

## Coach Schafer's Notes for January 14, 2015

AT ST. LAWRENCE-CLARKSON WEEKEND

@St. Lawrence 3, CORNELL 1

CORNELL 2, @Clarkson 0

When teams are struggling offensively, usually they don't play with much confidence. We addressed this situation all week in practice, and thought the message had been taken wisely.

Getting off to a slow start at St. Lawrence wasn't what we had in mind. With a couple of turnovers in our defensive zone, we paid the price by giving up a goal 1:45 after the opening faceoff. Coupled being down so early in the game, along with allowing a power play goal less than 3 minutes later, we really became frustrated. Adding to our troubles was the fact that the power-play tally bounced off one of our defensemen and into the net before sophomore goaltender Mitch Gillam ever saw the puck. This compounded our frustration of getting behind early, and lack of poise with the puck.

Gillam kept us in the game with nine saves in the first 20 minutes, including two shots from point-blank range after a couple of defensive turnovers.

We did right the ship somewhat, and continued to plug away in the second period. We had a couple of quality opportunities turned away in the opening 3 minutes of the middle stanza. Late in the second period, we killed off two power-play attempts, including a 1:17 span of a two-man advantage for St. Lawrence. It was a big penalty kill for us to keep the game at 2-0 at that point.

We finally got on the scoreboard at 8:10 into the third period. Junior defenseman Jacob MacDonald recorded his first goal of the season. The play started when sophomore forward Gavin Stoick flew up the left wing boards, and fed MacDonald cutting across the blue line from the other side. MacDonald fired a wrister over the glove of the goaltender. It was our first goal in eight-plus periods.

After the score was 2-1, we had some chances on the power play, but their goaltender was equal to the task. Nine of our 22 shots on net came on our four power-play attempts. The third St. Lawrence goal was scored on an empty net with 26 seconds to play.

Gillam finished with 22 saves, and the St. Lawrence goaltender made 21 stops. We were 0-for-4 on the power play, and St. Lawrence was 1-for-6.

Obviously, we didn't have a lot of confidence coming into the game the next night at Clarkson, after letting things get away from us on Friday evening. At Clarkson, we tried to keep it simpler in the first period, and not get ourselves in a bind.

They threw a lot of rubber at our net in the first period (a Clarkson season-high 19 shots), but freshman Hayden Stewart, playing for Gillam who was injured in the early morning skate, stepped up in a game that was huge for us as a team and recorded the shutout, his second of the year. They shouldn't get that many

shots to the net, and I was disappointed that our players weren't blocking these attempts. We addressed that at the first intermission, and it evened out for us quite a bit.

In the second period, we had to kill off three Clarkson power plays. Junior defenseman Reece Wilcox made a huge shot block on the first PP. In the middle of the second period, we had a couple of excellent offensive shots, but their goalie came up strong. Meanwhile, Stewart was showing his prowess at the other end.

We finally broke the scoreless tie with a goal by sophomore forward Matt Buckles at 15:34 of the second period. Buckles backhanded the puck past the goaltender with assists to freshman defenseman Ryan Bliss and sophomore forward Eric Freschi. It was the first time we had gone ahead in five games.

Just 50 seconds into the final period, we made it a 2-0 game on some excellent team passing. Senior defenseman Joakim Ryan had a shot from the center point blocked, but senior forward John McCarron retrieved the puck at the left point and chipped it down low. Junior forward Christian Hilbrich then sprung senior forward Cole Bardreau into space at the bottom of the left circle. Bardreau, deftly threaded a pass across the slot to sophomore forward Jake Weidner who sent the puck into the wide open side of the net for his first tally of the year. It was a power-play goal, halting a 0-for-17 record on our previous attempts.

For the rest of the third period, we kept Clarkson in check even though we had to kill off, for the second night in a row, a two-man power play, this time for 1:21 with 15 minutes left in the game. We have now killed off 19 consecutive two-man disadvantages dating back to February 2012.

Stewart made 36 saves, while the Clarkson goaltender was called upon for 17 stops. We were 1-for-5 on the power play, and Clarkson was 0-for-5.

Leading up to the weekend, we addressed a lot of things, and we are still not working hard enough away from the puck offensively. When I look around, it is not just we trying to generate offense, but many teams. Our 3-1 loss and a 2-0 win were coupled with Colgate winning 2-1 and 2-0 over the same two teams. Not a lot of goals were scored on the weekend. A scoring note is that we have lost our top scorer, senior forward Joel Lowry, for the season with an injury. He has missed the last four games.

We continue on the road this coming weekend at Union on Friday and Rensselaer on Saturday. Both games will be televised by Time Warner Cable, seen locally on channel 51.