



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • April 9, 2018

## THE NEWS & OBSERVER

### Hurricanes limp into 9th straight offseason with no playoffs

By JOEDY McCREARY AP Sports Writer

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RALEIGH, N.C.

The Carolina Hurricanes changed owners this season. They'll soon have a new general manager. Perhaps a new coach, too.

What didn't change was how early another yet offseason started.

Missing the playoffs for the ninth straight season, the Hurricanes finished up with a 3-2 overtime victory over the Tampa Bay Lightning on Saturday night.

"It's disappointing — obviously, we wanted to be in the playoffs and we were expecting big things out of our hockey club this year and fell short," veteran goalie Cam Ward said.

Carolina's playoff drought is the longest in team history, the longest active drought in the NHL and only the fourth of nine or more seasons in the history of the league.

The Colorado-New Jersey franchise also missed out from 1979-87, while the Florida Panthers (2001-11) and Edmonton Oilers (2007-17) went a league-record 10 seasons between playoff appearances.

So, either way, the Hurricanes will make history in 2018-19.

"I know we have a good group of guys and we just need to put it all together," forward Justin Williams said. "When you don't win, you don't stay together. So there's probably some things that will be different, but you've got to keep pushing forward."

Some things to know about the Hurricanes' disappointing 2017-18 season, and a look to '18-19:

**TIPPING POINT:** The official, mathematical elimination came a week before the season finale, in the 79th game of the season for the third straight year, but things went awry in the months before that. The Hurricanes lost 3-1 to San Jose in February, missing a chance to move into playoff position, and after that game, coach Bill Peters repeatedly called his team out. He repeatedly used the word "disappointing" and promised lineup changes, saying "you can't put that group out again after that." In their next game, the Hurricanes put pretty much the same group out again.

**BIGGEST MOVE:** The most significant acquisition was not of a player — but of a new owner. Dallas businessman Tom Dundon bought a majority interest in the team from longtime owner Peter Karmanos Jr. in January. Now as he enters his first offseason as a pro sports owner, the question becomes, what sorts of moves are coming?

**NEW GM:** Before the Hurricanes can get too involved in retooling their roster, they have to settle on who's in charge of that project after Dundon's midseason removal of Ron Francis as general manager. The Hall of Fame player stockpiled draft picks during his three-plus seasons but was criticized for a lack of moves to help the current club. Without question, the top priority for Dundon this offseason is picking his replacement.

**COACH SITUATION:** Peters, who was hired by Francis in 2014, is entering the fourth and final year of his contract. Now that Francis has been reassigned to another position within the organization, it's fair to wonder if the new GM will want his own guy behind the bench.

**LASTING IMAGE OF 2017-18:** The day after that fateful loss to the Sharks, Peters wrapped up a morning skate by posing a question to his team on a dry-erase board mounted on the glass. The message read: "Who are we? 29 games to find out." Two months later, the question was answered: Not a playoff team. Again.



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## Checkers Defeat Hershey to Earn Fifth Straight Win

Written by Nicholas Niedzielski

Published: April 08, 2018

The Checkers closed out the home portion of their regular season schedule by staying red hot and topping the Hershey Bears 3-1.

After a scoreless first period, the Checkers poured it on in the second, outshooting the visitors 20-5 over the course of the frame. Brenden Kichton opened the scoring early in the period by knocking home a one-time feed from the slot, then Janne Kuokkanen followed it up with his fourth goal in two nights to double the lead.

The Checkers would tack one more on the reeling Bears, with Josiah Didier launching a wrister from the slot through traffic and in, and that would be all the Checkers needed. Chris Bourque broke through in the third but that would be the only blemish for rookie netminder Callum Booth, who finished with 23 saves and picked up the 3-1 victory.

### QUOTES

Coach Mike Vellucci on the game

I didn't like the beginning but obviously we started playing a lot better in the second and then the third. It was six games in nine or 10 days, so it was good to get the win and move on.

Vellucci on the final weeks of the regular season

If we keep winning we might get second or third, and second place would be great to get home ice. We'll keep trying to put wins together, play well and see what happens.

Vellucci on getting two goals from defensemen

We ask our D to jump into the play all the time. They don't always score but they get great chances. It was a great read by Kich to jump in on that one, and same with Dids after he got hit from behind.

Vellucci on winning five games in a row despite missing several players to recall and injury

We knock two games off of Lehigh and then Hershey and now we can get seven guys back in the lineup. The guys stayed healthy all year, worked hard and stayed in great shape, and when they got the chance they made the most of it.

Josiah Didier on avoiding a letdown after clinching a playoff spot last night

We just had to refocus the mind, turn the page and get ready for today. We're happy we made the playoffs but we want to try to get home ice.

Didier on the team getting wins with a depleted lineup

It's the depth we have in this locker room. Everyone can play on any given night and guys are stepping up when their name is called. We're working as a team every night.

### NOTES

The Checkers' eight-game point streak (7-0-1) is the longest since a franchise-record, 12-game run (10-0-2) during the 2015-16 campaign. It is the longest active streak in the AHL ... The Checkers' five-game win streak ties their longest of the season ... With two more points, Charlotte jumped into a tie for second in the Atlantic Division in terms of points, though Wilkes-Barre/Scranton and Providence, who both had 3 p.m. starts today, have two games in hand ... The Checkers have 92 points on the season, tying their highest total since moving to a 76-game schedule prior to the 2011-12 season ... Didier, who today celebrated his 25th birthday, recorded his first multi-point game as a Checker (1g, 1a). It was the second multi-point outing of his 152-game AHL career ... Booth has a 1.60 goals-against average and .941 save percentage in his first four AHL appearances ... The Checkers allowed just one goal in four of their last five games ... Kuokkanen has four goals and six points in his last two games ... Julien Gauthier recorded his third consecutive multi-point game (2g, 4a) ... Aleksii Saarela also has six points (2g, 4a) in his last three outings ... Greg McKeeg's 12-game point streak that tied a franchise record came to an end despite him taking a game high six shots on goal. Today was just the second time he was held off the score sheet in 17 games as a Checker ... Forwards Andrew Miller and Lucas Wallmark, defenseman Jake Chelios and goaltender Alex Nedeljkovic missed the game due to injury ... Forward Clark Bishop and defensemen Tyler Ganly missed their third straight game due to illness.

### UP NEXT

The Checkers hit the road for their final two games of the regular season this Friday (Providence) and Sunday (Bridgeport). Dates and times for the first round of the playoffs will be released at a later date.



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## TODAY'S LINKS

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/nhl/article208277099.html>  
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# SportScan

Articles from outlets covering the Hurricanes' upcoming opponents and league-wide news

1090026 Carolina Hurricanes

Big question for Hurricanes: does Cam Ward get a new contract offer?

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

April 08, 2018 08:46 AM

Updated 2 hours 29 minutes ago

If it was Cam Ward's last game at PNC Arena, and he hopes that it wasn't, it ended well.

The Carolina Hurricanes goalie, who has experienced so many highs in his 13 seasons in Raleigh, was engulfed by teammates Saturday after a 3-2 overtime win over the Tampa Bay Lightning to end the season. They first congratulated Elias Lindholm, who scored the winner, then quickly swarmed around Ward..

Hours before the game, in a private ceremony, Ward was presented a golden stick to honor his 300th career victory, which came in December against the Vegas Golden Knights in Las Vegas. After the win Saturday, his teammates signed Ward's blocker by the bench as they left the ice as a season-ending memento.

Ward is due to become an unrestricted free agent in July. The Canes still are without a general manager after new owner Tom Dundon stripped Ron Francis of that job. No one knows what personnel moves the Canes, under Dundon or whomever, will take.

"My contract is up and the uncertainty and the unknown of what's going to happen, it can be scary at times," Ward said Saturday.

The Canes could offer Ward a one- or two-year extension and the chance to stay. Or they could move in a new direction with their goaltending.

On one hand, Ward is 34 and has squeezed so much out of his career. He has won a Stanley Cup with the Canes, being named the Conn Smythe Trophy winner in 2006 as playoffs MVP. He has won 318 games, all with Carolina. He has been well-compensated. He could step away from the game and not feel many regrets.

On the other hand, he's just 34 and he still likes to compete, to win. He finished this season with a 23-14-4 record, with a respectable goals-against average of 2.73 and save percentage of .906 after his 32 saves against Tampa Bay.

"Cam's been a rock for us this year," forward Justin Williams said. "Regardless of what people say or what's written about him, he's a rock for us."

When Francis signed Scott Darling to a four-year, \$16.6 million deal last year, Ward accepted the plan for Darling to be the team's No. 1 goalie. Ward said all the right things, noting at this stage of his career he was willing to give up his "franchise goalie" tag, take on more of a backup role and be a mentor while Darling got his first shot at being a No. 1.

That role reversal was to undergo a reversal. By late December, Ward was starting the majority of the games as Darling seemingly struggled with everything — his conditioning, his confidence, his technique, winning games.

"I can only control what I can control. I've kind of learned that throughout my career," Ward said Saturday. "Just control what you can on the ice and help this team win."

"It was a different role for me this year. I mean, I loved playing with Scott. He's a great guy and we were hoping we would be the tandem to get us to the playoffs. Obviously that didn't happen and that's disappointing for him and I."

Ward had become conditioned to success in the Stanley Cup playoffs — the Canes' stirring Cup run in 2006, then reaching the Eastern Conference finals in 2009 — when it all went away. His playoff experience and 4-0 record in Game 7s meant little as the Canes failed to reach the playoffs year after year.

In 2011, the Canes went into the final game of the regular season, against Tampa Bay, needing a win on home ice to clinch a playoff spot. The Lightning won 6-2 — as it turns out all these years later, the Canes' last, best chance of making it.

This season, inconsistency was a season-long malady. The Canes' longest winning streak was four games. They could never get on a little run and stockpile points.

"It's disappointing," Ward said. "Obviously we wanted to be in the playoffs and were expecting big things out of our hockey club this year and fell short. It's tough. I wish we were more upbeat and talking about us going into the playoffs."

Ward signed a two-year contract extension in June 2016 that paid him \$3.5 million in 2016-17 and \$3.1 million this season. It's possible the two sides could find the right price and term, keeping him in Raleigh and wearing No. 30 for the Hurricanes.

"This team was fun to play with," Ward said. "It's a good group of guys."

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1090166 Websites

The Athletic / Joe Sakic on Humboldt tragedy: 'It brings you back'

By Katie Strang Apr 7, 2018

When Joe Sakic got the text message Friday night, relaying the news about the horrific bus crash involving a Canadian junior hockey team, he was left reeling. On Saturday morning, he woke up to discover more details about the awful accident involving the Humboldt Broncos of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League.

A semi-trailer collided with the team bus Friday as the Broncos were on their way to Game 5 of their playoff series against the Nipawin Hawks. According to the RCMP, 15 people aboard the bus died in the crash, with 14 more injured.

"It hits home," Sakic told The Athletic when reached by phone Saturday afternoon. "It's such a devastating tragedy and you feel for all the families that are affected by this and the Humboldt organization. The city, the people in Humboldt, that whole community is affected by this. It's sad news."

After learning of the horror, Sakic couldn't help thinking back to his own nightmarish memories from 1986, when he was involved in a tragic bus accident with his Swift Current team. Four of his teammates were killed that day.

Sakic, who was a rookie on that Broncos team, does not talk about that day often, though it's evident the pain is still searing.

"When I heard the news, for myself and probably everyone that went through it in Swift Current, it brings you back," Sakic said. "You remember how hard it was, the pain. And it's one of those things. It's one of the hardest things you have to deal with. In time, they'll be able to move forward, but right now — when I heard the news, it crushes you to think that other people are going through this right now. It's tough, but they're going to get through it."

For anyone who has risen through the junior hockey ranks, it is easy to understand what sort of lifeblood a hockey team is to a small-town, tight-knit community like Humboldt. These towns embrace these players like their own sons. Inevitably, they become interweaved as part of the civic fabric.

That is why Sakic, now the Executive Vice President and General Manager of the Colorado Avalanche, is thinking not just about the families directly impacted by loss, but by the greater Humboldt community.

"It's a community, it's a team. It's that sense of feel. It's that sense of, it's your team. The community rallies around that team and the players are a part of that community and they're like family," Sakic said. "And in Swift Current, it's so hard — the whole community feels it. What the families go through, it's just a devastating thing."

Already there has been a deluge of support from across the wide expanse of the greater hockey network, with people reaching out in ways both big and small to offer help in Humboldt's time of need.

A GoFundMe page created to assist the families in the wake of the tragedy amassed more than \$1 million in donations in less than 17 hours, with people chipping in from every corner of North America and beyond.

In Saskatchewan, there are good samaritans from all over the province trying to buoy spirits and provide some solace.

Ian Boxall, a grain farmer from Tisdale, near where the accident occurred, offered lodging to anyone looking for a place to stay. And even though most of those involved in the accident have since been

transported to Saskatoon, he wanted to provide a place of warmth and comfort to anyone in need.

"I thought that if they needed a place to come or have a cup of coffee, I'd do what I could do," Boxall said.

Boxall has no direct relationship with anyone from the team or town of Humboldt, but felt compelled nonetheless.

