

## **Coach Schafer's Notes for March 25, 2019**

### **ECAC Tournament, Herb Brooks Arena, Lake Placid, NY**

**CORNELL 6, Brown 0 – Semi-Final**

**Clarkson 3, CORNELL 2 (OT) - Championship**

The recap this week reports good and bad news. Let's begin with the good news. We are playing in the NCAA tournament, headed to Providence, RI as the No. 3 seed. Our opponent is No. 2 seed Northeastern, the Hockey East tournament winner. The game is at 4:30 p.m. on Saturday at the Dunkin' Donut Center. The winner faces the winner of top-seed Minnesota State and No. 4 Providence. The regional champion earns a berth to the Frozen Four on April 11-13 at HSBC Arena in Buffalo. For the third straight year, we face the winner of the Hockey East tournament and Northeastern has won 11 of its last 12 outings. We are ready for the challenge even after all the obstacles we faced last Saturday night in Lake Placid.

Continuing with the good news, we scored three first-period goals, including two on the power play, on Friday night to defeat Brown 6-0. Just 2:03 into the game, Brown was whistled for a 5-minute major charging and a top-line winger was ejected. At 4:10, senior defenseman Matt Nuttle received a cross-ice pass from sophomore forward Brenden Locke, and Nuttle's shot through traffic found the back of the net. Still on the man advantage, junior forward Noah Bauld scored his second goal of the playoffs (and second of the season) to make it 2-0. With 7:52 left in the first period, sophomore Tristan Mullin scored his seventh goal of the season on a rebound after he helped create a turnover on the forecheck. We took a 3-0 lead into the first intermission but remembering our three-goal lead blown five weeks ago at Brown.

In the second period, we took five-minute penalty, but the Brown advantage was somewhat neutralized by three minor penalties charged to them. At 13:33, we scored our third goal of the game in a 5-on-3 power-play. Sophomore forward Morgan Barron fired a bullet from the top of the right circle for his team-leading 14th goal of the season. Junior defenseman Yanni Kaldis recorded his second assist of the game and 22nd of the season.

In the third period, freshman defenseman Joe Leahy scored his first collegiate goal at 7:40, and sophomore forward Kyle Betts finished the scoring at 12:40 with a short-handed, empty-net tally. It was Betts' third goal in the postseason and our first shorthanded goal since Nov. 4, 2016.

Sophomore Matthew Galajda made 30 saves for his fifth shutout of the season, while the Brown netminder stopped 16 shots. We were 3-for-6 on the power play and they were 0-for-4. The game was a tale of special teams. Obviously, scoring two power-play goals right off the bat and many penalties during the game, the penalty kill did a great job of blocking shots and when they didn't, Matty was ready to stop them.

ADVERSITY. We certainly had our share on Saturday. Before I get into the game, I want to give credit to Casey Jones and Brett Brekke, former assistants at Cornell, for the great job they have done at Clarkson. Theirs is a class program and I congratulate them on the win.

We started the night quickly with Bauld scoring his third goal in five playoff games, finishing off a give-and-go rush on a 2-on-1 break at 7:29 into the game. At this point, we ran into penalty trouble and Clarkson scored a pair of power-play goals to take a 2-1 lead after 20 minutes of play. In the process, we also lost junior forward Jeff Malott to an injury that will take months to heal. It was just a mirror of the entire season. We entered the game with 57 successful penalty kills in our last 57 chances. We also have not yet had to kill more penalties than the opposition, but Clarkson had five power plays to our two before the evening was over. Give Clarkson credit, the key to the game were those penalties and Clarkson capitalized.

Our team battles and we came back in the third period with 5:41 left in regulation to tie the score at 2-all. Mullin redirected a shot by Nuttle into the goal and that was the score heading to overtime.

This set the stage for the weirdest overtime possibly in the history of the sport. It started with a collision behind the goal that tipped the cage onto Galajda's back. But since the net never actually came off the pegs under the posts, play was allowed to continue. After several unsuccessful attempts to shrug the cage off, Matty got a skate tangled in the net. He attempted to continue playing but removed himself from play at the next whistle.

Why did the officials keep play going with the net on top of our goalie? This cost our starting goaltender a knee injury. For what? To keep the game going? They messed up the call and our player got hurt for no reason. Even our players and a Clarkson player tried to help him. That's the kind of sportsmanship we saw! The goalie's down on his knees, the net is on the back of his neck and yet they don't blow the whistle? And a student-athlete is injured as a result. I think that's an unacceptable officials' decision. And great sportsmanship from Clarkson! The only ones not helping were the officials.

The winning goal came at 14:36 of overtime on a play that we thought was offsides. The video shows a Clarkson forechecker poking the puck back into the zone, where it was touched by a

Golden Knights forward in an offside position. By rule: offside. But the puck made its way back into the neutral zone before being taken back again into the Cornell zone in a legal manner. The earlier offside went uncalled and was not a reviewable sequence. The winning goal came against sophomore goaltender Austin McGrath in relief, but he really didn't have a chance on the play.

Matty, in 70:49 of play, made 23 saves while McGrath stopped one shot. The Clarkson goaltender made 29 saves. We were 0-for-2 on the power play and they were 2-for-5.

Losing both Jeff and Matty in the game is devastating to our team but give them credit for plugging away all night long. Playing against one of the best defensive team in the country, we battled back to tie the game at 2-all in regulation. Obviously, it's hard to lose in overtime, but we have to put this behind us. We're looking forward to playing in Providence and moving on. As many of you do, please join us at the games this weekend. You'll love the grit and never give up attitude of this year's team.