

The Bulls are making their presence known as they surged up the leaderboard with a crucial 3-1 victory over the 1st-place Mariners, inching ever closer to solidifying their playoff spot. They came out swinging in the first period, with Bill Hingston striking first off a slick setup from John Killion and Tom Powers. Then, just a few minutes later, Jason O'Connell cashed in the game-winner, set up by Hingston and Tony Rota, putting the Mariners on their heels. The Bulls looked sharp and hungry, ready to prove they belong among the league's best as playoff talk starts heating up.

In the second period, both teams fought hard in a scoreless duel. Mariners' goalie Mike Ciavattieri held his ground, making key saves to keep his team within striking distance. Bulls' netminder Tom Andrade answered each shot with a save of his own, stonewalling the Mariners' attempts to shift the game in their favor. The tension on the ice was palpable as the Bulls kept up relentless pressure, forcing the Mariners to dig deep in what had been their most challenging matchup in weeks.

With time ticking down in the third, the Mariners managed to close the gap briefly with a late goal from Kyle Smythe, assisted by Mike Melanson. But it was Killion again who iced the game with just over a minute left, adding his second point of the night on an assist from Rota. As the buzzer sounded, the Bulls' bench erupted, knowing they had just taken down the top team in style. It was a statement win that stamped their claim on the playoff race and sent a clear message: the Bulls are here, and they're charging full speed ahead.



Despite missing their towering enforcer, Alex Bernstein, the Monarchs came out with a vengeance, trouncing the Knights 5-1 and adding to the Knights' increasingly bleak four-game losing streak. The Monarchs showed up to play right from the start, with Todd Pomerleau getting things rolling just five minutes in off a feed from Jeff Hurst. And it didn't take long for Dan McKinney to strike, netting the game-winner only 40 seconds later. By the end of the first, it was 3-0 Monarchs, with Dan Buckingham rounding out the period's scoring, sending the Knights scrambling to regroup.

The Knights managed to answer back in the second, with Sam Perkins finding the back of the net midway through the period off a nice setup from Tom Connolly. But the Monarchs' momentum was unstoppable. Pomerleau added another assist as he and Buckingham connected again to restore the Monarchs' three-goal lead. With Buddy Johnson standing tall in goal, the Knights' offense simply couldn't keep pace, getting outshot at every turn and visibly frustrated as they saw each attempt thwarted by the relentless Monarchs.

As the third period wore on, the Monarchs showed no signs of slowing down, and Mark Hayhurst put the final stamp on the game with an unassisted beauty, sealing the 5-1 rout. The Monarchs' bench was electric, celebrating a dominant performance that cements their strength even without their gentle giant, Bernstein, in the lineup. For the Knights, it's back to the drawing board as they wrestle with a rough skid, struggling to regain the spark that has eluded them in recent weeks. For now, the Monarchs continue their climb, and the Knights are left wondering how to break the cycle.

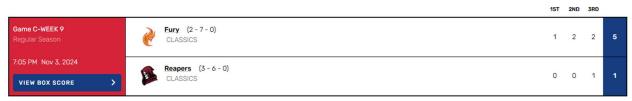


With the recent additions of Nick Cinqugrano and Anthony Cincotta, the Threshers showcased a deeper bench and newfound energy in their 5-1 victory over the Yellowjackets. These new players didn't just add fresh legs; they brought a burst of dynamism that sparked the entire lineup. John Sances got things started, scoring halfway through the first with a well-coordinated assist from Kevin Duggan and Mike Alexanian, setting the tone for a game the Threshers would soon dominate.

The second period saw the Threshers ramp up their offensive intensity. Eric Johnson netted the gamewinning goal unassisted, demonstrating exactly why Threshers' fans are excited about the boost in their lineup. Johnson wasn't finished, though; he also assisted John Zimmer's goal minutes later, giving the Threshers a 3-0 lead and leaving the Yellowjackets struggling to keep up. Jason Bernard finally answered back for the Yellowjackets, but Anthony Leclair's solo goal just before the period ended extinguished any comeback hopes.

In the third, Johnson capped his night with yet another unassisted goal just 18 seconds into the period, sealing the Yellowjackets' fate. With the Threshers boasting newfound depth and a resurgent offense, the victory highlights the impact of Cinqugrano and Cincotta. This dominant win not only pushes the Threshers up the standings but also signals they're gearing up to go back to back.

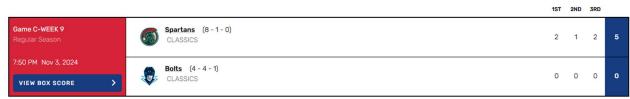




The Fury brought a storm to the ice last night, cruising to a commanding 5-1 victory over the Reapers. With a staggering 53 shots on goal, the Fury offense was relentless, and the Reapers simply couldn't keep up. Fury's Kevin Mackin kicked off the scoring just two minutes in, finding the net after a smooth assist from Nate Rasmussen. From there, the game was all Fury, and the Reapers, despite a strong effort by goalie Ken Menkello, struggled to hold back the offensive barrage.