"Saskatchewan's smaller — the whole province is smaller than Manhattan as far as people [living there] — when you have 14 kids and adults involved in a hockey team [accident] in the winter, when it is the backbone of that community, it affects the whole province."

Geraldine Barrett, a sports massage therapist who lives in Unity, Saskatchewan, had a similar thought. She offered up her services for free to any family who is grieving or going through a tough time.

She's been working on hockey players for the past 20 years, and can only imagine how difficult this time may be.

"Oh, I'm telling you, my tears are not just for me, it's for these families," Barrett said, sniffing. "Even in Unity, we are enmeshed in hockey from peewee to junior teams. I work on hockey communities. I'm not in the big leagues, but I know well what hockey is in our community and our province."

Sheldon Brookbank, a former NHL defenseman who played junior hockey for the Broncos, said Saturday he was in a state of "just utter disbelief."

"It's a feeling of complete sadness for the families involved. This hits home for anyone who is in hockey or any sport that has spent time on the bus. I am praying for the victims that are fighting for their lives right now," Brookbank told The Athletic via text message. "There really are no words. Humboldt is such a small community. It's a terrible tragedy for all the players, staff, families and first responders."

Lightning assistant Brad Lauer, 51, grew up in Humboldt and played for the Broncos junior team when he was 15. He took Highway 35 to Nipawin several times and recalled, "it's not a safe corner."

"There have been a lot of nights where you've been on the road and you're like, 'Oh,'" Lauer told The Athletic's Joe Smith. "They are bad roads but you feel safe. You think you're doing the right thing."

Lauer's parents and in-laws still live in the town, along with many friends, including families of current Broncos players.

"It's devastating," Lauer said, choking back tears. "It's home because everyone has been on these buses, whether your kids play basketball or hockey. You've sent your kids away on buses and expect them to be safe. And something like that happens."

"You hear a lot of things — no one knows, it's pretty chaotic. We're playing wait and see. Want to know the facts."

Lauer knows firsthand how significant the team is to that community.

"It's everything," Lauer said. "That team goes way back, there's a lot of history. They won a lot of championships. It's a big part of the community. This is going to affect the community big-time. It's going to hurt."

The fact that the hockey world has been so resolute and unified in rallying behind the Humboldt organization has been heartening. Sakic, who knows firsthand what the aftermath is like following such an awful event, said the best things people can do are both simple and sincere.

"It's just listening, supporting. Being there for the families, the players and the families in those communities," he said. "You've got to help out in any way you can. That's the best way, to just be there to support them and love them through this tragedy."

And though there is little that will dull some of the sharp edges of this unimaginable day, time will help the Humboldt community to heal, Sakic said.



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"It takes time. Those kids, the team was going for Game 5 of the playoffs, going there to play the game they love. And then this happens. There's really no words to describe what they're going through," Sakic said. "Hockey's a big part of their lives and to have that happen — in time, they're going to move forward, but right now, it's really hard to think about moving forward right now.

"In time, they're going to be able to do that. It's something they'll never forget. You'll never forget. You'll always have the memories of your teammates and your family and friends. It's something that eventually at some point they're gonna pick up and move forward. The community is going to rally behind them and the whole hockey community is going to rally behind them."

The Athletic LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090167 Websites

The Athletic / LeBrun: Making sense of a lost season with Claude Julien

By Pierre LeBrun Apr 8, 2018

TORONTO – The next time Claude Julien steps behind the Montreal Canadiens bench, the game will matter. It's been a while since that feeling existed.

The Habs' disastrous season is mercifully over, a 4-2 loss against the rival Maple Leafs on Saturday night cementing a 28th-place finish by virtue of a 29-40-13 record. Back in September, I sat down with the veteran head coach to discuss the upcoming season, his first full year back in Montreal after being hired last February. The first season of his five-year deal did not go as planned, to say the least. Injuries to key players such as Shea Weber, Carey Price and Max Pacioretty derailed any chance to compete, but even a healthy roster had question marks, at least in my mind.

As a bookend to that longer conversation we had in the preseason, we chatted again briefly Saturday about a season gone wrong:

LEBRUN: Claude, thanks for taking some time. When we sat down in your office before the season, you obviously would not have predicted that the year would have played out this way. How would you put into words the way it all went down?

JULIEN: Well, we didn't envision what's happened here. But the one thing that derailed us a little bit, we knew with some young players we'd have some growing pains along the way but we still felt we had enough to battle for a playoff spot. But then circumstances, Pricer has a bit of a tough start and then he gets injured, you lose Weber for the season, so we lost some important pieces along the way. As you know, checking the man-games lost, we had a lot of that. We had a lot of challenges. Of all the years I've coached in the NHL, this was by far the toughest I've been through with anything that could happen, happened. But at the same time, you talk about being resilient, not just as players, but as coaches. Just trying to stick with it. We've had a lot of young players come in that obviously aren't quite ready, or weren't quite ready, but had an opportunity to grow from that. So we're going to try and take all the positive things from all the bad things that happened to us and hopefully try to use that to our advantage moving forward. You know, it's been one thing after another, we've had six different players with concussions, it just seems like we were a little snake-bitten this year. So you move on, I'm not trying to find excuses but that's reality. At the same time, we also know we have to get better. In order to get better, some of those young players are going to be part of it again. Those injured players coming back will help, but we also have to be realistic and try and find some players to come and help us as well.

LEBRUN: I'm sure Carey Price himself would say this hasn't been his normal kind of season. It's a big year next season for him, the start of a big contract. He's the heart and soul of your team. What's your sense of his bounce back ability for next season?

JULIEN: It's good. When you look at Carey's numbers throughout his career, even the last five years, they're outstanding. Having a tough year this season ... you look back at Pekka Rinne a few years ago and Braden Holtby, everybody goes through it. Not just goaltenders, but all players. It happens. But what you do know about the player is that he's got enough character and enough pride that you know he's going to want to bounce back next year. So I'm very, very confident that we're going to have a good goaltender in Carey Price next year. He's not going to go through this twice in a row.

LEBRUN: It's been a challenging year as well for Jonathan Drouin at times, although I would argue in the second half he seems to have got better adjusted at playing centre for the first time in his NHL career. What are your thoughts on his season from start to finish?

JULIEN: Well I agree with you, I think the second half has been much better. Getting accustomed to playing centre, even though he played there in junior, it's a little different at the pro level. I think he made some great strides in the second half. You can see the potential in his play and how smart he is and how he reads the game, the situation, and everything else, even to the point where we've had him kill some penalties and take some big draws. He's improved a lot in his faceoffs. So, he's made some progress. But he's a young player. We keep forgetting that he's only 23 years old and that he's still a young player. I think there's still a lot of untapped potential there as he gets more experienced, as he matures as a player. We see him as a good player down the road. There's no doubt we've been patient, we've also pushed hard to make him a better player. The most important thing I'm going to tell you is that he's been receptive. And that's been important for us to see that. He's really made the effort, he knows we're behind him, and he knows we're trying to make him a better player.

LEBRUN: Now, I know you have a very good dialogue with your GM. You guys talk a lot. What kind of off-season do you think it will be, generally speaking, in terms of trying to fill some holes and change some things here?

JULIEN: Well, we've got a plan. No doubt. We've talked about it and we'll talk about it again some more with the rest of the upper management. The one thing we do know is that we've seen what happened this year and we're being realistic with all the different things. Whether it's with a healthy squad how good we could have been, at the same time what we still need to be better. There's certain things we have to tweak here and there. There's no doubt it's going to be a busy summer; like any team that fails to make the playoffs, you're going to want to improve your hockey club. So we're no different.

LEBRUN: And finally Claude, when you have a year like this, and you haven't had a lot of these in your career, you've had a lot of success, we talk about players perhaps second-guessing themselves in a year like this, what about a coach? Does it make you sit back and say, 'What can I do differently next year?'

JULIEN: No, I don't think it's a setback, if anything it's motive for me to push even harder to turn this around. This is my first year in the NHL where we've had a losing record. So it's been tough, there's no doubt about it. But at the same time, I know for a fact that I've always become a better coach through tough times. And hopefully that doesn't change.

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The Athletic / 'I want to get there, try to help, talk to them': Swift Current survivors go to Humboldt in aftermath of bus crash



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By Scott Cruickshank Apr 8, 2018

They don't know what to expect when they arrive. For much of Saturday they didn't even know where exactly they were headed – Tisdale or Humboldt or Saskatoon – or how they would get there.

As for the mission itself, those details seemed vague, too.

Keenly honed, however, was the motivation of these four gentlemen. Nothing was going to prevent them from rushing to Saskatchewan in the aftermath of the Humboldt Broncos tragedy.

The travelling party consists of Sheldon Kennedy, Bob Wilkie, Peter Soberlak – survivors of the Dec. 30, 1986, bus crash that killed four of their Swift Current Broncos teammates – and Darren Kruger, whose big brother Scott died that day.

Upon hearing news of Friday's devastating accident near Tisdale – which killed 15 aboard the Humboldt team bus and injured 14 other passengers – they'd agreed upon one obvious course of action.

To pitch in immediately. Wherever, however.

Eventually they determined to start their trip by flying Sunday morning to Saskatoon and going directly to the hospital there. Then they'll drive to Humboldt for the suppertime vigil. Don't expect their goodwill to stop there.

"I don't think there was any hesitation," said Soberlak. "I have no idea what we can do, but I do know one thing ... I want to see if it's possible to spend time with some of the survivors. Just be there for them in any way we can. Because it's going to be something that's really hard to comprehend. It's just something we know we have to be a part of. It was a no-brainer for us."

Wilkie, a mental-health coach for young athletes in Calgary, and the rest are confident they can lend a healing hand.

"To be able to use (our) unfortunate experience to go and help some other people that are about to go through it, that makes me happy," said Wilkie, who operates IGotMind.com. "There's been an outpouring of support already. Look at everything that's going on – the people that are donating, the people that are running to help, the people that are sending messages of love and support."

A scout for the Calgary Flames, Kruger is hoping their presence in Saskatoon – and their well-earned wisdom – can make some kind of difference.

"I know what I had to do to cope with it," said Kruger, a native of Swift Current. "Maybe I can show them some kind of support that way. If people need to talk, we can be there to help."

Soberlak, athletic performance advisor for Thompson Rivers University in Kamloops, B.C., had been at home Friday evening when he received a text.

"My first reaction – shock, disbelief, just completely numb," said the 48-year-old. "It took an hour or so to actually absorb it. I couldn't believe that this has happened. Over the night and the course of the morning, it's turned to acceptance and the thought of, 'What can we do to help everyone involved?'"

Jarring for Soberlak, in particular, was the photo, posted on Twitter by one of the parents, of three Humboldt players, side by side on hospital gurneys, holding hands.

"That just broke my heart," he said, voice cracking. "I just thought, 'I want to get there, try to help, talk to them.' It wasn't a question of if – it was just, 'How are we going to get there?' It's the right thing to do."

DEREK GRAYSON AND NICK BONDING AND HEALING IN HOSPITAL  
PIC.TWITTER.COM/DZESIOT27B

— R J PATTTER (@RJPATTER) APRIL 7, 2018

For Wilkie, too, it had been a text that alerted him to the disaster. He poked around online and learned more.

"I saw that there was this terrible event," said Wilkie. "I think my greatest sadness is just knowing what those people are going to live with for a long time."

Kruger was monitoring the Alberta Junior Hockey League playoff game between the Brooks Bandits and the home-ice Okotoks Oilers when Facebook pinged on his phone. He couldn't resist a peek.

"Then a whole flood of emotions came rolling back."

That day in 1986, Kruger had been in North Battleford – where he was playing in the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League – when he got a call from his twin brother Trevor, who'd been on the bus.

The message was blunt – come home.

Kruger knew the worst had happened – Scott had been killed in the accident. So he didn't hesitate, driving into the night. ("It probably wasn't the right decision because it was storming out. We hit the ditch coming home because the roads were so terrible.") But his first thought had been his mother's well-being.

"I knew she'd be devastated," Kruger said. "When I got home and I looked at her, it was just mourning to no end. Unbelievable."

Saturday morning, Soberlak and Wilkie reached out to their mothers. Not surprisingly, there were tears, each family reliving its own personal nightmare.

That day in Swift Current had started on a high note. Shortly after Christmas, everyone was in good spirits. So a quick trip to Regina for a Tuesday night game? No big deal. They boarded the bus in mid-afternoon.

"You're excited to get into that second part of the season," said Wilkie, "as I'm sure these (Humboldt) kids who got on the bus were – they were going to a playoff game (in Nipawin)."

"Then that moment in time changes everything."

The Swift Current bus, after hitting a patch of black ice only a few kilometres east of town, struck an embankment and went airborne, landing on its side and sliding into the ditch.

"The thing I remember the most is Trent Kresse standing up and saying, 'Hold on! I had my headphones on and I wasn't really paying attention,'" said Wilkie, 49. "Then seeing everybody floating through the air. It was slow motion like you see in the movies. Then waking up and trying to stand up. Seeing the chaos, hearing the yelling and screaming, not knowing which way was up. Seeing bodies laying around and not know who was who. I mean, it was surreal."

