

AYR & DISTRICT SPORTS

The Centennials will face K-W Siskins in first round of playoffs

by Dennis Millward
Centennials 2 - Listowel Cyclones 3
 The Centennials ended their regular season with a hard fought loss to the first place Cyclones Friday night in Listowel.

The Cens played the game with three lines (A.P. Jackson Cunningham from Ayr fit right in) and three defence pairings, were out shot 54-40 and started back-up keeper Nick Barker (he was stellar stopping 51 shots) but lost by just one 3-2. The outcome had no bearing on where Ayr would finish in the standings (5th) but the Cens have learned how to win and despite being without so many regulars they came very close to extending their streak.

Barker showed he was dialed in early denying a point blank shot 3:20 into the game.

Ayr got on the board first scoring at 8:21 in. Nathan McHattie from the left point sent it into the right corner. Jack Weiser was first to the loose puck and sent it to Austin Keleher who was all alone in the slot. A quick deke in close then a backhander that beat Grimes on the glove side. Listowel tied it with 9:11 remaining in the period when a pass found a Cyclone alone at the back door. The score was 1-1 after 20.

Listowel took their first lead 1:17 into the second with another back door pass on a 2 on 1. It was 2-1 after 40.

Ayr drew even 2:19 into the final frame. Reid Forster took a shot from the right point that



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SQUEEZE PLAY - A Centennials player is undeterred by a couple of Stratford Warriors players who try to keep him from the puck. The Centennials won the game on Thursday 3-1.

Photo by Jim Balkwill

hit a leg in front and went into the left circle. Charlie Barnes jumped in off the point and sent it into a crowd in front and Blair Krawchyk snapped the loose puck in from the blue ice.

Listowel regained the lead with 4:36 left on the clock with another back door play.

The Cens had a glorious opportunity to tie it up when the

Cyclones were down two men for 1:15 with 2:57 remaining, but both teams' penalty killers were perfect on the night. Final score was 3-2.

Centennials 3 - Stratford Warriors 1
 The Centennials defeated the Stratford Warriors 3-1 Thursday, February 29th to extend their winning streak to 8 games.

Flawless goaltending at

both ends produced a scoreless first, but it wasn't without some big hits and several high danger chances.

Ayr opened the scoring 12:52 into the second. Austin Keleher won a draw to the Stratford keeper's right back to Charlie Barnes on the left point. He fired a hard low shot creating a rebound that Blake Kersey swatted at the goaltender. He was able to grab his

own rebound and tuck it in while he was below the icing line.

Ethan Kowatsch maintained the slim lead with a huge left pad save on a point blank shot from a man alone in the slot.

Ayr doubled their lead capitalizing on a power play with 2:43 remaining in the second. Daniel Berehowsky from the left wing hashmarks back to Barnes at the point. He sent it to Ryan McKellar on the right point and he walked in to the dot before sniping it in the far side. Stratford cut the lead in half 16 seconds later when a shot from the point trickled just over the line.

Congratulations to Bonnie Brown winning the \$253 50/50.

It looked as if Stratford had tied it 3:37 into the third but it was ruled Kowatsch had been interfered with so the goal was disallowed. The teams traded chances through the third but the Cens held on to the slim lead. Stratford pulled Perdue for the extra attacker with 2:29 left on the clock. With 7 seconds remaining Kowatsch directed a rebound into the corner to Jack Weiser who sent it up the left side. Kersey won the race to the puck and backhanded it in the empty net from the bottom of the circle with 2.4 left on the clock.

Playoffs next week — Jr. Hockey worth watching. Full playoff schedule was unavailable at press time but our first playoff home game will be this Thursday, March 7th against the fourth place K-W Siskins.



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Forward Blair Krawchyk works the puck in the Centennials 3-1 win over Stratford on Thursday. Krawchyk scored one of the two Centennials goals on Saturday when the first placed Listowel team edged them 3-2.

Photo by Jim Balkwill

MWC	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	PTS
y - LIS	50	38	9	1	2	79
SFD	50	31	15	4	0	66
ELM	50	32	16	0	2	66
KWS	50	29	13	4	4	66
AYR	50	30	19	1	0	61
CAM	50	21	25	3	1	46
BFD	50	11	37	2	0	24
CAB	50	5	44	0	1	11