

## Jan. 10 Ice Hockey

### 'Stars lift Terry and Terry lifts 'Stars after passing of his famous grand dad

By Tony Piscotta

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**Jan. 10:** Senior captain John Terry is the most experienced and talented player on what is largely an inexperienced Nottingham hockey team. And while the team has struggled in terms of wins and losses, he has been a steady, positive force for the Northstars.

On Tuesday, it was the Northstars' as a team that rallied together, both to help their captain get through a tough time and team-wise to pull out a hard-fought, 3-2, win over visiting Jonathan Dayton.

"He's huge for us. He's basically the heart and soul of our team," said junior goalie Kyle O'Byrne, after Terry led the Northstars with a goal and two assists just one day after the passing of his grandfather, former Hamilton West Athletic Director and long-time teacher Lea Terry.

"Today wasn't that tough," said Terry, though the emotion in his voice said otherwise. "I have a great set of guys around me."

One "guy" who helped him focus on the game was his father, John, the youngest of Lea Terry's four children and a long-time football official and softball coach.

"He asked whether he should play or not and I asked him, 'What do you think your grandfather would want you to do?' said the elder Terry. "He said, 'He would want me to play.'"

For Northstars' head coach Alex Chis-Luca, Terry's effort was not surprising.

"We knew he was going through a hard time and our kids got behind him," Chis-Luca said. "We expected him to play because that's what his grandfather would have wanted and he played because his grandfather would have wanted it that way."

Like the Northstars, the Jonathan Dayton Bulldogs (0-8) entered the game with an inexperienced team that has struggled in its Union County league. The Bulldogs had scored just two goals in their first seven games coming into the contest.

After playing teams like Robbinsville, Paul VI, and some of the other top teams in the CVC, it took the Northstars (2-11) a while to get going.



*Bill Kriegner had Nottingham's second goal in today's 3-2 win over Jonathan Dayton (Photo by Wes "The Media Mogul" Kirkpatrick).*

"Most of our guys came out hard but then we started to slowed down to their level," said Terry.

The Northstars, after allowing an early scoring chance by Brandon Bauman, started to dominate the territorial play and put big pressure on Bulldogs' goalie Bailey Rudolph.

Rudolph recorded five saves during an early 5-on-3 advantage as Jonathan Dayton took back-to-back penalties - the sophomore twice stopped Zach Renitsky and Kevin Fuller from point-blank range.

While Dayton killed off both penalties, the Nottingham opened the scoring at 10:08 of the first period - one second after the second penalty had expired - when Renitsky tucked in a rebound after a pass by Terry. Fuller also had an assist on the play.

The Northstars again took advantage of a Bulldogs' infraction when the visitors took a penalty for interference late in the first period. Senior Bill Kriegner pounced on a rebound after Rudolph stopped Terry's initial shot and put the puck in the net for a 2-0 Nottingham lead with 1:10 left in the period. Defenseman Kyle Ballschneider also assisted on the play.

But the Bulldogs got on the board just ten seconds later when junior Robert Fiorilli took a quick pass from freshman Joe Katz and made a deke to get around Nottingham goalie Kyle O'Byrne and tuck the puck in; cutting the Nottingham lead in half.

The visitors seemed to find their legs in the second period and started to take the play to Nottingham but the Northstars' defense, and particularly O'Byrne, kept the Dayton off the scoreboard for most of the period.

"He had a rough start (at the beginning of the year) and it's tough being his first time starting but he's doing a great job," said Terry of the Northstars' junior netminder - who played goalie for the first time last season but saw little time behind graduated starter Bryan Rock. "This only helps his confidence and you can see how he's getting more confidence. He's definitely exceeding expectations."

Though he finished with just 16 saves for the game, O'Byrne made a pair of key stops on Dayton's top player, senior Jake Rudolph to start the second period, and also made a glove stop on Rudolph with 38 seconds left to preserve the win.

"I saw it all the way," said O'Byrne of the quick wrist shot that would've tied the game. "We did a great job of shutting them down at the end of the game. The whole game we did a good job."

The Northstars' third goal came at the end of the second period - again after some sustained pressure in the Bulldogs' end. Terry took the puck behind the Jonathan Dayton net and after making a pass to Matt McNeal on the point cut to the right circle, where he was able to deflect McNeal's shot from the point passed the Bulldogs' goalie.

Dayton cut the lead to 3-2 with 6.8 seconds left in the second when Fiorilli scored off of a rebound from a shot by Jason Hoen but the two teams played a scoreless third period.

While winning one hockey game doesn't turn the Northstars' fortunes around, nor erase the sense of loss felt by the Terry family, for a couple of hours both the team and its captain had something to smile about.

"It's been pretty tough (this year)," said Terry, when asked about how the Northstars' maintain their spirit despite frequently being over-matched. "We get great support from all of our coaches. We know we have a young team but if we keep our heads up, we'll be ok."

And in terms of being a team leader, the Northstars have a captain who no doubt made one former Hamilton Hornet proud.

*(Check Fish4Scores on Wednesday for a story on Lea Terry and his impact on Hamilton West and Mercer County athletics).*