The players who died – Brent Ruff, Chris Mantyka, Scott Kruger, Kresse – were all at the back of the bus. Wilkie was sitting the closest to them. Soberlak was in the next row.

"Peter and me, we were just holding each other," said Wilkie. "Seeing the bodies out the back window, just hugging each other and wondering what just happened."

Said Soberlak: "It's a miracle ... being three or four feet away from probably losing your life. That's something these players and these people are going to have to deal with and go through and understand. If we can be a part of their healing, that's what we want to do."

Shockingly, counselling for Swift Current's players had been non-existent. All outsiders were blocked by Broncos boss Graham James, who, years later, would be convicted of sexual abuse.

Really? No professional help? "No, not ever," said Wilkie.

So the survivors did their best.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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"We talked about it with the great people of Swift Current in their basements," said Wilkie, "and we tried to help each other find our way through the pain and the confusion."

Added Soberlak: "I've had my challenges in life, post-accident. These things are life-changing events and they alter your brain. They alter your perspective."

Six years ago, Wilkie, with co-authors Gregg Drinnan and Leesa Culp, wrote a book about that season – Sudden Death: The Incredible Saga of the 1986 Swift Current Broncos – and that helped.

"It was absolutely therapeutic," said Wilkie, "sitting down, reliving the whole thing and thinking about it in a healthy way rather than how we tend to process tragedy – you know, the dark side of it all. It was very healing. But that was 20-some years after the fact, right?"

In light of Friday's crash, Wilkie said he's heartened to know that times have changed, that help is out there. Humboldt, players and otherwise, is going to benefit from that.

"We're so much more aware of the affect," said Soberlak. "There's much more understanding of how this type of trauma affects people, immediately and in the long term."

There remains a lot to digest. For Kennedy, Soberlak, Wilkie, and Kruger, it's been more than 30 years – and less than 24 hours. The impact of a blow like that – then and now – is difficult to contemplate.

"Absolutely, absolutely heart-broken," Soberlak said about his reaction to Friday's events. "It's hard to fathom. To be honest, my thoughts didn't even really go back to what happened to us. My thoughts immediately went to the loss for these families – how catastrophic this accident appears to have been. My heart just goes out to the victims and their families and the survivors and the first responders – imagine the trauma that they're going to have to live with, in terms of that accident scene – and the billet families.

"It's just so overwhelming to think of – the far-reaching effects and the damage that something like this will inflict on so many people with so much sadness and sorrow."

But what's the solution? Because, of course, even a single incident is too many. These men don't have any recommendations. There aren't any.

"It's just the life of wanting to play the greatest game in the world," said Kruger, 49. "It is what it is. We do it because we love to play the game. You never expect anything like this to happen. When it does, it's disbelief. You hope that nothing like this ever happens again."

But, sadly, it will. It's simple probability – countless hours, hundreds of thousands of miles, travelled by buses filled with players, by vehicles filled with families, over winter roads, all over North America.

"There's no explanation for it, there's no reason for it," said Soberlak. "Life's cruel and strange at times. At other times, it's glorious and rewarding. We can't pick and choose how things are going to happen for any of us. The hardest thing ... everyone asks, 'Why? How?' I don't think there are answers to those questions."

The Athletic LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090169 Websites

The Athletic / 'Team of destiny': Minnesota Duluth caps remarkable run with national title

By Chad Graff Apr 8, 2018

The hugs and selfies had lasted 15 minutes back in Minnesota Duluth's locker room at Xcel Energy Center and they hadn't yet come up with a plan to greet their coach, the man who took a team that skated 13 underclassmen Saturday night and guided them to a national championship.

If there were a drawback to the raucous hockey celebration that turned the ice at Xcel into a mismatch of discarded gloves and sticks after UMD's 2-1 win over Notre Dame, it was that their water cooler went unused, they decided.

So a plan was formed. They baited coach Scott Sandelin into the room and distracted him with a hug, while two others jumped from the corner armed with a full Gatorade bucket. Their bath landed and the locker room erupted.

Sandelin, nearing his second decade at Minnesota Duluth, hollered and wiped the water from his hair.

Somehow, he turned this young team with few expectations into the best in college hockey, delivering UMD the program's second national title. Somehow, he steered them from the tournament bubble to the last ones standing.

"I'm not going to sit here and lie — we had question marks," Sandelin said. "Who is going to jump up and be our goalie? And how are those guys going to do?" ... I couldn't be more excited for this group and more proud of this group for doing what they've done."

A GATORADE BATH FOR SCOTT SANDELIN.  
PIC.TWITTER.COM/BQK2FV6UYM

— CHAD GRAFF (@CHADGRAFF) APRIL 8, 2018

They did it Saturday the way they had in the three games that led them to this pinnacle, relying on a suffocating defense that allowed few chances and a quick-strike attack that capitalized on its chances. And they did it on the back of Karson Kuhlman, the senior captain who admitted he was mystified a summer ago. The season before, he was a part of a veteran team that fell in this winner-take-all game. If they couldn't win a title with that team, how in the heck would they do it with this unproven one?

"That was the question all summer," Kuhlman said.

He spoke with a bruise on his eye and a cut below his chin, the hardest worker on a team full of them. He played in every UMD hockey game after arriving in Duluth in the fall of 2014 and won a national championship in his 166th and final collegiate contest.

"If I could have 25 guys like him," Sandelin said, "my job would be really easy."

His teammates followed his lead.

After one teammate, freshman Kobe Roth, suffered a broken ankle in the first period, others came to his aid. With the Bulldogs protecting a 2-1 lead late in the third period, their healthy scratches helped Roth pull sweatpants over the boot on his right foot and put his maroon jersey back over his head, afraid he otherwise would've missed the celebration of a lifetime.

The final buzzer arrived shortly after and finalized the team's win, yielding a scrambled celebration in the corner. But senior Jared Thomas quickly recognized the absence of a teammate and skated back to the bench where Roth was waiting, his boot still on and his ankle only hours removed from breaking. Thomas helped carry Roth across the ice to be with his teammates for the party.

Later, as each player took turns taking the trophy for a ride around the ice, Roth was pushed around in a chair by his linemate Jade Miller as Roth lifted the prize high.

"That made up for the injury," said fellow freshman Scott Perunovich.

TEAMMATES ARE ALWAYS THERE FOR EACH  
OTHER#FROZENFOUR PIC.TWITTER.COM/HOSHA7YLMV



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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— NCAA ICE HOCKEY (@NCAAICEHOCKEY) APRIL 8, 2018

There were more talented teams in college hockey this season than Minnesota Duluth, which had to sweat out the final day of the regular season just to get into the tournament. And there were certainly more experienced teams. But none played better than the Bulldogs, who followed a script in the national championship similar to their semifinal win.

Two first-period goals gave them a cushion, and outstanding defense kept Notre Dame from sustaining any offensive zone pressure, even when the Irish tried to force the equalizer late. So dominant was UMD that it surrendered just five shots on goal the final 20 minutes.

"When they made the tournament, they became that team of destiny that you're always hoping to be at the end of the year," said Notre Dame coach Jeff Jackson. "So hats off to them."

With a championship complete, the Bulldogs remained on the ice 15 minutes after the final buzzer, soaking in a remarkable night in front of 18,303 spirited fans that cheered decidedly for the victors.

The Bulldogs passed the trophy and found a pair of scissors they used to cut apart the net, each receiving a small souvenir from a night they may never forget.

The party continued into their locker room where Sandelin was drenched in so much water that it was still falling from his suit a few minutes after being thrown on him.

From the corner of that room, he watched quietly as the young team that barely made the NCAA Tournament celebrated a national championship.

"This feels pretty good," he said to no one in particular.

The Athletic LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090170 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Tunnel is long and light still dim as Humboldt begins healing process

Mark Spector | April 9, 2018, 1:04 AM

HUMBOLDT, Sask. — It was intended that the rink be full Sunday night in Humboldt, just not with prime ministers, TV cameras, and flowers.

They would have dropped a puck on Game 6 in the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League semifinal Sunday at 7:30 p.m., had the Humboldt Broncos snuck into Nipawin and won Game 5 as planned.

These are the nights junior operators dream of. A hot team, a full barn, jerseys flying off the rack and a product in April that sells season tickets in October. This night had most of that, but for all the wrong reasons.

Alas, nothing has turned out the way the Humboldt Broncos are accustomed to these last few days, a routine bus trip up highway 35 on Friday resulting in a bus crash that changed everything this small Saskatchewan city has ever known.

"This is a very, very tough time for all of us," said mayor Rob Muench, on a stage that covered the entire zone the Broncos would have been defending, had things gone as planned.

Instead, as you've likely seen by now, a vigil was held to pray for the 15 dead, the players still listed in critical condition — at least one player whose ability to walk again is in question — and the rest of the survivors of what will go down in history as the Humboldt Broncos bus crash of 2018.

None of the dead have been buried, but this vigil still had to happen. People here had to be together, their minds have been on these poor Broncos for two days now. They had to gather here, and gather they did, filling Elgar Petersen Arena, an adjacent curling rink, and the high school gym to the tune of almost 5,000 in a city with a population of not much more than that.

There just isn't a manual for grieving of this magnitude. Like eating the proverbial elephant, you have to take it one bite at a time, right?

"It's one of the steps we have to go through in our community. To use a hockey analogy, we'll stickhandle our way through this," said Muench.

With the parking lot out front filled beyond capacity, out back of the rink sat the truck belonging to coach and GM Darcy Haugen. It was parked in the spot he left it when he boarded that bus for Nipawin on Friday afternoon, said friend Andre Kruger, a local hockey dad and long-time goal judge at Broncos games.

"I drive into the parking lot this morning and see Darcy Haugen's truck, and immediately you feel sad. Because you know you're never going to see him again," said Kruger, a former President of Humboldt Minor Hockey whose two sons play. "That's the reason we're here, so we can mingle with each other. It's how you start the healing process, right?"

But the healing process is a nebulous thing, the goalposts moving across the Canadian prairies as devastated parents return dead sons home for burial services in their hometowns. Maybe after those funerals — at least three dead Broncos hail from the Edmonton suburb of St. Albert — can the healing truly begin, if even then.

Either way, Sunday's vigil was a place to see your neighbour, an old Broncos teammate, or a hockey parent from back when the boys were in Atoms. This was for anyone who felt like they might need a hug and a cry in a city that is bursting at the seams with people who fit that description.

"With men, they try not to cry, because it's not a good thing to do. I think the sooner we get the tears out of our system, the better," Kruger declared. "The young kids are not scared to cry. The Grade 12 kids? They're not scared at all. There is no 'Cowboys don't cry' mentality anymore."

Before we were done, it was Kruger who couldn't hold back his tears. It is here, in a town that experienced the unthinkable, where interviews end in hugs more often than not.

"Tonight is for sorrow," were the last words that Kruger could squeeze out.

It was like a funeral Sunday, without going downstairs for the squares and coffee. How could it not be? Fifteen have died, and the prayers offered for a few of the survivors are by all accounts going to be needed.

The difference is, the real funerals are yet to come here.

The tunnel is long, and the light still dim.

When they die this young, a thought and a prayer don't stand a chance.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090171 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Numbness wearing off in Humboldt as shock and sadness set in

Mark Spector | April 8, 2018, 6:54 PM

HUMBOLDT, Sask. — It is Sunday morning in Humboldt, a quiet day in a quiet town in northeastern Saskatchewan. Surrounded by still snow-



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covered fields, this part of our country is still a couple of plus-8 days from turning, like a jack rabbit, from white to brown.

You wouldn't know that tragedy has visited here by the drive into town, a wide-open corridor behind a roadside "Humboldt" sign that sports the usual Canadian store fronts.

A Co-op gas station, a Sobeys's grocery store, a Boston Pizza, a Canadian Tire. Timmy's sits on the right-hand side as you enter town from the west, just across from the local Ford dealer.

A DQ, and A&W a KFC... The fast-food alphabet spells out the same way here in Humboldt as it does in Campbellton, N.B., Trail, B.C. or Pembroke, Ont.

But from now 'til forever, this town isn't the same as those ones. This is Humboldt, the scene of the worst bus crash in Canadian sports history.

"As a hockey fan, and a hockey parent, and a hockey player, and a hockey billet," began Justin Rempel, "everyone just wants the best for their kids. You're just trying to make them a better person."

On Sunday morning, Rempel, the trainer for the Melfort Mustangs team that was vanquished by the Broncos in Round 1 of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League playoffs, was at the Uniplex, the centre of every Canadian town like this. The curling rinks are here, as well as the town pool, the high school, the public workout facility, the convention centre, and of course, Elgar Petersen Arena.

It is not just the home of the Humboldt Broncos. It is the only indoor arena in town, and there stood Rempel, sporting the Mustangs jersey of Jaxon Joseph, who was traded to Humboldt before the deadline for Tristan Elder, in a transaction that will forever shape two families.

Joseph was killed Friday, and now Rempel, the son of a Saskatchewan pastor, is back in Humboldt, lending a spiritual hand at the Sunday vigil.

"Everyone is hurting the same — it doesn't matter where you're from," Rempel said. "You could be in the Maritimes, and this can affect you the same way it affects someone from here."

