

WEEK 8

RECAP





The Bulls charged forward in a powerful win over the short-benched Threshers, pulling off a dominant 7-1 victory that lifted them out of the basement of the standings. The Bulls rolled out a relentless offensive attack, taking full advantage of the Threshers' limited rotation. With fresh skates coming onto the ice in consistent waves, the Bulls quickly wore down their opponents, turning the game into a display of precise passing, gritty puck control, and unbreakable momentum.

At the heart of it all was Mike Debenedictis, who showed off his playmaking finesse with three impressive assists. From setting up Jason O'Connell's game-winner in the first to sparking a power-play goal for Tony Rota in the third, Debenedictis was seemingly everywhere, reading the game beautifully and threading passes that the Threshers' defense couldn't keep up with. Each period saw scoring contributions from different Bulls players, proving that their strength lies not in any single player, but in the depth of their lineup. Tom Powers bagged two goals himself, including a slick feed from Debenedictis in the second.

The Threshers managed to get on the board late in the third with an unassisted goal by Eric Johnson, but by then, the Bulls were already far ahead. Goaltending was very solid, allowing just one goal across 36 minutes and keeping the Threshers at bay with key saves. As the Bulls skated off with their heads high, the victory not only gave them some breathing room in the standings but also showcased a team that's finally clicking. The Bulls are finding their groove, and they're proving that they're not just out of the basement—they're climbing.



The Monarchs put on an offensive showcase in their 7-3 victory over the Yellowjackets, with star performances from Mark Hayhurst and Alex Bernstein, each recording a hat trick and a playmaker respectively The duo delivered a scoring clinic, making their mark in each period and keeping the Yellowjackets' defense scrambling. Hayhurst opened

the scoring with a snipe in the first, setting the tone early, while Bernstein piled on the pressure with timely passes that seemed to deflate the Yellowjackets' bench each time.

Not to be overlooked was Matt McCourt, who orchestrated the Monarchs' offense with an additional three beautifully executed assists, each pass better than the last. McCourt's ability to read the ice allowed him to set up all three of Hayhurst's goals, making sure the Monarchs sealed the game with style. McCourt's vision and precise passing had the Yellowjackets guessing, as he fed his teammates with pinpoint accuracy, turning scoring chances into sure goals and keeping the momentum firmly in the Monarchs' favor.

The Yellowjackets managed to net three goals of their own in the first, with Ryan Twigg, Jason Bernard, and Dan Chouinard finding the back of the net. But their early spark fizzled quickly under the Monarchs' relentless offense. Goalie Brandon Cardoza held strong after the first period, shutting the door and allowing the Monarchs' big guns to shine. As the final buzzer sounded, it was clear that the Monarchs, backed by their top scorers and McCourt's playmaking prowess, had delivered a statement game that will have every team watching their backs.

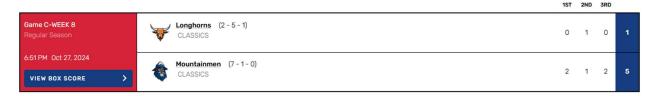


The Mariners proved exactly why they're the top team in the league, steamrolling the Knights with a dominant 5-1 victory. From the first drop of the puck, the Mariners controlled the game, with Collin Brennan leading the charge. Brennan struck early, netting the first goal unassisted and later adding a shorthanded dagger in the second period that left the Knights reeling. The Mariners' relentless forecheck kept the Knights hemmed in their own zone, setting the stage for a one-sided showcase.

Dave Hardiman and Mike Melanson were a lethal duo, combining on the game-winning goal just a minute after Brennan's opener. Hardiman dished a beautiful pass to Melanson, who wasted no time burying it behind Knights' goalie Jeff Delnickas. Not one to be outdone, Melanson returned the favor by assisting Hardiman later in the second, showing the Mariners' unmatched chemistry and depth. With an assist from Alex Lee, Dave Kendrick capped off the first period with a third goal, sending a clear message that the Mariners were here to dominate.

The Knights managed to put one on the board in the third with a lone goal from Sam Perkins, but it was too little, too late. Mariners' goalie Mike Ciavattieri was rock solid, turning aside all but one of the few quality chances the Knights could muster. The Mariners' suffocating defense and precision offense underscored exactly why they're perched at the top of the standings, and after a performance like this, it looks like they don't plan on stepping down anytime soon.

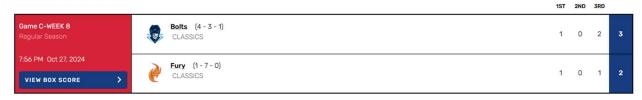




The Mountainmen put on a masterclass as George Levoy stole the show with a jaw-dropping hat trick, leading his team to a decisive 5-1 victory over the Longhorns. Levoy, named Player of the Game, was simply unstoppable, finding the back of the net three times and leaving the Longhorns defense scrambling. His game-winner came in the first period off a slick setup from Mike Simon, setting the tone early. Jim Daniels was the quiet maestro behind much of the night's action, tallying three beautiful assists that made the Mountainmen's offense hum.

