

# Oiler Rookies roll over Bears

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Though it hasn't even been three full months since the last time a team wearing Edmonton Oiler silks took to the ice, the team's hold on the city hasn't waned. 3009 fans crowded into Clare Drake Arena to watch as the rookie Oilers dominated the Golden Bears in a penalty-filled game, winning 6-3 and putting an end to the Bears' five-year winning streak in the event.

"It's unreal to win, it's been three years [of losing] for me and a whole lot more for the team. Out of the three years, this is by far the best I've seen our guys play," said Edmonton Oilers Rookies goaltender Devan Dubnyk. "It certainly didn't look like we hadn't played together before."

"It's only been two days out on the ice for us and we're already into it, the lines are clicking and guys are working hard. I didn't have to do much in the third period because the guys were working so well."

Like the 19 previous meetings between the teams, both teams played with something to prove—the young pros tried to make an impression on the fans and Oilers management, and the two-time defending CIS champions wanted to break in a new crop of players and show they could play with some of the best prospects in the game.

"They're a very good team and they probably had one of the best teams they've put together, speed-wise and skill-wise, in quite a few years," said Bears head coach Eric Thurston, who had to replace ten of the 18 skaters from last season's championship squad. "They probably had more guys on their team that played last year in this game than we did."

While the crowd seemed evenly split between the two teams, it was the Oilers fans that were rewarded early and often as the Rookies strong play kept the Bears on their heels. Though the Bears veteran combination of Ben



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**CROSSED UP** The Bears had their five game winning streak against the Edmonton Oilers Rookies broken. Much like the Bears broke up this Oiler Rookie rush.

Kilgour, Tim Krymusa and Dylan Stanley managed to show some flashes of brilliance, the Rookies dominance overshadowed and stifled their offensive effort.

The game featured its usual menu of big hits—Rookies defenseman Theo Peckham leveled two Bears in the third alone—and nice goals early on, it was the play of the goaltenders that stole the show. In the Edmonton net, Dubnyk only faced a handful of quality chances on the night he was equal to the task, allowing only a trio of power-play shots to get by him. Bear Aaron Sorochan—who was on the Rookies bench for last year's game—was the only reason Alberta

made it through his two periods of work only trailing 3-2.

"I was fortunate that I kept the guys in it early with a couple of saves there, but us not being used to this new penalty system hurt us, as was evident in the third period," Sorochan said. "I'm satisfied with the way I played, not perfectly happy, but hey, it's September, and March is a long way away."

"I was a little nervous at the start because the last couple years we didn't win. We played okay last year, but not great, and I just wanted to come out and make sure that I shook off the nerves," Dubnyk, the former Kamloops Blazer, said. "I got a couple

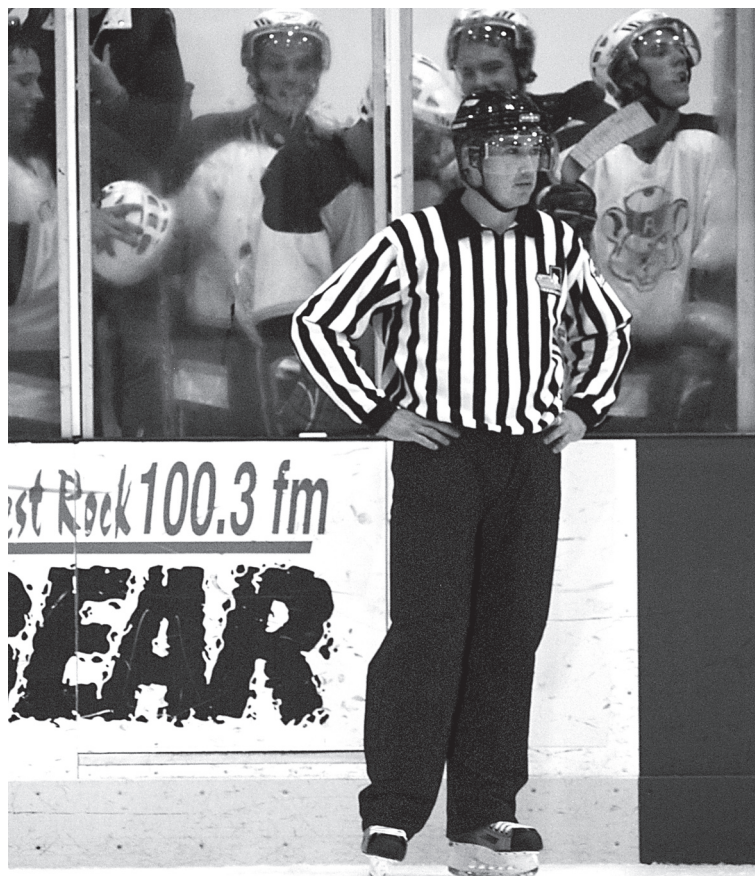
of saves in there and felt comfortable for the whole game, which was nice because—for whatever reason—in this game for the past couple years I haven't been able to settle down and get comfortable against [the Bears]."

Though the Rookies, lead by Robbie Schremp and Alexei Mikhnov, took the play to the Bears for long stretches in the game, both teams were constrained by the referee who handed out 66 minutes in penalties. The adjustment to the new standard of officiating is something that the Bears admitted they'd need some time to adjust to, though they feel it will benefit them in Canada West regular season play.

"I thought [the referee] did just a

fine job out there because that's the way it's being called," Sorochan said. "You saw it in the NHL last year and we're going to see it here this year. I think when we get into our season, the new rules are really going to help us with the new recruits we brought in and the existing speed we had."

"In a perfect world, you'd like to have three or four games with the new rules before you face a team like that because there's only one of our guys that had played with those rules before," Thurston added. "The rest of our guys were going from the Canada West and CIS extreme of wrestling or rope-a-dope, so you're going from one extreme to the next."



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**I TOLD YOU THAT WAS HOOKING** The Bears had five guys in the penalty box.



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**IN YOUR FACE** Oiler Rookie Theo Peckham(49) was burned a couple times by Dylan Stanley, but still ended the night +4.