

Coach Schafer's Notes for January 28, 2019

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Going into the weekend I was very concerned about our team since we didn't have a great week of practice. The habits of the week showed up at Colgate the first night. We didn't play very well in a win at Colgate. We improved on Saturday night at home but lost in overtime. The team rose to the challenge on Saturday; they played better and competed harder. After the game we talked about how we did not take care of Colgate's top line. They scored all 5 goals in the series. We also didn't win the special team's game. For the coming weekend, we hope to get some players back from injury. We are keeping our fingers crossed that Alex Green, Tristin Mullin and Noah Bauld can return. Max Andreev will be out until playoffs and it will close to get him back even then.

On Friday night, once again, we took the lead just 1:11 into the first period on a goal by senior forward Mitch Vanderlaan. His fourth goal of the season on a shot from the left circle squeaked through the goaltender's pads. Twelve minutes later, we made it 2-0. Sophomore forward Tristan Mullin buried a shot from the left hash, with assists to sophomore Kyle Betts and Vanderlaan. We went into the first intermission with a two-goal margin.

Colgate has a great first line, and they did the damage throughout the weekend. At 5:35 of the second period, the Raiders leading scorer, with defenders around him, ripped a shot over sophomore Matt Galajda's glove. Colgate wasn't finished and deadlocked the game at 2-all 6:14 into the third period. Matty had made the initial stop, but the puck trickled out toward the far post and was swept in from beneath one of our players.

The winning goal came at 9:13 of the third period. We were near the end of a power play and set up the goal with some very nice passing. Junior Jeff Malott and sophomore forward Brenden Locke did a tic-tac-toe sequence before Locke fed freshman forward Michael Regush alone in front of the net. Michael buried the puck for his fourth collegiate goal, and we hung on for the win.

Galajda made 18 saves for us, while the Colgate goaltender stopped 20 shots. Both teams were 0-for-3 on the power play. We escaped Hamilton with the victory with hopes that our play would pick up the following night at Lynah Rink.

We did play somewhat better on Saturday night, but the performance was not what we expect from this team. The loss ended an eight-game unbeaten streak, which was the longest active streak in the nation going into Saturday evening. Once again, we jumped out to a first-period lead. At the 2-minute mark, sophomore forward Morgan Barron intercepted a blind Colgate pass and fired a shot past the goaltender's glove for his 10th goal of the season. It looked like we would be going into the locker room with a 1-0 lead, but with 4.5 seconds on the clock, Colgate scored on the end of a 2-on-1 rush. A shot from the left circle flew past the glove of sophomore goaltender Austin McGrath.

That late goal seemed to ignite the visitors as they came right out and scored just 15 seconds into the second period. At that point, I pulled Austin and put Matt back in the net. I didn't think Austin battled hard enough to fight around the screen that was there and that's why I made the change. At this point on, I thought the Colgate freshman goaltender really excelled. We had a 5-on-3 power play near the end

of the second period and he made a sprawling glove save to prevent the game-tying goal. We out-shot the visitors, 17-5, in the middle stanza.

The third period began with us trailing, 2-1, but we tied the score at 13:42. Barron deked his defender to the ice and followed up with a pass across the crease to sophomore forward Cam Donaldson who squeezed a shot through the goaltender's pads, one of the few mistakes the goalie made all night. It was Donaldson's 11th goal of the year.

Overtime came to an end at 3:48 of the 5-minute extra period. An initial shot was blocked by Galajda, but a Colgate player was wide-open at the near post to lift the puck into the net.

Their top line killed our top checking line, scoring all five of their goals. That line was a point of emphasis all week, but our guys just didn't get it. Their goaltender was outstanding, but you've got to bury your chances. We missed three empty-net chances in the game, hit a couple posts, and when we had opportunities, their goaltender made some unbelievable saves.

McGrath had eight saves and Galajda turned away 11. The Colgate goalie made 41 saves! We were 0-for-4 on the power play and they were 0-for-3.

Earning two points this weekend, we tie with Yale for first place in the ECAC with six of our remaining ten games on the road. It starts this coming weekend with a trip to the Capitol District to play Union on Friday night and RPI on Saturday evening. We need a good week of practice, and I know the players will accept the challenge.