

Summary of the NFI/Seafax 25th Anniversary Game – 2018 for SIRF

Dear NFI Members and Friends:

The 25th Anniversary NFI/Seafax Hockey game, played for the benefit of SIRF (The Seafood Industry Research Fund), was held on Monday, March 12th at Harvard University.

We had the pleasure of having Neal Workman, the former Founder and President of Seafax and originator of this hockey rivalry, skillfully drop the first puck ---on my toe.

The NFI team was hopeful of a turn around this year after having lost 3 successive games to Seafax from 2015 through 2017; one being a 7-1 blowout in 2016. So revenge was on NFI minds and it was ultimately delivered. It was most appropriate for the NFI to win back the Gorton Cup with an 8-4 victory on our 25th Anniversary. So the “Good Guys” actually won for a change.

Seafax was at a slight disadvantage to start the game since they were missing two skilled and high-scoring forwards, Mark Pandolfo (Kitchens Seafood-FL) and Adam Rousseau (Bristol Seafoods-ME) plus a top defenseman, Todd Clark (Endeavor Seafood-RI) for this game. They certainly would have made a difference, but we do not think a 4 goal one.

NFI’s superb defenseman, John McGeough (Newport International-FL) and his fellow Rhode Island friend, Chris Della Grotta (Grotta Bay Imports-RI) both scored early in the 1st period as did shifty Matt Tenaglia (Preferred Freezer) to put the NFI up 3-0. Meanwhile, an apparent goal by Seafax was waved off by Referee Steve Burke as it was ruled to be directed in the goal off a skate.

Seafax’s goalie, Seth Keffas (Southwest Air Cargo-Halifax, NS) was put under heavy pressure throughout the first period but then quickly recovered to make some exceptional saves to keep Seafax in the game. NFI’s goalie, Craig Pollard, was meanwhile stopping everything Seafax fired at him until late in the period when both the talented Jeff Legge (Pearlmark Halifax, NS) and shifty Sheldon Hamilton (Seafax) scored nifty goals to close the gap to 3-2. Nevertheless, a little more than two minutes later near the end of 1st period, the NFI answered with two quick goals of their own, one by Chris Della Grotta again, ably assisted by linemates, Judge Nat Gorton and the hard-nosed Darren McInnis. That was followed shortly thereafter by a difficult one timer by Steve ‘Crazy Legs’ Mannarino, assisted by a nice pass from Carl Hampe Jr. (Ipswich Maritime Products) of the 2nd line (where was I on that one – I can’t remember). That put the NFI up 5-2 going into the 2nd 30-minute period.

Seafax closed the gap early in the 2nd period to 5-3 with an outstanding 2nd goal by Jeff Legge but NFI answered again with goals from its highly skilled 1st line center, Matt Tenaglia, assisted by his Preferred cohort, Ryan Martin and another one by Chris Della Grotta to complete his hat trick.

Speedy Alex Hallion (Crocker & Winsor-Boston) closed out the scoring for Seafax with a nifty goal by swooping around the defense in the last minute of game and beating goalie Pollard.

Both goalies, Craig Pollard (NFI) and Seth Keffas (Seafax) played exceptionally well throughout the evening. It was especially a nice win for Craig Pollard who had suffered two OT losses in recent years.

Steve Burke ably refereed the game in John Connelly’s absence and kept Jim Bonnie’s group from intimidating the smaller NFI team.

We were also honored on our 25th year by the presence of Bill Cleary Jr., Harvard's long-time, renowned Hockey Coach and Athletic Director and the one responsible for our use of their nice rink. It's only unfortunate that some of us weren't able to experience his adept coaching so we actually knew what we were doing out there on the ice.

All participants enjoyed the fast ice surface and friendly camaraderie in the hard fought and clean game with only a few minor bruises and no serious injuries or NFI players sent off to the hospital with a bloody ankle as in 2017. The Mike Gorton Cup will thus appropriately reside with team NFI throughout year 2018.

The facts of this game summary were garnered from phone interviews with veteran players from both teams so we believe them to be accurate in most instances.

Sincerely,

Mike Gorton
Captain of NFI's Hockey Team