

PSU sweeps heated series

By Paul Casella
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

Despite having allowed no goals through the first two periods, the story of the No. 5 Penn State Icercs' game Saturday was not junior Teddy Hume's first potential shutout of the season.

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Nor was it senior captain Matt Kirstein scoring his first goal since returning from a sprained medial collateral ligament (MCL) that kept him out more than a month.

Marek Polidor had a chance for a hat trick on a penalty shot — but that wasn't it either.

With Penn State (17-2-1, 11-0-1) leading No. 13 Delaware 6-0 — the eventual final score — a skirmish erupted with 12:20 left in the third, resulting in six combined penalties and two Delaware players receiving 10-minute misconducts. Overall Saturday, the teams combined for 60 penalty minutes, 40 of which came in the third, and two Delaware ejections.

"When we got up by that much, obviously I knew that kind of stuff was going to happen in the third period," coach Scott Balboni said. "But we did pretty good. We had to

defend ourselves, but we didn't instigate anything or do anything stupid. We just dealt with it, got the game done and got the sweep we wanted."

Picking up the sweep Saturday was possible after the Icercs won Friday night's game in the seventh round of a shootout.

Hume's 34 saves, not including the six shots he turned away in the shootout, led the way for the Icercs defense.

Hume also picked up an assist on the team's only goal in regulation.

One night later, Hume was the center of attention again.

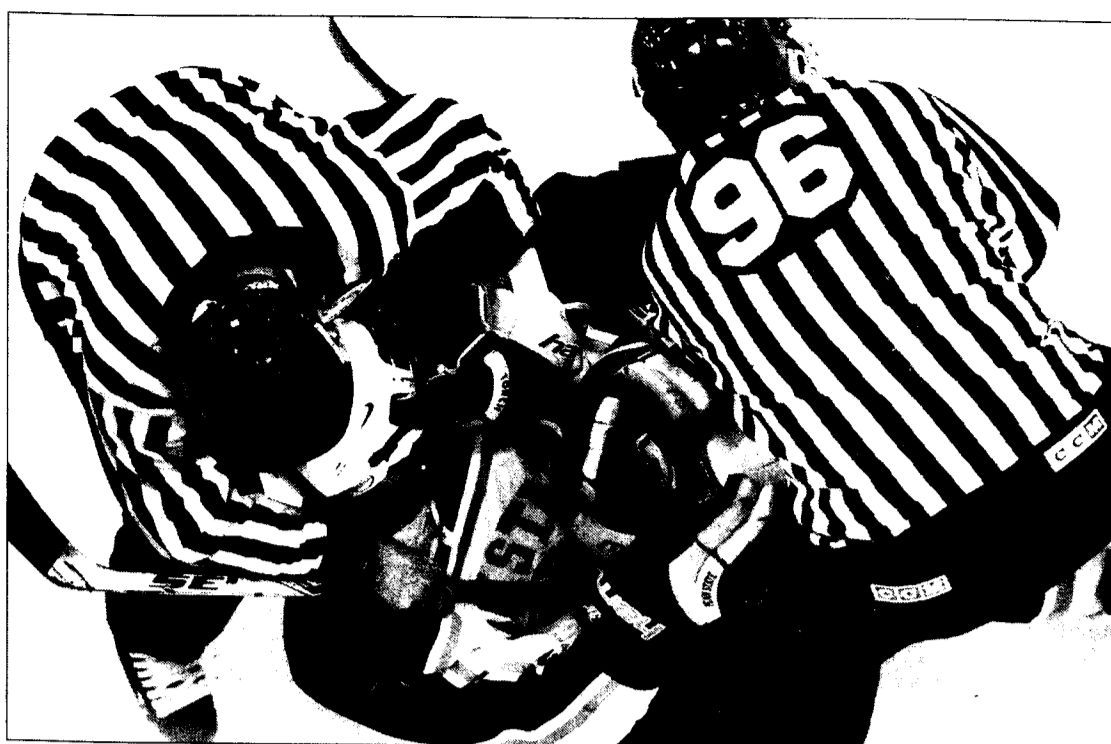
He was put in an unfamiliar situation when Delaware goalie Kurt Pflumm charged out of his net in Hume's direction during that stoppage at the 12:20 mark.

Pflumm, who was upset after Hume shot the puck down the ice during the stoppage, was met at his own blue line by one of his teammates and an official, who quickly ejected the net minder.

Aside from the hoopla, Hume grabbed the spotlight with a 38-save shutout.

"Being consistent is the biggest thing," he said.

"I thought I played well Friday, but it wouldn't mean a lick if I did-



Referees break up a fight between Penn State's Tim O'Brien (10) and Delaware's Andre Menard during Saturday's Icercs win. The two teams combined for 60 penalty minutes and two Delaware ejections.

n't come out and do the same thing [Saturday]. We're not here to split with teams. We're here to sweep them."

