

GAME REPORT

Home: CV Firebirds vs. Away: SD Gulls

Date: Jan 5, 2025 5:00PM PST

Pre-Game

The Gulls find themselves near the bottom of the Pacific Division. They are coming off a 4 to 1 loss to the Reign on Friday. They are currently on a 0-2-1-0 winless streak, and they have only 7 points of 20 in the last 10 games. As noted earlier in the season, the Duck organization has been on a rebuild for several years now, and this year is no different. A team with nothing to lose is a dangerous team so opponents shouldn't go to sleep on the Gulls.

The Firebirds won a big game last night against the Reign, and ended the Reigns points streak. Closing out the game was a bit difficult as they missed the empty net 3 to 4 times, but the two points help them move up the tightly packed Pacific Division. The Pacific division has 5 teams all within 2 to 4 points of each other for the 2nd place. A win tonight would move them to 2nd or 3rd place depending on other outcomes. The Firebirds are getting more physical and starting to get to the soft areas to get better scoring chances. A good trap at the blue line has prevented opponents from getting into the attacking zone. The biggest issue is staying out of the sin bin. They gave the Reign back-to-back power plays last night early in the 3rd period, and they Reign took advantage to mount a comeback.

Head-to-head: As much as the Reign and Firebirds are creating a rivalry, the same cannot be said for the Gulls and the Firebirds. The Firebirds have a 14-1-1-2 record against the Gulls in the three seasons of Firebirds existence, counting this one. Things can change from season to season. This season, the Firebirds won the first two meetings, but only by one goal. The first game had the Firebirds out in front by 5 goals only to see the Gulls mount a comeback. The second game the Firebirds had to come from a behind to win in overtime. The Firebirds should not take the Gulls lightly.

1st Period

The Firebirds had strong period with no effects after playing last night. The Firebirds got the loan goal in the period on a zone press. It appeared all 5 players got a touch on the puck, but it was a rebound off the Gulls goalie that went to the slot. A Firebird shot it in, and another tip from another Firebird helped the puck find the back of the net. Both teams had a power play opportunity, but the Gulls played a really good power play. The Gulls had several chances including one off the crossbar. Their movement with the puck at the top of the zone using the bumper higher in the slot caused the Firebirds defense to scramble. The Firebirds goalie stood his ground to keep the puck out of the net.

2nd Period

The Gulls made a push and took control of the first half of the period. The Firebirds made a rush up the ice and trapped the Gulls in the defensive end. Two reentries up the ice, and the Firebirds got the second goal on a rush, pass downlow, and a little stick handling. The teams got into a scuffle at the end of the period with 0.1 seconds left in the period resulting with penalty for both teams.

3rd Period

Fatigue came over the Firebirds and the Gulls capitalized late. Several icings kept the Firebirds in their defensive zone. With less than 5 minutes, the Gulls took control and scored two goal to tie the game. The first goal was a simple pass from behind the net to an open play coming in next to the goal to squeeze it by the Firebirds goalie for the first goal. The next goal a minute later with scramble in front of the Firebirds net, the Gulls put home the tying goal to force overtime.

OT Period

The Gulls got called with a too many men on the ice with 48 seconds into the OT period. With the man advantage, the Firebirds scored within a few seconds to win the game.

Post-Game

Never sleep on desperate team. The Gulls never stopped playing and tied the game to get a point. The Firebirds where a little fatigue from playing the night before. Getting the puck out of the zone was a struggle late in the game. The Firebirds gutted it out and got the needed two points to move one point from 2nd place in the Pacific Division. The Gulls head home for a 5-game home stand. The Firebirds continue the home stand with 4 more games.

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	OT	Total
Gulls	0	0	2	0	2
Firebirds	1	1	0	1	3

Full game statistic can be found on the AHL site: <https://theahl.com/stats/game-center/1026970>

Team Game Stats:

	Gulls	Firebirds
Shots	21	26
PP	0 / 3	1 / 3
PIM	18	8
SH	0	0

Unofficial stats:

The following are unofficial statistics. The AHL doesn't show faceoff wins, icing, or offsides on the score sheet. I am tracking this on my own so there is a margin of error.

	Icing	Offside
Gulls	6	7
Firebirds	8	5

Faceoff Wins	1 st	2 nd	3 rd		Total
Gulls	11	8	12	0	31
Firebirds	10	9	9	2	30

The following is a breakdown of faceoff wins based on zone and player count.

	Gulls			Firebirds		
Zone	ES	PP	PK	ES	PP	PK
Attack	7	3	0	6	4	0
Neutral	12	0	0	8	0	0
Defense	7	0	2	9	0	3

ES – Even Strength

PP – Power Play

PK – Penalty Kill