

## Fighting Saints slip by RoughRiders, 2-1

Written by Jim Ecker

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Several hockey fans saw their vehicles slip on the slick streets in southwest Cedar Rapids Saturday night as they headed home after watching the RoughRiders play the Dubuque Fighting Saints.

It was unfortunately symbolic, because the RoughRiders slipped inside the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena as well.

The Dubuque Fighting Saints scored two goals early in the third period and trimmed the RoughRiders, 2-1, before 2,367 fans on a snowy night in Cedar Rapids.

The loss snapped the RoughRiders' impressive 10-game winning streak and lifted the Fighting Saints within four points of Cedar Rapids in the USHL standings.

The RoughRiders had not lost a game since Oct. 11, going more than a month with nothing but victories. The streak was bound to end at some point, and it happened in a contest where Cedar Rapids was out-shot by a healthy margin, 36-17.

The RoughRiders were not quite as crisp or sharp as usual, but they still had their chances against their arch-rivals from Dubuque.

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Clark Kuster gave Cedar Rapids a 1-0 lead early in the second period with an assist from Matt O'Donnell and it stayed that way heading into the fateful third stanza.

The final period was just 39 seconds old when Blake Hillman tied the game for Dubuque, 1-1, with an assist from Seamus Malone. The Fighting Saints struck again about 3 1/2 minutes later when J.D. Dudek scored for the visitors.

The RoughRiders had a few good chances to tie the game, but luck was not on their side this time.

Ben Blacker stopped 34 of 36 shots in goal for Cedar Rapids. Jacob Nehama was only half as busy in goal for Dubuque, stopping 16 of 17 shots by the RoughRiders.

Cedar Rapids, enjoying a hot start to the season, fell to 13-2 for 26 points with only its second loss of the campaign. Dubuque raised its record to 11-3 for 22 points, just four points behind the RoughRiders in the Western Conference with a game in hand.

Cedar Rapids will play its next four games on the road before finally appearing in the Ice Arena again on Saturday, Nov. 29 against Waterloo.

The RoughRiders visit Team USA on Nov. 21 and Nov. 22, travel to Lincoln Nov. 26 and visit Waterloo on Thursday, Nov. 27 for Thanksgiving.