

## More Ups and Downs

Contributed by Russ Cline  
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Saturday night was a roller coaster of emotions. The first quarter was very disappointing but was followed by three solid quarters of lacrosse against a very good Minnesota team. This is the second game we would have won (Portland) where we got into a hole and never recovered. The blame for not being ready to play from the first face off cuts across our whole organization including owners, coaches, players, captains and veteran leaders.

At Dallas Eliuk's induction ceremony at this month's NLL Hall of Fame event; Gary Gait said that Dallas made Gary a better player because Dallas practiced and warmed up the way he played the game. He would never let you score unless you earned it even when it didn't count. So I will say it again, we are a good team when we play the way we are capable of and very bad when we do not. We deserved your boo's in the first quarter.

### Observations:

- Athan told me before the game that he felt his best since his returning to the play and it certainly showed with 5 goals and 3 assists.
- Merrick Thomson continues to play well with his 3 goals and 1 assist. He is the third leading scorer in the league.
- While our replacements for Geoff did all they could with face offs, I believe Geoff's presence would have made a big difference. We expect him back no later than the April 4/5th weekend.
- I sometimes wonder what our record would be with the team we thought we would have at the beginning of the year. All teams have injuries and job conflicts but this has been a real tough year for us with losing some of our best players.
- We are 2nd in the league in Power Play %, 10th in Penalty Killing and #1 in Short Handed goals.
- Minnesota and Rochester are two of the hottest teams in the league. The Swarm has won three in a row and Knighthawks four of their last five.
- I hate weekends off. You lose momentum and flow.
- Of the four games played on Saturday night three were one goal games with two of them being OT.

- You have to play through missed calls but the last five minutes of play clock and crease violations was back breaking for us.

We will have an auction of special Wings memorabilia following the March 28th Colorado game at the post game party to raise funds to assist Chris Sanderson in his transportation costs for his treatments in Durham, North Carolina. I hope you will plan to join us to do something good for a very special member of our family.

We have a tough schedule ahead but we absolutely also have the ability to get the job done if we get the best from every member of the organization. Once again thanks for being the best fans in the league.