

Coach Schafer's Notes for February 13, 2018

CORNELL 0, @Clarkson 0 (OT)

CORNELL 1, @St. Lawrence 0

Anytime you score one goal and pick up three points, something in the process is working well. Of course, we want more offense, but to grab three points in the North Country is always a plus. We now are assured of a bye in the first round of the ECAC playoffs and will be at home for the quarterfinals.

Let's begin with Friday night's game at Clarkson, where I wasn't behind the bench because of illness. Associate head coach Ben Syer ran the show and I wish we had scored a couple of goals to keep him from pulling his hair out. On Friday night, it was a tight, closely-played game like anyone would expect from two nationally-ranked teams who were 1-2 in the ECAC. Statistically, we are the country's top two defensive teams and were led by two excellent goaltenders. There were a lot of blocked shots and the defense played very well.

We were assessed three of the first four penalties with Clarkson being the nation's second-most efficient power-play team in the country. Three successful kills in the first 29 minutes did the trick and we didn't have a penalty the rest of the game. As the evenly-played game progressed, we gained some momentum and threatened on a couple of second-period power plays. We also had a 2-minute power play in overtime, getting three shots on net in the extra period. It was the first time this year that we had an extra-man situation in OT.

Freshman Matt Galajda was superb in goal with 34 saves and was very calm around the net. The Clarkson goaltender also played very well, stopping 32 shots. We were 0-for-4 on the power play and the Golden Knights were 0-for-3.

Well, the offense certainly picked up on Saturday night with my return to the bench. Just kidding, as Ben did a superb job of keeping the guys together on Friday evening. While senior forward Jared Fiegl provided the offense, Galajda recorded his eighth shutout of the season to rank No. 1 in Division I. Matt also was helped by a stifling defense, as he was called upon to stop just 16 shots. Galajda is the reigning Hockey Commissioners' Association National Goaltender of the Month for January.

Two weeks ago, Fiegl scored his first two goals of the season. Jared has earned a lot of ice time as a checker and he's always worked extremely hard. He's a very physical player and he brought energy both nights this past weekend. He has been battling illness and

injuries in the past few weeks and because of this, we didn't even know if he could play on two consecutive nights. He proved us wrong in the Union-RPI weekend.

Much of the game's first 40 minutes were marred by penalties but neither team could capitalize on the power play. We came out flying for the third period with a lot of energy. With the guys who were playing with energy, we started putting those guys together. The players who might have missed a shift or two gained energy from the break. We started moving pucks faster and when you move the puck more quickly, you look faster and we were in the third period.

Fiegl scored just 8 minutes into the third period. We had possession along the wall behind the St. Lawrence goal. Senior forward Trevor Yates swept the puck out in front, where Fiegl worked hard to get himself free. As the St. Lawrence goalie sprawled on the ice to make the first save, Fiegl roofed the rebound into the top of the net.

We also finished out the last 4:56 of the game on a power play, after a Saints defender was issued a major penalty for butt-ending. St. Lawrence pulled its goalie in the last minute, but neither team was able to score.

Galajda made 16 saves and St. Lawrence stopped 29 shots. We were 0-for-4 on the power play and St. Lawrence was 0-for-5.

With a 14-2-2 ECAC slate, we now are in first place with 30 points with four games to play. Clarkson (11-3-4) and Union (13-5) are tied for second place with 26 points apiece, followed by Harvard (9-6-3) with 21 points.

On Saturday night we will honor our six seniors for their contributions to our program. Hope you will join us to congratulate these great student-athletes. We look forward to an outstanding crowd like two weeks ago.