

Coach Schafer's Notes for November 13, 2017

@CORNELL 3, Dartmouth 0

@CORNELL 3, Harvard 2

It was quite a weekend with plenty of excitement. Our players performed well and never gave up and of course the Lynah Faithful did their job too. It's hard to believe that we would be the only undefeated NCAA Division I men's hockey team in the country with the many freshmen who are contributing much to our success. We have moved up to No. 6 in the USCHO.com rankings, including four first-place votes. We are ranked No. 1 in the Pairwise ranking, which is also very important.

We started slowly against Dartmouth on Friday night and the visitors had a number of odd-man rushes in the first 10 minutes but our defense was solid. We began dominating the game in the second half of the first period and finally scored with 2:01 left before the first intermission. Junior forward Mitch Vanderlaan got us on the scoreboard by banging home his own rebound after taking a pass from classmate Anthony Angello.

At 5:57 into the second period, we had to kill off a 5-minute major penalty for boarding but the penalty killers did their job as Dartmouth had only three shots during this span. We also had help from a boisterous crowd who showed its support for our hard work ethic. Our players responded to this loud crowd support and the penalty killers returned the game's momentum to us.

We made it 2-0 at 16:24 of the second period when our leading goal scorer, senior forward Trevor Yates, buried a shot from inside the far post. Freshman forwards Cam Donaldson and Morgan Barron assisted on the Yates goal. Barron's assist made him the program's first freshman to recorded points in each of his first five collegiate games since frosh became eligible to play on the varsity in 1975-76.

The final goal at 1:03 of the third period came when Angello broke behind the defense for a breakaway that resulted in his first tally of the season. Both Vanderlaan and Angello tallied their first goals of the young season and also added one assist apiece.

With a 3-0 lead, the defense continued its dominance holding Dartmouth to just two shots on goal in the final period. We out-shot Dartmouth 31-16 for the game.

Freshman goalie Matt Galajda was called upon for just 16 saves in recording his second shutout of the year. The Big Green netminder stopped 28 shots. We were 0-for-3 on the power play, and they were 0-for-4.

Saturday night was a typical Cornell-Harvard battle at Lynah Rink. The crowd was ready with pre-game antics and the players once again fed off the enthusiasm of their supporters.

Fast-forwarding to the end, we won the game when junior defenseman Alec McCrea scored a power-play goal with 1.4 seconds remaining. Harvard ran into penalty trouble late in the third period with a bench penalty at 17:46, followed by a tripping call with 1:50 remaining. The winning goal was started by sophomore forward Jeff Malott sending the puck into the left circle for Barron who circled back along the end wall away from his defender. Barron found McCrea near the right faceoff dot where McCrea one-timed the puck past the goaltender's blocker for the game-winner.

Harvard got off to a quick start, opening the game's scoring 6:03 into the first period on a defensive miscue. With 4:45 remaining in the opening period, there was a major scrum in front of our goal. With Galajda at the bottom of the pile, a Harvard player pushed the puck into the net and the goal stood after a video review. Down 2-0 and still in the first period, we had to make some adjustments. Harvard was making us play the kind of game that we didn't want to play and it took us awhile to get going. We turned over more pucks in the neutral zone than all year.

We finally got on the scoreboard with 44 seconds remaining in the first period. We were on a 5-on-3 power play and sophomore defenseman Yanni Kaldis rifled a shot from the top of the circle past the Harvard goaltender. We used this momentum breaker to tie the score at 2-2 just 1:15 into the middle period. Malott got his stick on a loose puck and began a two-on-two rush. Jeff blew past his defender and cut to the middle before stuffing the puck past the right pad of the goalie and inside the far post. Harvard's two-goal lead had vanished in a span of 119 ticks on the game clock.

From this point on the game was played evenly, although we did combine for 10 penalties, which does not make for much flow in the game. Both goaltenders were solid right up until the end with Matt making 22 saves and the Harvard goalie with 21 stops. We were 2-for-10 on the power play and Harvard was 0-for-5.

After going down 2-0, our team just found a way to win. It was the first time this year that we hadn't taken the first lead. The guys were very excited after the game and why shouldn't they be. They will remember this kind of game. That's why it is such a big rivalry—the games with Harvard are always like this. We beat a very good hockey team on Saturday night and the sellout crowd enjoyed it immensely.

We stay at home this weekend for another tough battle. We're certainly not overlooking St. Lawrence on Friday night but Casey Jones '90 brings an awfully good Clarkson team to Lynah on Saturday evening. We're both tied (4-0) in the ECAC, and Clarkson is ranked No. 8 nationally.

Hope you can make it to Lynah Rink this weekend.