

Fronk gets hat trick as Riders win 10th straight

Written by Mike Condon

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Jiri Fronk made sure he scooped up the puck as he left the ice Friday night.

The Cedar Rapids RoughRider right winger wanted a souvenir of the best night of USHL career. Fronk, a native of Louny in the Czech Republic, finished with a hat trick and an assist as Cedar Rapids' win streak hit 10 with a 7-2 thrashing of Tri-City before 2,206 fans at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena.

Coach Mark Carlson's team, now 13-0-1, 26 points, was the quicker team to the puck all night. None were faster than Fronk and linemates Andrew Oglevie and Erik Foley.

Foley finished with two goals and two assists while Oglevie had three helpers.

"It's a little hard to believe we've only been together (as a line) for two games," Foley said. "It's great playing with them because we are such good friends."

Foley did much of the speaking for Fronk who, by his own admission, doesn't speak very good English.

"It's good," Fronk said with a big smile on his face when asked about his hat trick. "It was a great win."

Foley was happy for his fellow winger.

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"Jiri is such a skilled guy," he said. "It was great to see him have that kind of night."

Carlson was pleased by what he saw with the line.

"They're starting to get some chemistry," he said. "They're all getting better every week."

Tri-City came into Friday's game with a 7-3-3 record, but looked overmatched much of the times against Cedar Rapids. Alec Marsh and Foley scored within a three-minute span late in the first period and the Riders were on their way.



"We are rolling right now," Foley said. "We have a great group of guys in the room. Everyone really knows their role and accepts that role. We're all really excited to be a part of it."

Tyler Gernhofer connected on a rebound early in the second period pushing the lead to 3-0. Tri-City's Chris Wilkie scored on a breakaway to cut the lead to 3-1 only to see Fronk score his first of the night from a near impossible angle out of the corner to put the Riders up 4-1.

And when Foley netted his second of the night on a feed from Ross Colton, it marked the end of the night for Tri-City goalie Alec Dillion, who gave up five goals on just 10 shots. The Riders were outshot 34-20 for the game.

Fronk's final two goals came in the third period, both coming on scrambles in front of the Tri-City net.

Ben Blacker was strong in goal for the Riders, denying the visitors on a number of solid scoring chances.

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Despite the torrid start, Carlson's focus remains on what is ahead.

"This is a day-by-day operation," Carlson said. "We're not concerned with the past. We just have to take it a day at a time here and get ready for (Saturday night against Dubuque)."

The Riders should get a strong test from Dubuque, currently second in the USHL's Eastern Division, six points behind the RoughRiders.

"We're a really tight team," Foley said. "We all get along great and we know we will have a tough game (against Dubuque), but that's what makes it fun."

Tri-City █ █ █ █ █ █ **0 2 0 - 2**
Cedar Rapids █ **2 3 2 - 7**

CR - Alec Marsh (Tyler Gernhofer)

CR - Erik Foley (Jiri Fronk, Andrew Oglevie)

CR - Tyler Gernhofer (Dylan McLaughlin)

TC - Chris Wilkie (unassisted)

CR - Jiri Fronk (Erik Foley)

CR - Erik Foley (PP) (Ross Colton)

TC - Matthew Freytag (PP) (Mattias Goransson, Tory Dello)

CR - Jiri Fronk (power play) (Andrew Oglevie)

CR - Jiri Fronk (Erik Foley, Andrew Oglevie)