



Even as They Win One, Rangers Lose Lindros

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The Rangers finally won a game they were expected to win last night at Madison Square Garden, but they lost Eric Lindros to injury again.

Lindros sustained a scratched left cornea at 6 minutes 38 seconds of the first period of the Rangers' 6-2 victory over the Pittsburgh Penguins when he was hit in the face with the blade of Josef Melichar's stick.

Lindros was examined last night by **Dr. Mark Fromer**, the Rangers' ophthalmologist. Lindros could see out of his left eye, but it was filled with blood. When he was playing with Philadelphia, the oft-injured Lindros bruised an eye near the end of the lockout-shortened 1995 season. He missed the final game of the regular season and the first three games of the playoffs.

Lindros, who did not miss a game because of injury last season for the first time in his 11-year career, recently returned from a chest sprain on the left side that forced him to miss seven games.

Lindros had recorded four assists in two games since coming back Saturday, although the Rangers lost both games.

The Rangers snapped a three-game losing streak and improved to 6-5-2-2. The Penguins, who have dropped four consecutive games since losing Mario Lemieux to a strained left hip, fell to 3-8-3-0.

The Rangers' 6 goals and 42 shots on goal were both season highs. The Rangers will play 11 of their next 15 games on the road, beginning with a Saturday matinee at the Meadowlands against the Devils.

Lindros started his third straight game as a right wing on Bobby Holik's line. Holik's left wing, Martin Rucinsky, scored his third goal of the season 27 seconds into the game. Rucinsky put on a nifty forehand-to-backhand move, cutting across the low slot after he gobbled up the rebound of a shot by Vladimir Malakhov from the left point.

At 2:18, the Penguins lost their top scorer, the former Ranger Rico Fata, to a strained left hamstring when he was caught on the back of the leg by Lindros's right leg.

Pittsburgh tied the score when Dan Focht beat a screened Mike Dunham with a wrist shot from the right point at 6:22, just as a Pittsburgh power play ended.

Sixteen seconds later, Melichar was assessed a double-minor for high-sticking Lindros. The Rangers came into last night's game with the league's least efficient power play, in terms of overall success (5 of 55, 9.1 percent) and on home ice (3 of 36, 8.3 percent).