Cyclones Take CSCHL Regular Season Title With 1-0 Win Over Bobcats

Feb. 18, 2017 – Athens, Ohio – After coming back from a 2-0 deficit to Ohio Friday night for a 3-2 victory, Iowa State entered Saturday night’s rematch with the opportunity to earn the team’s first Central States Collegiate Hockey League regular season championship since 2002 if the Cyclones picked up a second victory over the Bobcats, and the Cardinal and Gold scored early and held on to that one-goal lead for a jubilant 1-0 shutout victory.

Both teams came out skating hard, with a slight edge in momentum to the Cyclones early, and the narrow advantage resulted in a goal at 4:30 of the first period when Adam Alcott (Rochester, Minn. – Wisconsin Whalers/NA3HL) took a board pass along the left wing in the neutral zone, made a short pass to Jon Severson (Rockford, Ill. – Nashville Jr. Predators/NA3HL) just before the offensive blue line, and Severson streaked into the offensive zone and fired a wrist shot from the left face-off circle that beat Bobcat goaltender Aaron Alkema high glove side to make it 1-0 Iowa State. The rest of the first period was high-paced and largely back-and-forth, with Cyclone netminder Derek Moser (Tomah, Wisc. – Rochester Ice Hawks/MnJHL) and Alkema both playing solid in net.

About 60 seconds into the second period, Moser got a small piece of a Joey Breslin wrist shot earmarked to score top shelf with his glove to maintain Iowa State’s lead, and for the first half of the second Ohio held an edge in momentum, but Moser continued to make save after save. At about the 12-minute mark, Moser made a couple big saves in a flurry of pressure around the crease and then also, later, made a vital cover to freeze play before Jake Faiella could get another shot off. Ohio received a prime opportunity to pull even during a power play due to a tripping call assessed to A.J. Gullickson (Verona, Wisc. – Alexandria Blizzard/NA3HL) at 14:31, but the Iowa State penalty kill masterfully killed the penalty and fed off that energy to apply some pressure during the three remaining minutes of the period to make shots closer to even during the second, 13 to 10 in favor of the Bobcats.

As would be expected, both the Cyclones and Bobcats came out giving their all to start the third period, but exuberance got the best of Kody Reuter (Sioux City, Iowa – Austin Bruins/NAHL) when he level Brandon Lubin from behind just below the goal line to maintain Iowa State’s lead, and for the first half of the second Ohio held an edge in momentum, but Moser continued to make save after save. At about the 12-minute mark, Moser made a couple big saves in a flurry of pressure around the crease and then also, later, made a vital cover to freeze play before Jake Faiella could get another shot off. Ohio received a prime opportunity to pull even during a power play due to a tripping call assessed to A.J. Gullickson (Verona, Wisc. – Alexandria Blizzard/NA3HL) at 14:31, but the Iowa State penalty kill masterfully killed the penalty and fed off that energy to apply some pressure during the three remaining minutes of the period to make shots closer to even during the second, 13 to 10 in favor of the Bobcats.

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The game continued at a frenetic pace after Iowa State’s timeout and the Cyclones continued to largely keep the Bobcats outside of the slot by collapsing players in the defensive zone. With 1:38 left, the Cyclones appeared to have a reprieve when Bobcat senior Matt Hartman was called for tripping on a low hit on Trevor Sabo (Skokie, Ill. – Rochester Ice Hawks/MnJHL) and Ohio responded by calling a timeout to strategize heading into the penalty kill. Ohio did not remain on the penalty kill for long, however, as Iowa State defenseman Jake Uglem (Moorhead, Minn. – Winkler Flyers/MJHL) was whistled for tripping with 58.4 left after taking down pass option Austin Heakins on the backcheck to prevent a 2-on-1 scoring opportunity.

Ohio returned to even strength, skating four-on-four, and brought Alkema to the bench with 29 seconds remaining for an extra attacker off an offensive zone face-off. Nick Sandy (Calgary, Alberta – Neepawa Natives/MJHL) made a timely clear from the crease with about 10 seconds remaining and Tony Uglem (Moorhead, Minn. – Austin Bruins/NAHL) made a diving effort to poke the puck out of the zone with five seconds remaining, which secured the 1-0 shutout and resulted in the Cyclones pouring off the bench in celebration around Moser in his crease.
Moser made 30 saves in the shutout and helped Iowa State finished with a CSCHL league-best 11-5-0-0 record in league play and to improve the Cyclones’ overall record to 21-13-1-0.

Following the game, Cyclone Hockey Head Coach and General Manager Jason Fairman was proud of what the team had accomplished despite numerous obstacles and hiccups during the season.

“That game was play-off hockey, which leads right into the actual play-offs,” said Fairman. “I was pleased with our effort and I thought we did a good job on some adjustments from a systems standpoint that paid off.

“We accomplished something that hadn’t been done in 15 years, which is winning the regular season league title. That’s the first step in our three goals and we’re proud of it, but it’s already time to move on and to get ready for playoffs.”

