

Cougars knocked out in game 7

By Robert Belardi

The Junior C Schomberg Cougars hockey club were eliminated in the first round of the playoffs, in seven games against the Orillia Terriers. It was a well-fought series. Last Thursday, the Cougars returned home to Schomberg to defend their territory in game six. In front of a warm crowd in the Trisan Centre, it was to every hockey lover, arguably, the best game of the season the Cougars played all year. This one had you at the edge of your seat. Both clubs could not open the scoring in the first period. With the Cougars dominating the Terriers in every facet of the game, it was only a matter of time before the boys could sneak one in. At the beginning of the second period, on the power play, Quinn Godfrey's point shot was saved by Zach Levac. The goaltender could not control the shot and there was Connor Childerhose to pot the first goal in for his fifth of the playoffs. Shortly after, it was the Terriers' turn to try to get on the board. Owen King stepped to take a penalty shot mid-way through the period that Cougars' goaltender Curtis Boothe, had no issues turning aside. He was on fire all night, making save after save for the boys. Head Coach Brett Delmas said he put Boothe in the game to change things up instead of Alex Surzycia, adding on, the Cougars have been happy with both goaltenders. It was also in this period, when the tensions began to rise, especially after Terriers forward Jacob Linzner crashed into Boothe on the breakaway. It didn't sit well with the Cougars, nor the fan base. Towards the end in the final minutes, the Cougars penalty kill showed off what they have in store offensively. With the man short, Spencer Ripley and Harris Goan broke free on a two-on-one. Ripley slipped the puck through the defenceman across to Goan who buried his first goal of the post-season. It was also Goan's first game of the playoffs, since being sidelined with a knee injury he suffered in practice weeks prior. Goan added another goal in the third period on the power play. He's been eager to play since being sidelined and he shared what the mentality was all throughout this game. "I love being physical. When I came back I just wanted to hit them as much as I could. We didn't give them that much time and space," explained Goan, saying the boys were loose on the sticks and played with a lot of confidence. For as much as the offensive mentality was staying loose, defensively the Cougars had some work to do. They hit hard on the boards, frustrated the Terriers and wore them down all night. "Defensive responsibilities come first," said Delmas, something he has preached all series. "They actually executed tonight. I'll tell ya, it's strange what a player will do when you tell them this will be their last game." For the final game seven, the Cougars marched into the Terriers' edifice, to be greeted by 567 home fans in attendance. The boys were blanked 6-0 in their final game of the year. It has been from all points, a stellar playoff series. Although losing by six seems daunting and you might think the team didn't play well, the Cougars outshot the Terriers 36-34. It seemingly came down to execution. It could be luck too. The team leaves the season behind with their heads held high.