
Rangers sting Sarnia

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After a successful year at 47-17-1-3, the Kitchener Rangers faced off against the Sarnia Sting in the first round of the OHL playoffs.

Game one was in Kitchener. After falling behind two goals to start the game, the Rangers responded with four unanswered, en route to a 6-4 victory. Nick Spalding and Steve Downie each tallied two goals, combining for seven points. Game two took place in Sarnia and it was a hard fought battle. Kitchener jumped on the home team early, scoring the first two goals. The Sting quickly recovered and they took a 3-2 lead heading into the third period. Justin Azevedo tied the game with his second goal of the game and shortly after, Robert Bortuzzo netted the eventual game winner. Despite getting outshot 41-33, the Rangers prevailed in the crucial road game to take a 2-0 series lead back home to Kitchener.

In front of nearly 6000 fans for game three, the Rangers played the Sting to a scoreless first period. Kitchener came out hard in the second, quickly gaining a two-goal lead, before Sarnia netted a late goal. The third period was played much like the first and it remained scoreless until the 2:43 mark when Sarnia got the equalizer. However, less than a minute later, Matt Pepe scored the game winner, giving Kitchener a commanding 3-0 series lead. Game four was back in Sarnia, with the Rangers looking to close things out on the road. The first two periods were full of penalties and Sarnia led 4-3 heading into the third. Again Kitchener used its depth to overwhelm Sarnia late in the game, as the Rangers cruised to a 7-5 victory and the series sweep. Matt Halischuk took home first star honours after he scored a hat trick. The Rangers now move onto the quarter-finals with their opponent still to be determined.