Humboldt is that dusty gem among wheat fields that gave the hockey world the great Glenn "Mr. Goalie" Hall, the same way a tiny pimple on the Prairie called Floral, Sask. gave birth to Mr. Hockey — Gordie Howe.

It's a big deal when a town this small pumps out a player that big, so at the Glenn Hall monument, there is also respect paid to the careers of Humboldt and area pros Brendan Witt, Jerome Engele, Brad Lauer, and Ralph Klassen.

(The old Cleveland Baron Klassen, his plaque explains, was in 1979 claimed in an expansion draft, then traded twice the next day. That made him property of four teams in two days.)

Today, putting kids in the NHL remains the goal, but it has fallen down the queue. It is more realistic to talk about qualifying kids for college scholarships, or simply preparing them to be solid adults, the kind of people this community is leaning on so heavily today.

And this team was, in fact, pulling Humboldt together.

The cliché is that the junior rinks are packed every night, but Elgar's place has not always been full. The Broncos were coming out of an unstable period, but coach and GM Darcy Haugen had taken hold of this club, and turned it into a contender again.

"He built a team, this year, that was worth watching," said a season ticket holder, who did not want to be named. "They had lots of speed, lots of excitement, good goaltending... As the year progressed they just kept getting better, and better and better. It was happening."

"(Haugen) talked about the fact the Humboldt Broncos were about not building hockey players, but building amazing young men," said team president Kevin Garinger. "Through that process, they could ultimately become great hockey players too."

Haugen was one of the 15 killed Friday, when the Broncos bus was hit by a semi-trailer just north of Tisdale, Sask. Of the 29 people who were heading up to Nipawin for Game 5 of the SJHL semi-final, 15 are dead, 13 are still in hospital — some with very serious injuries — and one unnamed player was released from hospital on Sunday.

The numbness is wearing off here, as shock and sadness sets in.

"As the names are coming out, it's getting harder and harder for the community, for parents, for everyone else," said Humboldt mayor Rob Muench, his cell phone ringing incessantly even as he stood behind a podium to address the media. "I'm getting emails, phone calls and text messages from people — I don't even know who they are. A text from an area code that I don't even know where: 'Here's a poem that I wrote. Here's a song. Here's a message.'"

Prime Minister Trudeau is here, as are Ron MacLean and Don Cherry, major network anchors like Ian Hanomansing and Lisa LaFlamme, and media from every national outlet. Many will have flights booked for Toronto Monday, and as the national glare predictably fades, this little Prairie town will be left to grieve, and put back together a hockey team that is, oftentimes, the centre of its social calendar.

"This is going to be a long haul for us," said Mayor Meunch. "I just talked to (the mayor of) the Swift Current, and they're still suffering (from their 1986 bus crash). We're going to need support for our community, to be there for each other.

"Not just days, not just weeks, not just months. It could be longer."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090172 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / 2018 Stanley Cup Playoff Preview: Toronto Maple Leafs vs. Boston Bruins

Sportsnet Staff |April 9, 2018, 12:19 AM

It went right down to the final minutes of the final game of 2017-18, but the Toronto Maple Leafs finally have their first-round opponent. Tampa Bay takes the Eastern crown and finishes as a higher seed than the Boston Bruins, but there's a case to be made that the Bolts would've been the preferable matchup for Toronto.

Tampa's style lines up well with the Leafs'—they're both teams that rely on speed and dynamic offensive skill to pile up goals on their opponents. There's a bit of run-and-gun in there, and Toronto can keep pace with that approach. The Bruins? They're a different breed, and they have plenty more ways to frustrate a team like Toronto.

Boston can score with the best of them — it's the sixth-highest scoring team in the league, in fact — but it can also be punishingly physical, defensively responsible, and has a crew of leaders with Stanley Cup rings on the shelf.

Nothing has been able to quell the Bruins up to this point. Injuries and suspensions couldn't do it — the club just kept adding key pieces down the stretch, the latest being rookie sensation Ryan Donato, who put up a quick nine points through 12 late-season games to keep things rolling.

That said, there's plenty to like about this Leafs team, particularly up front — a crew of young, elite game-changers backed up by reliable veteran talent. But it's the blue line that could be a problem, and one the team on the other side won't have, as Boston allowed the fourth-fewest goals in the league this season.

Toronto has a strong enough squad to give Boston some trouble — it did take three of four meetings with the Bruins this season — but with the



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club getting outshot in all but one of those meetings, the onus may be on netminder Frederik Andersen to steal a series.

### ADVANCED STATS

5-on-5 via Corsica.Hockey

Toronto: 49.85 CF% (17th), 53.96 GF% (5th), .928 SP% (8th), 9.01 SH% (2nd), 101.77 PDO (2nd)

Boston: 53.66 CF% (2nd), 55.07 GF% (3rd), .925 SP% (12th), 7.89 SH% (12th), 100.38 PDO (13th)

### POWER NUMBER

Determined by percentiles created for a variety of statistics and weighed equally to give each team a grade out of 10 for offence and defence (seven for 5-on-5 and three for special teams). These numbers are then averaged to come up with a power number to measure a team's all-around play.

TEAM (rank)	OFFENCE (rank)	DEFENCE (rank)	POWER NUMBER
Toronto	7.60 (5th)	5.80 (8th)	6.70 (5th)
Boston	6.96 (6th)	9.21 (1st)	8.08 (1st)

### TEAM STATS

Toronto: 25.0 PP% (2nd), 81.4 PK% (10th), 270 GF (3rd), 230 GA (12th)

Boston: 23.5 PP% (4th), 83.7 PK% (3rd), 267 GF (6th), 211 GA (4th)

### HEAD-TO-HEAD RECORD

Toronto: 3-1-0

Boston: 1-2-1

Toronto Maple Leafs Outlook: By wins and points, this is the most successful regular season team the Maple Leafs have iced in their long history. Unfortunately for them, they achieved it in an era with a playoff format that forces you to play out of your own division first, which means Toronto faces an even better team right out of the gate.

But if there is a team suited to pull off an early upset, it would be Toronto, which finished third in the Atlantic with the seventh-best record in the league. Only Tampa Bay, Pittsburgh, Winnipeg and Vegas scored more often than the Maple Leafs this season and though they allow a ton of shots on net, Frederik Andersen has emerged as one of the top netminders in the game today, acting as a great equalizer for a team that, while still getting a good amount of points from top blueliners Jake Gardiner and Morgan Rielly, still has a need to improve its shot suppression.

The Leafs are fast, young and mostly healthy, which means they're as prepared as they can be for a tough first-round matchup. Last year's six-game opening round defeat as an eight seed against Washington gave this team a taste—now we'll see if they've grown enough to take a bite out of the playoffs and knock off a top contender out of the gate.

Boston Bruins Outlook: This is the team that can play any style. Boston can play a physical game, a quick game, an offensive game or a defensive game. However you want to come at them, the Bruins have an answer. Boston has the sixth-most goals in the league, allowed the fourth-fewest, averaged the ninth-most shots, and gave up the second-fewest. Between Patrice Bergeron and Brad Marchand, Boston has two players for whom you could build a Hart Trophy argument around.

One of the most amazing things about this team is how they've consistently been able to win despite key injuries. Bergeron, Torey Krug, David Krejci, Jake DeBrusk, Charles McAvoy, Zdeno Chara and trade deadline pickup Rick Nash have all been sidelined at various points, while Marchand has faced a couple suspensions—in the absence of each of these players, Boston didn't miss a beat.

A total of 11 different rookies have suited up for the Bruins this season, with the underrated Danton Heinen leading them all in points, followed by DeBrusk and McAvoy, who was a likely Calder Trophy finalist before going down with injury. Had it not been for Gerard Gallant and the Vegas Golden Knights, Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy would be taking home the Jack Adams Award this season for a job done incredibly well.

Maple Leafs X-Factor: Over the past two years, Nazem Kadri has emerged as a smart two-way player and quietly excellent goal scorer—the 63 he's scored since October 2016 are the 17th-most in the NHL, ahead of players like Jamie Benn, Patrick Kane and Sean Monahan.

The playoffs are a different animal though. Kadri scored just once in six games versus the Capitals last spring and has two in 13 career post-season games. Auston Matthews will draw the toughest line matchups at least on the road in the playoffs, which leaves Kadri in a position to flourish and be an impact playoff performer for the first time. He and linemates Mitch Marner and Patrick Marleau are coming into the playoffs on a high, too, as an extremely dangerous offensive line.

In general, goals and power play opportunities come down in the playoffs as well, so Kadri's defensive abilities, which have improved in leaps and bounds under Mike Babcock, will also be put into the spotlight.

Bruins X-Factor: Though he's their leading scorer, Marchand was mostly overshadowed by the two-way strength of Bergeron in any MVP talk. But when the assistant captain missed a month late in the season, Marchand posted 20 points in 12 games.

We know he can score and pester, but Marchand becomes a problem when he crosses a line. It's tougher to get yourself suspended in the playoffs, but Marchand is always a candidate to take a dumb penalty at the wrong time. He's an extremely talented and valuable player, but also a volatile one. While Boston wants him to bring that edge to his game, it's a tight-rope walk to not cross the line and cost the team.

### TEAM LEADERS (G-A-PTS)

Toronto: Mitch Marner (22-47-69), Auston Matthews (33-28-61), William Nylander (20-40-60)

Boston: Brad Marchand (34-51-85), David Pastrnak (35-45-80), Patrice Bergeron (30-33-63)

Livestream every single game of the 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs—blackout free—plus the Toronto Blue Jays, key Raptors & NBA Playoffs matchups and the 100th Mastercard Memorial Cup, all in one subscription.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090173 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Sportsnet's 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs First Round Broadcast Schedule

Sportsnet Staff | April 9, 2018, 12:05 AM

TORONTO — With two Canadian teams in the Stanley Cup Playoffs, the Penguins chasing a three-peat and all kinds of other storylines to follow, Sportsnet unveils its 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs first round broadcast schedule.

Sportsnet's coverage of the 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs begins Wednesday, April 11 on opening night of the first round. All Stanley Cup Playoffs coverage will be available on TV on Sportsnet, Sportsnet 360, Sportsnet ONE or CBC and via live stream on Sportsnet NOW and Rogers NHL LIVE.



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The Winnipeg vs. Minnesota series will air on Sportsnet and the Boston vs. Toronto series will air on CBC. Select Toronto Maple Leafs games will be available on Sportsnet 590 The FAN, with select additional Stanley Cup Playoff games available along the Sportsnet Radio Network, including Sportsnet 960 The FAN and Sportsnet 650. Hockey Central Tonight will air every evening with a half-hour pre-game show on Sportsnet. The first round broadcast schedule is as follows:

Livestream every single game of the 2018 Stanley Cup Playoffs—blackout free—plus the Toronto Blue Jays, key Raptors & NBA Playoffs matchups and the 100th Mastercard Memorial Cup, all in one subscription.

### EASTERN CONFERENCE

Tampa Bay Lightning (A1) vs. New Jersey Devils (WC2)

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Thurs., April 12		New Jersey @ Tampa Bay, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT SN
G2	Sat., April 14		New Jersey @ Tampa Bay, 3 p.m. ET / Noon PT SN360
G3	Mon., April 16		Tampa Bay @ New Jersey, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN
G4	Wed., April 18		Tampa Bay @ New Jersey, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN
G5*	Sat., April 21		New Jersey @ Tampa Bay, TBD
G6*	Mon., April 23		Tampa Bay @ New Jersey, TBD
G7*	Wed., April 25		New Jersey @ Tampa Bay, TBD

Boston Bruins (A2) vs. Toronto Maple Leafs (A3)

• Play-by-play: Jim Hughson; Game Analyst: Craig Simpson; Reporter: Kyle Bukauskas

• Select games will air live on Sportsnet 590 The FAN

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Thurs., April 12		Toronto @ Boston, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT CBC
G2	Sat., April 14		Toronto @ Boston, 8 p.m. ET / 5 p.m. PT CBC, OMNI
G3	Mon., April 16		Boston @ Toronto, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT CBC
G4	Thurs., April 19		Boston @ Toronto, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT CBC
G5*	Sat., April 21		Toronto @ Boston, TBD CBC, OMNI
G6*	Mon., April 23		Boston @ Toronto, TBD CBC
G7*	Wed., April 25		Toronto @ Boston, TBD CBC

Washington Capitals (M1) vs. Columbus Blue Jackets (WC1)

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Thurs., April 12		Columbus @ Washington, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN360
G2	Sun., April 15		Columbus @ Washington, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN360
G3	Tues., April 17		Washington @ Columbus, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN360

G4 Thurs., April 19 Washington @ Columbus, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN

G5\* Sat., April 21 Columbus @ Washington, TBD TBD

G6\* Mon., April 23 Washington @ Columbus, TBD TBD

G7\* Wed., April 25 Columbus @ Washington, TBD TBD

Pittsburgh Penguins (M2) vs. Philadelphia Flyers (M3)

• Play-by-play: Rick Ball; Game Analyst: Greg Millen; Reporter: Christine Simpson

