

Drillers favorites today; Wave facing elimination

Contributed by Joanne Ireland
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Funny thing about momentum. It can transform whipping boys into road warriors, underdogs into prize fighters. Defensive midfielders into lethal goal-scorers.

Just ask Doug Holloway.

After 27 games for the Edmonton Drillers, he'd scored one goal.

One goal, three assists and a steady dose of shadowing opposing defenders.

Then he takes to the field at the Wisconsin Centre Arena Friday for the opening game of the quarter- finals against the Milwaukee Wave.

The Drillers -- 6-14 on the road -- are up 4-2 late in the second quarter.

Holloway intercepts a long pass, chests the ball off the plexiglass, turns, and hammers a shot past goalkeeper Victor Nogueira.

Late in the game, with the Drillers in command, he punches home a rebound to lift Edmonton to a 20-6 victory.

Two goals. Four points. One playoff game.

``I don't think it was any different than any other game other than the fact that I scored.

``I was just playing my normal defensive game, which is my job," he said Saturday, ``but I shot the ball and it went into the net.

``It was definitely our night."

The Drillers and the Wave spent the day travelling to Edmonton.

That left little time to celebrate or overhaul the game plan. The two teams line up again today at 2:05 p.m. at the Coliseum.

``It's going to be run-and-gun," said captain Bill Sedgewick, ``and I think that's what teams are afraid of. We're fast, we're quick, and we're not afraid to counter-attack."

The Drillers can talk a big game. With eight wins in their past nine outings, they're not only tearing up the turf but are in control of this series.

A win today and they advance to the next round against St. Louis.

``We're going to come out flying," said coach Ross Ongaro, ``and that's exactly how we have to play, with a lot of emotion.

``We're going to play them the same way.

``Now it's up to them to rethink what they're doing."

The Wave were frustrated on both fronts Friday.

Defensively, the Drillers shut them down. Offensively, Edmonton hit the Wave with a balanced attack.

Thirty-four shots to Milwaukee's 15. Ten goals to Milwaukee's three.

Chris Clarke, who turns 19 today, charged through the defence and calmly slapped a goal into the corner of the net. Martin Dugas, Nick DeSantis and Carmen D'Onofrio were again on target.

Goalkeeper Scott Hileman stood tall while the defenders shut down Michael King, the Wave's leading pointman.

Everyone stepped to the plate. Players like forward Siphon Sibiyi. Players like Holloway.

``We still have a long ways to go," said Holloway.

``There's always that haunting feeling that it's not over, that things could be different come today. They're not going to just come out and accept defeat, so we'll try and do the same thing we did there."

Only this time the Drillers are at home, where they've posted a 15-5 record. This time they're the favorites.

``It has to be a total team effort," said Holloway. ``But I don't think my scoring goals is going to be something that people should get used to. It was just one of those nights."

DRILL BITS

GAME DAY: The Edmonton Drillers take on the Milwaukee Wave today in Game 2 of the best-of-three quarter-finals. Kickoff at 2:05 p.m. at the Coliseum.

GIVE-AND-GO: If the Drillers, 1-0, give it to Milwaukee again, they go on to the North Division semifinals against St. Louis.

HEAD-TO-HEAD: The Drillers and the Wave split the regular season series 1-1, with Edmonton outscoring Milwaukee 23-19. Factor in the Drillers' 20-6 victory in the opening playoff game, and Edmonton has a 43-25 edge on the scoresheet - - 41 of the those points were posted in the last two games.

TICKET WICKET: The Drillers office, 471-KICK, is open from 9-11:30 a.m. Passes -- \$12 for adults; \$6 for seniors and game-goers 14 and under -- can also be purchased through TicketMaster or at the door.