

Oil Kings on verge of elimination

Rebels finally get to Brossoit for three unanswered goals in third period

BY NATHAN LIEWICKI, EDMONTON JOURNAL

Published: Tuesday, March 29, 2011

A fluke goal that somehow hopped over goaltender Laurent Brossoit cost the Edmonton Oil Kings dearly in Game 3 of their Western Hockey League playoff series on Monday night at Rexall Place.

Daulton Siwak broke a 1-1 tie with 1:52 left in the game to lift the Red Deer Rebels to a 3-1 win over the Oil Kings and into a commanding 3-0 lead in the best-of-seven Eastern Conference series.

"I took away the short side and then (Siwak) tried to feed it through to the crease and I grabbed that. Then it went out in front and I just tried to get up and make the save, but then it went off Van (Adrian Van de Mosselaer's) stick and up and I had no idea where it was and it just popped in the net," said Brossoit, describing the game-winning goal.

Twenty seconds later, the Rebels iced the game when Byron Froese scored his second goal of the game and third of the series.

The game was scoreless through the first 40 minutes. After Edmonton took a 1-0 lead on an ugly goal by T.J. Foster 1:45 into the third period, the Rebels cranked up their game a few notches in the last 10 minutes and scored three unanswered goals.

With Oil Kings defenceman Van de Mosselaer in the penalty box for a kneeling penalty, Froese tied the score at 1-1 after a nifty one-touch pass across the slot from Ryan Nugent-Hopkins.

"It's playoff hockey and it wasn't a pretty goal to win it and, at the end of the day, that's the kind of goals we're looking to manufacture," Oil Kings head coach Derek Laxdal said of the game-winner.

Brossoit, who sat on the bench for for the first two games as he watched Red Deer score 10 goals on teammate Jon Groenheyde, got the call between the pipes and almost stole a win.

"LB gave us a chance and I thought he was excellent tonight and I feel sorry for him because I think he could've had the first one of the game," Laxdal said.

The Surrey, B.C., native turned in one of his best performances of the season, but it wasn't enough.

"We were so close for so long in the game," Brossoit said. "It's just so close to the end of the game and, like I said, it's a tough pill to swallow, especially on a goal that just kind of floated in."

Brossoit was the best player on the ice for Oil Kings, but couldn't help them score goals.

"We had a chance in the first period on the five-on-three, and T. J. Foster had one and instead of putting it in he put it back into the goaltender's pad," Laxdal said. "You've got to score early to gain some momentum and confidence for your hockey club and, tonight, I thought we struggled with that a little bit."

Edmonton came out flat-footed and sluggish. They were outshot 7-1 by the Rebels in the first nine minutes, but Brossoit kept the Oil Kings in the game. He was the team's best penalty-killer on three Red Deer power plays in the first period, but twice got help from the crossbar.

Red Deer head coach Jesse Wallin was pleased with his team's grit and determination until the final horn.

"We knew it wasn't going to be easy and it certainly wasn't tonight," said Wallin. "We were mentally tough, stayed with it and got her done on the road."

The Rebels will have a chance to sweep the series on Thursday at Rexall Place.

nliewicki@edmontonjournal.com

twitter.com/liewicks