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Wed., April 11		Philadelphia @ Pittsburgh, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT CBC
G2	Fri., April 13		Philadelphia @ Pittsburgh, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT CBC
G3	Sun., April 15		Pittsburgh @ Philadelphia, 3 p.m. ET / Noon PT CBC
G4	Wed., April 18		Pittsburgh @ Philadelphia, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT CBC
G5*	Fri., April 20		Philadelphia @ Pittsburgh, TBD TBD
G6*	Sun., April 22		Pittsburgh @ Philadelphia, TBD TBD
G7*	Tues., April 24		Philadelphia @ Pittsburgh, TBD TBD

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### WESTERN CONFERENCE

Nashville Predators (C1) vs. Colorado Avalanche (WC2)

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Thurs., April 12		Colorado @ Nashville, 9:30 p.m. ET / 6:30 p.m. PT SN
G2	Sat., April 14		Colorado @ Nashville, 3 p.m. ET / Noon PT SN
G3	Mon., April 16		Nashville @ Colorado, 10 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. PT SN
G4	Wed., April 18		Nashville @ Colorado, 10 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. PT SN
G5*	Fri., April 20		Colorado @ Nashville, TBD TBD
G6*	Sun., April 22		Nashville @ Colorado, TBD TBD
G7*	Tues., April 24		Colorado @ Nashville, TBD TBD

Winnipeg Jets (C2) vs. Minnesota Wild (C3)

• Play-by-play: Paul Romanuk; Game Analyst: Garry Galley; Reporter: Scott Oake; Secondary Analyst: Cassie Campbell-Pascal

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Wed., April 11		Minnesota @ Winnipeg, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT SN
G2	Fri., April 13		Minnesota @ Winnipeg, 7:30 p.m. ET / 4:30 p.m. PT SN
G3	Sun., April 15		Winnipeg @ Minnesota, 7 p.m. ET / 4 p.m. PT SN
G4	Tues., April 17		Winnipeg @ Minnesota, 8 p.m. ET / 5 p.m. PT SN



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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G5\* Fri., April 20 Minnesota @ Winnipeg, TBD SN  
 G6\* Sun., April 22 Winnipeg @ Minnesota, TBD SN  
 G7\* Wed., April 25 Minnesota @ Winnipeg, TBD SN

Vegas Golden Knights (P1) vs. Los Angeles Kings (WC1)

• Play-by-play: Dave Randorf; Game Analyst: Louie DeBrusk; Reporter: Dan Murphy

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Wed., April 11		Los Angeles @ Vegas, 10 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. PT
G2	Fri., April 13		Los Angeles @ Vegas, 10 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. PT
G3	Sun., April 15		Vegas @ Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m. ET / 7:30 p.m. PT
G4	Tues., April 17		Vegas @ Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m. ET / 7:30 p.m. PT
G5*	Thurs., April 19		Los Angeles @ Vegas, 10 p.m. ET / 7 p.m. PT
G6*	Sat., April 21		Vegas @ Los Angeles, TBD
G7*	Mon., April 23		Los Angeles @ Vegas, TBD

Anaheim Ducks (P2) vs. San Jose Sharks (P3)

GAME	DATE	TIME	STATION
G1	Thurs., April 12		San Jose @ Anaheim, 10:30 p.m. ET / 7:30 p.m. PT
G2	Sat., April 14		San Jose @ Anaheim, 10:30 p.m. ET / 7:30 p.m. PT
G3	Mon., April 16		Anaheim @ San Jose, 10:30 p.m. ET / 7:30 p.m. PT
G4	Wed., April 18		Anaheim @ San Jose, 10:30 p.m. ET / 7:30 p.m. PT
G5*	Fri., April 20		San Jose @ Anaheim, TBD
G6*	Sun., April 22		Anaheim @ San Jose, TBD
G7*	Tues., April 24		San Jose @ Anaheim, TBD

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1090174 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Swift Current survivors determined to give help they were denied

Eric Francis | April 8, 2018, 3:30 PM

Early Sunday morning they started a Western Canadian journey not unlike the one they'd shared so many times as junior teammates in Swift Current.

Sheldon Kennedy, Bob Wilkie and Peter Soberlak boarded a Saskatoon-bound flight from Calgary, dropped into a local hospital and then made a 100-kilometre drive to Humboldt, Sask.

Their mission is to help, something Graham James wouldn't let people do following their team's tragic bus crash.

That's not to suggest the people of Swift Current and throughout Western Canada didn't do everything humanly possible to wrap their arms around the survivors of the 1986 crash that killed four teammates.

However, what came to light many years later was why their coach – James – steadfastly refused to allow players professional counsellors. He feared such introspection would unearth his history as a sexual predator.

"When Sheldon stood up and finally outed Graham (in 1996) it all became clear why we weren't able to get help after the bus crash," said Wilkie, whose life was so dominated by the trauma of the crash he wrote about about it in a 2013 book called Sudden Death: The Incredible Saga of the 1986 Swift Current Broncos.

"We weren't allowed to talk about it for fear his dirty secret would come out. My mom wondered for years why we were never given any of the resources we needed to cope with it properly. Those who wanted help were told 'no' by Graham. Now we know why."

James has been in and out of jail for sexually abusing Kennedy, Theoren Fleury, and Todd Holt — Fleury's cousin — while facing similar accusations from several other players.

Wilkie, Kennedy and Soberlak struggled for years with nightmares, flashbacks and guilt stemming from the accident.

Why did they survive? What more could they have done to help?

Nagging, haunting, legitimate questions that all should have been directed at professionals, instead of drunken teammates in billets' basements during recurring meltdowns over the years.

Wilkie and Kennedy were both drafted by the Detroit Red Wings and were labeled as talented trouble makers due to their penchant for drugs and alcohol. They used to numb the pain of the type of trauma the world has since learned can have lifelong effects. Wilkie played just 18 NHL games and Kennedy's rocky NHL stint saw him bounce around as he battled his now-obvious off-ice struggles.

Both will forever wonder what could have been had their heads been on straight, their bodies clear of contaminants and their focus laser sharp. After all, they both played on Canada's under-18 team with, amongst other longtime NHLers, Chris Joseph, whose son, Jaxon Joseph, was one of the 15 killed outside Tisdale, Sask., late Friday afternoon when a semi-trailer collided with the Humboldt Broncos team bus.

This emotional journey back to Saskatchewan really does bring them full circle. (In that vein, his billets' three-year-old daughter was one of the emergency doctors treating players from the crash Friday).

"I still don't like buses. It brings back that feeling," said Wilkie, who took decades to find the tools and help necessary to help him move forward to the point he now helps young players with the mental side of the journey.

"It's a lifelong sentence, man. These kids will never be the same and I think that's the most painful part. But what's going to be the difference with these kids is the help they'll be given."

From people like Wilkie, Kennedy, Soberlak and Darren Kruger, who lost his brother Scotty in the 1986 crash and simply wants to lend his heart and hands to the cause.

"Talking to Bob Friday night we decided if there's something we can do we'd love to go there and show our support," said Kruger, who scouted Humboldt Broncos defenceman Layne Metchuk and reached out to the family who are with the 18-year-old as he lies in a coma with severe head and upper-body injuries.

"Back then we didn't have really anybody to talk to or deal with. Colleen McBain was a high school counsellor who was great, but there weren't many resources there. I didn't deal with a lot of counsellors, but more just family and friends' support that slowly got us through the days. These days there are resources that will help guide them through."



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As Wilkie's mother, Judy, said, "Thank god there's no Graham James in the middle of all of this because he wouldn't allow them to get the support they needed. These boys will."

Kennedy agreed.

"We need to be there, doing anything we can," he said. "The number of victims involved goes far beyond the survivors."

And even though they aren't armed with counselling certificates, these lads can help because they've lived it.

They know what's coming next.

"It's going to be dark for a while. It's going to be sad and consuming and frustrating and none of it makes sense," said Wilkie, whose quartet will attend Sunday night's vigil in Humboldt with thousands of others.

"As hard as this is going to be for a while they will be much stronger. They will be inspired and more driven and once they get to the other side it will be OK.

"There isn't a thing in my life where I haven't looked back and said, 'If I can survive that, I can survive anything.' If someone would have told me that after the accident I would have told them off, but it is the truth."

And that's the message they'll deliver to first responders, family members, players and anyone else they come across devastated by a tragedy that has gripped the nation.

For Wilkie, Kennedy and Soberlak it has been more than 31 years of wondering what else they could do to help out that horrible, snowy day on the side of the Trans-Canada Highway.

Now they know.

God bless them for acting on it.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090175 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Numbness wearing off in Humboldt as shock and sadness set in

Mark Spector | April 8, 2018, 6:54 PM

HUMBOLDT, Sask. — It is Sunday morning in Humboldt, a quiet day in a quiet town in northeastern Saskatchewan. Surrounded by still snow-covered fields, this part of our country is still a couple of plus-8 days from turning, like a jack rabbit, from white to brown.

You wouldn't know that tragedy has visited here by the drive into town, a wide-open corridor behind a roadside "Humboldt" sign that sports the usual Canadian store fronts.

A Co-op gas station, a Sobeys' grocery store, a Boston Pizza, a Canadian Tire. Timmy's sits on the right-hand side as you enter town from the west, just across from the local Ford dealer.

A DQ, and A&W a KFC... The fast-food alphabet spells out the same way here in Humboldt as it does in Campbellton, N.B., Trail, B.C. or Pembroke, Ont.

But from now 'til forever, this town isn't the same as those ones. This is Humboldt, the scene of the worst bus crash in Canadian sports history.

"As a hockey fan, and a hockey parent, and a hockey player, and a hockey billet," began Justin Rempel, "everyone just wants the best for their kids. You're just trying to make them a better person."

On Sunday morning, Rempel, the trainer for the Melfort Mustangs team that was vanquished by the Broncos in Round 1 of the Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League playoffs, was at the Uniplex, the centre of every Canadian town like this. The curling rinks are here, as well as the town pool, the high school, the public workout facility, the convention centre, and of course, Elgar Petersen Arena.

It is not just the home of the Humboldt Broncos. It is the only indoor arena in town, and there stood Rempel, sporting the Mustangs jersey of Jaxon Joseph, who was traded to Humboldt before the deadline for Tristan Elder, in a transaction that will forever shape two families.

Joseph was killed Friday, and now Rempel, the son of a Saskatchewan pastor, is back in Humboldt, lending a spiritual hand at the Sunday vigil.

"Everyone is hurting the same — it doesn't matter where you're from," Rempel said. "You could be in the Maritimes, and this can affect you the same way it affects someone from here."

Humboldt is that dusty gem among wheat fields that gave the hockey world the great Glenn "Mr. Goalie" Hall, the same way a tiny pimple on the Prairie called Floral, Sask. gave birth to Mr. Hockey — Gordie Howe.

It's a big deal when a town this small pumps out a player that big, so at the Glenn Hall monument, there is also respect paid to the careers of Humboldt and area pros Brendan Witt, Jerome Engele, Brad Lauer, and Ralph Klassen.

(The old Cleveland Baron Klassen, his plaque explains, was in 1979 claimed in an expansion draft, then traded twice the next day. That made him property of four teams in two days.)

Today, putting kids in the NHL remains the goal, but it has fallen down the queue. It is more realistic to talk about qualifying kids for college scholarships, or simply preparing them to be solid adults, the kind of people this community is leaning on so heavily today.

And this team was, in fact, pulling Humboldt together.

The cliché is that the junior rinks are packed every night, but Elgar's place has not always been full. The Broncos were coming out of an unstable period, but coach and GM Darcy Haugen had taken hold of this club, and turned it into a contender again.

"He built a team, this year, that was worth watching," said a season ticket holder, who did not want to be named. "They had lots of speed, lots of excitement, good goaltending... As the year progressed they just kept getting better, and better and better. It was happening."

"(Haugen) talked about the fact the Humboldt Broncos were about not building hockey players, but building amazing young men," said team president Kevin Garinger. "Through that process, they could ultimately become great hockey players too."

Haugen was one of the 15 killed Friday, when the Broncos bus was hit by a semi-trailer just north of Tisdale, Sask. Of the 29 people who were heading up to Nipawin for Game 5 of the SJHL semi-final, 15 are dead, 13 are still in hospital — some with very serious injuries — and one unnamed player was released from hospital on Sunday.

The numbness is wearing off here, as shock and sadness sets in.

"As the names are coming out, it's getting harder and harder for the community, for parents, for everyone else," said Humboldt mayor Rob Muench, his cell phone ringing incessantly even as he stood behind a podium to address the media. "I'm getting emails, phone calls and text messages from people — I don't even know who they are. A text from an area code that I don't even know where: 'Here's a poem that I wrote. Here's a song. Here's a message.'"

Prime Minister Trudeau is here, as are Ron MacLean and Don Cherry, major network anchors like Ian Hanomansing and Lisa LaFlamme, and media from every national outlet. Many will have flights booked for Toronto Monday, and as the national glare predictably fades, this little



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Prairie town will be left to grieve, and put back together a hockey team that is, oftentimes, the centre of its social calendar.

"This is going to be a long haul for us," said Mayor Meunch. "I just talked to (the mayor of) Swift Current, and they're still suffering (from their 1986 bus crash). We're going to need support for our community, to be there for each other.