And although Hume never left his own crease during the events, he said Pflumm's actions only motivated the Icercs.

"It definitely gives us motivation, and we feed off that," he said. "The first 10 minutes of the game we were a little sluggish, but when things got more intense, we

turned it on and there was no looking back after that."

Despite emotions running high between the rivals, Penn State received only one misconduct penalty this weekend to Delaware's four.

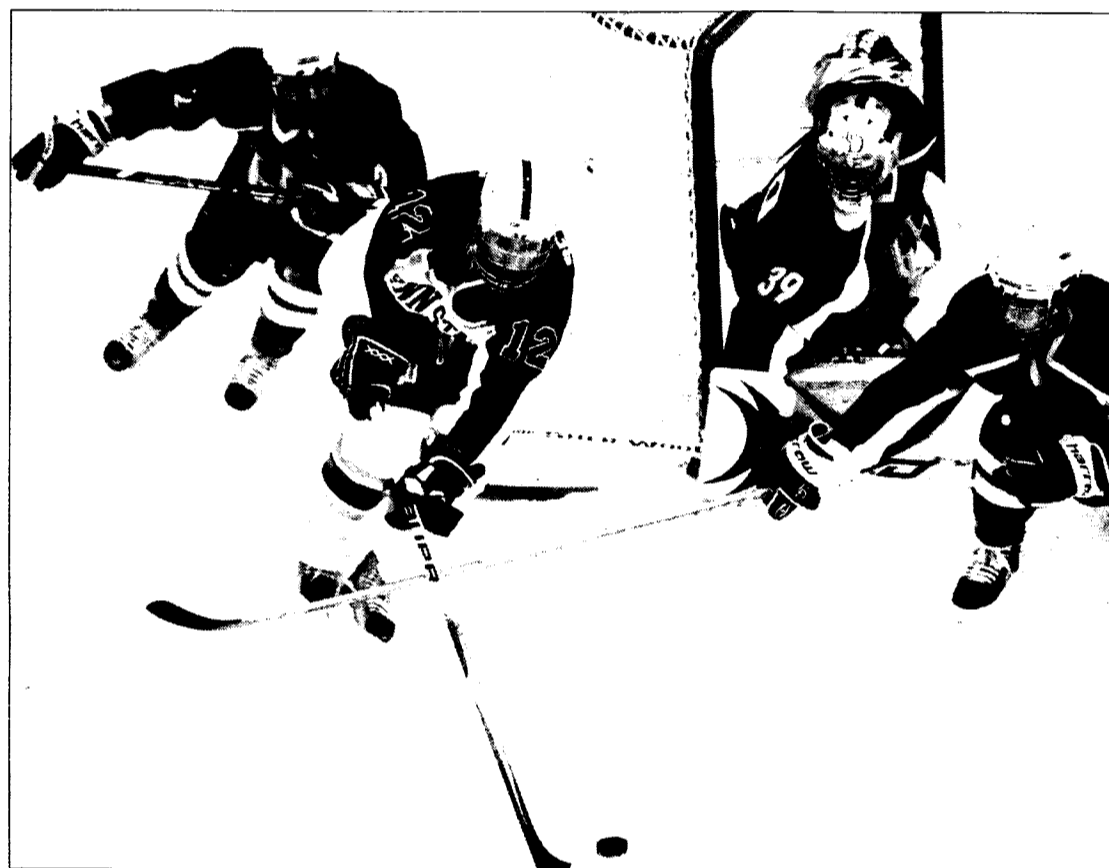
That lone misconduct penalty was on senior captain John Conte in the first period of Friday's game.

Conte later came back and scored with the game on the line

in the shootout to keep Penn State alive.

"You just have to stay focused and pick your moments," he said. "Sometimes you just have to shy away and realize that playing the next day is more important than fighting and getting ejected. Especially when a sweep like this can help us steam roll into next semester."

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Penn State's Nick Seravalli (12) skates around the Delaware net during the Icercs' 6-0 win Saturday afternoon. The wins were the team's first since its 11-game winning streak was snapped last weekend.

Kirstein impactful in return

By Tom Kinslow
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

It was as if he never left.

As the Penn State Icercs neared the midway point of the first period, forward George Saad fired on Delaware goalie S.J. Broadt.

The puck bounced off the goaltender and ricocheted to Icercs senior captain Matt Kirstein.

Kirstein fired at the net, bouncing the puck off of Broadt and into the back of the net.

That first goal of the game propelled Penn State to a 6-0 victory and weekend sweep of rival Delaware as Kirstein finally made his return from injury.

The senior had been sidelined with a sprained medial collateral ligament (MCL) that had kept him out of practice and the lineup since late October.

With that absence in mind, Icercs coach Scott Balboni limited the forward's playing time during the weekend.

