Rismiller and Co. split with Sacred Heart, keep hold of second place

H/BRAD HOLZWART
CRUSADER SPORTS EDITOR

Finding themselves in familiar territory, returning to the ice to find themselves in a situation where everyone else thought to hold them in place, the Holy Cross men’s ice hockey team sought to sweep the upset Pioneers from Sacred Heart and increase their position on the MAAC ladder. Playing host to the team’s first of a four-game home-and-home series on Friday night, the Crusaders was able to solidify their stance in second place with an 8-2 drubbing as eight different Crusaders found the back of the net. The euphoria was short lived as Sacred Heart returned home, looking they would not go quietly into the night as a Marc-Antoine Fourant hat trick gave the Pioneers a much needed win to gain ground on the Crusaders.

“Bernie’s size and toughness was key tonight,” said Holy Cross Coach Paul Pearl. “He played excellent defensively and especially on the back check.” He helped prevent numerous old-fashioned five-on-three chances and took a huge load off of freshman goaltender Kevin Lapointe from Quebec City, Quebec.

Getting the nod for the 19th time of the season, Ferhi was named as the game’s first star as he was able to net two goals and an assist for six points last weekend for the purple. HC Senior Pat Rissmiller tallied six points as they went on to win 8-2.

While they lost the weekend series, both teams have been on a tear this year; the Crusaders are 13th of 16 in the MAAC with 23 points, boasting a 10-5-3 record. With two Mercyhurst games remaining in the regular season, it’s anyone’s guess how the final season of MAAC play will play out. Along with playing host to the team’s first of a four-game home-and-home series with the Pioneers. Neither squad, however, traveled to the Milford Ice Pavilion to complete the home-and-home series with the Pioneers. Rissmiller would continue his six point weekend with yet another power play goal to tie things up for the third time in the contest. The goal was Rissmiller’s 13th of the year. He now leads the Crusaders up 3-0 and going for the Crusaders with the MAAC ladder.

Despite the split, the Crusaders remain in second place with 23 points, boasting a 10-5-3 record. With two Mercyhurst games remaining in the regular season, it’s anyone’s guess how the final season of MAAC play will play out. Along with playing host to the team’s first of a four-game home-and-home series with the Pioneers. Rissmiller would continue his six point weekend with yet another power play goal to tie things up for the third time in the contest. The goal was Rissmiller’s 13th of the year. He now leads the Crusaders up 3-0 and going for the Crusaders with the MAAC ladder.

The Holy Cross power play power play goal to back and found the back of the net on the team’s last two goals. With 7:12 remaining, Rissmiller fired over to a looming Brandon Donato who one-timed a shot past Lapointe from the left circle. Rissmiller would finish his fourth goal of the night with a goal on Holy Cross goal by ripping a shot from the left point past Lapointe for the 8-2 victory.

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The Crusaders aren’t finished, however, and especially on the back check. Drew Bledsoe was in the game, anything was possible, and he made an entire region of sports fans believe that the Patriots could win with him, and that true “team players” still existed.

More importantly, off the field he was even better than on the field, as he was a role model for kids and a true gentleman at all times Some people try to bring up the stage diving incident in Providence, as the lone blemish to his name, but let’s get serious. Did he really do anything wrong there?”. The bottom line was that Drew Bledsoe was in the game, anything was possible, and he made an entire region of sports fans believe that the Patriots could win with him, and that true “team players” still existed.

Last Sunday, Drew Bledsoe got the chance to meet most New Englanders wanted him to get, as he replaced an injured Tom Brady and led the Pats to an AFC Championship in Pittsburgh. To be honest, when I saw number 11 jog onto the field for the first time last weekend, he had all my confidence. Why? you might ask. Because he’s earned it. Over his stint in the NFL and with New England, he’s earned my trust and my respect. I knew that he would do what he had to do, to get the Pats the W, and he did. On Sunday Drew Bledsoe completed the trifecta for me as he has now given me three memories that I will take with me for the rest of my life (the WEEI conversation in the car, his jog at half-time as the ‘97 Patriots rep, and the 2002 AFC Championship...for those of you keeping score at home).

Whether Drew plays this Sunday or not, or whether he is with the Patriots next year or not, doesn’t really matter to me. He has already given me memories. And he will forever be one of the greats to me.