

Midget B Bancroft Jets advance to eastern loop finals

The Bancroft I.D.A./Canadian Tire Midget B Girls Jets travelled to Frankford on Saturday afternoon to face off against the Cold Creek Comets in their last two qualifying games of their OWSA Provincial playdowns. The Jets played the Comets in a home-and-home "do-or-die" scenario in the tightly contested All-Ontario qualifying series. Bancroft, Cold Creek, Keene and Peterborough are all trying to be the top seed to represent their division at the OWSA Championship Finals in April. The Jets jumped out to a 1-0 lead midway through the first period with Kenndal Marsden roofing a snap shot, high blocker, after Danielle Sunstrum forced a turnover behind the Comet net that Katie Funk gathered up to feed Marsden in the slot for the opening goal. Bancroft continued to pressure Cold Creek but neither team could change the scoreboard with a scoreless second period.

The Jets took a 2-0 lead early in the third when Ella Hedley stuffed home a loose puck in the crease after Kelsey Maracle forced another turnover in the Comet end that Sydney Feir fired on the net. Both teams challenged the remainder of the game but could not change the final score of the 2-0 shut-out win with Katie Hoover's stellar play.

The Jets hosted the Comets back in Bancroft on Sunday afternoon in the last game of their OWSA Provincial playdowns qualifying bid. Bancroft needed a win to try and secure a berth at the all-Ontario championship finals along with some help from the other remaining match-ups left in the playdown series. After a scoreless first period, the Jets suffered the dreaded "TSN turning point" early in the second period when their go-ahead goal was called back. The non-goal seemed to stall the Jets and allow the Comets to get back into the game after the Jets had held the bulk of the scoring chances to that point in the game. Midway through the second period Cold Creek scored what proved to be the deciding difference maker when they forced a turnover behind the Jets' net and found a trailing Comet with a quick pass to break the goose egg tie. Cold Creek

used the 1-0 lead to continue their pressure on the short-staffed, depleted Jets' roster with two players out of the line-up and took a 2-0 commanding lead early in the third period after a bouncing puck turned into a two-on-one attack that the Comets capitalized on. The Jets pulled their goalie to try and find a way to answer back but some more back-breaking bounces went to Cold Creek who put the game out of reach with a 3-0 empty netter. The loss ends the Jets' bid to advance to the OWSA provincial finals in mid-April. On Monday night in Bancroft, the Jets started their LLFHL Eastern Loop Finals against the Keene Wolverines in their four-point series to claim the first place finish and advance to the LLFHL "Best of the Best" Championship weekend in early April. After a scoreless first period, the Jets opened the scoring early in the second period when Kenndal Marsden forced a turnover at the Keene blue line and then beat the Wolverine tender with a quick snap shot low blocker to take the 1-0 lead. Bancroft continued to pressure Keene and midway through the period, capitalized on a power play as Danielle Sunstrum stuffed home a rebound to give the Jets a 2-0 lead.

Keene never gave up and caused a turnover of their own in the Bancroft end, getting on the scoreboard with a high slot shot that deflected into the back of the net. The Wolverines continued their aggressive pressure and early in the third tied the game at 2-2 with a wrister from the point that went high blocker. Both teams tried to get a go-ahead goal in the hopes of taking the first two points of the series but neither squad could break the tie. The tie game means the series will go the full three games. Games two and three will be in Keene, Tuesday, March 22, at 7:30 p.m., and then in Wilberforce on Wednesday, March 23 at 7 p.m. Stay focused, Jets, and get ready to ramp up your aggressive play in the next two games. You will need to win the little battles as you challenge Keene to compete for the next three points to take this LLFHL Eastern Loop Final series. Your team effort will determine your success!

Submitted by Dan Marsden