

Coach Schafer's Notes for December 6, 2018

@Dartmouth 3, CORNELL 2
CORNELL 2, @Harvard 1

We're going to go from best to not so good in this wrap-up of the weekend's road trip. On Saturday night, the win was one of the grittiest I've been part of during my time as head coach. Harvard has one of the best power plays in the country and scored an extra-man goal 5:30 into the game. This didn't seem to bother our guys because they never hung their heads; they never got down. They just kept competing. Shots were even for the first 20 minutes at 20 apiece. This was the first time this season that we had allowed a power-play goal in the first period, killing off 15 straight opponent extra-man chances in the first 20 minutes.

In the second period, it was our time to score on the power play. A series of crisp passes set up the eventual goal. Sophomore forward Tristin Mullin attempted a one-timer and his stick shattered. The puck dribbled past a charging defender. With the Harvard goaltender going down to block the shot, sophomore forward Cam Donaldson was open on top of the crease, and he flipped the puck into the wide side to make it 1-1 at 7:01 of the second period. Six minutes later, sophomore forward Morgan Barron's shot was kicked out by the Harvard goalie directly into the path of senior forward Mitch Vanderlaan. Mitch's backhand hit a defender's skate and popped off the goaltender's shoulder down into the crease where Mullin flipped it in for his second goal of the season and second point of the game. It was Vanderlaan's second assist of the game to lead the team with 10 on the season. Mitch is an inspiration to our team because he played the game basically on one leg after being injured at Dartmouth.

Harvard dominated the third period with 10 shots on goal to our one, including two more power-play opportunities.

Sophomore goaltender Austin McGrath, filling in for his injured classmate Matt Galajda, for the second night, made 23 saves, including 10 in the third period, while the Harvard netminder stopped 28 shots. We out-shot them, 30-24, for the game. We were 2-for-4 on the power play and Harvard was 1-for-4. Once again, the Harvard rink looked like "Lynah East" with all the Big Red support we had in the stands.

Friday's loss at Dartmouth was just frustrating because we were not able to score goals. I was proud of our guys, being as shorthanded as we were, as I felt we played very well. We just need to find the back of the opponent's net. Austin played well, and the guys were solid in front of him. He really stepped up with 19 saves.

After a scoreless first period, we took an early second-period lead. Junior forward Jeff Malott returned to the lineup after missing several games with an injury, and he demonstrated why he is so vital to our team. On the first goal, Malott received a pass that sent him into the Dartmouth zone. He drew defenders to him and dished off to freshman defenseman Joe Leahy cutting back to the right side. Leahy's open shot from the right circle hit the back skate of senior

forward Beau Starrett, who was posted above the crease, and it bounced in. Two minutes later, Dartmouth tied the game at 1-1, and then at 11:31 it went up, 2-1. We trailed 2-1 after 40 minutes of play.

Malott scored his first goal of the season to tie the game at 2-2 just 6:10 into the third period. Starrett won a draw to the right of the Dartmouth goaltender to Vanderlaan inside the left point. Mitch fed Leahy in the middle at the top of the zone. Joe's wrist was headed wide of the goaltender but was tipped out of mid-air and into the net by Malott.

The winning goal came on a Dartmouth break-away from a turnover at the blue line when we were changing our defense and one player fell. The Dartmouth player had a clean break-away from the left circle and he slid the puck on his backhand between McGrath's pads. I was pleased with the game except for this unfortunate turnover, but that's the way things have gone recently.

In his first start, McGrath had 19 saves and we torched the Dartmouth goalie who had to make 38 saves, including 20 in the final period. We were 0-for-3 on the power play and they were 0-for-2. The loss ended our 15-game unbeaten streak in the Ivy League.

So, we now take a 6-5 overall, 4-2 ECAC, 4-1 Ivy record into a five-week break for finals and the holiday break. This couldn't come at a better time and we hope to have everyone healthy to start play in January. In addition to injuries, we need to put the puck in the back of the net. We can't let that bother us because the tide will turn for guys to score. It's just a matter of time.

We return to play on January 4-5 at Princeton and Quinnipiac, respectively.

From all of us in the Cornell hockey program, we wish our friends and loyal supporters Happy Holidays. The New Year will give us a fresh start to what promises to be an exciting and competitive season. Please join us as part of the Lynah Faithful at home or in your hometown area. The players appreciate the 'Sea of Red' in the stands.