

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

CORNELL 3, @Niagara 2 OT

@CORNELL 4, Niagara 0

This preseason, we emphasized recapturing the culture of basic Big Red Hockey, which has developed over the past twenty years into a winning program. The entire team bought in on this challenge and the locker room has a completely different atmosphere compared with recent seasons. Everyone is everyone's teammate and the underclassmen are just as important as the upperclassman.

Though we have only four seniors, their leadership in the preseason has been fantastic--just what we've been looking for. Christian Hilbrich, John Knisley, Teemu Tiitinen and Reece Wilcox comprise our 2015-16 senior leadership group with two captains for road games and two for home contests.

To open the regular season, we played a home-and-home series with Niagara; Friday night was on the road. It certainly didn't begin as planned when Niagara scored just 22 seconds into the game. That really put us on our heels, all the aspirations of playing well seemed gone, and we were behind 1-0 on the road.

The willingness to work through adversity put us back in the game. We tallied a pair of goals in the second period. The first scored by junior forward Eric Freschi, swatting a rebound past the goaltender at 4:31 of the second period. Niagara went back on top, 2-1, at the 15:08 mark. Again, we came back firing and freshman forward Anthony Angello scored his first collegiate goal of what should be many in a Big Red uniform.

Angello retrieved a puck from behind the Niagara net and passed to junior forward Jeff Kubiak on the right half wall. Angello skated to the left circle and received a great pass from Kubiak, then ripped a shot inside the near post to tie the game at 2-2 with 3:38 remaining in the second period.

No goals were scored in the third period and junior goaltender Mitch Gillam kept us in the game with several great saves.

The winning goal came at 1:46 into the overtime period as a result of those little details on a faceoff win. Christian Hilbrich got to the low slot in front of the net and took a great feed from

junior forward Jake Weidner from behind the net. Hilbrich fired a shot over the glove of the Niagara goaltender for the game winner. For the game, Gillam made 23 saves, while the Niagara goaltender stopped 32 shots. We were 0x3 on the power play and Niagara was 0x2.

Returning to Lynah Rink on Saturday evening, we got off to a better start. We improved defensively and coming out of the zone, and we were a lot better on the fore check. We talked about how we need to score more faceoff goals and shoot more on the power play.

A little over six minutes into the game, we scored first; the goal coming off a successful faceoff set play. Angello won the puck forward into space and went directly to the goal. As a defender moved on him, Anthony slid the puck across the crease to a hard-charging Mitch Vanderlaan, another freshman forward, for his first collegiate goal. Angello helped create the second goal on a breakout 5:30 later chipping the puck off the wall to feed junior Jeff Kubiak rushing down the middle. Kubiak sent the puck to Vanderlaan who passed it back to Jeff who put the puck over the goaltender's blocker.

We made the score 3-0 early in the second period with our first power-play goal of the season. At 1:51, Kubiak tipped in a shot from the point by freshman defenseman Alec McCrea. Kubiak had two more excellent opportunities to tally in the second period but the hat trick was not to be.

Junior defenseman Holden Anderson scored the fourth and final goal of the game at 14:42 of the second period. Sophomore forward Trevor Yates stripped a Niagara player of the puck at the blue line, which was picked up by senior Reece Wilcox. His pass to Anderson set up a laser from the center point for the 4-0 score. No goals were scored in the third period. In posting his second career shutout, Gillam made 19 saves, while two Niagara goalies combined for 29 saves. We were 1x4 on the power play; Niagara was 0x3.

[Follow this link to watch highlights from the game at home.](#)

We want to up the tempo in future games and our first ECAC contests are this weekend at Lynah Rink against Princeton and Quinnipiac. Thankfully, this year we took a larger than usual recruiting class and have had plenty of depth in preseason. Early injuries have taken their toll and though we started with 17 forwards, 9 defensemen and 3 goalies, we are down now to 12 forwards, 7 defensemen and 2 goalies.

If you're in the area this weekend, please come and see us play. You will enjoy the excitement generated by this team.