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Terriers claim North Carruthers Division championship with overtime win

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The Orillia Terriers are the North Carruthers Division champions after an overtime win in Game Five of their best-of-seven championship series against the Alliston Hornets.

Orillia will now enter the Provincial Schmalz Cup playoffs as one of eight Provincial Junior Hockey League Division championship teams.

The final series was a real upset for Alliston fans. The Hornets finished the regular season in first place with a 40-2 record, then went on to sweep their quarter-final playoff series in four games over the Muskoka Bears.

They continued with a clean record by eliminating the Penetang Kings in four games in the semi-final round.

Orillia had a strong season, finishing in second place with a 35-7 record, however, they lost all six games they played against Alliston during the regular season.

The Terriers eliminated the Midland Flyers in the quarter-finals, then went on to knock out the Stayner Siskins in five games in the semi-final round to earn the right to advance to the final against the Alliston Hornets.

Game One of the championship series got underway at the New Tecumseth Recreation Centre in Alliston on March 21.

Alliston fans were shocked when the Hornets failed to score and were shut out 3-0.

The series was tied after Game Two when the Hornets won 3-2 on Terriers' home ice.

The Terriers were back in the lead with a 4-2 win in Game Three.

Game Four took place in Orillia on March 26, and the Terriers had a huge advantage in the series after winning that game 4-3.

The return to Alliston for Game Five meant the Hornets had to win or face elimination.

The Hornets took an early two-goal lead in the first period. The Terriers scored one late in the frame.

Alliston went ahead 3-1 with a goal at 1:27 into the second period.

It was a tie game when the Terriers scored twice to make it 3-3. That included a devastating short-handed goal that the Terriers scored while on a penalty kill.

The Hornets again took the lead in the third period, but a late Terriers goal tied the game at four and the teams prepared for overtime (OT).

The OT period lasted only 26 seconds when Dylan Palomaki scored on the first shot on net to win the game and give the Terriers the 2025 Division championship.

It was a big loss for Alliston fans and players who expected the squad to go on to compete at the provincial level this season.

?We played great during the regular season and we played great in the playoffs,? said Hornets head coach Jacob Bauchman after the

final loss. ?We didn't face any real adversity and that's what ended up getting to us. We didn't know how to battle through the adversity and bear down when we needed to. I'm not trying to make excuses. It happened last year as well ? no one really tested us. They [Orillia] were a different team than they were in the regular season. We didn't have the fight in us. We had three leads in that game and couldn't hang on.?

Four other PJHL Division championships have been decided.

The remaining three series will be decided this week.