

Macomb Daily 12-27-11

Lakers blank Tars to reach finals of own tournament

Will play Monroe in finals today

By Paul Harris

Special to The Macomb Daily

Anchor Bay could not handle St. Clair Shores Unified's trio of forwards Tommy Guzzardo, Joe Vitale and defenseman Michael DiFranco on Monday night.

H.S. Boys Hockey

They had three points each for a combined nine to lead the Lakers to a 4-0 win over the Tars in a semifinal of the St. Clair Shores Unified Hockey Holiday Classic at the St. Clair Shores Civic Arena.

SCS Unified will play Monroe in the championship game at 8 p.m. today. Monroe defeated Fraser 6-3 to advance.

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Macomb Daily photo by David S. Angell

Anchor Bay goalie Jeff Wilssens (30) makes a save against St. Clair Shores Unified as teammates Alex Baker (4) and Adam Koleski go down to try and block the shot. The Tars fell to the Lakers, 4-0.

LAKERS: Reach finals of tourney with 4-0 win

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Anchor Bay and Fraser will play in the consolation game at 5:30 p.m.

Guzzardo had two goals and an assist, Vitale a goal and two assists and DiFranco three assists.

"I think it was our forecheck (that was the difference)," said Lakers' coach Russ DiCristofaro, whose team improved to 6-1-1. "The kids were relentless on the forecheck. They didn't give Anchor Bay a chance to breathe out there."

The proof of that statement is that Lakers' goalie Joe Sedrowski had to make only 11 saves for the shutout.

"We just didn't have enough shots," said Tars' coach Mel Rettell. "... You're not going to win many games with that amount of shots."

On the other hand, Anchor Bay goalie Jeff Wilssens saw plenty of rubber, making 46 saves.

"I thought their goalie was outstanding," DiCristofaro said. "The kid was fantastic."

Anchor Bay is 3-5.

St. Clair Shores Unified had the territorial advantage for most of the first period as the Lakers spent a lot of time in the Tars' zone, forcing Wilssens to make a few saves. But SCS Unified couldn't beat the senior Anchor Bay goaltender until only 1:22 remained in the period, when Guzzardo

banged one in off a goal-mouth scramble to give the Lakers a 1-0 lead. Vitale and DiFranco, who took the original shot from the left point, got the assists.

Vitale had an outstanding chance in the game's first two minutes after going around two Anchor Bay players, but Wilssens stopped Vitale from point-blank range.

"They're hard to get around," said Rettell about Guzzardo, Vitale and DiFranco.

St. Clair Shores Unified scored three times in the second period, all coming from its specialty teams.

Guzzardo got his second of the game with a shorthanded effort 5:42 into the middle period. He took a cross-ice pass from Vitale and beat Wilssens from the right circle. DiFranco also got the second assist on that goal.

Justin Misiak's power-play goal with 8:25 left in the second made it 3-0. He scored by breaking in off the left wing and putting it in the net from the bottom of the left circle. He was knocked into the backboards just as he shot the puck. His brother Brandon Misiak and Austin Buchholtz got the assists.

Vitale then picked up a power-play goal with 2:47 remaining in the second period. He put a puck in off of a goal-mouth pile up. DiFranco and Guzzardo got the assists.