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HUGHES' GAME-WINNER ELIMINATES P-BRUINS

HARTFORD, C.T. - The Providence Bruins lost 3-2 in overtime against the Hartford Wolf Pack in the winner-takeall Game Five at the XL Center Friday night. It was the OT-winner for Hartford against the P-Bruins in a decisive game (2000).

Hartford had three of the four best scoring chances in the opening period, though neither team could beat the oposing goaltender. About a minute into the game, Ryan Spooner and Paul Carey had a 2-on-1, but Carey hit the crossbar. It was ruled no goal on the ice, and after a long video review, the call stood. With four minutes left, Smith made four saves on one rush, including a high glove-side stop. Oscar Lindberg broke free in front of Smith with fewer than ten seconds remaining, but Jeremy stoned him, then smothered the rebound.

For the first time all series, Providence scored first. The Bruins lead came at 7:55 of the middle period, when Colin Stuart buried his own rebound, shortly after Seth Griffith's bid from the point. Chris Bourque had a quality opportunity to tie the game when Yann Danis fed him with a two-line pass, but Smith saved Bourque's slapper from the left point. Later in the frame. Marek Hrivik missed a slap shot on an odd-man rush. Joe Morrow went into the box for a high-sticking double minor, and it led to the game-tying goal. Carl Klingberg connected with Oscar Lindberg, whose shot bounced off of Smith to the far doorstep. Chris Mueller pushed the puck in to tie it for the home team.

For the second period in a row, the Bruins took the lead, but Hartford tied it on the power play. Tommy Cross registered his first point of this year's playoffs with a slapper from the left point that put Providence up 2-1 with 13:24 left in regulation. With 1:34 to go, Paul Carey committed a hooking minor, and the Wolf Pack went on a 6-on-4 shortly thereafter. Mueller scored his second game-tying goal of the night with only 0:46 on the clock. His shot from the left dot went top-shelf to knot it up at two apiece.

Hughes was the hero with the game-winner on a rebound he zipped past Smith for the 3-2 win in both the game and the series. Hartford has now won two of the five all-time post-season series between the teams, with the only other win coming in the team's lone Calder Cup Championship year. This was the fifth time Providence reached overtime in the final game of a series. They are 2-3 in that regard, including the aforementioned loss to Hartford.

PROVIDENCE SCORING: #49 Colin Stuart (#17 Seth Griffith) #3 Tommy Cross (#24 Ryan Spooner, #17 Seth Griffith, PPG)

PROVIDENCE GOALTENDING: #30 Jeremy Smith (39 saves on 42 shots)

The Providence Bruins are an American Hockey League franchise and the top affiliate of the NHL's Boston Bruins. Since moving to Providence in 1992 the P-Bruins have been among the league leaders in regular season attendance. On the ice the team has enjoyed similar success, having won five division titles, three regular season titles and the Calder Cup in 1999.

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