

# ISHL/Houston Wild Apollos NAPHL Tournament, Blaine Minnesota recap

Six of our Apollos made the trip to Blaine Minnesota for the second of three NAPHL tournaments and again, all six produced excellent ice hockey with the New Mexico Ice Wolves. While the result of the tournament wasn't where the team ultimately wanted to end up, each player contributed and continued on the pathway of improvement.



(New Mexico Ice Wolves with ISHL/Houston Wild Apollos players)

Game 1 saw the team start off strong and come back with two goals produced by Damien Straube to tie after 3 periods of play. Unfortunately the team didn't have the OT winner in this one and the Ice Wolves lost to Tri-State Spartans. Tri-State scored first followed by Straube's unassisted goal in the first period; Sinclair gained time on the score sheet in the form of 2 minutes for roughing. The second period Tri-State struck again while Straube spent 2 minutes of shame for cross-checking. The third period was a nail-biter to the end and Drabscynski spend 2 minutes in the sin-bin for cross checking but then Straube struck again with an unassisted goal to knot the score late in the third. With only couple minutes left in OT Tri-State sealed the win on the Power Play while Straube spent a couple of the 120 seconds earned for cross-checking.

Unfortunately the next 3 games did not produce as the team would have liked with a 5-0 loss to St Viator, a 2-0 loss to Weber Mustangs, and a closer against Clearwater Ice Storm of 5-2 loss. The remaining games contributions were in the penalty department unfortunately from our boys. Ryan Burgess-Jimenez with 1 assist and 4 minutes in penalties, Mauro Raciti served a "Too Many Men" 2 minutes, Kacper Drabscynski with 1 assist and 4 minutes on the weekend, Damien Straube tallied 2 goals and served 4 minutes, and Cannon Sinclair totaled 4 minutes in penalties.

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-Coach Anderson

In another tough tournament, the Apollos players were impactful and invoked pride. Coach Anderson had this to say,

“All six of these young men are doing so much to improve their game and showcase what Houston has to offer. I may say this too often, but it’s a real gut-punch that we didn’t have this roster for our 18UAA because I know we would have been extremely competitive. When I see players like Charlie McLellan go to an NAPHL tournament and create opportunities and offense effectively, Mauro Raciti play the solid, reliable blue line and d-zone he’s so effective with, and all the players get better every time they play with the NAPHL, I can’t help but think about what could have been. That said, we’re here to help players get better and achieve their goals while developing this team and creating great team-members for the future. The boys keep getting better and that’s a big win for the Apollos as a whole. Charles Higgins gets added to the next tournament and I think with 7 of our players in the NAPHL tournaments it’s going to keep making us stronger.”

The next NAPHL tournament is in February for President’s Day weekend in Detroit.

