

GAME REPORT

Home: CV Firebirds vs. Away: TUC Roadrunners

Date: Jan 8, 2025 7:00PM PST

Pre-Game

The Roadrunners have had a strong season thus far. They sit in 6th place in the Pacific Division. They are part of 5 teams that are a few points apart in the Pacific Division, and they are 5 points ahead of the teams behind them. They start January with a 6-game road trip. They come into tonight's game after a weekend series split with the Texas Stars. They are led by a group of veteran players, and unlike the Firebirds, the team has not had too many call ups to the NHL level. They have won 15 points out of 20 in the last 10 games.

The Firebirds are coming off a strong weekend to get 4 points and sit one point out for 2nd place in the Pacific. They are on a 5-game points streak, but the last game against the Gulls on Sunday was almost a loss as the Gulls tied the game in the last 5 minutes. A power play goal in overtime helped the Firebirds to avoid losing a game they dominated most of the 60 minutes.

Head-to-Head: Both teams played the first two games of the season in Tucson on November 26th and 27th. The Roadrunners had come off a two-game sweep over the Wranglers the weekend before so the Firebirds had a big task in front of them at the time. The first game saw the Firebirds go down two goals only to come back and score three goals in the first period. The Firebirds continued to roll and get 2 goals in the 2nd period and 3 goals in the 3rd period for an 8 to 2 victory. The next night, both teams played to a tie in the next night's game, and the Roadrunners got the goal in overtime to even the series. The Firebirds are playing their rookies, and they are stepping up with all the callups and injuries. The best way to sum up tonight's matchup is the Firebirds youth movement versus the Tucson veterans.

1st Period

The Firebirds started off the first 4 minutes controlling the game, but penalty trouble soon followed. A hooking penalty followed 30 seconds later with a delay of game with the puck tossed out of play, resulted in a 5 on 3 power play for the Roadrunners. The Roadrunners capitalized to get their first goal. The Roadrunners weren't done push in the offensive zone, a shot snuck on the Stezka's blocker side. After a video review, the goal was confirmed. During this time, the Roadrunners were winning the faceoff circle 7 to 2 so they controlled the game. The Roadrunners then got into penalty trouble and gave the Firebirds a 5 on 3. A quick pass across the ice by Brandon Biro to Jani Nyman, and Jani's patented hard slap shot got past Conner Ingram before he could get over side to side. It looked like the Firebirds started to turn the play around, but the Roadrunners answered. On a rush up the ice, Travis Barron made a power over to get the puck past Stezka. Late in the period, the Roadrunners were awarded a penalty shot, which was blocked by Stezka, which kept the Firebirds in the game.

2nd Period

Roadrunners controlled most of the period, and setup some great shots. Firebirds had a few rushes up the ice, but no real o-zone time. Neither team could get a goal. The Roadrunners implemented an interesting neutral zone defense 1-1-3. Forechecker, a forward chasing the Firebirds center and the 3 on the defensive blue line.

3rd Period

Roadrunners continued to take the o-zone time, and the Firebirds had some spurts. Firebirds had a couple of power plays, but couldn't get anything going. Roadrunners closed out the game with an empty net goal.

Post-Game

In the battle of the youth versus the veterans, the veterans won the day. The Roadrunners got sticks into lanes and had the better o-zone time to prevent the Firebirds to get anything going. The Firebirds point streak comes to an end, and they will get ready for two game this weekend against the Chicago Wolves of the Central Division. Roadrunner continue to add to their point streak, and they continue the road trip to San Diego to take on the Gulls this weekend.

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	OT	Total
Roadrunners	3	0	1		4
Firebirds	1	0	0		1

Full game statistic can be found on the AHL site: <https://theahl.com/stats/game-center/1026976>

Team Game Stats:

	Roadrunners	Firebirds
Shots	29	30
PP	1 / 4	1 / 4
PIM	10	10
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	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Total
Roadrunners	2	1	0	3
Firebirds	1	1	0	2

Offsides	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Total
Roadrunners	1	2	3	6
Firebirds	1	1	0	2

Faceoff Wins	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	Total
Roadrunners	13	10	9	32
Firebirds	11	7	10	28

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

	Roadrunners			Firebirds		
Zone	ES	PP	PK	ES	PP	PK
Attack	9	5	0	5	2	0
Neutral	5	2	0	10	1	1
Defense	9	0	2	7	0	2

ES – Even Strength

PP – Power Play

PK – Penalty Kill