

Coach Schafer's Notes for November 29, 2014

FROZEN APPLE GAME AT MADISON SQUARE GARDEN

CORNELL 3, Penn State 1

We had a good team victory last Saturday night at Madison Square Garden. The atmosphere was terrific with the stands colored in RED. It's always an exciting time for our team, especially for the newcomers, but it probably doesn't get old for our upperclassmen either.

The first period did not go well for us, as we fell behind on a Penn State goal off a three-on-two rush in the game's 10th minute. Penn State (7-4-2) outshot us (4-4-1) in the opening period by a 12-5 margin. Between periods, I told the players, don't look at the shot clock. They fire shots from everywhere.

After the first period, as badly as we played, when we tracked the statistics, they had three really good scoring chances, and we had two. Shots and plus-minus are some of the biggest misleading statistics in the game.

Early in the second period, we had to kill of a 5-minute penalty, and our guys did a great job. Sophomore goaltender Mitch Gillam played very well the entire game, but was a stalwart in the second period. Shots were even (10-10) in the second period.

Junior forward John Knisley, who missed last weekend with an injury, got us going in the second period with his first goal of the season at 13:59. After a broken play, we regained possession in the left corner of the offensive zone. Senior forward John McCarron dished a pass back to sophomore defenseman Holden Anderson on the left point. He sent a shot toward goal that was redirected out of midair by Knisley, who was standing on the hash marks of the left circle. The deflection left the Nittany Lion goaltender helpless.

It was good to see Knisley score a goal. He has that offensive ability in himself. It was good to see him score on a tip and get rewarded for his hard work.

At this point, it seemed that the momentum tipped in our favor, but we couldn't do anymore damage in the second period.

We were more patient (after the first period). In the first period we were up on our toes chasing people in the offensive zone. It's getting there. I think we can produce offense, but we've got to produce it our way.

We needed another big save from Gillam to keep the score even. With 11:37 to play in the third period, a Penn State player found himself with point-blank range just to the right of the slot. He made a move to his backhand at the near post, but Gillam stayed with the play and made a glove save.

A little more than 3 minutes later, Gillam actually started the play on the winning goal. He got his stick on a puck that was headed wide to his left, knocking the puck through the corner and onto the half wall. Senior forward Joel Lowry won a battle with a Penn State player and broke out of the zone. Lowry angled a pass off the left wall in the neutral zone, with McCarron getting position on his defender at the Penn State blue line. The defender went down to the ice, and McCarron had some time and space. As he came into the circle, the other Penn State defenseman sprawled to the ice. McCarron calmly waited for him to slide by,

then zipped a perfect pass across the low slot to Lowry on the back side for the shot into the vacated wide side of the net to give us a 2-1 lead with 8:32 left in the game.

Another pretty passing play led to Knisley's empty-netter to ice the game with 1:06 remaining. McCarron's assist on the goal gave him our first three-point game of the season, and Lowry's assist made him Cornell's all-time leading scorer at Madison Square Garden. Lowry has had two goals and three assists for five points in his four career games at MSG, surpassing the four assists posted by Brendon Nash '10 and McCarron.

Gillam made 37 saves in the net, while the Penn State goalie stopped 22 shots. Both teams were 0-for-2 on the power play.

Once the third period rolled around, we were playing with purpose. We had them running around in their own zone, cycling, cutting off breakout attempts, and so on.

We're really comfortable with the win. We're not going to be the highest scoring team. We don't have to win games 5-2, but we do have to be comfortable in 0-0 games and 1-1 games, and take the opportunity to score the third goal or the fourth goal when it comes.

Now, we bring a three-game winning streak back to Lynah Rink with a two-game series vs. nationally-ranked University of Denver on Friday and Saturday evenings.

Game highlights

<http://cornellbigred.com/index.aspx?path=mhockey&>

Read more: <http://www.uscho.com/recaps/2014/11/29/cornell-starts-slow-roars-back-to-beat-penn-state-at-the-frozen-apple/#ixzz3Kr3JGMmE>