Kirstein saw spot action, getting shifts here and there as he eased back into action after missing 10 games.

This was something the senior believes paid off.

"I gotta get my conditioning back," Kirstein said. "Our coach-

ing staff did a good job of not over-extending me and having me play too much, and our team played very well today, and we got a good win out of it."

As Kirstein settled into being back into game situations, he said the most difficult part of returning was mental.

The senior felt some nagging doubts in his mind about his knee, but after taking a couple of big hits on Friday night, he felt more confident in the healed injury.

The goal was also a contributing factor.

"I think it picks up your morale a bit," Kirstein said.

"It gets you going, you know, you're like 'Alright, I popped one in. Now I can start playing, concentrate on defense, backchecking, things like that.' I think this weekend I tried to keep it simple and play physical, play good defense and play my position. After that, goals are anything you could ask for."

Kirstein's morale wasn't the only one boosted during the weekend.

Forward Tim O'Brien said that Kirstein's return marked the injection of the certain things the senior brings to the table that led to his being named captain.

"He's always going to go out and give his all, and it's good to see him come back and do that and finally getting healthy," O'Brien said. "So hopefully we can keep him healthy and he keeps competing and keeps battling because it makes it harder for the coaches to make their lineup, which is something that's good and we need that a little more."

With Kirstein's return and immediate impact, not to mention the lack of pain experienced in the knee by the senior following the weekend's set, it would be easy for the forward to get eager for more playing time in future games.

That isn't the case with Kirstein.

Kirstein said he needs to get his conditioning back lost by his month-long absence and that he is more than content with his current role.

So is his coach.

"Next weekend we'll spot play him and get him back into full shape so that when we go into the second half, when we're ready to start, that he's 100 percent and ready to go," Balboni said.

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Hume's shutout overshadowed

By Tom Copain
COLLEGIAN STAFF WRITER

At the apex of Saturday's chaos-filled third period, Teddy Hume just leaned back against the crossbar of his net.

When Delaware goalie Kurt Pflumm skated out to his blueline, possibly trying to challenge Hume to a fight, he still leaned against the crossbar. And when Pflumm charged out of the tunnel after being ejected trying to get to Hume, Hume didn't move a muscle.

The near-fight between the two goalies is perhaps what the lasting image of the Penn State Icercs' 6-0 win over Delaware Saturday afternoon will be, but lost in the Icercs' offensive outburst and astronomical penalty minutes is Hume's 38-save shutout against the No. 13 team in the country.

"He played really well," defenseman Steve Thurston said. "Giving up one goal in a weekend, that's gonna probably give us two wins almost every weekend if he can do that. So, as long as he keeps doing what he's doing, then we'll be in good shape."

It was a long way from the championship game of the PAL/Stovepipe Tournament last Sunday, when Hume allowed four goals in the second period and six goals overall before getting pulled.

Hume bounced back this weekend, however, allowing only one goal in Penn State's 2-1 shootout win over the Fighting Blue Hens Friday.

Saturday, Hume was in the zone early. Delaware had the first three shots of the game, which Hume stopped.

He made 10 saves in the first period while the Icercs took an early lead on Delaware.

"He's taken the No. 1 role and run with it," Penn State coach Scott Balboni said. "He knew he had a bad game in the NCAA tournament up there. He didn't play very well."

"He knew he was the No. 1 guy, came back, played strong for two games. So I think that confidence is starting to run over and he's playing well."

As the game went on, Hume got better and luckier.



Hume

"Giving up one goal in a weekend, that's gonna probably give us two wins almost every weekend."

Steve Thurston
senior defenseman

The few pucks that did get by Hume either trickled wide or were kept out by his Penn State teammates.

But it wasn't until the third period, when the game was out of reach and there were almost as many penalty minutes as there were shots on goal, that Hume made his best save of the night.

It was a low shot from a Delaware player from around the circles. Hume made a glove save and then flipped up on his back to show the officials, the fans and Delaware that he had the puck.

"The guy came down, sort of pumped, faked a shot and I bit it," Hume said. "I wasn't patient, and then he went the other way. But I was able to get up and slide over and luckily get a glove on it."

Hume's 14th win and first solo shutout — he split time with Dan Ivanir for two shutouts against Navy last month — of the season capped off a weekend where he had two wins, allowed one goal, had an assist, received an unsportsmanlike conduct for his role in the near-altercation and almost got into a fight.

And after it was all said and done and Pflumm was off the ice, Hume skated around his net with a big smile on his face.

"I wasn't feeling too great after last Sunday," Hume said. "To come out here and put two good games together really helps my confidence. I'm ready to get back at it and keep that juggernaut going."

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Teddy Hume's weekend

- Two wins
- 73 shots faced
- One goal allowed
- One assist
- Two penalty minutes

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