

Claire Thompson's memorable birthday lifts Minnesota Frost over Toronto in shootout

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[Frost](#)

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Happy birthday, [Claire Thompson](#). Would two goals be a good gift?

Frost fans at Xcel Energy Center sure thought so.

On the night she turned 27, the birthday girl was the star. The Frost rookie netted the second and third goals of her PWHL career Tuesday night, helping hoist Minnesota to a 4-3 shootout

takedown of the Toronto Sceptres.

After scoring yet again in the shootout, a cherry on top of her breakthrough night, loud chants of “Happy birthday!” rang out in appreciation.

“It feels great,” Thompson said with a laugh. “It was definitely a lot of fun.”

Her teammates drenched her after the game, a combined celebration of a birthday and a season-topping performance.

Tuesday’s victory pushed [the Frost](#) out of their tie with Montreal and into sole possession of first place in the PWHL as they cross the midway point of their season.

It had been a while since the Frost and Sceptres had met — all the way back on Dec. 7, their first and only other meeting of the season. Minnesota won 6-3 that night, and was eager to do the same Tuesday.

Frost stars Grace Zumwinkle and Dominique Petrie were still out against Toronto because of upper-body injuries suffered in early January and late December, respectively. “They’re trying to get back, and we’re trying to bring them back, but also make sure they’re healthy,” [coach Ken Klee](#) said Sunday.

Long before Tuesday got to the shootout, both teams’ power play had been the star of the game, responsible for five of the six regulation goals.

“[The power-play success] was just confidence,” said Klee, whose squad went 2-for-5. “Tonight we

were able to recover pucks. We got more than one look on most of our power plays.”

The Frost’s first goal of the night was one of them, by [Michela Cava](#) at 3:40 of the first period. The tally was Cava’s sixth of the season, tied for the most in the PWHL.

Toronto converted on their own power play 10 minutes later, with Sarah Nurse scoring to tie the score 1-1.

The second period was deadlocked until Thompson’s first goal registered at the 8:50 mark, kicking off her fiery night to loud applause. That lead held until the 4:12 mark of the third period, when Toronto’s Jesse Compher scored the game’s fourth power-play goal of the night.

Thompson supplied another lead with her second goal, scoring unassisted at 10:21. The resounding celebration in Xcel Energy Center didn’t last long. Toronto’s Renata Fast sent in another power-play goal less than two minutes later, tying the score at 3-3.

After a deadlocked third period and overtime, it was time for a shootout.

[Britta Curl-Salemme](#) scored on the first shootout attempt, before Thompson’s goal clinched the victory. The two goals were enough to overtake the Sceptres’ singular one by Nurse, and Minnesota finally snagged the hard-fought victory.

Tuesday night's victory was Minnesota's last game before an international break for the USA-Canada [Rivalry Series](#). Many names on their roster will still be in action — Curl-Salemme, Kendall Coyne-Schofield, Taylor Heise, Kelly Pannek and Nicole Hensley will be playing for the U.S. in the series; Thompson and Sophie Jacques will skate with Canada.

The Frost won't be back at Xcel until Feb. 23 for a rematch with the Sceptres.

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