

Kristin Della Rovere leads Team Italy to win over France to open Winter Olympics in Milan

By Jim Stewart

Caledon East Kristin Della Rovere scored a goal and an assist in Team Italy's 4-1 win over France in the opening round of the Winter Olympics at the Milano Santaguilia Ice Hockey Arena on Thursday.

Della Rovere also drew a penalty in the contest ? inspiring her Godmother, Mira Dimovski Budd, to post on Facebook that her Goddaughter not only ?score[d] Her First OLYMPIC GOAL?, but she also earned a ?Gordie Howe Hat Trick ? one assist, one goal, and one penalty.?

The amusing post featured footage of Della Rovere's first goal at the Olympics ? Italy's fourth of the game ? that sealed the deal versus France.

Although a Gordie Howe Hat Trick is comprised of a goal, an assist, and a fight, fighting at an IIHF-sanctioned event earns the pugilist an automatic game misconduct, and Della Rovere's professional presence on the ice was needed by Italy.

Della Rovere is Team Italy's only PWHL representative. The current Toronto Sceptre and former Ottawa Charge player assisted on Rebecca Roccella's second-period goal to help propel Italy to its big home ice win.

After the dramatic three-goal victory over France, Della Rovere's squad fell 6-1 to Team Sweden in Game 2 on Saturday. The Caledon East native was gracious in defeat during her post-game interview with IIHF beat writer Andrew Podnieks: ?Sweden's a really good hockey team. I think we came out flying and then were on our heels a little bit, but I'm so proud of these girls,? she said. ?I'm looking forward to the next two games.?

Team Italy will face off against Germany and Japan in the final two games of the opening round.