The team’s other two goals are to win the CSCHL Tournament championship and also the ACHA Men’s Division 1 National Tournament championship. Fairman thinks Iowa State’s sweep of Ohio at Bird Arena, which marked the first time the Cyclones had swept the Bobcats in Athens since the two teams starting playing two-game series in 2003-04, will play a significant role in shoring up the team’s confidence heading into the two tournaments.

“We’ve had an up-and-down season, there’s no question about that, and this sweep is going to help our confidence, knowing that we beat a quality team like Ohio playing in a tough environment like Bird Arena,” said Fairman. “They had sellouts both nights and the crowds were really into it and it’s a little bit of a different ice sheet with a small neutral zone.

“I think it’s similar to Illinois where Ohio has a home-ice advantage, to some degree, and they know how to play in their rink. We made some adjustments that I think helped and the players did a phenomenal job executing those adjustments. I think that’s one of the reasons we were able to get this win.”

Fairman and the Cyclones now look toward next weekend, where the team will enter the 2017 CSCHL Tournament. Iowa State, as the top seed, will play the winner of the Friday night game between tournament host Robert Morris and Illinois, at either 4:00 or 7:30 p.m., depending on whether Robert Morris wins. The team knows anything can happen in any game, as the Eagles won last February’s tournament in Ames despite coming in as the fifth seed.

“I think most people would say the CSCHL is the top in the country and we’re certainly proud of winning the regular season title, but our second goal is to win the league tournament championship and we certainly hope to do that, but anything can happen against these teams in the CSCHL,” said Fairman. “So, we’ll need to prepare to play either Illinois or Robert Morris for the semifinal game.

“I think there’s a familiarity with all of the teams, so we probably won’t be surprised too much. So, the biggest thing will just be playing our game and we’ll be flying if we do that and playing with a lot of energy.”

Cyclone Hockey plans on broadcasting all games the team plays at the CSCHL Tournament online live on EverSport. To watch, fans can go to https://eversport.tv/acha and log-in or register to watch.

Iowa State plays its final home game Saturday, March 4, against Midland, which likely secured a trip to the ACHA Men’s Division 1 National Tournament this weekend with a pair of respectable showings against third-ranked Adrian. The game March 4 against the Warriors marks Senior Night, as Cyclone Hockey will be saluting seniors Drew Carlson, Alex Grupe, Eero Helanto, Dalton Kaake, and Chase Rey. Cyclone Hockey will broadcast Senior Night’s game online live on EverSport at https://eversport.tv/acha.

Cyclone Hockey fans can still take advantage of steep discounts on group rates for groups of fans of 10 or more fans for Senior Night. Group rates must be secured two weeks prior to the desired game a group intends to attend. Contact Cyclone Hockey at 515.294.3498 to secure your group rate tickets. Fans can learn more about Cyclone Hockey’s extremely affordable ticket prices and group rates at the organization’s website at www.cyclonehockey.com. Cyclone Hockey can also be followed on Facebook at /CycloneHockey, on Twitter at @Cyclone Hockey, and on Instagram at @CycloneHockey. Cyclone Hockey…Right Now.
NOTES: Jon Severson’s goal was his first game-winning goal of the season. Severson is now tied for tenth in team scoring with 14 points (7-7-14) in 34 games played. By assisting on Severson’s goal, Adam Alcott snapped a 10-game pointless streak. Video review revealed that Kody Reuter picked up a second assist on Severson’s goal by making the board pass up to Alcott, which was not touched by any Bobcat player. On the strength of his 30-save performance, Moser now has a 2.36 goals-against average and .916 save percentage in 1474:09 played in 25 games. His record now stands at 16-8-1-0 records and his shutout of the Bobcats was his fourth shutout of 2016-17.

GAME SUMMARY

GOALS BY PERIOD  1  2  3  FINAL
IOWA STATE        1  0  0  1
OHIO              0  0  0  0

First Period – Scoring: ISU, Severson (Alcott, Reuter), 4:30.
Penalties: OU, Spellacy (slashing), 4:55; ISU, Sandy (holding), 4:55; OU, Heakins (high-sticking), 14:55; OU, Hartman (high-sticking), 17:40; ISU, Halbach (roughing), 17:40.

Second Period – Scoring: None.
Penalties: ISU, Gullickson (tripping), 14:31.

Third Period – Scoring: None.
Penalties: ISU, Reuter (cross-checking), 2:37; OU, Hartman (tripping), 18:38; ISU, J. Uglem (tripping), 19:01.

SHOTS BY PERIOD  1  2  3  TOTAL
IOWA STATE       8  10  6  24
OHIO             9  13  8  30

GOALTENDERS (SV/SH)  1  2  3  TOTAL
ISU, Moser (60:00)  9/9 13/13 8/8 30/30
OU, Alkema (59:31)  7/8 10/10 6/6 23/24
OU, Empty Net (0:29) -/- -/- 0/0 0/0

POWER PLAY: ISU 0-2; OU 0-2

PENALTIES: ISU 5-10; OU 4-8

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