.

Polaczek's unassisted empty net goal with 85 seconds left on the clock gave Caledon some much-needed breathing space. Noonan—assisted by Ethan Serenko—beat Moreau sixteen seconds later to provide the three-goal margin of victory for the visitors.

Caledon netminder Chad Walker turned aside 15 of 16 shots to raise his save percentage to .920 and rack up the win. Von Dehn and Polaczek earned First and Second Stars of the Game, respectively, as voted on by PJHL staff.

The 7th-place Golden Hawks improved their record to 10-17-1-2 with the victory while the cellar-dwelling Flyers fell to 2-25-2. Caledon will host the 3rd-place Schomberg Cougars—winners of six of their last eight games—on Saturday, January 13 at 8 p.m., and the much-improved 5th-place Penetang Kings on Sunday, January 14, at 2:30 p.m. at the Mayfield Recreation Complex.