

Coach Schafer's Game Notes for February 17, 2016

@CORNELL 3, Brown 3 OT

Yale 4, @CORNELL 2

Well, I finally got back behind the bench on Saturday night. Our assistants did a great job keeping the team together while I was gone, but as a competitor, obviously, you always want to be there for the team.

Looking at tape, etc. about Friday night's game, I thought the guys did a good job. We created lots of quality scoring chances, gave up very few, and we were disciplined. I thought our guys, overall, played a solid game, but unfortunately, Brown seemed to score on a just a few chances.

Friday night's game was one where neither team could hold a lead. The first period was played evenly with Brown having 12 shots on goal, and we had 10. Late in the first period, we were assessed a holding penalty at 15:29. A little over a minute later, Brown's top scorer, with 15 goals, put the Bears in front, 1-0. We had a couple of shorthanded opportunities before the end of the period, but couldn't put the puck in the back of the net.

In the second period, we continued our offensive attack, and tied the game at 1-1 at 17:37. Sophomore forward Dwyer Tschantz, after avoiding a defender, skated behind the net, and attempted a backhand shot that didn't go across the goal line, but classmate Trevor Yates, a forward, made sure that it did with a tap in for his fifth goal of the year.

Taking the advantage of this momentum, we took the lead just 1:12 into the final period. Freshman forward Anthony Angello, on the power play, picked up his team-leading ninth goal of the year to give us a 2-1 lead. Brown came back midway through the third period to even the score at 2-2 at 10:18, and at 13:46, made it a 3-2 game in favor of the visitors.

The team hung in there and with nine seconds remaining, senior forward Christian Hilbrich sent us into overtime. We were in the second half of a power play opportunity, and had pulled junior goalie Mitch Gillam for an extra skater. Junior forward Jeff Kubiak started the play with a pass to Hilbrich, who in turn shuffled the puck over to senior defenseman Reece Willcox who was skating in from the point. Reece's shot was knocked down by the goaltender, but Hilbrich converted the rebound to send us into overtime.

In the extra session, we dominated play with five shots on goal to Brown's one, but had to finish with the 3-3 tie.

Gillam made 30 saves, while the Brown net minder stopped 29 shots. We were 2-for-3 on the power play, and Brown was 1-for-3.

Against Yale, one of the best teams in the country, we got off to a good start on Saturday night, but it didn't last long. At 1:24, we took a boarding penalty to give a very good power-play team its first excellent chance to score and they did just a minute into the extra-man situation. Discipline has been a very good part of our team this year, but this penalty certainly showed a lack of focus that we will not tolerate. With a team like Yale, you can't do them any favors.

Three minutes later, we turned the puck over in the neutral zone, and Yale scored at 5:23 to take a 2-0 lead. You can't get yourself down two goals against a great defensive hockey team with great goaltending. They use their speed to stay above you and frustrate you. It doesn't matter who you are, it's going to be a long haul to try to get back into the game. It's a real lesson on discipline, and it just takes one person to screw it up for the rest of the guys.

Taking a 2-0 lead into the second period, Yale wasn't finished, as it scored just 2:44 into the period. We finally got on the scoreboard with a tremendous individual effort by senior forward John Knisley. John picked up the puck in our zone, and literally flew from end-to-end. Flying down the right boards, Knisley left his defender in the distance at the circle. When the goaltender attempted a poke check with players all around the goal, the senior slipped the puck between the goalie's legs for his third goal of the season to make it 3-1. This was a tremendous individual effort by one of our captains.

Moving into the third period, the more we pressed the worse it got, as we gave up a number of odd man rushes in our attempt to score. Yale took a 4-1 lead at 5:13. With 32 seconds remaining, sophomore forward Alex Rauter scored his first collegiate goal converting his own rebound over the shoulder of the goaltender.

Gillam made 18 saves in goal during 22:44 of playing time. I lifted Mitch after Yale scored its third goal because he wasn't his usual sharp self with rebounds, and he just didn't look comfortable in the net. Sophomore goaltender Hayden Stewart came in for the first time this season, and made 19 saves in 36:39 minutes of playing time. Hayden did a good job of coming in and basically shutting the door. It was a tough place for Hayden to come in. We were down 3-0, and trying to create offense. That sometimes leads to the goalie being in trouble.

The Yale goaltender, one of the best in the business, stopped 20 shots. We were 0-for-3 on the power play, and Yale was 2-for-4.

It doesn't get any easier this coming weekend, as we travel to Harvard on Friday night with hopefully a gigantic Big Red crowd, and then up to Dartmouth on Saturday evening. The following weekend (Feb. 26-27), we wind up our final ECAC regular-season games vs. Union and RPI. Every point is crucial at this time of the year. The league is so tight that we could finish anywhere from second to ninth.