

# Red win: Simple twist of fate

By MIKE WITHIAM

Journal Writer

Somebody, somewhere, was watching over the Cornell hockey team Tuesday night at Lynah Rink. That's the only explanation for Cornell's come-from-behind, 6-5 overtime victory against Providence College in the quarterfinals of the ECAC Division I hockey tournament.

The Big Red fell behind 5-1 when Providence's Tom Bauer scored with 16 minutes left in regulation play, but goals by John Stornik, Steve Hennessey, John Olds and Lance Nethery — the last with just 13 seconds left — tied the game, 5-5, and forced overtime.

Rob Gemmell scored the winning goal as he stuffed a rebound past Providence goalie Bill Milner four minutes into the overtime period

Gemmell's goal sent the crowd pouring over the boards onto the ice in a celebration that Red coach Dick Bertrand said he had "never seen anything like" before at Lynah.

The Cornell players, who were mobbing Gemmell at the east end of the rink, were in turned mobbed by onrushing fans. Youngsters grabbed souvenir sticks; students raised high their posters, which had correctly predicted victory.

Cornell advanced to the ECAC semifinals, and will face New Hampshire Friday night at 6:15 p.m. at Boston Garden. In the other semifinal matchup, Boston University will meet Dartmouth.

New Hampshire routed Yale, 9-2, Boston University beat Vermont, 4-3, and Dartmouth stopped Clarkson, 2-1, in overtime, in other quarter-

final games Tuesday.

For 59:40 Tuesday, Cornell couldn't buy a break. But with 20 seconds left, Providence ahead 5-4, and Cornell goalie Brian Hayward out of the net in favor of another attackman, the Big Red got the break it needed.

Providence's Randy Wilson got behind the Cornell defense and appeared ready to send the Friars to Boston, but his shot at the unguarded net from 30 feet away missed high and wide.

Cornell's Nethery picked up the rebound, beat everybody to the Providence end of the rink, and fired a low slapshot from the blue line. It beat Milner with 13 seconds left, and a delirious Lynah crowd covered the ice with hats, scarfs and mittens.

"I couldn't believe it when he (Wilson) missed that open net," Nethery said. "Then I saw we had a three-on-two going the other way, but I didn't know how much time was left, so I just wound up and shot. I think it (the puck) went under his (Milner's) stick. I'm gonna be dreamin' about that one for a year."

"I gave it up there when I saw him (Wilson) heading for the open net," said Cornell defenseman Hennessey.

Nethery's goal also helped him tie two individual scoring records. It was his 268th career point, tying him with RPI's Frank Chiarelli for the ECAC Division I career scoring record. It was also his 91st career goal, tying him with Doug Ferguson for the Cornell career goal scoring record.

The Cornell locker room was a picture of different reactions. Some jumped around and shouted their happiness, while others sat quietly, with dazed looks on their faces.

## Many playoff games were close

Tuesday night's ECAC quarterfinal games proved just one thing — there isn't much difference between being number one and being number eight.

Though the seedings held, with the top four teams all advancing to Friday's semifinals at the Boston Garden, three games were decided by one goal. Two of those were overtime decisions, and the third, Boston University's 4-3 win over Vermont, wasn't decided until the final 15 seconds of play.

In addition to Cornell's 6-5 overtime win against Providence, Dartmouth nipped Clarkson, 2-1 in overtime, and New Hampshire blasted Yale, 9-2.

Boston University will meet Dartmouth in one semifinal Friday, and Cornell will face New Hampshire.

Vermont, which upset BU in the season's final weekend to gain an ECAC playoff berth, built a 3-0 lead midway through the second period against the defending national champions.

The Terriers, who improved to 21-5-2, then battled back with two

goals late in the second period, and tied the game early in the third period. John Bethel's tally with 15 seconds left in regulation gave BU the win. Vermont finished 11-10 overall, and 11-10 in the ECAC.

