

Late goal steals a win from Dakota

Coach 'frustrated' as Wolves tie game with 11.8 seconds left in game

By Fred Costello

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ROCHESTER — The Cougars just couldn't hold on.

Dakota clung for nearly 25 minutes to a one-goal advantage, only to see Clarkston tie the game with 11.8 seconds remaining at the Macomb Area Conference/Oakland Activities Association showcase on Saturday. The Cougars (16-2-2) got goals from Matt Gurin and Justin Sanchez, but were forced to settle for a 2-2 tie. Clarkston (8-9-2) was

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the No. 2 OAA seed, while Dakota represented the No. 3 seed for the MAC.

With 1:41 on the clock and a face-off in the Dakota zone, the Wolves pulled its goalie and wound up chipping in a rebound goal over junior netminder Justin Dudzinski.

It wasn't a loss — yet still felt like one to coach Mike Jakubik.

"It was frustrating," Jakubik said. "It was just a mental lapse where the guy was on the wrong side of the puck, and that will cost you. It's good to get this adversity out of the way, right before the playoffs."

Clarkston got on the board first, notching a power play goal at 14:40 of the second period. Dudzinski was screened on the shot, and appeared to never see the point shot from Adam Larkin until it was too late.

Dakota responded, tying the

game on a very nice play by Gurin. The senior defenseman raced toward the Wolves blue line, where he barely held the puck in the zone. Taking a stride toward the net, he fired a wrist shot that hit goalie Jack Viazanko's shoulder, but still had enough momentum to go in.

Gurin wasn't thrilled with the goal, nor the final outcome.

"We're just disappointed because we thought we had this game," Gurin said. "My goal was just a good bounce. We were working hard the whole time and I hon-

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estly thought we were taking it to them."

The unassisted goal came at 7:52 of the second, and was followed up with another one 40 seconds later.

Sanchez, a senior forward, went to the net hard and slammed home a rebound — staking the Cougars to a 2-1 lead.

Jakubik was pleased with how his team responded

after getting down a goal.

"We like to play aggressive with our defense," Jakubik said. "Sometimes, you just throw the puck at the net and it goes in. Then, the next line goes out and crashes the net hard with all that energy."

The third period saw Clarkston rack up a lot of attack zone time, yet very few chances. Dakota did a great job pushing the speedy Wolves forwards to the perimeter of its defensive zone.

When there were break-downs, Dudzinski was there to bail the team out.

"Dudzinski had a great game," Gurin said. "I thought for the first period and a half, he was the reason we were in the game."

The first period was a defensive struggle that resulted in a 0-0 tie.

Senior forward Quin Warnack had a couple brilliant chances to score, yet Viazanko wouldn't yield anything.

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