

## **Coach Schafer's Notes for February 4, 2015**

CORNELL 2, @Colgate 1 OT  
@CORNELL 2, Colgate 2 OT

After a tough, hard-fought weekend, we picked up three points to move into a tie for sixth place with Colgate in the ECAC standings. It's a very tight pack (four points) between No 3 and No. 9 and obviously we want to finish in the top four to gain a first-round bye and home ice. Our lineup has been depleted because of injuries but the team played hard both nights.

Much of our success for the weekend goes to tight defense and sophomore goaltender Mitch Gillam, who leads the country in goals against average (1.45) and save percentage (.946). Our guys want to pick him up. They know how critical he's been to our success so far this year and he's been there to cover for guys a lot.

Friday night at Hamilton was a preview of how competitive the home and home series was going to be. Colgate fired 10 shots on goal in the first period, and Mitch stopped them all. Colgate went in front 1-0 just 50 seconds into the second period even though we out-shot them 9-7. At this point, we had been 0-6 when trailing after two periods.

The Raiders held this narrow margin until junior forward John Knisley tied the score (1-1) with a goal 5:06 into the final period. It all started as junior forward Teemu Titinen picked up the puck at our own blue line and sent Knisley flying up the ice on left wing. John slipped the puck between a Colgate defender's skates in the faceoff circle, and then beat him wide before sending a backhand shot toward the net. The goaltender got a piece of the puck, but Knisley poked it in the net for his fourth goal of the season. And we went into overtime.

It didn't take long to end the game. Just 57 seconds into OT, freshman defenseman Ryan Bliss sent a shot from the left point that made its way through traffic by bouncing off the back of a Colgate defender standing in the crease and into the back of the net. The play started with senior defenseman Joakim Ryan sending a cross-ice pass to lead us into the Colgate zone. Sophomore forward Jeff Kubiak drove up the boards on the left side and circled behind the net before sending the puck toward the middle. It got all the way back to Bliss to set up his second goal of the season.

Gillam made 20 saves during the 60:57 game, while the Colgate netminder had 24 stops. We were 0-for-3 on the power play, and the Raiders were 0- for-2. It was a short ride back to Ithaca.

We came back to Lynah Rink for the second game with Colgate on Saturday evening and were looking for the sweep. The first period was scoreless and once again we pressured them with 13 shots on goal to their 6.

We had the upper hand in the second period and took a 1-0 lead just 25 seconds into the play. On the power play, senior forward Cole Bardreau set up Ryan for a one-timer from the center point, and the puck was redirected between the goaltender's pads by junior forward Christian Hilbrich for his team-leading seventh goal of the season.

We appeared to take a two-goal lead less than 5 minutes later. Sophomore forward Jake Weidner sent a shot over the goalie's glove hand after Hilbrich had swatted the puck toward the net. The goal was allowed to stand on the ice, but eventually was overturned on video replay because of a hand pass. We felt that the puck hit at least one Colgate player after Hilbrich touched the puck, which would have negated the hand pass, but we were overruled.

The 1-0 margin stood up until Colgate tallied with 24 seconds remaining in the period. We went back on the power play and Hilbrich worked the puck up to sophomore defenseman Holden Anderson at the right point. Anderson sent the puck to senior defenseman Jacob MacDonald in the middle who fired the puck toward the net. Senior forward John McCarron tipped the puck, redirecting it over the goalie's shoulder for his first goal of the season. It was a tremendous play by John who has been struggling to score, but continues to do so many other great things as captain and leader on and off the ice. We led 2-1 with 10:19 left in the game.

The Raiders didn't give up, and scored off a faceoff with 4:28 remaining. This was very disappointing that twice we gave up the lead and especially off the faceoff where we didn't get a guy. Mitch then made a huge save at 2-2 with a minute remaining in regulation.

In the overtime, it was all Mitch. Colgate got four shots on goal; two were point-blank. We also had to kill a penalty for two of the five minutes. We did not have a shot on net in the extra session. Gillam made 23 saves and the Colgate goalie stopped 29 shots. We were 2-for-4 on the power play, and the visitors were 0-for-4.

Getting just one point at home is not acceptable at this time of year. I thought the effort was good. Colgate is a good hockey team with skilled players and a defense that gets up and down the ice. With players out due to injury, I thought our team stepped up and did a solid job.

This weekend at Lynah we face Quinnipiac, in first place in the ECAC, on Friday night, and Princeton on Saturday. We're looking forward to another huge home crowd that will have Lynah Rink rocking the rafters.