

**WWSHL Playoff Finals
Winnipeg Free Press Division B**

**MILES MAC BUCKEYES v CSHC HUSKIES
MARCH 9, 2016**

After a sweetly rendered version of O' Canada sung by Miles Mac Assistant Captain Shayla McMillan, the two teams got down to business. Shayla would be "heard" in a different way before the night was through. The game was fast, intense, marked by numerous offensive chances at each end. For Sturgeon Heights #10 Assistant Captain Anna Meier asserted herself with slashing attacks which the Buckeyes struggled to control. Only stellar play by Miles Mac goaltender #35 Grace Fedirchuk kept the Huskies off the board in the early going. The Buckeyes responded led by #17 Assistant Captain Rebecca Thevenot who forced Huskies goaltender #35 Emily McDonald to make several good saves. Then Anna combined with her teammate #20 Danielle Chobotar for the best chance so far. Anna fired a shot which Grace stopped but couldn't control and the rebound was fired instantly by Danielle. Somehow Grace got her right pad on the puck and the score stayed knotted at zero. Something had to give and eventually it was the Buckeyes. Anna intercepted a pass near her own blue line and sped down the ice on a clear breakaway. Her shot was post and in and with the TSN worthy goal, she staked her team to a 1-0 lead. The Buckeyes responded led by Rebecca who repeatedly penetrated deep into the Huskies' zone only to be turned aside by Emily each time. Anna responded for the Huskies but was checked by Buckeyes #4 Captain Kali Solmundson who led a rush passing to her teammate #2 Melissa Brown for a shot forcing Emily to make an excellent save. With less than a minute to go and the Buckeyes pressing, Sturgeon Heights #17 Jamie Pischke was called for high-sticking. The Buckeyes had two good chances from Kali and #3 Mikaela Robinson but still the puck stayed out. The buzzer went to end the first period with the Buckeyes still on the powerplay. Shots on goal in the first, Miles Mac 6, Sturgeon Heights 6.

In the second period with the Buckeyes still on the powerplay, a slap shot from Mikaela was turned aside by Emily. Sturgeon Heights cleared but soon the Buckeyes were back led by Kali. She passed to Rebecca who skated right in on goal but fired just wide to the blocker side. With Sturgeon Heights back at full strength the teams traded chances. Finally Mikaela picked up the puck behind her own net and skated through the neutral zone gathering speed. She swept down the right wing and cut in on goal. The Huskies defenders collided with each other in a vain attempt to match Mikaela's pace and the speedy Buckeyes' defender fired short-side. The puck caromed off the post, hit the back of Emily's leg and then the back of the net. With a goal equal on the Richter scale to Anna's, Mikaela had drawn her team even, 1-1. From there the intensity of the game ramped up and appeared to turn in the Buckeyes favour as Jamie was sent off for elbowing. With the Buckeyes on the powerplay, it was the Huskies led by Anna who created the chances forcing Grace to freeze the puck. The Huskies Captain #3 Meghan Hodgins won the faceoff and passed to Danielle. Her shot was stopped by Grace but the rebound led to a scramble in front of the Miles Mac goal and Anna was first on the puck firing it home. With the shorthanded goal Sturgeon Heights had regained the lead, 2-1. With time winding down on the penalty and the period, Rebecca led a rush passing to #15 Meghan McDonald. She in turn fed the puck to Buckeyes #28 Chase Kavanagh in perfect position by the weak-side post but the play failed to click. With Sturgeon Heights back at full strength, Anna had one more chance but the period ended with no further change in the score. Shots on goal in the second, Miles Mac 7, Sturgeon Heights 7.

The third period lasted all of 7 seconds before Danielle was given penalty for hooking. Back on the powerplay the Buckeyes dominated but couldn't penetrate the Huskies' PK. The teams traded chances and then with momentum seeming to turn in favour of the Buckeyes, Mikaela was called for tripping. However the Buckeyes showed they could be just as good on the PK and an excellent play by Chase forced Sturgeon Heights #14 Sophie Stuart to take an interference penalty only 21 seconds in. During the ensuing 4x4 the Buckeyes drew another penalty, this time against Kali for tripping. With the Huskies enjoying a 4x3 advantage, Anna led an end-to-end rush skating in at warp speed but Grace made the save. Moments later Mikaela exited the penalty box and the Buckeyes, grimly determined, pressed the play into the Huskies' zone. Chance after chance was turned aside by Emily but finally Kali led an end-to-end rush ending up behind the Huskies net. She passed the puck to Melissa whose one-timer was in the back of the net before Emily could react, 2-2. With 4 minutes left and overtime looming, both teams tried to end it. Miles Mac tried a bit too hard and got caught when Anna picked up the puck and headed in 2-on-1 flanked by Danielle. Using her teammate as a decoy, Anna fired a hard shot but Grace made the save. The teams traded chances by Kali for the Buckeyes and Danielle for the Huskies but both goalies stood tall and the third period ended with nothing decided. Shots on goal in the third Miles Mac 8 for a three period total of 21, Sturgeon Heights 10 for a three period total of 23.

The teams then proceeded to a 15 sudden death overtime. No one was in the mood for cautious play and there were glorious chances at either end. For the Buckeyes Meghan intercepted a clearing pass and skated right into the slot. Her shot was labelled but Emily with a brilliant glove-save kept her team alive. On the next play Mikaela led a rush but was checked leading to a 3-on-1 for the Huskies, however an ill-timed pass put the play offside and the Buckeyes averted disaster. Finally with the clock nearing the 8 minute mark the Buckeyes controlled. Shayla (remember our anthem singer) cradled the puck in the high slot. She fired but the shot was blocked by a Huskies defender. The puck came back onto Shayla's stick and she fired again. Again blocked. Again onto Shayla's stick. Again fired. This time the puck got through and was stopped by Emily but she couldn't control the rebound. #44 Brittney Lueck had a crack at it and finally the puck was fired home by Mikaela for her second goal of the night as the Buckeyes' bench emptied and their fans went wild. Shots on goal in overtime, Miles Mac 2 for a total of 23, Sturgeon Heights 4 for a total of 27.

The three game stars were:

1st Star – Buckeyes Mikaela Robinson

2nd Star – Huskies Emily McDonald

3rd Star – Huskies Danielle Chobotar

Many thanks to Dustin Douglas and the girls of Springfield, Amy Therrien, Lane Kostiuk and Dana Schultz who worked the desk and scored an impressive \$229.00 in 50/50 sales. Game 2 goes Monday, March 14th at 7:00 p.m.