

RoughRiders lanced by Omaha, 2-1

Written by Jim Ecker

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Sometimes you can play at a pretty high level game and still lose the silly hockey game.

Sometimes a winless team defeats an undefeated team, simply because the puck does not bounce your way all the time.

It happened to the Cedar Rapids RoughRiders Saturday night.

The Omaha Lancers handed the RoughRiders their first loss of the season, 2-1, before 2,035 customers at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.

Omaha arrived in town with an 0-3-1 record, compared to a spotless 3-0 mark for the RoughRiders. It's too early in the USHL to make any profound judgments about the league, however, and both clubs appeared to be fairly even in ability.

Cedar Rapids took a 1-0 lead in the first period when Andrew Gaus scored a shorthanded goal while the RoughRiders were killing a penalty. Nobody got an assist on the goal, but Casey Jerry created the action for Cedar Rapids when he broke away from the pack and fired a shot at Omaha goalie Hayden Hawkey.

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Hawkey stopped Jerry's shot, but Gaus was in perfect position for the rebound and goal.

Omaha tied the game, 1-1, on a goal by Shane Gersich in the second period on a power play. Gersich struck again at the 12:10 mark of the third period with the game-winner, somehow forcing the puck into the goal from close range through a mass of humanity.

The RoughRiders had several good opportunities during the contest, but Hawkey stopped 24 of 25 shots and several others slipped by the crease without finding the net.

Cedar Rapids had a final chance with 20 seconds left in the game after Coach Mark Carlson pulled goaltender Ben Blacker for an extra skater and a 6-on-5 advantage. Erik Foley rifled a shot at Hawkey, but it went a little high and wide.

Blacker saved 32 of 34 shots for the RoughRiders.

Cedar Rapids began the season with four straight home games, but now the RoughRiders will play their next three games on the road. They visit Waterloo Oct. 17, visit Madison Oct. 18 and play at Chicago Oct. 24 before hosting Sioux Falls Oct. 25. The RoughRiders will play three more road games after that, giving them 6-out-of-7 games away from home during a three-week stretch.

Omaha	0	1	1	- 2
RoughRiders	1	0	0	- 1

RR - Andrew Gaus (shorthanded) (unassisted)

OM - Shane Gersich (power play) (Brendan Smith, Steven Spinner)

OM - Shane Gersich (Anthony Angello)