"Not just days, not just weeks, not just months. It could be longer."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090176 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Flames Thoughts: Calgary pays tribute to Humboldt Broncos in final game

Derek Wills | April 8, 2018, 8:26 PM

Mark Jankowski scored four goals and Jon Gillies stopped 26 of 27 shots as the Calgary Flames posted a 7-1 win in Saturday's season finale versus the Golden Knights at the Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary.

## HOCKEY WITH HEAVY HEARTS

Less than 24 hours after finding out that 15 members of the SJHL's Humboldt Broncos family had tragically lost their lives in a horrible bus crash, I wasn't sure what to expect from the players, from the fans or even from myself when the Flames and Golden Knights took to the ice on Saturday. The mood was sombre, to say the least, when the two teams arrived at the arena and when the fans stepped through the turnstiles at the Saddledome for the final time in 2017-18.

For those who are passionate about sport, sometimes wins and losses can feel like life and death—until something happens that puts everything into perspective.

While Saturday's game between the Flames and the Golden Knights was meaningless in the standings and, more so, inconsequential in comparison to what is truly important, what sport can sometimes provide is an escape from the real world. An escape from actual life and death.

While there weren't many dry eyes in the building on Saturday, hopefully the game gave those in attendance, watching on TV or listening on the radio a chance to escape from what can be a cruel, unfair world—if only for a moment.

When he spoke to the media following Saturday's morning skate, head coach Glen Gulutzan said his team was going to "play for the love of the game, because that's what those kids did."

On Saturday night, the Flames played inspired hockey. I believe they did so for the Humboldt Broncos and for everybody who has been impacted by their tragedy.

## A TOUCHING TRIBUTE

Prior to puck-drop, Flames and Golden Knights players gathered together around the faceoff circle at centre ice for a moment of silence to remember the 15 who lost their lives in Friday's awful accident.

In addition, both teams wore Humboldt Broncos stickers on their helmets, and the Flames changed the colour of their logo on the scoreboard and on their social media channels to the team's green and gold.

## LENDING A HELPING HAND

Always looking for ways to give back to the community, not only in Calgary and Southern Alberta but wherever help is needed, the Flames and the Flames Foundation donated proceeds from Saturday's 50/50

draw to those impacted by the tragedy. As usual, Flames fans stepped-up, purchasing more than \$168,000 in tickets.

When he spoke to us prior to the game, Gulutzan indicated that he had chatted with Edmonton Oilers head coach Todd McLellan earlier that morning. On Sunday morning, we found out what they were planning.

Just hours after their seasons ended, Gulutzan (who played junior hockey in Saskatchewan for the WHL's Moose Jaw Warriors and Saskatoon Blades) and McLellan (who was born and raised in Saskatchewan, played for the Saskatoon Blades and coached the SJHL's Battlefords North Stars and WHL's Swift Current Broncos), flew to Saskatoon with gifts for those who survived Friday's bus crash and to support those who are grieving the loss of loved ones.

While on the ice, I believe the Battle of Alberta is about to become as heated as it has been since the early 1990's, off the ice the Flames and Oilers are both first-class organizations, and Gulutzan and McLellan should be commended for what they're doing to give back to the people and a community that clearly means a great deal to them.

## GONE TOO SOON

One of the 15 who tragically lost their life in Friday's accident was the team's radio play-by-play announcer, Tyler Bieber.

When I first started in broadcasting, I spent most of my time covering Junior B hockey. Because I covered all seven teams in the Golden Horseshoe Junior B Hockey League, I didn't get to travel with the teams during the regular season or league playoffs. But for a couple of weeks every season, I would join the boys on the bus and travel with the league champion to and from Sutherland Cup round robin and finals games. Even though I wasn't really part of those teams, I so looked forward to those trips.

In 2001, I got my first big break in broadcasting when I was hired by the Hamilton Bulldogs. I spent the next 13 seasons travelling with the team, primarily by bus, from one AHL city to another. The team bus was a second home for me, the coaches, the support staff and the players. We watched movies. We played cards. I also learned a lot about hockey from people like Claude Julien, Geoff Ward, Doug Jarvis, Don Lever, Ron Wilson, Guy Boucher, Randy Cunneynworth, Clem Jodoin and Sylvain Lefebvre. I always sat in front of, beside or behind the coaches and I was constantly leaning over or sticking my head between the seats to ask questions. Most of what I know about the game I learned during my 13 seasons riding on the Hamilton Bulldogs team bus. Many of the friendships that were built on that bus will last a lifetime.

While most of my memories of those bus trips are fond ones, there were some pretty scary moments, too. On one trip, a wheel flew off of a semi and slammed into the side of our bus. On another trip, our bus caught on fire. During a pre-season trip in Northern Ontario, a herd of moose came running out of the trees right in front of our bus. It was the middle of the night and we were all sleeping until the bus driver slammed on the brakes and we started fish-tailing towards them. Thankfully, we stopped just in time. There were countless other close-calls on bad roads filled with bad drivers.

We got lucky. I got lucky.

Unfortunately, the Humboldt Broncos and Tyler Bieber did not.

I did not know Tyler, but based on what I've read about him, he was a talented young broadcaster who was passionate about the people around him and his community. Tyler volunteered teaching high school students basketball and football and was also involved in the Big Brothers Big Sisters program.

Tyler was 29.

It was an honour to dedicate Saturday's Flames radio broadcast to Tyler.

## PROMISING PROSPECTS



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While it's tough to really evaluate players in meaningless games late in the season, a pair of Flames prospects looked like they might be ready to take the next step and become full-time NHLers next season.

Rasmus Andersson: Because of their depth on defence at the NHL level, the Flames had the luxury of being able to let Rasmus Andersson over-ripen in the AHL.

When the second-year pro was recalled from the Stockton Heat on Mar. 19, he was fourth in the AHL in assists by defenceman with 30 and sixth in points with 38. While Andersson was pointless in 10 NHL games this season, he was playing in a much different role—primarily on the third pairing instead of the first—and was used sparingly on special teams in Calgary after playing on the first power play unit and the penalty kill in Stockton.

With the numbers that he had put up in the OHL and AHL, I wasn't really worried about that side of his game in the NHL—I wondered if he would be able to defend.

One thing is pretty apparent—the Swedish blueliner has a high hockey IQ, which you simply can't teach. Because I think there is a strong possibility that the Flames are going to trade one of their top six defencemen during the off-season, Andersson could graduate from the Heat to the Flames as soon as the start of next season.

At this point, it's probably up to the player. The biggest knock on Andersson has always been his conditioning. If the talented 21-year-old puts in the necessary work this summer and performs well when the Flames do fitness testing next fall, his days in the AHL may be over.

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Spencer Foo: After finishing one point out of the NCAA scoring lead last season, when he posted 26 goals and 62 points in 38 games for the Union College Dutchmen, Spencer Foo was a pretty hot commodity. When the undrafted college free agent chose to sign with the Flames instead of one of the number of other NHL teams that were trying to get him under contract, including his hometown Oilers, fans were excited.

Foo's professional career started pretty slowly when he scored only once in his first 19 AHL games. But after scoring a hat trick on Dec. 6, the 23-year-old started to soar. He scored 19 goals in the next 40 games before being recalled from the Heat on Mar. 29.

After getting his first career NHL goal in Thursday's 2-1 loss to the Jets, Foo scored for the second straight game on Saturday, tallying in the Flames' 7-1 season-ending victory over the Golden Knights. In his first four NHL games, Foo scored two goals on 16 shots. More impressive than any stats that I can throw at you is the way he played the game—with speed, skill, grit and a willingness to go to tough areas, including his opponent's net.

While I have to remind myself to take what I see from players in meaningless games at the end of the season with a grain of salt, it's hard not to be excited about Foo, especially for a Flames team that desperately needs a right winger who can put the puck in the net and provide some secondary scoring.

## THE BIG JANKOWSKI

Mark Jankowski certainly had some ups and some downs during his first (almost) full season in the NHL. With that said, his full body of work was pretty impressive. After scoring his first career hat trick before tacking on a fourth in Saturday's win, the 23-year-old finished the season with 17 goals in 72 games.

At 6-foot-4, 202 pounds, Jankowski is a big guy. But in order to take the next step and go head-to-head with the top centremen in the league, he's going to have to get even bigger and stronger. If Jankowski can bulk up a bit during the off-season and play more assertively and consistently next season, he should, at the very least, be an above-average third-line pivot

for the Flames—who, quite frankly, need more from that line and whoever is on it next season.

Looking into my crystal ball, I can envision a third line of Jankowski between Spencer Foo and Sam Bennett or Micheal Ferland, providing the Flames with some much-needed secondary scoring and being tough to play against and difficult to match up against next season.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 04.09.2018

1090177 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / 2018 Stanley Cup Playoff Preview: Pittsburgh Penguins vs. Philadelphia Flyers

Sportsnet Staff | April 8, 2018, 12:34 PM

For the first time since their epic 2012 series, the Pittsburgh Penguins and Philadelphia Flyers will revive the Battle of Pennsylvania to kick off Round 1 in the East. Last time these two met, they combined for 56 goals through six games, peaking with a 10-3 win for Pittsburgh in Game 4 and an 8-5 victory for Philadelphia in Game 2. Though the rosters have seen plenty of turnover in the half-decade since, both clubs enter into the reunion with similar offensive prowess.

The series features four of the top 10 scorers in the league, with Claude Giroux (102 points), Evgeni Malkin (98), Phil Kessel (92) and Sidney Crosby (89) all entering healthy and ready to contribute. Add in some notable goaltending issues on both sides—the Flyers have seen unsteady performances from all of Brian Elliott, Michal Neuvirth and Petr Mrazek and the Penguins don't have Matt Murray rolling like he was the past two years—and there's a fair chance some more high-scoring games are coming.

Matching Pittsburgh's depth will be crucial if the Flyers hope to hang with Pittsburgh in this one. While Philadelphia has seen some elite performances from their top names, they'll have to be able to keep pace with their rival's four-line game to avoid getting buried. The Penguins are still without trade deadline acquisition Derick Brassard—who hasn't played since Mar. 27 while dealing with a lower-body injury—which makes things a bit easier, as the absence of the third-line pivot may convince head coach Mike Sullivan to move Kessel back to the second unit with Malkin.

But if the Penguins opt to keep Crosby, Malkin, and Kessel spread among the top nine, the Flyers' third line of Valtteri Filppula, Wayne Simmonds, and Travis Konecny will have to step their game up. The two teams' season series suggests that might be easier said than done, however, as Pittsburgh took all four meetings with Philadelphia in 2017-18, scoring five goals in each of those games.

## ADVANCED STATS

5-on-5 via Corsica.Hockey

Pittsburgh: 52.23 CF% (5th), 48.07 GF% (21st), .910 SP% (29th), 7.29 SH% (23rd), 98.33 PDO (29th)

Philadelphia: 49.79 CF% (18th), 52.33 GF% (13th), .925 SP% (13th), 7.88 SH% (13th), 100.36 PDO (14th)

## POWER NUMBER

Determined by percentiles created for a variety of statistics and weighed equally to give each team a grade out of 10 for offence and defence (seven for 5-on-5 and three for special teams). These numbers are then averaged to come up with a power number to measure a team's all-around play.



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TEAM (rank)	OFFENCE (rank)	DEFENCE (rank)	POWER NUMBER
Pittsburgh	9.12 (1st)	3.95 (19th)	6.53 (6th)
Philadelphia (13th)	5.01 (18th)	5.69 (10th)	5.35

### TEAM STATS

Pittsburgh: 26.2 PP% (1st), 80.0 PK% (17th), 270 GF (3rd), 248 GA (20th)

Philadelphia: 20.7 PP% (15th), 75.8 PK% (29th), 249 GF (12th), 236 GA (14th)

### HEAD-TO-HEAD RECORD

Pittsburgh: 4-0-0

Philadelphia: 0-2-2

**Pittsburgh Penguins Outlook:** The back-to-back Stanley Cup champions are trying to become the first three-peat winners since the New York Islanders dynasty of the 1980s—not even the great Edmonton Oilers team that followed won three in a row. The Penguins are coming into the playoffs on a relative high note too, and their season really is a tale of two halves.

On Jan. 1, Pittsburgh was the 22nd-best team in the NHL with a 19-18-3 record and had just 68 even strength goals—the third-fewest in the league. But from then on, the Penguins slowly returned to form and have scored the most even-strength goals over the past three-plus months while posting a 26-11-3 record. The one constant team stat has been an unstoppable power play that converts on 26.2 per cent of its chances, which is the best full-season mark in the NHL since the Calgary Flames posted a 27.7 per cent in 1989-90.

A high-event team, the Penguins still have an unmatched amount of star power that is tough to match up against when Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Phil Kessel are spread across three lines. Not much has changed between this year's Pens team and the ones that won the previous two Cups. In fact, if healthy, they may be more dangerous now than ever.

**Philadelphia Flyers Outlook:** It's really hard to get a read on a team that's been as streaky as the Flyers. Philadelphia is the definition of an up-and-down team this season, starting with a 10-game losing streak early on, which they immediately followed with a stretch of seven wins in eight games. They also had a stretch in which they posted 11 wins in 23 games, which included a 10-1 streak. They're all over the place.