Jay DiCarlo was the undeniable star of the night, netting a stunning hat trick and assisting twice. His first goal in the second period, assisted by Gavin Steinman and Neil Landry, ended up as the game-winner. DiCarlo struck again minutes later with another beautifully coordinated effort with Steinman, giving the Fury a comfortable lead they never relinquished. By the third period, DiCarlo completed his hat trick, giving Fury fans yet another reason to cheer as the scoreboard stretched even wider.

The Reapers managed a glimmer of hope when Dan Sloan, assisted by John Dunn and Rich Buckley, scored on a power play, making it 4-1 with just over five minutes to go. But Fury's Neil Landry quickly responded, putting away the final nail with a fifth goal for the Fury. The Reapers' woes continued, unable to overcome the Fury's relentless pace and DiCarlo's incredible performance. With this win, the Fury solidify themselves as a serious playoff threat, while the Reapers will need to regroup to avoid being buried by the competition.



The Spartans dominated the rink last night, securing a decisive 5-0 shutout against the Bolts in what could only be described as a masterclass in teamwork and strategy. The Spartans' Mike Martin got things rolling in the first period, scoring the game-winner barely halfway in with an assist from Jeff Vancura. The Bolts had

no response as Bill Petrarca followed up with an unassisted goal just five minutes later, putting the Spartans up by two and silencing any early momentum for the Bolts.

The second period saw the Spartans solidify their control. Jim Holmes capitalized off a slick assist from Glenn Harnish, making it 3-0, as the Bolts' defense continued to falter. Despite limited shots, the Spartans' efficiency was the story of the night, with goalie Barry Kaiser practically unchallenged and racking up his well-earned shutout. Meanwhile, the Bolts were stonewalled by the Spartans' airtight defense, barely getting any clear looks at the net as the clock ticked down.

As if the lead wasn't commanding enough, Steve Figlioli and Dave Currier added two more insurance goals in the third period, sealing the fate of a frustrated Bolts squad. Currier's assist on Figlioli's goal and his own score just seconds before the final buzzer underscored the Spartans' offensive cohesion, with Mike Martin assisting for good measure. With this dominant win, the Spartans showcased why they're a team to be reckoned with, while the Bolts will have to regroup and find answers to avoid getting swept away in the season's remaining games.



In a gritty showdown that ended in a 3-0 shutout, the Longhorns proved they have the firepower—and the finesse—to dominate on both ends of the ice. Player of the game Bill Sawtelle opened the scoring in the second period, delivering a beautiful wrist shot assisted by Jim Hutchinson that flew past Astros goalie Andrew Pelley. Sawtelle's goal not only set the tone but also paved the way for the Longhorns to control the game from there, adding another impressive win to their season tally.

The highlight of the night, however, came on the Longhorns' third goal, where John Currie delivered a screen that will go down in the highlight reels for sheer comedy and effectiveness. With a slight shift just faster than a snail's pace, Currie successfully blocked Pelley's view, allowing Tim Fallon to knock one in cleanly. Currie's "strategic stillness" may not win any speed awards, but it was exactly what the team needed to widen the gap and keep the Astros off-balance.

Defensively, Doc Smith was rock-solid between the pipes, stopping all 32 shots and securing his shutout. The Longhorns' backline, anchored by Sawtelle's constant hustle, ensured the Astros couldn't gain any momentum, limiting their opportunities and turning away their every push. By the end, the Longhorns had made a loud statement about their playoff potential, leaving the Astros scrambling to figure out where it all went wrong.



In a game where every pass and shot counted, Brian McKenna showed up as the player of the game, steering the Hawks to a 3-1 victory over the Mountainmen. McKenna's playmaking was on full display in the second period, as he set up John Davey's goal at the 11:18 mark to break the scoreless tension and get the Hawks

on the board. It was a crucial momentum shift, one that the Mountainmen would struggle to counter for the rest of the night.

McKenna wasn't done yet, delivering another slick assist to Jim Mulhern just minutes later. With McKenna orchestrating the play from the perimeter, Mulhern was able to fire off a shot that found the back of the net, giving the Hawks an insurmountable lead. Though the Mountainmen's Andrew Kuhn managed to answer with a goal of his own, McKenna and the Hawks struck back, with Frank Elwood scoring at 1:49 to put the game out of reach.

Meanwhile, goaltender Barry Kaiser was a fortress, turning away 26 shots from the Mountainmen, who couldn't find the spark they needed to crack the Hawks' defense. McKenna's leadership on both ends of the ice and Kaiser's wall-like presence in the net were a winning formula. With McKenna's masterful playmaking and Kaiser's rock-solid goaltending, the Hawks sent a clear message that they're ready for any challenge coming their way.