

## sports

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# Young Navy Vets' refuse to quit

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Sentinel-Review

WOODSTOCK — Give the Woodstock Navy Vets credit.

Despite their current play-off predicament, the young hockey club has refused to quit against the powerhouse Norwich Merchants. True, the Navy Vets' season is on life support trailing 2-0 in the best-of-seven series, but they've played better than the awful eight-game stretch leading into the playoffs.

“As long as Norwich is sitting back, then it controls the tempo of the game.”

Woodstock is still searching for its first lead of the series — more than one goal in a game would suffice at this point — but the Navy Vets are giving themselves a chance to win. And, at worst, that's all that can be expected from a team punching above its weight class.

In Game 1, Woodstock trailed 4-1 after two periods. Three goals in one period is a lot to ask against a team committed to defence like the Merchants, but it's a manageable deficit.

In Game 2, the Navy Vets lost

2-0. One goal would have gone right to the players' legs and given them reason to be optimistic. Who knows what would have happened after that?

If Woodstock is able to steal a game, it almost has to score the first goal and hope the Merchants come out of their defensive shell. As long as Norwich is sitting back, then it controls the tempo of the game. When the Merchants have a lead, they grind out each shift and break the spirits of their opponents.

Woodstock's roster is filled with rookies in their first play-off series, and they need something positive to build on, whether it's for the next game or the next season.

Norwich is Norwich. They've outscored Woodstock 8-1 and limited the Navy Vets' scoring chances. But it's the fact that Woodstock is still working hard in an effort to generate those chances that is encouraging.

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ELLIOT FERGUSON Sentinel-Review

Woodstock goaltender Neil Pittcock bobbles the puck as Norwich's Bryan Phillips, left, and Curtis Logan wait for the rebound during the Merchants 2-0 win Saturday night. Game 3 is tonight at Southwood Arena at 7:45 p.m.

