

FIRST ROUND SERIES MATCHUP: GULLS VS. BARRACUDA

APR 16, 2019

SERIES MATCHUP: The Gulls and San Jose Barracuda meet for the second time in the Calder Cup Playoffs, this time in a First Round best-of-five series. San Diego earned the No. 3 seed in the Pacific Division, and fourth in the Western Conference, following a regular-season record of 36-24-5-3 (.588%). This marks San Diego's third trip in four seasons to the Calder Cup Playoffs after appearing in the postseason in both 2016 and 2017.

HEAD-TO-HEAD: In 10 regular season meetings between the clubs in 2018-19, San Diego posted a 6-4-0-0 record, including a 3-2-0-0 mark at Pechanga Arena San Diego. The Gulls also won three of the five road contests in the season series, improving the club's record to 10-9-1-0 all-time in the regular season at SAP Center. San Diego is 23-14-2-1 all-time against San Jose in the regular season and has outscored the Barracuda 127-100 in those 40 games. Sam Carrick led San Diego in scoring against San Jose with 6-4=10 points in eight games. Kevin Boyle posted a 5-2-0 record with a 2.57 GAA and .915 SV% in seven starts against the Northern California rivals.

SERIES FORMAT: The five-game series will feature a 2-3 format with the first two games hosted by the Gulls at Pechanga Arena San Diego, followed by three contests at SAP Center with Games 4 and 5 if necessary. Three wins will see one team advance to the division finals.

PRIOR HISTORY: San Diego has faced San Jose one previous time in the Calder Cup Playoffs, meeting in the 2017 Pacific Division Finals. In Game 1, the Gulls erased two one-goal deficits to force overtime and Kevin Roy scored the club's first playoff overtime goal 38 seconds into

the extra session to give San Diego a 1-0 series lead. San Jose won the final four games of the series, however, as the Gulls depth took a hit with the Anaheim Ducks, San Diego's primary affiliate in the National Hockey League (NHL), competing in the 2017 Western Conference Final. At the time, the Gulls and the Ducks were the only pair of NHL and AHL affiliations remaining in their respective playoffs.

DIFFERENCE MAKER: Sam Carrick had a career year setting Gulls single-season records in scoring (21-29=61) and goals in the regular season. Carrick became the first Gull in club history to score 30 goals and 60 points to surpass the 57 points recorded by Brandon Montour (12-45=57, 68 games) and Chris Mueller (20-37=57, 63 games) in 2015-16 and the 21 goals scored by Corey Tropp and Kalle Kossila (2017-18), Antoine Laganiere (2016-17). Carrick led the Western Conference and ranked fifth among AHL leaders in goals, and scored his 100th career AHL goal in the season finale Apr. 13 at Tucson. He also paced San Diego in scoring, goals and PPG (11), and was second in assists. He ended his season on a high note with goals in back-to-back games, 5-4=9 points his last seven contests, 10-9=19 points his last 19 games and 26-24=50 points his last 47 overall.

SCOUTING THE OPPONENT: San Jose began the season as one of the hottest teams in the AHL, leading the league in point percentage for the majority of the first half of the year. After failing to continue their near impossible pace, the Barracuda finished the season in a battle for the Pacific Division title, falling just short and claiming second in the division. The special teams battle could determine the series as a strong San Jose penalty kill will face a San Diego power play that has scored in three straight games. The Barracuda tied for the fewest power-play goals allowed (41), killing 192 of their 233 times shorthanded (82.4%). A big reason why San Jose had so much success on the penalty kill was its goaltending tandem Josef Korenar and Antoine Bibeau.

WHO TO WATCH: San Jose's goaltending duo was led by Josef Korenar, who tied for third in the league in shutouts with four and ranked third among all AHL rookies with a 2.54 GAA and .911 SV%. In addition, Korenar helped the Barracuda gain standings points in his each of his last five games (4-0-1-0), posting a .943 SV%, 1.79 GAA and a shutout. The Barracuda's other goaltender, Antoine Bibeau, also won four of his last five games, including a shutout performance against Ontario. Nick DeSimone finished the season tied for sixth in goals and tied for seventh in points among AHL defensemen, leading all Pacific Division blueliners in both categories. As San Jose's leader in goals (24) and points (55), Alexander True was impressive against San Diego during this season series, picking up 7-4=11 points in 10 games against the Gulls.

FROM THE COACH: "I think the home fans, and I have actually read studies about this, everybody talks about home-ice advantage being having the last change and things like that. Are those good to have? Yeah, sure. But what really goes on not only in hockey, but in other sports is the effect of the crowd on the game. Obviously, our (first) game is at home and I think if you look at the four years that I have coached here, I don't have the number, but our feeling is that we're very good at home. We like playing at home, we're comfortable there and our fans are like a seventh player to us. We're certainly very happy there. Now that being said, we have no problem going on the road either. If you're going to win playoff series, you're going to have to win on the road." - Gulls Head Coach Dallas Eakins