

Toronto Rock falls to Swarm in overtime

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At times it felt like a playoff game in February. And if the Toronto Rock and Georgia Swarm continue to play at this level, they may face off in real ones this May.

The Swarm won the first of two regular-season meetings on Friday at the Air Canada Centre when Johnny Powless scored his second goal of the game 46 second into overtime on a shot that bounced over the top of the shoulder of Toronto goaltender Nick Rose for a 13-12 win.

That may have sent the crowd of 8,385 home disappointed, but definitely wanting more of this battle of good, young sides that battled for every ball all 60 minutes.

“There was a lot of back and forth,” Rock head coach Matt Sawyer said. “It was a classic lacrosse game. We had an opportunity to seal it at the end but we came up short.”

Georgia came out quickly. Miles Thompson scored just over a minute in with the Rock yet to touch the ball. Toronto eventually did get possession and Dan Lintner tied the game from in close.

Kieran McArdle and Turner Evans gave Toronto a lead and after Shayne Jackson scored the first shorthanded goal the Rock has conceded so far this season, McArdle added his second and Tom Schreiber scored one more to give Toronto a 5-2 lead after one.

Jordan Hall and Lyle Thompson scored for the Swarm in the second quarter. Brett Hickey replied for the Rock, giving the hosts a 6-4 lead at the half as both defences and both Rose and Swarm goaltender Mike Poulin played well early.

Stephan Leblanc opened the third-quarter scoring for the home side but Powless answered two minutes later. Then from a sharp angle and on the power play, Miles Thompson scored his second, followed by a goal from Jordan MacIntosh to tie the game. Damon Edwards ended the Swarm run off transition. Dan Lintner and Kiel Matisz then traded goals.

Miles Thompson scored his third on a nice feed from his brother Lyle, but not to be outdone, McArdle completed his hat trick a minute later to send the Rock to the fourth quarter up 10-9.

The third Thompson brother on the Swarm, Jerome, scored from in close to even the game again. Then Matisz found his way in close and beat Rose to give the Swarm a lead but Brodie Merrill found the net in transition.

With 1:01 left Sandy Chapman found Latrell Harris all alone in transition and he beat Poulin to give Toronto the lead. But seconds later, Harris took an interference call. With now two extra attackers, the Swarm tied the game with 3.2 seconds left when Jackson scored from in close to force extra time.

“That’s this league in a nutshell,” Rose said. “You think you have the game won but then they make a play to force overtime and Johnny Powless had a hell of a shot to win it.”

“We have a short turnaround before we go into Rochester. So we have to have a short memory and forget about this one.”

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