

Shield doubles up opponents during weekend games

BY BRENT COOPER

The best way to describe the past weekend for the South Muskoka Shield is in two words ... double digits.

South Muskoka pushed its perfect record in the Greater Metro Junior A Hockey League to 6-0 with a pair of lopsided wins, a 10-5 defeat of the Rama Aces at home Friday night and an 11-5 road shellacking of the woeful Bracebridge Blues on Saturday.

The Shield joins the 8-0 Toronto Attack with flawless starts in the GMHL to date. South Muskoka is in third place in the North Division with 12 points, but has three games in hand on the division-leading Temiscaming Titans (7-1-0-1) and two games on the second-place Seguin Huskies (7-1).

The game against the red-hot Aces – winners of four straight – was close after one period, with both sides tied 1-1. Rama took a 2-1 lead early in the second, but it was all South Muskoka after that, as the Shield rattled off five unanswered goals in the middle frame to take a commanding 6-2 lead into the third.

The scoring was more evenly distributed in the third, with the host Shield counting four tallies to three for the Aces.

The loss dropped Rama's record to 4-3, good for fifth place in the North Division.

Braden Smith led the Shield offence with six points, including two goals. Also chipping in with a pair were Ladislav Garay, Jeff Whitwell and Michael Gambacorta. Goalie Tomas Gbur made 22 saves for his second straight win.

Bracebridge had been singing the "Blues" prior to Saturday's game. Having lost their head coach just the week before, the Bracebridge Blues came into the game with a 2-8 record, well back of their visitors in the North Division standings.

But the team's fans were not blue six seconds into the game when Bracebridge scored to take a 1-0 lead.

Four straight Shield markers followed that goal, as South Muskoka built up a 4-1 lead after 20 minutes.

The Blues tried to cut into the lead with a goal 1:27 into the second, but like the first period, four more South Muskoka goals were counted to drive the score up to 8-2 after two periods.

Both sides exchanged goals in the third with three goals each to make the final score 11-5.

Garay scored three times with two from Braden Smith. Trevor Smith, Simon Hatt, Harlan Hayden, Gambacorta, Steele Drenning and Zachary Wright had singles. Ryan Sandrin turned aside 33 Bracebridge shots for his third win in as many starts.

Braden Smith's weekend output pushed



AT THE NET: No. 93 Braden Smith led the Shield offence with six points, including two goals. (Photo by Richard Coburn)

him into a tie with the Toronto Blue Ice Jets' Dalton Barnes for the league's scoring lead. Smith has 28 points in six games (12 goals, 16 assists) while Barnes has the same point total in 10 games.

Smith is also tied for the league lead in goals with 12. Luca D'angelo of the Jets and Yannick Aubé of Sturgeon Falls also have 12 goals.

South Muskoka has one game this coming holiday weekend. The North Division-leading Titans will visit Gravenhurst Friday at 8 p.m. to take on the Shield.



MEET THE SHIELD

Harlan Hayden is from Delaware



HAYDEN

Harlan Hayden comes to us from south of the 49th, his hometown is Wilmington, Delaware. The 21-year-old stands six feet tall and weighs 185 pounds. He plays forward and shoots left.

There is no doubt Hayden has hockey in his blood. He began playing at the age of six and he admires Rod Brind 'Amour of the Philadelphia Flyers.

While playing for the Delaware Ducks he won the Tier 2 National Skills competition. This is Hayden's second season in the GMHL and we are happy he decided to play with the Shield this year. Of the games he has played he has proven himself to be a goal scorer.

In his spare time he likes to relax and hang out with his team members.

In the future he would like to play hockey in college or professionally or coach.

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Park

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