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An interview with:

COACH GADOWSKY MAX GARDINER

THE MODERATOR: We're now joined by Penn State head coach Gadowsky and Max Gardiner. Coach, an opening statement?

COACH GADOWSKY: You know, you look at the game and you certainly wouldn't think it was one of our best performances, but I tell you what? It was definitely one of our grittiest. We had a couple of guys that probably shouldn't have played at all and really gritted it out. I thought it started off fairly well and had a bit of a bad break. Puck ran around the boards, hit a linesman, puck jumped in and had a breakaway 1-0. And that linesman is one of the best refs in the league. It's just a bad-luck play.

So after that I thought the team had started to try to stay positive and grit it out. And it was a lot like a microcosm of what we've been going through this week. Having guys try to grit it out to play. I know it's not the result we wanted, but I tell you what, when these guys especially this senior class looks back at what they accomplished while they've been here and especially this season, I think they're going to be very proud.

Q. As Coach Gadowsky mentioned, you guys as seniors have a lot to be proud of. I know it's hard after this game, but how do you feel about you and the program?

MAX GARDINER: It's been an honor to play for Penn State and build a foundation here. Something I'm going to miss, for sure, but the program's in great hands from the coaching staff down. There are some great leaders going into next year in that locker room. There are a lot of good things to look forward to for the program.

Q. You had your second goal in as many games. What did you see on that?

MAX GARDINER: Actually, Tommy Olczyk made a real nice play there. He picked off

a pass and made a nice pass to me. And Zach kind of drew the "D" over, drove hard doing that, and kind of gave me an opening to let one go. Luckily enough it went in.

Q. How did this game compare to some of the other games you've played against them this year?

MAX GARDINER: I mean, similar. They play hard, they're fast. They've got a lot of forwards that can really move. You saw that with a couple breakaways there tonight and couple mistakes, bad bounces here and there, and they capitalized on their opportunities and we maybe didn't on a few of ours. So that was the difference, I thought.

Q. Max, the team played a lot harder in the second and third periods. Is that what happened when you went back into the locker room in the first?

MAX GARDINER: Yeah, as Coach said, we tried to stay positive. We've come back many times this year. Unfortunately, we weren't able to tonight. But we went out there and laid it on the line. I'm proud of the guys on our team, and unfortunately the result wasn't in our favor.

Q. As your coach said, you guys, the senior class looking back have a lot to be proud of building this program. Going forward, how do you see this program going after you guys are gone?

MAX GARDINER: It's going to continue to rise, I believe. Like I said, it's in great hands, great leadership. They're going to continue to build it next year and for many years to come. I think there's going to be a lot of success in Penn State hockey.

Q. Coach, to get a sense of what they were able to do, I think you had 31 shots today. Were they able to keep you out of the shooting lanes you usually get to? I think it was pretty similar to the last time you played them as well.

COACH GADOWSKY: Yeah, I think part

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of that is not an excuse, but we have a pretty significant part of our offense that was really struggling to play a couple of our players, and I don't think we had the speed that we normally have to jump on pucks and try to get second and third chances. I think they did a really good job of keeping us away from second and third chances. Credit their "D". It's a total team effort by them, but they did a very good job at that. We weren't able to really generate much.

Q. Having Taylor come back to the lineup, how good was he and what did that mean to your team?

COACH GADOWSKY: It meant a lot that he was there. We really didn't expect him to play even up till game time. I thought it was a really, really gritty effort by him to play. Obviously, he couldn't skate nearly as well as he normally does, but I think it meant a lot to our team that he was putting in the effort and going through the pain that he did to play.

Q. Looking at the season, maybe back in the tournament from last year, but you made great strides in the regular season. How big of a jump do you think you made this year?

COACH GADOWSKY: I think we made steps, and I'm pretty sure that in the future when all the teams, especially the seniors look back at this, I think they're going to be very proud of the steps they made. Like I said, we came in here limping a little bit, and we faced a team that I think are playing their best hockey of the year. They're playing extremely well lately. If I'm not mistaken, I think it's eight of the last 11 wins for them, something like that.

Coach Rohlik certainly has been playing really well at the right time. For us though, I think we have to look back at the season as a whole. I think we made a lot of great strides in a lot of areas of the program. Like I said, I think the whole team, especially the seniors, should be very proud of that.

Q. Coach, Nate Jensen went down. Do you have an update on his status?

COACH GADOWSKY: No, he was back though. Actually another defenseman was held for that. He went down, I don't know when, but he was out. Mike Williamson didn't come back, but Nate was able to come back later, so I think he's fine.

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