

4-10-09

After last night's 5-3 loss, the Rays have dropped 12 straight road playoff contests. Their last postseason road win? That would be a 4-3 win over the Florida Everblades, on April 15, 2005.

And for those keeping track, SC is 14-13 all-time in Game Twos.

If and when he dresses, Rob Ricci will be the first player to make his Stingrays debut in a playoff game since goaltender Andy Adams in 1997, the year SC captured its first Kelly Cup Championship. Derek Grant and "Stone Cold" Steve McLaren, who made their South Carolina debuts in the spring of 1995, are the other two skaters.

The American Hockey League regular season wraps up this weekend, and the two teams Stingrays fans are keeping close tabs on, Syracuse and Quad City, are still in the thick of things. The Crunch, currently one point behind Toronto for the fourth and final playoff spot in the North, have a home-and-home tonight and tomorrow with the Rochester Americans, who have the second-fewest points in the league. The Flames, meanwhile, have a more daunting task, trailing Rockford by three points for the fourth slot in the West. Quad City, who plays a home-and-home with the non-playoff-bound Iowa Chops, needs to capture both games and hope that the IceHogs, who face Peoria and Chicago, drop their two remaining contests. If Rockford and Quad City are somehow even at 84 or 85 points, however, they'll have to resort to a tiebreaker. Both teams split the season series with four wins each, so that means moving on to the second tiebreaker: points in the season series between teams. In this case, the tiebreaker goes to Quad City, who had 10 points compared to Rockford's 8.

This appeared in the Puck Daddy blog on Yahoo! yesterday, on how hockey writers are coping with the recession and its affect on the print media: http://sports.yahoo.com/nhl/blog/puck_daddy/post/On-the-Furlough-Newspaper-hockey-writers-roll-w?urn=nhl,154681#remaining-content

I can't be the only one surprised to see Travis Morin finished tied for fifth in the MVP voting...

Rookie Stefan Della Rovere, who played in the Stingrays' final two regular season contests, was officially added yesterday to the Hershey Bears' roster, and could make his AHL debut tonight as the chocolate and white look to capture the East Division crown.

2008-09 Stingray Michal Neuvirth is profiled in this Washington Times article by Corey Massiak: <http://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/apr/09/varlamov-neuwirth-learning-the-ropes/>

Riku Helenius has certainly had a well-traveled rookie season. The 15th overall pick in the 2006 NHL Draft by Tampa Bay began the season as the backup for the now-defunct Augusta Lynx before moving up to the AHL's Norfolk Admirals. He then appeared in three games for the Mississippi Sea Wolves prior to another AHL recall. The Finn made his NHL debut in January for the Lightning, stopping both shots faced in his only contest. This week, Helenius was officially added to the Elmira Jackals' playoff roster, but will most likely be relegated to backup duty to Michael Teslak. I guess you could say he's come full circle, eh?

Defenseman Jamie Fraser, who played parts of two seasons in South Carolina from 2005-2007, became the fourth former Stingray to make his NHL debut this season, skating in the New York Islanders' 3-1 win over Tampa Bay last Saturday. Here are a couple of pics of him in action during that game:

http://sports.yahoo.com/nhl/players/4159/photos;_ylt=AkuXv8KOvUcooU7_XGacDvVivLYF?slug=decc89847fa940c58371940b9042455e.lightning_islanders_hockey_nyjd209

http://sports.yahoo.com/nhl/players/4159/photos;_ylt=Ano6f.m99kaCu31c3V3LUkxivLYF?slug=6353d4dfef314158952185c70354338b.lightning_islanders_hockey_nyjd204

Apparently, a championship ring from SC's first Kelly Cup has been relisted on eBay:

http://cgi.ebay.com/Mens-10KT-ECHL-Stingrays-Championship-Hockey-Ring_W0QQitemZ170319453312QQcmdZViewItemQQptZLH_DefaultDomain_0?hash=item170319453312&trksid=p3286.c0.m14&trkparms=72%3A1205%7C66%3A2%7C65%3A12%7C39%3A1%7C240%3A1318%7C301%3A0%7C293%3A1%7C294%3A50

"I don't know what happened there. Kind of one of those games where you black out and then next thing you know, people are patting you on the back." -- The Blues' David Backes on scoring four goals, including the game-winner, in a 5-4 win over the Red Wings last Thursday.

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