Muddying the waters even more is the lack of clarity in net, which is nothing new to this franchise. Brian Elliott and Michal Neuvirth went down to injury, forcing GM Ron Hextall to acquire Petr Mrazek at the trade deadline and, after a promising start, he's cratered to a sub-.890 save percentage. Elliott is back for the playoffs, but he's played just two games since Feb. 10—and ask Flames fans how he fared in last year's playoffs (hint: it was ugly).

The fact they got this far means there are some positive things going on here. The Flyers' young defence has helped them to the fifth-lowest shots-against average this season and their offence is the 11th-best in the league. No. 2 overall draft pick Nolan Patrick started off low in the lineup, but has worked his way up to the second unit where he plays with Jakub Voracek. Patrick has answered with 16 points in 23 games. The top line remains one of the league's best and was made possible by Claude Giroux's move to left wing, which has been a huge success. He's an underrated Hart Trophy candidate who finished with a career-high 102 points after getting just 58 a year ago. In his career, Giroux has 62 points in 63 playoff games, but hasn't seen the second round since 2012.

**Penguins X-Factor:** In the past two seasons the Penguins came into the playoffs with two credible No. 1 options in net between Matt Murray and

Marc-Andre Fleury—and they needed them both. Now without Fleury, there isn't as secure a safety net behind the 23-year-old starter.

With a .907 save percentage this season, Murray had his worst of three NHL seasons and, though he's been good at stretches, it's the downturns that could be trouble for the Penguins. The longest streak of games Murray has had this season allowing less than three goals in a game is just three, which he achieved just once. At the end of the season he wasn't exactly trending up either—in three of his past six starts Murray allowed at least four goals.

The Penguins will get their offence, and the power play has been incredibly good, but in the past two playoff seasons Murray's save percentages have been .923 and .937. He needs to get back up to that level of excellence, or close to it. In last year's run to the Cup, in which he played the final two rounds, Murray allowed three or more goals just three times in 11 games.

**Flyers X-Factor:** Brian Elliott returned to the net on April 5 after missing nearly two months with an abdominal injury and allowed three goals on 22 shots, then recorded a shutout on Saturday. With a .909 save percentage in 43 games, Elliott has been his usual self—up and down, with his best month coming in December (.927) and worst in January (.874).

His 2016-17 with the Flames followed a similar wave and ended in disappointment with 12 goals allowed in a four-game sweep to Anaheim. Petr Mrazek was brought in as insurance at the deadline and was even more volatile, while regular backup Michal Neuvirth got injured days after returning from a previous malady. The Flyers, as usual, will sink or swim with their goalies.

### TEAM LEADERS (G-A-PTS)

Pittsburgh: Evgeni Malkin (42-56-98), Phil Kessel (34-58-92), Sidney Crosby (29-60-89)

Philadelphia: Claude Giroux (34-68-102), Jakub Voracek (20-65-85), Sean Couturier (31-45-76)

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Sportsnet.ca / 2018 Stanley Cup Playoff Preview: Tampa Bay Lightning vs. New Jersey Devils

Sportsnet Staff | April 9, 2018, 12:19 AM

The Tampa Bay Lightning meet the New Jersey Devils in what figures to be as genuine a representation of the conference-leader-meets-wild-card matchup as we've seen. This isn't a pretty strong No. 1 seed meeting a known commodity that happened to drop to the wild-card spot. It's Nikita Kucherov and Steven Stamkos, who have been dominating the rest of the league since day one, meeting a Devils team that looked more likely to finish as the league's first 31st team than an eventual champion.

New Jersey's rise has been one of the season's best stories, as it's ridden Taylor Hall's MVP-calibre campaign all the way to its first playoff appearance in six years. But the Devils have their work cut out for them in the Lightning who, though they wilted in the season's second half, still remain one of the most dangerous clubs in the post-season.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

## NEWS CLIPPINGS • April 9, 2018

Tampa's greatest strength just happens to be the Devils' Achilles heel — offensive depth. While Hall's 93 points sit 41 higher than the team's next scorer, 19-year-old rookie Nico Hischier, the Bolts will roll out Kucherov (100 points), Stamkos (86), Brayden Point (66) and Yannick Gourde (64), all of whom also have at least 25 goals on the year.

New Jersey swept the season series against the Lightning, but that's a bit misleading when it comes to projecting how these two stack up against each other — the Devils squeaked by with one-goal wins every time, and were outshot in all three games, most notably in the second meeting, which saw Tampa Bay fall despite amassing 51 shots to the Devils' 28.

If Keith Kinkaid continues his standout year and the Lightning's stars stumble in the bright lights of the playoffs, the Devils can put together an epic first-round upset. But if things keep going as they have when the two clubs have met so far, you have to assume things eventually swing Tampa Bay's way over the course of a seven-game stretch.

### ADVANCED STATS

5-on-5 via Corsica.Hockey

Tampa Bay: 51.62 CF% (7th), 57.18 GF% (1st), .929 SP% (5th), 9.35 SH% (1st), 102.28 PDO (1st)

New Jersey: 48.63 CF% (21st), 48.77 GF% (17th), .917 SP% (25th), 7.91 SH% (11th), 99.64 PDO (19th)

### POWER NUMBER

Determined by percentiles created for a variety of statistics and weighed equally to give each team a grade out of 10 for offence and defence (seven for 5-on-5 and three for special teams). These numbers are then averaged to come up with a power number to measure a team's all-around play.

TEAM (rank)	OFFENCE (rank)	DEFENCE (rank)	POWER NUMBER (rank)
Tampa Bay (2nd)	9.10 (2nd)	5.20 (14th)	7.15
New Jersey (26th)	3.57 (24th)	3.38 (26th)	3.47

### TEAM STATS

Tampa Bay: 23.9 PP% (3rd), 76.1 PK% (28th), 290 GF (1st), 234 GA (13th)

New Jersey: 21.4 PP% (9th), 81.8 PK% (7th), 243 GF (14th), 240 GA (17th)

### HEAD-TO-HEAD RECORD

Tampa Bay: 0-2-1

New Jersey: 3-0-0

Tampa Bay Lightning Outlook: Nobody could beat Tampa Bay at the start of the season, as they went 27-8-2 from October through December. But while they've still been a difficult team in the second half (26-15-3) team defence has become a problem.

In their last 44 games, Tampa Bay has allowed the sixth-most shots in the league, turning one-time Vezina Trophy favourite Andrei Vasilevskiy human again—the Russian has a pedestrian .907 save percentage in 2018, a flip from the .935 rate he had in the season's first half.

The good news is the offence is as strong as ever with 148 goals scored in their past 44 games (3.4 average), led by Hart Trophy candidate Nikita Kucherov and Steven Stamkos, who is quietly having his best season in six years. The Lightning are also the most potent offensive team at even strength, leading the league in 5-on-5 goals. The pace at which they play and the waves of offence they can throw at teams thanks to great secondary options such as J.T. Miller and Brayden Point is difficult for

any team to match against. But how far they go in the playoffs might be determined by their play at the other end of the ice.

New Jersey Devils Outlook: One of the best stories in the league this season, the Devils benefitted from a strong 11-4-2 start, but they haven't coasted into the playoffs. On the contrary, the Devils faced a difficult six-game road trip in mid-March that included games against Nashville, Vegas, Pittsburgh and the three California teams, which could have been the disaster that allowed the streaking Florida Panthers to catch up. But New Jersey managed to go 4-2-0 in those games, then won two in a row upon returning home. The road trip turned out to be a defining moment for the young team.

Taylor Hall is the top story for the Devils, a strong Hart Trophy candidate with a 42-point lead on the second-highest New Jersey scorer. But the kids have also been key contributors, including rookies Nico Hischier, Will Butcher and Jesper Bratt, who make up three of the team's top five scorers.

These Devils don't play anything close to the style the franchise is linked to from the Dead Puck Era days. They are fast, loose and frequently playing back-and-forth action. This puts pressure on the goaltenders, which is another area of interest. Usual starter Cory Schneider has had difficulty getting back to form following a groin injury and hasn't won a game since Dec. 27. In his place, Keith Kinkaid has taken over the lead role, playing both halves of back-to-back sets three times within the past month. He also started each of the six games on the aforementioned road trip and has a .925 save percentage since March.

Lightning X-Factor: One of the best power plays in the league is offset by a penalty kill that ranks among the worst. With a 76.2 per cent kill rate, Tampa's PK is the second-worst among all playoff teams, ahead of only the extremely streaky Philadelphia Flyers. Since Feb. 1 it's gotten even worse—they rank 30th in that time with a putrid 71.3 per cent kill rate.

Special teams are hugely important in the post-season and last year's Pittsburgh Penguins were the only champions in the past 10 years who finished the regular season with a PK rate lower than 80 per cent—and even they were at 79.8. If you're looking for a weakness of this contender, here it is.

Devils X-Factor: Kinkaid's heroics are mentioned above, but when it comes to playoff hockey the 28-year-old is completely untested at the NHL level. In the pros in general, he has one series under his belt, in which the AHL's Albany Devils were swept in 2014. The Devils are playing with house money this playoff season, as they're a couple years ahead of schedule. And they probably didn't envision getting here with Kinkaid.

But this is a team with nothing to lose and a goaltending with everything to prove—if Kinkaid continues to shine and leads New Jersey to Round 2, the hockey world will look at him and his team much differently.

### TEAM LEADERS (G-A-PTS)

Tampa Bay: Nikita Kucherov (39-61-100), Steven Stamkos (27-59-86), Brayden Point (32-34-66)

New Jersey: Taylor Hall (39-54-93), Nico Hischier (20-32-52), Kyle Palmieri (24-20-44)

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Sportsnet.ca / Best bounce-back and breakthrough: Handing out 4 made up NHL Awards



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

## NEWS CLIPPINGS • April 9, 2018

Ryan Dixon | April 8, 2018, 10:04 AM

Since movie-makers have ensured there's no avoiding superhero mythology these days, I'll just embrace it and say that when I receive the annual email telling me it's time to vote on NHL year-end awards, Ben Parker — you know, Spider-Man's uncle — always pops in my head saying, "With great power comes great responsibility."

And as anybody who's entered the adult portion of their life can tell you, responsibility is stressful.

Like most lucky enough to vote, I agonize over every last name that goes on my ballot. The fun of it really can get buried under the fear you've missed an angle or detail.

So before I truly dive into that task, let's lighten things up and hand out some awards in categories I made up over breakfast. The goal here is to spread some love for guys who may not walk away with actual hardware — though some are definitely in the running — but deserve kudos nonetheless for some kind of achievement this season.

Without further delay, I present a handful of made-up distinctions for guys who are more than welcome to try using them in their next contract negotiation.

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**Best Bounce-Back Season:** Claude Giroux, Philadelphia Flyers

There's a ton of Masterton and Hart overlap here in a category brimming with candidates. Giroux gets the nod for his willingness to play ball with the Flyers and move to wing at the start of the season so formerly buried centre Sean Couturier could finally star in an offensive role. Bothered by hip and abdominal issues in the recent past, Giroux rebounded from a 58-point campaign last year — his lowest total in a full season since his sophomore showing in 2009-10 — to set a career high with 102.

He gets the ever-so-slight nod over a pair of other captains Tampa Bay's Steven Stamkos and the Kings' Anze Kopitar.

**Honourable Mentions:** Dustin Brown, Marc-Andre Fleury, Jonathan Huberdeau, Taylor Hall, Brendan Gallagher

**Best Season By An Old Guy:** Zdeno Chara, Boston Bruins

To be eligible for this award, players had to be in their age 35 season or older as determined by the always-awesome hockey-reference.com. And I definitely added bonus points to Chara based on the fact he was one of just two players — along with Minnesota's Matt Cullen — to turn in a full year in their age 40 season (the big man turned 41 on March 18).

Chara continues to be a smothering presence in his own end. He averaged nearly a minute more of shorthanded ice time per game than any other Bruin and could end the season No. 2 in that category for the entire league. His relationship to rookie D partner Charlie McAvoy is, no doubt, symbiotic, with Chara setting a sage example of how to play the thinking man's position, while McAvoy's young legs lug the puck up ice.

This award could easily have gone to likely Vezina winner Pekka Rinne, 35, and the .927 save percentage he put up with Nashville or Joe Thornton, who sustained a knee injury that limited him to 47 contests. The 38-year-old Sharks centre was playing at a 63-point pace.

**Honourable Mentions:** Daniel and Henrik Sedin, Roberto Luongo (another injury victim), Patrick Marleau

**Best Season in a New Place:** Artemi Panarin, Columbus Blue Jackets

We could put half the Vegas Golden Knights team down here, so let's just acknowledge that crazy scene and agree to limit this category to players not on the best expansion team in the history of sports.

Panarin was acquired by Columbus after two wonderful seasons in Chicago and promptly put up more points in Ohio than he did playing alongside Patrick Kane with the Blackhawks. The Russian's 82 points represent a new franchise high for the Blue Jackets and Panarin is a big reason why Columbus is a team to keep an eye on as the post-season kicks off.

