

U12AA King Rebellion runs roughshod over Richmond Hill and Stouffville in 5-0 and 4-0 playoff

victories

By Jim Stewart

When the U12 King Rebellion AA hockey team took to the ice for their playoff game at Ed Sackfield Arena in Richmond Hill on Wednesday, they did so amid the cacophony of bell-clanging hockey moms impelling their sons to victory. The Rebellion Ringers rang their red bells in raucous unison off the ice and King's powerhouse squad took care of business on the ice as they defeated the Richmond Hill Stars 5-0 in opening round York-Simcoe playoff action. It was the Rebellion's second consecutive decisive playoff win after a first-game upset loss to Newmarket last week. On Thursday in Stouffville, the Rebellion made it three shutouts in a row with a 4-0 win over the Clippers to conclude their opening round of the playoffs with a 3-1 record. The Rebellion looked impressive in Richmond Hill. Resplendent in their navy and red uniforms, the King U12's challenged the Stars from the opening minutes of play and their aggressive approach paid off on the scoreboard. Two minutes into the first period, the Rebellion jumped out to a 1-0 lead when Ryon Mottaghi popped in a rebound after an effective rush by Jonathan Racco who earned an assist on his team's opening goal. Alexander Artenosi put King ahead 2-0 with an impressive solo effort with four minutes left to play in the period. His quick wrist shot off the left wing beat the Stars' goalie high on the stick side. Team Captain Luca Sebastiano drew an assist on Artenosi's goal. While the edge in play belonged to the Rebellion, the opportunistic Stars generated good scoring chances. However, Rebellion goaltender Nicolas Iaboni was up to the task especially when he flashed the leather with 3 minutes to play to thwart a Stars' point-blank scoring chance and preserve his team's shutout. The Rebellion kicked off the second period with more aggressive forechecking and, at 9:56, Adrian Sorgini finished off a nice passing play by tucking the puck in the corner of the Stars' net to stake his team to a 3-0 lead. Benjamin Caporiccio collected the assist on the Rebellion's third goal. With the Stars serving a tripping penalty with 4:45 left in the middle frame, the Rebellion's power play went to work. Racco cashed in a juicy rebound on a shot by Caporiccio his second assist of the night to put King up by 4. The Rebellion blunted the Stars' comeback bid 4 minutes into the final period when Ryon Mottaghi rifled his second goal of the game to give the visitors a commanding 5-0 lead. The Rebellion continued to use their much heavier, taller frames to move their comparably diminutive opponents off pucks and diminished the Stars' scoring chances. The Rebellion showed their physicality and skill in the third period when they moved opponents and pucks as needed to dominate time of possession. The Rebellion, with a five-goal lead, changed goalies with 6:43 left in the game as starter Nicolas Iaboni skated to the bench and Julian Daher was tasked with preserving the shutout. Daher was challenged immediately upon entering the game, but made a big midsection save to keep the Stars off the scoreboard. Iaboni and Daher shared the shutout on Wednesday night, and the Dynamic Duo reprised their role on Thursday by sharing the shutout versus the Whitchurch-Stouffville Clippers in a 4-0 win. It was the netminders' third playoff shutout in a row, including a 5-0 win over Markham last weekend. On Thursday in Stouffville, Rebellion captain Luca Sebastiano opened the scoring on an assist from Adrian Sorgini with 36 seconds left in the first period. After a scoreless second period, the Rebellion increased their lead over the Clippers to 2-0 at 13:36 of the third period when Sebastiano scored his second goal of the game assisted by Jonathan Racco. Six minutes, Landon Taylor's unassisted goal made it 3-0 for the Rebellion and Benjamin Caporiccio wrapped up the scoring with 4:45 remaining in the final frame. Christian Mazzaferro earned the assist on the Rebellion's fourth goal to finish off the Clippers who went winless (0-4) in the opening round of the York-Simcoe playoffs.