

Bantam Red Wings take consolation final in home tournament

By Jake Courtepatte

It was a successful weekend for the home squads at Schomberg Minor Hockey's annual Novice/Bantam Red and White Tournament. Fourteen teams from across Ontario, including one for each division to represent the home town Red Wings, converged on the Trisan Centre for glory at the under-9 and under-15 levels.

The Novice Red Wings were a favourite to take the championship, going undefeated in regular season play so far this year sporting a 9-0-4 record.

The tournament proved to be their biggest challenge of the year, however, when they lost their opening match up 3-2 to the East Lambton Eagles.

But the Wings bounced back with a pair of wins over their divisional opponents, cruising to a 7-1 win over the Honeywood Hurricanes and a 7-2 win over the Norwich Nighthawks to close out round robin play.

That set up a rematch with the Eagles for the novice championship, after the Eagles went a perfect 3-0 in the other division.

The home squad came out determined to not allow history to repeat itself, but despite a number of chances in the first period they trailed 1-0 at intermission.

Mid-way through the second, they came within inches of tying it when the puck sat on the goal line after an Eagles player tipped it on his own net.

A few minutes later, Pax Degli-Angeli made a nice move around three Eagles skaters but couldn't beat the goaltender in alone. The Wings headed to the third still down by one.

It was two minutes into the final frame when they found the equalizer, a pretty one off the stick of Justin Caruk who broke in alone cutting across the net before tapping it into a yawning cage.

Unfortunately for Schomberg, the elation didn't last long. East Lambton retook the lead minutes later on a nice wrist shot to the top corner.

Three penalties in a row for body checking put the nail in the coffin for the Wings, although they came close in the final 10 seconds when the puck slid under the Eagles goaltender just wide of the post.

In bantam action, the Red Wings started off strong walking over their divisional competitors the Chatsworth Rebels and South Muskoka Bears, 6-0 and 8-1 respectively.

They met the Mitchell Meteors to determine tops in the division, and who would advance to the championship game.

Mitchell defeated Schomberg 4-1, sending the Wings to face the Newmarket Redmen in the consolation final.

Cameron Kokelj led the Wings in a game that was never really close, notching two goals to capture the Tier 2 final by a score of 4-0.

In the Bantam 'A' final, the Meteors beat out the Listowel Cyclones.

For full tournament info, check out www.schombergminorhockey.com.