

Coach Schafer's Notes for January 22, 2018

@CORNELL 2, Colgate 0

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You're playing solid hockey when you shut out an opponent in two consecutive games. We are now tied for first place in the ECAC (10-1-1) and with a 16-2-1 (.868) overall record, still rank No. 1 for the best winning percentage in NCAA Division I.

This past weekend was almost like playoff hockey because after winning the first night, you have to be prepared for the same opponent the following evening. The games were hard-fought both nights. We were not spectacular but very steady in all six periods of hockey.

Junior forward Anthony Angello got us going just 2:40 into Friday night's game. Junior forward Mitch Vanderlaan challenged three defenders as he skated towards the net. The puck bounced back into the path of Angello flying into the right circle alone. He tucked a shot past the goalie's glove to put us up 1-0. For the rest of the period, it was pretty much an even game; we had 10 shots on goal to Colgate's seven.

Just 43 seconds into the second period, Angello redirected a shot by sophomore defenseman Yann Kaldis into the back of the net. Anthony has scored seven goals in the last eight games. Our puck possession commitment to get above guys after turnovers and blocking shots fuels our offense.

Freshman goalie Matt Galajda was called upon for 24 saves and he was very steady in crucial situations. The Colgate netminder stopped 27 shots. We were 1-for-2 on the power play and the Raiders were 0-for-2. On Friday night we were very fast in spurts, and for the most part our play was solid. I still felt we had more in the tank when the game was over.

Saturday evening in Hamilton, we had a nice Cornell contingent as part of the record crowd in their two-year-old building. Colgate was the aggressor during the early going and Matt was outstanding with a couple of big saves during the first Colgate power play of the game. Blocking shots has become a key to our success and our skaters were solid in that area during the first extra-man situation. We starting going midway through the first period and dominated territorially, but just couldn't put the puck in the back of the net. We out-shot the home team 12-6 in the first 20 minutes.

Colgate had the best scoring chance of the second period on a breakaway but the shot was kicked away by Matt. Kaldis also made a great defensive play to spoil a 3-on-1 charge by Colgate at the 14-minute mark. With about 4 minutes left in the second period, freshman forward Cam Donaldson poked the puck free from a defender and skated inside the left circle. He picked his spot and fired a shot past the goaltender's blocker to put us up 1-0.

Halfway through the third period, we increased our lead to 2-0. Vanderlaan worked the puck along the back boards. Freshman forward Kyle Betts stepped out in front of the net and wrapped a forehand through the goaltender's legs. Vanderlaan's assist was his 11th of the season, giving him six in the last four outings. We're getting offense from everyone, including the freshman class that has scored 15 goals

so far this season. Our defense is making it difficult for opponents all game long, especially in the shot blocking department.

Galajda was called upon for 23 saves, including 11 in the third period. The Colgate goalie stopped 31 shots. We were 0-for-3 on the power play and Colgate was 0-for-2. Our goaltending has been really solid and it's game-to-game and week-to-week for us right now. Matt played during the early part of the season and then senior Hayden Stewart took over until he was injured. Now Matt's back in and he's kind of got it rolling. Galajda's shutout was his fifth in just 16 games, moving him into a tie with David McKee for the program record for shutouts by a freshman. By stopping 47 shots on the weekend, he posted our first consecutive shutouts since Nov. 20-21, 215, when Mitch Gillam blanked Yale and Brown.

We're having success but our team still has so much more to give and grow. We will need this improvement as the league will tighten up over the next five weeks. Our eight-game unbeaten streak is second-longest in the nation (#1Notre Dame has 16).

This coming weekend, we have a tough road trip to New England. We are at Harvard on Friday night with hopefully a large Big Red following and travel to Dartmouth for Saturday evening.