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[Joe](#)

## **Brick City Homecoming and Family Weekend at Blue Cross Arena; the tradition begins**

The first full week of October has given us several annual rites of passage in the sports world: New York Mets fans wondering how seemingly safe division leads were lost, Buffalo Bills followers pondering who their next head coach will be, and when a playoff berth will finally be reached, ESPN giving a weekend's worth of coverage to Brett Favre, or Florida State trustees blabbing to the media hoping head coach Bobby Bowden will resign (okay, maybe the last two are new, but, you get the idea).

This year however, a new tradition will be launched, as the [men's hockey team will play Colgate](#) at Blue Cross Arena during [Brick City Homecoming and Family Weekend](#) for the first time as a Division I program on Saturday at 7:05 p.m. It looks as if hockey will be playing home during Brick City Weekend for the foreseeable future. Better yet, the game will be played at Blue Cross Arena, rather than Ritter Arena. This is not a knock on Ritter Arena at all, but let's face it, there would be no way the old barn could pack all of the students, alumni, and fans who will be around all weekend. Last season, the Tigers sold out their home opener against Clarkson a week in advance, with several hundred fans turned away.

I am very intrigued to see how many people come out to the game Saturday. As of this morning, nearly 4,000 seats have been sold, which will already make this the second best showing by Tiger fans at Blue Cross Arena. Two years ago, Oct. 27, 2007 to be exact, RIT drew 5,142 fans to Blue Cross Arena for a magnificent, 4-1 win over Cornell. Since then, however, the crowds have dwindled. On March 15, 2008, the Atlantic Hockey Association semifinal pitting the Tigers and Air Force drew 3,933 fans (an AHA Tourney record). Last season, RIT played three times at the BCA, drawing 3,296 fans against St. Lawrence on Oct. 18, 2,022 people for an exhibition contest against the United States-Under 18 national team, and finally, 2,555 for the 2009 AHA semifinal against Mercyhurst.

That being said, the Tigers are fresh off a school record 23 wins in 2008-09, and were the second highest scoring team in the nation. Nineteen players return, including four of the top six scorers. Colgate played in an NCAA record 19 overtime games last season, and return 2009 Hobey Baker finalist, David McIntyre. The game should be a fast-paced, high intensity affair, if last season's trends are any indication. Two years ago, the Tigers opened their regular season at Colgate, and [lost 6-5](#) in a game filled with plenty of offense.

Saturday will begin with several athletics teams reunions, along with the women's soccer squad taking on Stevens at RIT Field at 1 p.m. From there, it is off to Blue Cross Arena for more reunion activities, and most importantly, the start of the 2009-10 hockey season. Dr. Destler will be dropping the ceremonial first puck to kick off the contest.

Check out the *Democrat and Chronicle* print and [online versions](#) on Friday. The print version will feature a preview of Saturday's game and the 2009-10 season, while the online version will have the "Meet the Tigers" spread.

It's exciting to see a new tradition at RIT that will revolve around athletics. Hopefully, a large walk-up crowd shows up at Blue Cross Arena on Saturday night at 7:05 p.m. to show plenty of school spirit and support the Tigers. Ideally, we draw 6,000-7,000 fans. In any event, let the season begin.

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