

RoughRiders fall, but gain playoff edge

Written by Jim Ecker

Friday, 04 April 2014 21:46 - Last Updated Friday, 04 April 2014 22:13



The Cedar Rapids RoughRiders were losers AND winners Friday night.

The RoughRiders lost to Waterloo, 5-1, before 4,009 fans at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena, but the Riders secured the home-ice advantage for the first round of the USHL playoffs anyway.

The night had a somewhat happy ending for the RoughRiders because the Dubuque Fighting Saints lost to Youngstown, 3-1, ending the battle for second place in the Eastern Conference standings between Cedar Rapids and their rivals from Dubuque.

Friday's outcome means Cedar Rapids will finish second in the Eastern Conference and Dubuque will finish third, which means the RoughRiders will have the home-ice advantage when they meet the Fighting Saints in the opening round of the playoffs.

The best-of-5 series against Dubuque will start next Friday, April 11 at 7:05 p.m. at the Cedar Rapids Ice Arena. The second game of the series will be played at the Ice Arena on Saturday, April 12 at 7:05 p.m.

The fifth game of the series (if necessary) will return to Cedar Rapids on Monday, April 21 at 7:05 p.m.

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There is one game left in the regular season for both teams, but the RoughRiders have a 35-21-3 record for 73 points and Dubuque has a 33-22-4 mark for 70 points and therefore cannot catch Cedar Rapids in the standings.

The RoughRiders will play at Waterloo Saturday night to end the regular season.

Cedar Rapids owns a 19-10-1 record at home, but the home-ice advantage against Dubuque will not mean a thing if the RoughRiders play another lackluster game like they did Friday against Waterloo.

The RoughRiders scored first on a goal by Andrew Poturalski with 48 seconds left in the first period for a 1-0 lead at the break, but that was the highwater mark for the home squad.

Waterloo scored five straight goals, including an empty-net tally with 29 seconds left, and the visitors outshot the RoughRiders 34-16.

Waterloo scored its first two goals on power plays, and its last three goals were all unassisted.

Waterloo has a 43-11-5 record for 91 points and will be the No.1 seed in the Western Conference for the playoffs.

Waterloo 0 2 3 - 5
Cedar Rapids 1 0 0 - 1

CR - Andrew Poturalski (Frederik Tiffels, Judd Peterson)
W - Peter Krieger (power play) (Brandon Montour, Liam Pecararo)
W - Montour (power play) (Krieger)
W - Patrick Russell (unassisted)

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W - Mark Friedman (unassisted)

W - Derek Pratt (empty net) (unassisted)