

Minor bantam Rebellion victorious in Buffalo



By Christine Degli Angeli

Congratulations are in order for the King Rebellion minor bantam A team, who took home the gold medal at the 47th annual Gene Harrington Shootout Classic this past weekend in Buffalo in an undefeated run.

The team's head coach Leo Napolitano had set out some strict tournament rules for the team's players like strict curfews, healthy food choices, a detailed dress code, and a zero-tolerance video game policy. The lesson that was repeatedly communicated to King's young players the entire weekend was, "whatever we put into this weekend will determine exactly what we will leave with." The players abided by the team rules, remaining 100% focused the entire weekend. They were determined to bring back a number 1 trophy not only for themselves, but for the organization, and the entire township.

The Rebellion started their tournament off against a familiar divisional opponent, the Aurora Tigers. They defeated Aurora in a tight early morning 1-0 game. The team needed to quickly refocus as they were scheduled to play a tough Caledon Hawks later that afternoon. The Rebellion battled it out with the Hawks, whom they previously lost to in a pre-season game but King was prepared and ready for retribution. Despite a flood of injuries to the Rebellions bench during the game, the Rebellion kept their composure and ended with a decisive 6-2 win.

The following morning King had to prepare for a tough 7 a.m. time slot in a frigid outdoor rink in downtown buffalo. Despite the 5:30 a.m. wakeup call and a cold breeze, the Rebellion quickly heated up and cruised past Valley team from Syracuse, NY with another crushing 6-2 win. The Rebellion went on to outplay and outpace the West Seneca Wings (NY), winning with a final score of 4-2. An entire team effort, an unforgiving forecheck, determined backchecking, our stellar defense, and rock-solid goaltending had helped lead this team to the finals and earn an undefeated record so far.

The King Rebellion faced their close divisional rivals, the Markham Waxers, in a heart stopping back and forth championship game. King came out strong with a 1-0 lead in the first period and quickly added some comfort making it a 2-0 lead in the second period. But Markham fought hard to tie the game 3-3 late into the third period.

The game was intense and fans were sitting at the edge of their seats. With just under two minutes remaining on the clock the King Rebellion scored the go-ahead goal, but there was still 80 seconds until they could finally celebrate. The fans held their breath as the Waxers pulled their goalie to add an extra attacker, the Rebellion were giving everything they had to try and run down what seemed like a painfully slow clock. The Rebellion played with heart and determination to sustain the 4-3 lead and could finally catch their breath. The boys had succeeded in their pursuit! Excitement, relief, joy, pride, can only begin to describe the amount of emotions felt in that moment.

This win was a total collaboration by all of our players, parents, coaches and everyone involved with this team leading up to the tournament.