

Cougars shut out Kings, lose ground on Golden Hawks

By Jake Courtepatte

The Junior C Schomberg Cougars earned their first win in almost three weeks last Wednesday, but were effectively shut down by the team chasing them in the Georgian Mid-Ontario Hockey League on Sunday.

Heading into their contest with the Penetang Kings last Wednesday, the Cougars were riding a three-game losing streak. They made sure to put an end to that with a 37-shot performance, with Evan Woodhead, Tanner Smith, and Justin Formenton finding the back of the net on the power play. Mike Elia added an even-strength tally for a 4-0 blanking of the Kings.

Vince Michelizzi earned the shutout, his first for the Cougars while stopping all 28 shots he faced.

Hawks soar

With the streaking Caledon Golden Hawks hot on their tail, Schomberg headed to Caledon East Arena on Sunday to try to stave off their hot offence.

It was a defensive battle in the first period, with each side earning only one good failed attempt. At the 10-minute mark, Caledon's Tyler Whitten was sprung on a breakaway, but was stopped by Michelizzi and fanned on a big rebound.

At the other end, Kiefer McIntosh sprung a streaking Carter LeRoux with under two minutes to go in the period, who cut through the defense before ringing one off the crossbar.

Caledon finally opened the scoring mid-way through the second period, when Avery Rodriguez potted a wrist shot from the slot to give the home side a 1-0 advantage.

Schomberg's J.P. Crescenzi countered with an almost identical goal a few minutes later on a four-minute power play.

Formenton had a chance to put the Cougars ahead on the next shift, but fanned on a deke to his backhand on a breakaway.

Caledon opened up a lead early in the third, with Christian Mariconda scoring just 26 seconds into the period, and Matt Magliozzi doubling the lead by catching Michelizzi out of position just two minutes later.

The Cougars wouldn't recover, eventually falling 4-2 after a goal from Derek Neilly and surrendering an empty-netter.

With the loss, the Cougars now sit in a dead tie with the Hawks, both owning a 5-8-1 record. Their 11 points are good for only second-last in the GMOHL standings, ahead of only the Orillia Terriers, winners of one game so far this season.

On a high note, Schomberg continues to be one of the best disciplined teams in the league, putting up the second-lowest amount of penalty minutes. That puts them ahead of only the Hawks, as you can expect a low-strung rematch between the two this Thursday at the Trisan Centre.

After that it's a tough weekend for the Cougars, who visit the first-place Alliston Hornets on Friday and host the third-place Huntsville Otters on Saturday.

For stats, schedules, and more information, visit www.schombergcougars.com.