Daniels' playmaking was the glue holding everything together. His first assist fed Chris O'Keefe in the second period, extending the lead, while his deft passing in the third set Levoy up for two more goals, each showcasing their chemistry. Daniels' skill in orchestrating the attack gave the Mountainmen an effortless flow, keeping the Longhorns on their heels throughout. By the time Levoy netted his third goal, the crowd was buzzing, and it was clear the Mountainmen were firing on all cylinders.

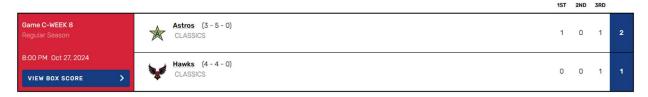
The Longhorns did manage to get on the scoreboard with Ed Mortell's second-period goal, but it was hardly enough to put a dent in the Mountainmen's lead. Doc Smith did his best between the pipes, but the relentless Mountainmen offense, anchored by Daniels and Levoy, was too much to overcome. This win cements the Mountainmen as a team to beat, and with performances like this, it's going to take a herculean effort to slow down this unstoppable duo.



The Bolts and Fury faced off in a fierce contest that saw both teams clawing their way for control, but it was the Bolts who pulled ahead late to claim a tight 3-2 victory. The Fury struck first with Kevin Mackin's sharp goal at 9:39 in the first period, set up by the dynamic duo of Nate Rasmussen and Tom House. Just as it seemed like the Fury had grabbed the game's momentum, Joe Carroll responded with a perfectly timed goal for the Bolts with just 28 seconds left in the period, evening things up and setting the stage for a tense, scoreless second period.

Both teams' defenses took center stage in the second period, with Bolts' Rick Welch and Fury's Dan Nason each standing tall in net. The third period, however, turned into a nail-biting battle. Peter Vitello of the Bolts made his mark with a well-placed shot off an assist from Peter Lynch at 9:07, giving his team the lead. The Fury answered back with an equalizer from Nate Rasmussen at 4:35, but it was clear this game was far from over. Both teams seemed ready to settle it in a shootout, but the Bolts had one final trick up their sleeve.

Art Riccio stepped up as the hero, scoring the game-winner for the Bolts at 3:31 with an assist from Mark Vitello and Jeff Uva, sealing the victory and sending the Fury packing. Despite a last-minute penalty for tripping on Fury's Rich Higgins, it was too late for a comeback. The Bolts' resilient performance kept them in the driver's seat all night, showing they're a team ready to capitalize when the stakes are high.



In a gritty showdown, the Astros managed to edge out the Hawks with a 2-1 victory, driven by none other than their player of the game, Chris Regan. While he didn't appear on the scoresheet, Regan set the tone for his team with unrelenting physicality, even serving a minor penalty for roughing in the second period, which underscored his nononsense approach. His relentless energy rallied the Astros as they turned a tight defensive game into an impressive win.

The scoring kicked off in the first period, with Mike Fuller lighting the lamp for the Astros off a beautiful setup from Andrew Mellen. Both teams then settled into a defensive battle, with Astros' goalie Andrew Pelley and Hawks' Barry Kaiser putting on a clinic between the pipes. By the third period, the game was still anyone's to take. Then came Dave Fallon's game-winning goal at 5:21, assisted by Paul Murphy, giving the Astros a crucial two-goal cushion before the Hawks clawed one back late in the period with an unassisted effort by Shawn Malloy.

Despite the Hawks' pressure, Regan's commanding presence on the ice was enough to keep his team locked in, and they managed to fend off a late surge from the Hawks. Pelley's stellar performance in goal rounded off the Astros' game plan perfectly. This victory reinforces the Astros' defensive grit, showing that with Regan setting the tone and Pelley rock solid in net, they're ready to face any challenge the season throws their way.



The final game of SSCHL's Player Appreciation Night was a wild one, with a packed house of fans cheering and raising their glasses from the bar as the Spartans dominated the Reapers 6-2. With the crowd buzzing, the Spartans wasted no time getting on the board. Mike Aylward struck first with a slick goal assisted by Mike Martin, who was all over the ice, setting up plays and picking up a goal of his own. The Spartans kept the momentum rolling with an early dagger by Mike Cashin, assisted by Glenn Harnish and Bill Petrarca, putting them up by three before the first period closed.

The second period saw the Spartans pulling out all the stops. Petrarca sniped one in from the blue line, showcasing the chemistry with Dave Currier, followed by a beauty from Jeff Vancura that had the crowd roaring. With each goal, fans packed into the stands and bar area erupted in cheers, further fueling the Spartans' energy. The Reapers managed to claw back a goal with an unassisted solo effort by Eric Morgan, but it was clear the Spartans weren't done as they stormed into the third.

In the final stretch, the Spartans turned the night into a celebration of pure skill and grit. Cashin sealed his strong performance with another goal, while Morgan added one for the Reapers, assisted by Jim Polito. But it was too little, too late. Spartans goalie Matt Nelson stood tall in the net, and as the final buzzer sounded, the Spartans skated off the ice to a roaring crowd. Player Appreciation Night was a success, and the Spartans gave their fans a game they won't soon forget.