

Minor bantam Knights the last hope for YSHL championship

By Jake Courtepatte

And then there was one.

With the elimination of the Minor Midget NobleKing Knights from the York-Simcoe postseason over the weekend, the minor bantams remain the last team standing from the organization.

An undefeated run by the minor bantams in their round robin series with the East Gwillimbury Eagles and Newmarket Redmen set up a semifinal first-to-six points series with the Orillia Terriers, who surprised the Knights with a 2-1 win in game one.

NobleKing rebounded to take the next three games in a row, by scores of 5-4, 3-2, and 5-3, to earn their spot in this week's YSHL championship series.

The minor midgets actually took a 5-3 lead in points heading into their game four match-up with the Newmarket Redmen, needing just a tie over the final two games to book their championship ticket.

Unfortunately it was the schedule that worked against them, with game four set for the Thursday of March Break. Only six skaters took to the ice at Magna Centre in Newmarket for the Knights, who implemented a defensive shutdown strategy to attempt to keep their players rested.

Matthew Plasa was stellar in the first period between the pipes for the Knights, eventually beaten with just two minutes left in the first by a fresh-legged Redman on a rush off the bench.

Growing more exhausted throughout the game, the Knights eventually fell 7-0, bringing the series to a fifth and deciding game on Sunday afternoon.

This time the score was much tighter, but Newmarket still came out on top 3-2.

The minor bantams, meanwhile, move on to face the Aurora Tigers in the YSHL championship. The puck dropped in game one Tuesday in Aurora (results unavailable at press time), with the series shifting to Nobleton Arena for game two.

Schedules can be found at www.noblekingminorhockey.com.