

Sports

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The El Paso Rhinos and Lafayette Cajun Catahoulas prepare to face off after the Rhinos score.

PHOTOS BY SPC. BROOKS FLETCHER

Rhinos trample Catahoulas in first home game

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31st Brigade Public Affairs Office

The El Paso Rhinos melted the ice in an 11-1 victory over Lafayette's Cajun Catahoulas in their first home game of the season at the Sierra Providence Center, at the El Paso County Coliseum Friday.

With fans tailgating three hours before the night's action and more than 400 in attendance, the Rhinos would have more than enough support during their debut home game.

Within the first four minutes of the first period, Rhinos winger Jason Knutson, scored two goals with an assist both from defenseman Costi Hinn and center Grady Little, giving the Rhinos an instant two-point lead over the Catahoulas.

No more than three minutes later, the Catahoulas' defenseman Austin Garcia assisted forward Frankie Loftus who slipped a shot passed goalie Mitch Cooper, making the score 2-1.

After almost six minutes of rallying back and forth between the two teams and a penalty on the Catahoulasa behalf; Rhino's capitalized off of a power play, as defenseman David Devine scored off an assist from right wing Corey Jendras, putting the score at 3-1.

After another short stalemate between both teams, Rhinos fostered an epidemic of entertainment.

Winger Jason Knutson scored off an assist from center Luke Van Asch, increasing the score to 4-1 and forcing the Catahoulas to take a defensive stance.

The visiting team carried a defensive stance all the way through a late, first period fight, as their forward Kyle Mead faced-off and protected himself from the long arms of Rhino's right wing Alex Sherman. Both players received five minutes in the penalty box.

The Rhino's did not show any mercy, as they continued to charge and delivered three more scores on the period.

Winger Marcus Wilhite assisted center Nick Group, shortly before left winger Hayden Kowalski scored unassisted. After changing a bouncing puck, Kowalski then ended the period on a score which was assisted by center Victor Estrada, closing the first period with a score of 7-1.

The first period, the Rhinos out shot the Catahoulas, with a shot-to-goal of 26-4.

Although the following period was not as successful as the first period was for the Rhinos, the El Paso team carried some of the momentum over as Jendras scored an unassisted goal late in the second period, pushing their lead to 8-1.

The Rhinos out shot the Catahoulas 21-2 on the period.

In the last period of play, the Rhinos never gave the visitors from Louisiana a chance, as they put the nail in the coffin and scored three more times before the game ending buzzer. Grady took the spotlight this time with a double assist from Jendras and Wilhite, then from Wilhite alone.

Shortly following was an assist from Grady and Wilhite to Jendras, giving the Rhinos a command and devastating score of 11-1 over the Catahoulas.

The Rhinos reproduced the same results in Saturday's game, devastating the Catahoulas, once again, 11-1.

With Friday's and Saturday's win over the Catahoulas, the El Paso Junior B hockey team bumped their record to an impressive 11-2, leading the Mid-West Division of the Western States Hockey League.

The El Paso Rhinos next game is scheduled for tomorrow against the Dallas Hawks at Sierra Providence Center.



Rhino's right wing, Alex Sherman, prepares to strike Catahoulas' forward Kyle Mead, during a first period fight.



In pursuit of the puck, Rhino's center Nick Group cross checks Catahoulas' forward Alex Heinz.