Dartmouth and Clarkson traded goals late in the first period, then settled back into a fierce defensive struggle. Dartmouth's Dennis McPherson scored the winning goal in overtime, helping the Green improve its record to 17-7-2. Clarkson finished 13-9 in ECAC play and 19-13 overall.

Freshman center Dan McPherson scored four goals and senior wing Bruce Crowder added three more to lead New Hampshire past Yale.

The Wildcats and Elis battled to a 1-1 tie after one period, before New Hampshire pulled steadily away.

New Hampshire improved to 20-8-3. Yale finished with a 12-9-1 ECAC mark, and a 13-12-2 overall record.

In the Western Collegiate Hockey Association playoffs Tuesday, Top-seeded North Dakota stopped Colorado College, 6-3; second-seeded Minnesota beat Michigan Tech, 5-3,

third-seeded Minnesota-Duluth stopped Denver, 5-2, and fourth-seeded Wisconsin won its ninth straight, beating Notre Dame, 11-5.

The second games of the two-game, total goal series continue tonight. First round winners pair off for the semifinals Friday and Saturday nights.

The WCHA finals are set for March 16-17.

In the Central Collegiate Hockey Association playoffs, Bowling Green and Ohio State meet Friday and Saturday in a two game, total-goals series to decide the conference title.

That winner then meets the WCHA runner-up in a one-game playoff, with a berth in the NCAA semifinals at stake. The ECAC champion, and an ECAC team selected by the ECAC, along with the WCHA champion, will complete the semifinal field.

The NCAA tourney is set for Detroit, March 22-24.

Tom Whitehead, a senior and one of 15 Cornell players in their first ECAC tourney action Tuesday, had a look of disbelief on his face as he sat quietly after the game.

"I still can't get over that guy missing the net. That was his ticket to Boston," Whitehead said.

Ever give up, Tom?

"Never. We have so many young guys on this team I think that's one reason we didn't die," Whitehead said. "Dick came in before the third period and told us to show Providence who was the better team in the third period, and see what happens. But when it got to the 10-minute mark of the third period, and it was 5-3, we had the momentum on our side."

"This team had never come back to win a game when it got two or more goals behind," Bertrand said. "If it had been a regular season game, I would have said it was gone when it was 5-1. But the feeling was different this time. There was a

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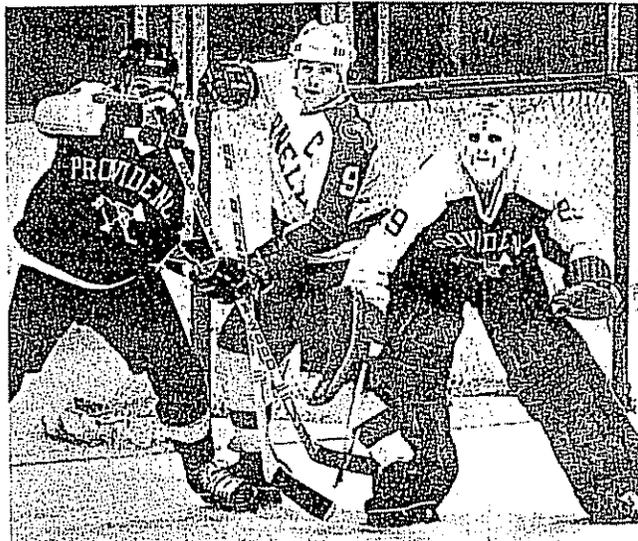


Photo by Mark Kelley

**Pushin'** Cornell's John Stornik does battle with Providence goalie Bill Milner and defenseman Bob Bonin during Cornell's ECAC playoff win Tuesday night at Lynah.



Photo by Mark Kelley

**Bedlam** Cornell rooters poured onto the ice Tuesday night after the Big Red rallied to down Providence, 6-5, in overtime, in an ECAC quarterfinal game. Identifiable players are Tim Strawman (4), Dave Mitchell (18), Peter Whiting (11) and Steve Hennessey (3).