The Montreal Canadiens' miserable season really started in earnest when the club couldn't come to terms with Alexander Radulov on a new contract and he signed with the Dallas Stars. Putting a guy with his talent and passion on a team with Tyler Seguin and Jamie Benn worked out as well as you'd expect, with Radulov setting career highs in goals (27), assists (45) and points (72).

Arizona goalie Antti Raanta, who started the year battling injuries and finished by signing a new three-year deal with the Coyotes, posted a 16-5-4 record in the 2018 portion of this season to go along with a sparkling .942 save percentage over the same stretch.

**Honourable Mentions:** Brayden Schenn, Thomas Vanek, Ryan Miller, Patrick Marleau

**Biggest Breakthrough Season (for a non-rookie or sophomore):** William Karlsson, Vegas Golden Knights

There are two types of people in this category: Those who made a good-to-great leap and those who came from nowhere to suddenly become players.

Karlsson fits squarely in the latter. He had 15 goals the past two seasons combined and he's got nearly triple that amount in his maiden voyage with the Golden Knights — only Alex Ovechkin and Patrik Laine have more tallies than Karlsson's 43. In a positively unfathomable season in Vegas, the Swede's scoring exploits has to be the lead story.

Nathan MacKinnon is playing in the most critical game of the weekend and if he has a big Saturday night against the St. Louis Blues with a playoff spot on the line, he could wind up with the best points-per-game mark in the league.

**Honourable mentions:** Connor Hellebuyck, Sean Couturier, Carter Hutton, Matt Dumba

**Best Half Season:** Ryan Ellis, Nashville Predators

This award is limited to guys who, for whatever reason, were limited to 50 games or fewer. After returning from off-season knee surgery on Jan. 2, Ellis made an already-loaded Nashville defence corps so much better with his smart defensive play and by producing offence at a 0.74 points-per-game clip — a mark that bests all but nine blue-liners in the league, including teammates Roman Josi and P.K. Subban.

Florida Panthers goalie Roberto Luongo, who was troubled by a groin injury earlier in the season, entered the final weekend of play with a .929 save percentage that represented the second-best mark of his entire remarkable career.

Also, Kings centre Jeff Carter has scored at a 41-goal pace in 26 games.

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Sportsnet.ca / The good, bad and ugly of the Montreal Canadiens season

Andrew Berkshire April 8, 2018, 10:26 AM



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • April 9, 2018

The Montreal Canadiens wrapped up their season on Hockey Night in Canada against the Toronto Maple Leafs with a loss. They'll now be forced to watch one of their oldest rivals brimming with confidence and loaded with talent head into the playoffs, as the Habs themselves carry out end-of-season interviews and are likely all too happy the season has ended.

It was a disaster of a season dating all the way back to the pre-season. But similar to the last time they bottomed out and missed the playoffs, not everything is pointing to the Canadiens being stuck in the basement for next year.

With that in mind, let's take a look at the good, bad, and ugly of this season for the Canadiens.

## The Good

It's tempting to just post a picture of Brendan Gallagher here and say "next," and that might be a fairly accurate representation of the best of this Canadiens' season. But there are a few positive things team-wide that deserve some attention.

Looking at the Canadiens' shot shares this season, it's important to note they were running on fumes for the last two months as the team has lost some of their most important play drivers long term.

Even if you limit it to just losing Shea Weber for nearly 60 games, and Max Pacioretty for the last 18 of the season, teams without their top forward and top defenceman tend to fall to pieces in the possession game. Yet, the Canadiens hovered in respectable territory at 5-vs-5, only in the negatives in scoring chances on net and scoring chances.

That's a good sign going forward that this is a team, despite many weaknesses, that can at least compete on any given night once their roster is back to being healthy.

Gallagher, Artturi Lehkonen, and Phillip Danault are a trio of underrated, young play drivers at 5-vs-5 who have, along with Jeff Petry, kept the Canadiens afloat down a dismal stretch to end the season.

## The Bad

It's been a very long time now that the Canadiens have struggled to move the puck with passes into dangerous areas. To put these numbers in context, the Canadiens have the lowest offensive zone pass success rate in the NHL, the second-lowest pass to the slot success rate, and the second-highest pass to the slot success rate against.

That lethal combination of being exceedingly poor at penetrating the slot with passes, while also extremely poor at defending those same passes, has led to tons of games over the last few years where the Canadiens outshoot and seemingly outchance their competition, but get outscored because their opponents were able to generate pre-shot movement and they weren't.

The best example of that is last year's first-round matchup against the New York Rangers. In shots and scoring chances, the Canadiens blew up the Rangers in that series. But they couldn't move the puck East-West, and Henrik Lundqvist was able to stay set for a huge majority of their scoring chances, and he dominated the series for the Rangers.

At the other end, Carey Price played an admirable series with a .933 save percentage, but the Rangers' ability to pick apart the Canadiens defence with passes led to far too many backdoor plays for him to overcome. Montreal lost in six games.

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To Marc Bergevin's credit, he tried to address this issue in the off-season by trading for Jonathan Drouin, adding a depth playmaker in Ales Hemsky, and he thought Karl Alzner was a defensive stalwart to help the defensive issues. Alzner was a miscalculation, Hemsky barely played

and looked done when he did, and Drouin was forced out of his natural position due to a positional weakness in the roster.

Offensively, those low pass success rates likely come down to the centre position, at least in part. Drouin does a good job producing those passes. But despite his other strengths, Danault is not a playmaker and no one else on the Habs roster who played centre this year is an NHL centre of any offensive impact.

From the wing, the Canadiens are loaded with shoot-first players like Gallagher, Pacioretty, Lehkonen, Shaw, and Byron, with only two wingers being above average playmakers in Alex Galchenyuk and Charles Hudon. That's a balance that will need to be corrected if they want to unlock the most offence they can from this roster.

Defensively, the Canadiens have some players like Weber and Petry who are actually very good away from the puck, but they have a specific weakness in stopping passes into the slot.

Weber isn't as exploitable there as Petry, but neither are great at stopping those passes. You may have guessed it, but centres typically have a big impact on stopping those passes into the slot as well.

While Bergevin is likely dreaming of John Tavares, one player likely isn't enough to tip the scales for the Canadiens up the middle. They need three centres, with only the third line slot currently filled adequately by Danault.

## The Ugly

There's no graphic needed for this one, it's Carey Price. Whether it's lingering injury, or the reported exhaustion he suffered from all season, the Carey Price we're all used to seeing didn't show up this year for any significant stretch.

Price didn't string together four straight starts of above league average save percentage at any point in the season, and he's looked wrong the whole campaign.

Typically the best skating goalie in the league, Price was betrayed by his skating all year, fell on shots that should be easy, failed on his side-to-side pushes and was caught out of position because of it.

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The lucky part for the Canadiens here is that it's unlikely Price will repeat this next season. There have been a few out there who propagate the idea that cumulative injuries have worn Price out early in his career, but he did not suffer any major injury this season that would have contributed to that, and he struggled right out of the gate.

If Price had looked this off last season after missing almost a full year due to injury, that might make some sense. But he was excellent last season, posting the second-best goaltender performance in the league.

The Canadiens' problems aren't about to be easily solved, but they're not quite as doomed next year as they've looked on the surface. The problem is they don't look capable of being a true contender, but a draft lottery could change that.

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TSN.CA / Youngest Bronco Adam Herold remembered for his character off the ice

Frank Seravalli



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

## NEWS CLIPPINGS • April 9, 2018

HUMBOLDT, Sask. — Adam Herold arrived here only three weeks ago to join the Broncos for their Saskatchewan Junior Hockey League playoff run.

The captain of the Regina Pat Canadians Midget AAA team joined the Western Hockey League's Prince Albert Raiders for one game on March 17 before the Raiders sent the defenceman to Humboldt for seasoning.

That decision, one that normally would not have generated a second thought, is now weighing heavily on the hearts of the Raiders.

"We just wanted him to get in some games rather than sit and watch with us," said Raiders associate coach and NHL veteran Dave Manson, choking back tears over the phone.

"We had him pencilled into our lineup next season. He had his whole life in front of him."

Extremely happy to have signed with the Prince Albert Raiders. Thanks to everyone who helped make this happen.  
[pic.twitter.com/fBTPyyRIDO](https://pic.twitter.com/fBTPyyRIDO)

— AdamHerold (@Adamherold10) May 26, 2016

Herold, 16, was the youngest of the 15 players and staff killed in Friday night's horrific highway accident. He was to turn 17 in six days, on April 12. He appeared in nine games with the Broncos, eight of them in the playoffs.

Pat Canadians coach Darrin McKechnie said Sunday, if only his team hadn't lost in the second round of the midget playoffs and were playing for the Telus Cup national championship like last season.

Instead, a vigil will be held for Herold tonight in his hometown of Montmartre, a rural farming community in Saskatchewan.

"He was just a terrific young man, a joy to be around," McKechnie told TSN. "You could take the best kid you know and times that by 10 and you'd get Adam. I'm not just saying that because he's gone. He was that special — and the hockey was just extra."

To Herold, the hockey wasn't just extra. It was everything. He left home at 15 to billet in Regina for Midget AAA, with his parents, Russell and Raelene, placing him in the trust of a McKechnie family friend.

Herold led the Pat Canadians to their first-ever Mac's Major Midget tournament championship this season in Calgary. He had been on the WHL's radar for years as a two-way defenceman on the rise. The Raiders made him their second-round pick in the 2016 WHL Bantam Draft.

"Adam was a good young hockey player with a bright future," Raiders director of player personnel Ron Gunville said in an email. "But he was a guy we valued way higher based on his leadership, character and ability to play the game. He was only with us for parts of two seasons but he left a lasting mark on our organization."

Gunville and Manson both said they pegged Herold as the Raiders' future captain.

"I can't rave about him enough," Manson said. "As good a player as he was, it doesn't come close to the type of person he was. He had character. He looked you in the eye and shook your hand. You knew if you asked him something, he would get it done."

Herold's get-it-done attitude was part of what stood out for McKechnie, who coached in the WHL with the Regina Pats in 2014-15 under John Paddock.

"If there was work to be done, he just did it," McKechnie said, pausing to collect himself. "He was the first guy on the team to pack the bus. He was the last guy to stay unpacking the bus. The other [Pat Canadians players] would just be on their phones, only worrying about their own stuff."

That proud image of Herold on the bus was difficult for McKechnie to shake. He struggled to compose himself.

This hits home for everyone in the hockey world, but especially for Manson, who has ridden the bus for the past decade with his hometown Raiders after an 1,100-game NHL career. His 26-year-old son, Josh, rode the bus not that long ago in the SJHL and British Columbia Hockey League on his way to the Anaheim Ducks.

Herold's dream was to make the NHL one day.

He had perhaps the best shot on that Broncos bus. Gunville said he had already had conversations with pro scouts who predicted Herold would be an NHL pick in 2019.

"It's impossible to say," Manson said. "I do know that kid would have given himself every chance."

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USA TODAY / NHL point projections reflection: Golden Knights had me fooled

Kevin Allen, USA TODAY Sports Published 12:01 p.m. ET April 8, 2018 | Updated 12:26 p.m. ET April 8, 2018

Trying to predict the NHL standings before the season begins is a fool's errand and every year I play the fool.

This season I was more foolish than usual in underestimating the strength of a handful of teams, particularly the Vegas Golden Knights.

Mostly based on history of expansion teams, I projected the expansion Golden Knights to be the NHL's worst team and they ended up owning the league's fifth-best record.

A few other misses also fall in the whopper category. I predicted the New Jersey Devils and Philadelphia Flyers would finish second-to-last and last in the Metropolitan Division, respectively. They both qualified for the playoffs.

I believed the Flyers' talented young defensemen needed another season before they came together, and that the Devils had too many inexperienced players in general.

Wrong.

I also misread the Edmonton Oilers, failing to see they were incapable of sustaining their 2016-17 success. I could see the Winnipeg Jets were on their way to being exceptional, but didn't see it happening this season.

Wrong again.

I was miles off the mark on my Colorado Avalanche prediction, but honestly who saw their success coming? Maybe Joe Sakic, but I wouldn't be surprised if he didn't.

I did have some situations figured out, including identifying the Nashville Predators and Tampa Bay Lightning as the winners of their division. I was on the money with my forecast that the Anaheim Ducks would finish with 44 wins, and was a point off on my predictions for the Minnesota Wild and St. Louis Blues.

I had the Dallas Stars finishing with 95 points, and they finished with 92. I had the Vancouver Canucks projected at 75 points, and they ended with 73. I had the Los Angeles Kings pegged accurately as a rebounding team.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

**NEWS CLIPPINGS • April 9, 2018**

I predicted the Detroit Red Wings would rank 26th in the NHL and they landed 27th.

My faith in Arizona's improvement also looked misplaced, although I would argue that the Coyotes' strong showing over the final two months of the regular season suggests they are a better team than their record indicated.

It's this time of year when I remember that it's probably easier predicting the impact of a tropical storm than forecasting what's going to happen in an NHL season. But I will forget all of that by next fall when it is time to again embark on another fool's errand.

USA TODAY LOADED: 04.09.2018