

Silver Stick Champions

Story and photos c/o Apsley Minor Hockey

The Apsley Flames Peewee team won the International Silver Stick Regional Qualifier in Haliburton and Minden the weekend of December 2nd and 3rd. The team will now advance to the International Silver Stick Finals in Niagara Falls and area January 12th-14th.

On Saturday, December 2nd the Peewee Flames faced-off against the Penetang Flames in Minden. Apsley dominated the game but didn't score until the third period. Keagan Perks scored first for the Apsley Flames, assisted by Owen Plunkett and Ethan Wilkes. The two teams continued to battle hard with Penetang pulling their goalie late in the third. Owen Plunkett scored the empty net goal with helpers from Ethan Wilkes and Tyler McMann. Apsley ended up winning 2-0. Cameron Wood earned the shutout for the Flames.

In their second game, Apsley took on the Beeton Stingers. Will Kirkham scored for Apsley, assisted by Kolt Covell. Again, Apsley seemed to dominate but didn't score their second goal until the third period. Tyler McMann scored for Apsley, assisted by Callum Perks. With two minutes left in the game, Cael Osborne sealed the deal by scoring the Flame's third goal, assisted by Connor Lockerbie and Tyler McMann. Apsley won 3-0 and Cameron Wood earned his second shutout of the tournament.

The Flames completed their third and final round robin game with the Temiskaming Shores Puckhounds. Connor Lockerbie scored for Apsley, assisted by Austin Shee and Gordie Garrett. Mason Harris played solid on defense and Abby Eastman never stopped digging. Apsley tied Temiskaming 1-1, earning them top spot in their pool. It was later discovered that the Puckhounds were a rep team and they were *disqualified* from the tournament. The Apsley Flames advanced to the semi-finals, crossing over to play the 2nd place team from the other pool.

On Sunday, December 3rd in Haliburton, Apsley competed against the Midland Centennials in a semi-final game. Apsley opened up the game with a goal in the first thirty seconds. Ethan Wilkes scored, assisted by Keagan Perks and Owen Plunkett. Beeton scored later in the first but Tyler McMann answered them right away by scoring again for Apsley. The game continued back and forth with both teams facing elimination. Landon Sayers secured Apsley's fate by scoring in the second period assisted by Ethan Wilkes. The game continued and Apsley held onto their lead. The final score was 3-1, sending the Peewee Flames to the championship game.

The final match of the International Silver Stick Regional Qualifier began with the Apsley Flames and the Ennismore Eagles lined up on their respective blue lines and the playing of O'Canada. Ennismore caught Apsley by surprise by

scoring the first goal of the game. Noah Olauson tied it up for Apsley in the second period with help from Connor Lockerbie. The Eagles scored early in the third, giving them a 2-1 lead over Apsley. The Flames played their hearts out and as the clock ran down, hope was almost all but lost for the Flames. With less than a minute left, Apsley pulled their goalie. Before the Flames' 6th attacker even entered Ennismore's end, Hayden Rosborough made a heroic shot from the point with only 33.3 seconds left in the game and evened the score! Regulation ended and the game went into overtime.

The first overtime round consisted of three minutes of 3 on 3, sudden victory overtime. Cameron Wood stood on his head and made some marvelous saves for Apsley. The nail bitter three minutes ended and the second round began, which consisted of two minutes of 2 on 2, sudden victory overtime. Apsley made changes on the fly and at the whistles through both rounds of overtime, sending out different players and giving them rests in between shifts. The two minutes were almost up and the next round would have consisted of one minute of 1 on 1 sudden victory overtime. As the seconds wound down, Callum Perks carried the puck out of Apsley's end and through the neutral zone. Keagan Perks picked it up in Ennismore's end. With 3.7 seconds left, as dubbed by one of the Flames' parents, he scored the Golden Goal!

The team's success was just that - contributions from every player on the team throughout the entire tournament. The Apsley Flames Peewee team was well supported by their families, friends and an excellent coaching staff consisting of Josh Perks, Mike Shee, Scott Wilkes, Trevor Plunkett, Dean McMann and Barb Sayers. The team will go on to compete in the International Silver Stick Finals hosted by the Pelham Minor Hockey Association in mid January. They will face other regional champions, including teams from Ontario and the United States.

For more information about the Apsley Minor Hockey Association, their schedules and scores, please visit our website at www.apsleyminorhockey.com. **Pictured below:** Hayden Rosborough and Will Kirkham pose with the banner won by the hard work and dedication of their whole team. Congratulations players!

The ISS Championship Tournament features 102 teams in 11 divisions from Squirt to Midget. Apsley's team will play in an eight team division.

