

Tirone shines as RoughRiders get shutout

Written by Jim Ecker

Wednesday, 29 January 2014 23:00 - Last Updated Wednesday, 29 January 2014 23:02



The Cedar Rapids RoughRiders crowded around Danny Tirone and gleefully pounded him on the head Wednesday night. When the celebration ended, the 19-year-old goalie skated down the ice and acknowledged the cheers from 2,550 fans at the Ice Arena.

He deserved all the tributes he could get.

Tirone stopped 18 shots and gave the RoughRiders their first shutout of the USHL season in a hard-fought 1-0 victory over Des Moines.

"It was great," said Tirone, calling it a total team effort. "The offense was going, the defense was going. The defense made it pretty easy for me. They blocked so many shots."

The RoughRiders came out firing and outshot the Buccaneers, 29-18, but they managed only a single goal themselves against Des Moines goalie Ryan Ruck, who was equally strong in net.

Judd Peterson scored for Cedar Rapids at the 7:34 mark of the second period on slick passes from Mitch Maloney and Frederik Tiffels. Tirone and the RoughRiders defense took it from there, killing three power plays and stuffing the Buccaneers when it counted.

"It was a decent effort," said Coach Mark Carlson. "We came out real well in the first (period), I thought. We have to be more consistent, but I thought there were a lot of good things."

The best thing was Tirone, who hails from Trumbull, Conn., and has committed to play college hockey at the University of New Hampshire.

"I thought he had a real good game," said Carlson. "He had a real good game for sure."

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"He competes. And he's athletic," the coach said. "That's a good place to start."

Tirone made the biggest play of the game in the third period when Des Moines forward Tanner Karty took a long pass and rushed the net all alone, without a Cedar Rapids defenseman in sight. A goal would have tied the game, but Tirone stopped him cold and also covered a dangerous rebound.

"He did a pretty good move," said Tirone. "I just stretched out and was lucky enough to get a toe on it. It happened pretty quick. I just tried to play it as well as I could."

"I was able to make the save, the rebound came out, my defenseman was able to push him aside and I covered up."

The victory lifted Cedar Rapids to 21-14-1 for 43 points, good for third place in the Eastern Conference behind Indiana (52) and Dubuque (49) and just ahead of Green Bay (41), Muskegon (40) and Team USA (38) in the tight standings.

The top four teams in the Eastern Conference will make the playoffs. The RoughRiders have played 36 games and have 24 left in the regular season between now and April 5.

"We want to get two points every night and we know that's going to move us up in the standings," said Tirone, who has a 15-8 record and a 2.63 goals against average. "Tonight we really came to play. We definitely care about that (the playoffs) and it brings us closer to our goals."

Cedar Rapids visits Sioux Falls Friday night and hosts Green Bay Saturday night.

Des Moines 0 0 0 - 0

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Cedar Rapids 0 1 0 - 1

Scoring

CR - Judd Peterson (Mitch Maloney, Frederik Tiffels)