

Blades rely on depth to earn win in Game 5

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first after Volpe turned over the puck. Then, with a minute left in the period, Karius banged in a rebound — the first of three Oakville power-play goals — to make it 3-0.

The 20-year-old finished tied for third on the Blades during the regular season with 20 goals but has shown even more of a scoring touch in the play-offs, when goals are supposed to be harder to come by. His pair upped his post-season total to eight, second-best in the league. And if you include his final two regular season games, Karius has 11 goals in his last 13 games.

Burlington did what it needed to — scoring early in the second period — but the Blades replied just 18

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■ *Stephen Hickey*

seconds later when Russell set up defenceman Stephen Hickey for his first of two. Hampton and Russell then blew the game wide open midway through the second as the Blades capitalized on both ends of a Cougars double minor.

"If you look at our team, all season long we haven't had anyone in the (league's) top scorers," Hickey said, "but we have confidence in all four lines. I think that's because of the depth we have. I think you really have to give kudos to them for putting a team like this together."

On an afternoon where the Blades' leading scorer, Kyle Lysaght, was held without a point, Oakville got seven goals from four players who barely averaged 10 each during the regular season.

So while the Blades had discovered how to get scoring from throughout the lineup, one thing they would like to rectify is winning at home. But this series matched two teams that look like they were constructed for the opposition's rink.

"We're a little bigger," said Blades assistant coach Matt Moore, who believes the team's size helps in Burlington's smaller rink, "but they've got a quick transition that might be geared more toward our (Olympic-sized) rink."

Oakville won all three of its games at the Sixteen Mile Sports Complex in the last round against the

Georgetown Raiders and only three of the 31 OJHL teams lost fewer games at home in the regular season, so they know they can win there.

If they did that last night, they'd be one step closer to their fourth straight trip to the league final.

NOTES: If the Cougars staved off elimination with a win last night, the deciding

Game 7 would be played tomorrow (Thursday) at Burlington's Wave Twin Rinks, beginning at 7:30 p.m... The Kingston Voyageurs, who Oakville has met in the final the last two years, advanced to the semifinals by knocking out Vaughan in five games Saturday. Wellington (3-1) and Stouffville (3-2) lead the other series.



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