



GARDEN DELIGHTS

Farrell knocks off Fordham on MSG ice

BY MATT GAGNE

THE CHILLS had everything to do with the ice.

Monsignor Farrell made the most of a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity on Sunday, skating past Fordham Prep with a 3-2 victory at Madison Square Garden in a game played after the Rangers hosted the Florida Panthers.

"I can speak on behalf of my teammates: we all had butterflies in our stomachs," said Lions senior Stephen Imbasciani, who finished with a pair of goals despite playing with a chipped skate. "To be out there on the ice the Rangers play on, with my friends from school, it's a great feeling."

Both schools entered the Garden shortly before noon and lugged their gear to makeshift locker rooms, everyone's head on a swivel as they walked past NHL players jumping rope and stretching in the corridors. They watched from the nosebleeds as the Panthers cruised to a 4-0 victory, the anxiety building until they hit the ice some four hours later.

"Everyone was ready to get out there after watching the Rangers game and looking up to the players," Imbasciani said. "I'll probably remember this for the rest of my life."

Fordham Prep sophomore Joe Regan scored the game's first goal — the first of his career — on an odd-man rush midway through the second period, but Farrell picked up two quick goals over the final 1:38 of the period.

Both came against Rams goalie Richard Fusco, who had replaced starter Anthony Gaudio minutes earlier in a move designed to split playing time.

"We were happy to see a different

goalie at that point," Farrell coach Peter Jerabeck said. "The other kid was real good."

The Lions tied the game on a power play goal by Imbasciani and took a 2-1 lead with six seconds left in the period on defenseman Andrew Lurie's wrist-shot from the slot.

CHSHL 'A'
FARRELL
FORDHAM PREP 2

"Everyone was in front of the net and I saw a hole, the right side was kind of open," Lurie said. "I just threw it there. I was hoping I would score here, and I did it."

Forechecking to kill off an interference penalty with four and a half minutes left in the game, Imbasciani intercepted a lazy pass on Fordham Prep's doorstep and added an insurance goal with a quick wrist-shot under the crossbar.

It's a good thing he did. Fordham Prep captain Michael Spillane scored from the left wing less than a minute later, putting the Rams within striking distance as they pulled their goalie over the final minute in a bid to force overtime.

"We were losing by two and we knew there was no messing around, we were going straight to the net," Spillane said. "It happened very quick, I just made a move and shot it and then I was like, 'I just scored in Madison Square Garden, that's pretty cool.' But I still wish we got the win."

Farrell improved to 3-1 in CHSHL 'A' while Fordham Prep leveled off at 1-1 at the World's Most Famous Arena, a venue secured by the connections of a Fordham Prep parent.

"Our coach was talking to us between the second and third periods about playing at the Garden," Imbasciani said. "He said you'll have the experience for your whole life, but you don't want to say you played there and lost. To say that you won there, it makes it even better."

Farrell's Stephen Imbasciani (16) scores two goals in Lions' 3-2 win and gets jumped by Michael Singer. Photo by Richard Harbus

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