

## Heroic 41-save performance by Tigers? Christopher Thompson not enough in Aurora's 5-0 loss to King Rebellion

Aurora goaltender Christopher Thompson earned Third Star of the Game honors by turning aside 41 shots fired at him by King Rebellion shooters on Sunday afternoon, but the Tigers could not beat rookie netminder Erik Powers in a 5-0 loss at the Nobleton Community Centre.

Powers' in his first start of the season made 42 saves to earn the shutout much to the delight of the 390 fans who packed the arena for the first Junior A hockey game in King since 1987.

It was the Tigers' fourth consecutive loss as their month-long road trip rolled on inexorably this weekend with stops in Haliburton County and King Township.

When the Tigers took the ice in Nobleton on Sunday for a 3 p.m. puck drop that included red carpet ceremonies to mark the Rebellion's home opener, the road-weary Aurora team was coming off a tough 5-2 loss to the Huskies at SG Nesbitt Arena on Saturday afternoon.

The Tigers trailed 3-0 after two periods of play in Haliburton.

Aurora forward Parker Bonsignore's power play marker at 2:19 of the final frame pulled the Tigers to within two goals, but Isaac Larmond restored the Huskies' lead at 11:16. Thirty-eight seconds later, Aurora's Andreas Mikrogiannakis narrowed his team's deficit to two. However, Sam Black tallied Haliburton's fifth goal at 15:56 to provide the Huskies' margin of victory.

Former Aurora Tiger Carson Littlejohn who was a prized acquisition in a multi-player deal with the Toronto Junior Canadiens in Fall 2023 fired a power play goal in the first period for the Huskies and added one assist against his old club on Saturday afternoon.

On Sunday afternoon, after the dignitaries exited the ice surface in Nobleton, the Rebellion and Tigers fought to a scoreless draw after twenty minutes of play in what amounted to the 'Battle of the 6's' Goalies.' Powers and Thompson put forth entertaining efforts for the fans assembled at the venerable arena that was home to the COJHL Nobleton Devils from 1985-1987. In addition to Powers's 42-save, First Star of the Game performance, Thompson kept the 0-4 Tigers in the game by turning aside 41 of the 46 shots he faced in a heroic effort.

The Rebellion's power play struck twice in the second period to break the scoreless tie. Dylan Coers's blast from the blue line through a maze of red and white jerseys eluded Thompson high glove side at 2:46.

Evin Kojokaro, who scored the Rebellion's only goal in an 8-1 loss to the Toronto Patriots on Saturday night, staked the Rebellion to a 2-0 lead at 8:23 of the middle frame when Thompson got a piece of the puck, but it trickled past him inside the right post.

King opened up a three-goal lead on a brilliant individual play by Artem Narbekov who burst down the left wing, created a breakaway with a power move to the net, and fired a low shot along the ice that beat Thompson 95 seconds into the third period.

Simon Wang, the Boston University commit who rushed the puck brilliantly all game, banged in Captain Aaron Andrade's rebound off the left wing to provide the home side with a comfortable 4-0 lead with six minutes remaining. McCharles's conversion of Andrade's perfect pass provided a five-goal cushion with just over two minutes left in the contest.

Opening Ceremonies on the Red Carpet in King

King Mayor Steve Pellegrini led a delegation of dignitaries onto the red carpet at centre ice, welcomed both teams and 390

spectators to the first Junior A hockey game in King Township in almost 40 years, and presided over the ceremonial puck drop between Rebellion captain Aaron Andrade and Tiger Assistant Captain Antonio Cerqua. Mayor Pellegrini acknowledged the Rebellion's recent win over the CJHL champion Collingwood Blues and invited all King residents to come out and watch the team play.

?Enjoy this thrilling season. I encourage all of you to attend all the Rebellion's home games here at the Nobleton Community Centre and at their permanent home at the Zancor Centre. Go out and see them on the road, too. Let's get ready to enjoy some great Junior A Hockey here in King.?

The sightlines in the Nobleton Community Centre were clear and the Rebellion looked resplendent in their home red jerseys with the team logo representing, as Mayor Pellegrini pointed out, ?The Rebellion of 1837 in Lloydtown.?

The King Rebellion (2-2-1) is the rebranded version of the Brantford 99ers franchise which was given approval by the OJHL to move to King City in the Spring of 2024.

**By Jim Stewart**