

October 15, 2006

Randolph Jr. RAMS -vs.- Hillsborough Ice Raiders

'Randolph and Hillsborough end in a tie'

Late third period pressure by Hillsborough, and the ensuing tying goal by Alex Wizna, assisted by Alex Vitale at 12:48, resulted in a 5-5 tie for the first game of the season. During the final seconds of the third, Randolph offense applied pressure, but was stopped by the Hillsborough goalie Bobby Palzer. Throughout the game, the Jr. RAMS and Ice Raiders defensemen were able to control the slot and stymie forwards down low. Both goalies, Joey Wiggins of Randolph, and Bobby Palzer, played outstanding games, facing 27 and 32 shots respectively, and denying the opposing team's breakaways.

FIRST PERIOD

The game started off with possession changes, offensive attacks and great goal tending and continued to be very evenly matched for these opponents. Randolph was able to strike first, midway through the first period, on a power play goal by Evan Jones, assisted by Andrew Tucker. The first period concluded with Randolph in the lead 2-0, after James Loveys scored, assisted by Nick Beatrice. In the final minutes of the first period, Randolph had their third power play but was called for an interference penalty and lost their man advantage. With the teams skating 4 on 4, Hillsborough applied a lot of pressure on the Randolph goalie, with quality shots and teamwork. Although there was a score differential at the end of the first, the game was evenly matched.

SECOND PERIOD

Early in the second period, through battling and eventual possession of the puck by Beatrice, Randolph increased their lead to 3-0, with a goal by Kyle D'Amore, assisted by James Loveys. A minute later, Hillsborough decided enough was enough and began their come back, with the first of two power play goals. The first goal of the season for Hillsborough came from Alex Vitale, unassisted. The game continued with Randolph controlling play in the attacking zone, until Hillsborough jumped out with one of many breakaways, which Randolph goalie, Joey Wiggins denied. Midway through the second period, Randolph regained a three point lead when Kyle D'Amore scored his second goal of the evening, with multiple assists going to Loveys and Beatrice. While Randolph was feeling comfortable with the score at 4-1, Hillsborough added their second power play goal. With an assist from Brett Siegrist, Alex Wizna scored the first of his two goals. Minutes later, notwithstanding Randolph's power play, Hillsborough applied pressure and controlled the puck in their attacking zone. Danny Congiusta found an opportunity to score a short handed goal, assisted by Seth Mansfield. The conclusion of the second period left Hillsborough gaining momentum on Randolph, with both teams and fans on the edge of their seats, rooting for their teams.

THIRD PERIOD

The third period began with quick pressure by Hillsborough's Ice Raiders on the Randolph Jr. RAMS. At 30 seconds into the period, Danny Congiusta found the back of the net with a rebound goal (his second goal of the evening) assisted by Alex Vitale. With the score tied at 4-4, both teams refused to back down. It was Randolph who finally broke the tie. With both teams at full strength, at 7:18 in the third period, a great passing combination between Kyle D'Amore and Kyle Brennan resulted in Brennan's first goal of the season. With Randolph in the lead by one goal, Hillsborough maintained relentless pressure during the ensuing minutes. At 12:48, Alex Wizna of Hillsborough scored the final goal of the evening's contest, which tied the game.

If the first match-up of these teams is any indication of what the 2006-07 season will hold, there will be much nail biting and holding on to the edge of your seat. Both teams are looking forward to the rematch on February 2nd.