

Rush rally for first win

Defenceman Greer scores first goal of season;
Edmonton faces Stealth again Saturday

BY NATHAN LIEWICKI, EDMONTON JOURNAL

Published: Saturday, February 12, 2011



Edmonton Rush forward Andy Secore, right, whips the ball at the net to score against the Washington Stealth in National Lacrosse League action at Rexall Place on Friday night.

Photograph by: Ed Kaiser , The Journal

Bill Greer lived up to his nickname of "The Thrill" on Friday night.

The veteran defenceman picked the perfect time to score his first goal of the season, potting the game-winner on a breakaway with 1:13 remaining in the National Lacrosse League game at Rexall Place to give the Edmonton Rush a 14-12 victory over the Washington Stealth.

Second-year defenceman Brett Mydske added an insurance goal into an empty net with 31 seconds left to seal the Rush's first win of the season after five straight losses.

"I just had a good feeling when Billy got that ball. He's a pretty skilled player and he made a nice finish," said Rush head coach and general manager Derek Keenan.

Early in the game, it looked like the Rush were going to remain winless as the Stealth scored three times in the opening 97 seconds. But Edmonton used its skill in the transition game to battle back and get the win.

"I couldn't believe the first two minutes of that game where we were literally on our back end and stood around and I called the timeout," Keenan said. "We corrected that, and credit to our players and our leadership group to try and get a handle on that. We got a couple key goals early on to get us back in it, and from there it was a battle."

Through three quarters, the Rush had outshot the Stealth 51-37 but the score was tied 10-10.

Then Scott Evans, with his second goal of the season, and Andy Secore, with his third goal of the game and sixth of the year, scored 20 seconds apart early in the fourth quarter to give the Rush their first two-goal lead.

Secore wasn't the only Edmonton player to have a big night. Scott Stewart, who entered Friday's game with only two goals, also had a hat trick and played well on the defensive end after a slow start.

"He's one of those dynamic players. He's going to score goals not many guys in this league can. In open space, he's very very hard to contain," Keenan said.

Rhys Duch trimmed Washington's deficit to one goal at 8:58 of the fourth and, just over a minute later, Paul Rabil tied the score 12-12.

Despite allowing Stealth forward Lewis Ratcliff to record three goals and seven assists, the Rush had the last laugh in the first game between the teams since Rabil scored eight seconds into overtime in last year's West Division final to give Washington a 12-11 win and end Edmonton's season.

On Friday, there was no love lost between the teams, with plenty of hard hits and a fight between Evans and Stealth defenceman Chris O'Dougherty as the teams were leaving the floor at halftime. Both players were given minor penalties, but O'Dougherty also received an extra two minutes.

Edmonton netted two short-handed goals by forwards Dean Hill and Gavin Prout 39 seconds apart late in the first quarter.

The teams play again Saturday night at Everett, Wash.

nliewicki@edmontonjournal.com