



Shells see season end to Columbia in sectional semifinals

by John Hough, Sports Writer
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COLUMBIA - You're going to have to come across elite opponents in the playoffs.

It also doesn't help that they happen to have home-field advantage.

The Roxana Shells came into Columbia's house on Tuesday afternoon looking to take down the young, but massively talented Eagles, and it was a difficult battle.

Columbia dominated possession from start to finish and bombarded Roxana's goal running out as 6-0 winners in the IHSA Class 1A Columbia Sectional Semifinals.

Shells head coach Lori Yates couldn't say enough good things about her Roxana girls.

"We accomplished great things this year. I can't be more proud," she said.

Roxana finished the season with a conference and regional championship while having a 16-game unbeaten streak snapped as well.

Mary Gasaway opened the scoring with a goal coming off of a corner kick in the ninth minute.

Two minutes later it could've easily been 2-0 had it not been for a great double-save from keeper Braeden Lackey. She had also dealt with a couple of other shots before in the opening minutes.

Despite, Lackey's solid display in goal, Columbia's wave of attacks set up chances that Lackey could do nothing to stop.

Six minutes after the opening goal, Fae Harrell gave the Eagles a 2-0 on a tap-in. Within four minutes of each other, Columbia's Regan Mauch and Sophia Bonaldi both hit the post. In the 30th minute, Kyra Bivins made it 3-0 and all but killed off the game.

All the while, Columbia shut down any counter-attack. The Shells attempted and bottled up Emma Lucas who scored 37 goals in 22 games this season. As a team, Roxana didn't get a shot on goal.

Kennedy Jones, Kyra Bivins, and Bonaldi all made tallies to the scoresheet in the second half.

For Roxana, this is the second straight season they've won a regional, which are the only two in their history. Although she's proud of the program achieving these accolades, Yates hopes to that this success and loss to Columbia will push her players and potential up and comers to play soccer all year round to push forward in the future.

"Just getting it out there for our other younger girls in Roxana that soccer is something up and coming," Yates said. "need to get more involved in the offseason. Get touches in, play 3-v-3 or play on a team somewhere because that's what it takes to be a team like Columbia. You gotta play all year long."





