

Coach Schafer's Notes for January 1, 2018

@CORNELL 6, Canisius 2

This opening game of the second half of the season always brings much trepidation because you're concerned about how sharp the team will play after a month break. We were a bit rusty during the early stages but got going after our first goal at 16:18 of the first period. Freshman forward Kyle Betts initiated his game hat trick at this point by winning a faceoff in our zone that started a breakout ending with Betts banging home a pass from sophomore forward Jeff Malott to put us up, 1-0. We had another excellent opportunity to score shortly after with a two-man advantage for 1:39 but couldn't get the puck in the back of the net. There were a lot of shots in that first 20 minutes with us on top, 13-10.

Canisius, ranked No. 20 in the country, was the nation's No. 4 offensive team and No. 3 on the power play. The visitors used this prowess early in the second period to tie the score at 1-1 with a power-play goal at 4:45 that came off a 3-on-1 rush. But, less than 5 minutes later, senior forward Trevor Yates put us back on top, 2-1, with an unassisted goal after a turnover. Just a little over a minute later, Betts took a pass from senior forward Alex Rauter and sent the puck inside the far post, past the goaltender's blocker to make it 3-1 at 10:37.

Still in the second period, we kept buzzing around the net but it looked like Canisius was going to break out of its own zone, when Rauter caused a turnover and Malott picked up the puck toward the bottom of the left circle. Malott sent a pass to Betts drifting back into the slot and the frosh one-timed the puck under the goaltender for his first collegiate hat trick at 14:26 to make the score 4-1 after 40 minutes of play.

The visitors didn't give up and just 14 seconds into the third period, the nation's leading scorer, Dylan McLaughlin, flipped a shot high over senior Hayden Stewart's glove. Now, it was time for Yates to gain the momentum back for our side. He scored his team-leading 10th goal at 12:40 by snapping a shot from the top of the slot that beat the goaltender on his glove side. We led 5-2 with 7:20 remaining.

We weren't finished scoring. Freshman forward Cam Donaldson forced a turnover and Yates picked up the puck going up the middle. He fed freshman forward Morgan Barron flying up the left wing and Barron went around a defender, cut across the goal mouth and deftly slid a backhand into the net.

Getting the fifth and sixth goals was big to put the game out of reach because of the visitors' offensive prowess. It was a big performance from Trevor to break the Canisius momentum both times at 2-1 and 5-2. There's no doubt about it, Kyle Betts had an outstanding game.

We gave Stewart his second start of the season because we thought he earned it. We have a real battle in the goal right now with freshman Matt Galajda starting the first 11 games. They'll make each other better by the end of the year. Stewart made 24 saves and two Canisius goaltenders made 35 saves. We were 0-for-3 on the power play and they were 1-for-3.

Our next 16 games are all against ECAC opponents and will challenge our 11-2 overall record, which is the nation's best winning percentage (.846). We are in third place in the ECAC with 10 points (5-1); Clarkson is first (8-0, 16 pts.) and Union is second (6-2, 12 pts.).

We are at home this coming weekend and with students still on break, it's an excellent time to come and see the Big Red in action. On Friday night, we entertain a Princeton team that is currently playing very well and on Saturday, Quinnipiac comes to town and this is always a battle.

The Cornell Men's Hockey program wishes you a Happy New Year and may 2018 be a safe and productive year for us all.