

1-1-09

Happy New Year! I wish nothing but the best for each and every one of you in 2009.

I just got finished watching the Winter Classic on NBC, and although it lacked the snow we witnessed in last year's contest between the Pittsburgh Penguins and Buffalo Sabres, I thought the product was great. I think someone forgot to tell the Blackhawks there are three periods, though. After Chicago skated into the first intermission with a 3-1 lead, the Red Wings stormed back with five unanswered goals. Nevertheless, a storied rivalry + Wrigley Field + New Year's Day = winner in my book.

I'm split between Toronto's SkyDome and Boston's Fenway Park for next year's game. Too bad I'm not the schedule maker.

How about Zach Tarkir and Trent Campbell? In last Sunday's and yesterday's games for the Atlantic Division's first-place Portland Pirates, these two 2008-09 Stingrays scored the respective game-winning goals.

Congrats to our all-stars, Travis Morin, Johann Kroll and Michal Neuvirth, on their selection to this month's ECHL All-Star Game, which will be played in Reading, PA, on Jan. 21.

And speaking of all-stars, a pat on the back goes out to former Stingray Joel Irving (2000-2003, 2005-06), who was selected as a starter for this year's Central Hockey League All-Star Game, to be held Jan. 14 in Loveland, CO. "Swirvin" has 41 points in 32 contests for the Arizona Sundogs in 2008-09, ranking among the league leaders in goals and points.

With Alexandre Parent's second period power-play goal last night for Mississippi, the Stingrays snapped a streak of 35 consecutive penalty kills. The Rays' power-play unit, on the other hand, has converted just four of their last 41 opportunities (9.8%), including one over their last 21 chances.

Former Stingrays goaltender Daren Machesney's Team Canada fell to Dynamo Moscow yesterday in the Spengler Cup Final, 5-3. Expected to rejoin the Hershey Bears in the next several days, "Cheese" posted a 3-1 record in the tournament for the silver-medalist Canadians.

Washington Capitals Senior Writer Mike Vogel put together a great article yesterday on the Caps' timeline from this day in 2004 to the present, and the remarkable turnaround they've had:

<http://boards.washingtoncaps.com/index.php?autocom=blog&blogid=59&>

Keep an eye out for the Rays, who got a nod on their 2008 performance.

“Win together today and we’ll walk together forever.” – Fred Shero

-Joe

joe@stingrayshockey.com