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Saints edge Tars, push win streak to 5

By PAUL COSTANZO
Times Herald

The new year has been pretty good to Charlie Cronenworth and the St. Clair hockey team.

The senior forward scored his fourth and fifth goals of 2008 Thursday to lead St. Clair to its fifth straight win, a 3-2 Macomb Area Conference Red Division triumph against Anchor Bay at McMorran Pavilion.

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All five games in the winning streak have come in '08.

"I thought we played pretty good. It was a big team effort and we had fun, which is what hockey is all about," Cronenworth said. "I think we were definitely mentally prepared for tonight.

"We wanted to keep our winning streak alive."

St. Clair is two points behind Dakota in the MAC Red with one game in hand.

The Saints never trailed in the game, and got a goal and an assist from Blake Frantz. Paul Westrick, Drew Carrell, Steve Mauk and Will Hunter also had assists on the night for the Saints (6-2-1, 10-4-1), while Rocco Benvenuti stopped 19 shots in net.

Anthony Depetro and Steve DeGrande each scored for the Tars (3-6-1, 4-8-1); while Paul DeGrande had two assists, and Kevin Moore and Aaron Teal each added one. Goaltender Jeremy Wierzbowski stopped 13 shots in the loss.

Zoom Photo



By WENDY TORELLO, Times Herald

FIGHTING FOR POSITION: Anchor Bay's Aaron Teal, left, and St. Clair's Mark Morley battle for the puck during Macomb Area Conference Red Division action Thursday night at McMorran Pavilion. Morley and the Saints won, 3-2.

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Steve DeGrande's goal came with 24 seconds to play in the game and pulled the Tars to within one. They weren't able to get anything going in the final seconds.

It came not long after a power-play opportunity for the Tars in which they weren't able to cash in.

"It was a typical Anchor Bay game right now," Anchor Bay Coach Daryel McCarrel said. "We're not finishing. We've played four games in the new year and allowed eight goals, yet we're 1-3."

McCarrel said his team had two good breakouts on the power play, but one led to an offside call, and the other a missed shot. He added that St. Clair made the proper adjustments during the power play.

"We ran (the penalty kill) to a 'T,'" Cronenworth said.

Said St. Clair Coach Scott Nichols: "Our penalty kill has been pretty good all year. It was a good penalty to take (a trip by Joe Lanzi), because they were going to have a breakout."

Anchor Bay did score on an earlier power play, however, midway through the second period. Depetro's goal came off the rebound of a Moore shot. It made the score 2-1 in favor of the Saints.

But 3 minutes later, Cronenworth put St. Clair back on top by two by finishing off a well-executed give-and-go with Will Hunter.

"I thought he was going to shoot," Cronenworth said. "But he ended up passing it and the goalie didn't get

over in time."

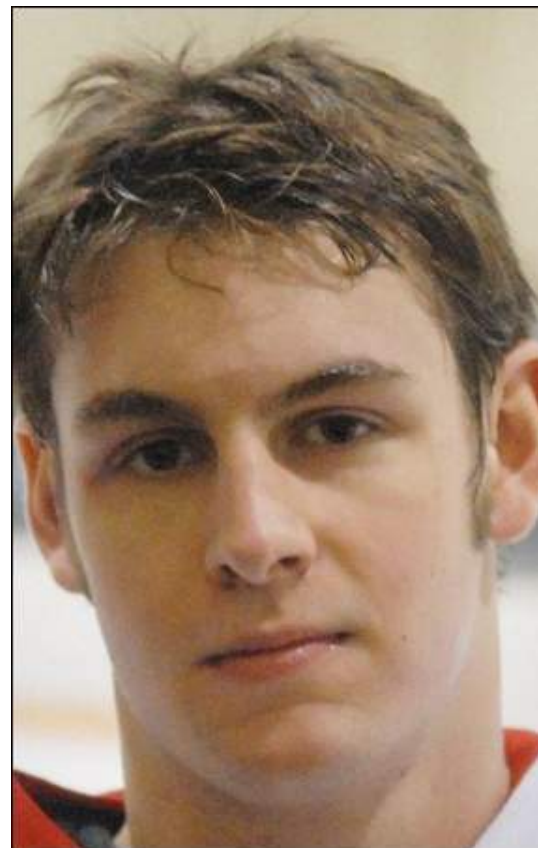
It was the second goal of the period for Cronenworth, and it came 11:56 in.

His first - a self-described "garbage goal" - came at the 3:39 mark.

Cronenworth found the puck on the doorstep and tapped in the final of several rebound attempts during the sequence.

Frantz opened the scoring with 4 seconds to play in the first period.

He carried the puck into the offensive zone as time was winding down, wove his way across the goalmouth, and shot the puck back to where he came from, beating



Blake Frantz

Wierzbowski low.

"That goal with 4 seconds left changed things," McCarrel said. "We were going in assuming things were positive, and then everything we were going to talk about changed."

Both teams return to action Saturday. St. Clair will play host to Utica Eisenhower at the McMorran Pavilion, while Anchor Bay will host Port Huron Northern at Glacier Pointe.

DAKOTA 8 MARYSVILLE 2

Tyler Billins and Devin Herr had goals for Marysville in the MAC Red loss at McMorran Pavilion.


Dakota remains two points ahead of St. Clair for the conference lead.

Darin Bowerson and Cody Gilbert each had assists for the Vikings (0-9, 4-10) who were outshot 33-19.

Josh Kelly and Andrew Schunk split time in goal.

Marysville returns to action Wednesday against Chippewa Valley at Great Lakes Sports Center.

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