



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • August 28, 2020

## THE NEWS & OBSERVER

### As other pro sports leagues halted Wednesday, the NHL arrived a day later

By Luke DeCock

While players in other professional leagues decided not to play Wednesday night in the wake of the Jacob Blake shooting, the NHL was an outlier: it proceeded almost entirely as normal in its Toronto and Edmonton bubbles.

By Thursday, the Hockey Diversity Alliance — a group of current and former Black NHL players — had convinced enough of its fellow players to join athletes in other professional leagues and sit out Thursday and Friday's games.

This was a major development for the NHL, a league where what little protest Black players have tried has gone almost entirely unsupported by their white teammates.

And it was an abrupt change from Wednesday, when there was an anodyne "moment of reflection" before the Boston Bruins-Tampa Bay Lightning game in Toronto, but its planned counterpart in Edmonton apparently never happened later that evening. Then both games were played as scheduled.

"I don't think we should be here," Kelly Hrudey, an analyst for Canadian broadcaster Sportsnet, said before the Tampa-Boston game.

"I feel sick to my stomach we're actually doing this game," Sportsnet's Christine Simpson said during one intermission.

In recent years, several NHL players of color have attempted to call attention to injustice without the visible support of their teammates. When J.T. Brown — son of N.C. State football great Ted Brown — raised his fist during the national anthem in 2017, he did it alone on the Lightning bench.

Earlier this month, Minnesota Wild defenseman Matt Dumba gave a speech and knelt during the anthem before a qualifying-round game between the Edmonton Oilers and Chicago Blackhawks and one Black player from each team put a hand on his shoulders. Vegas Golden Knights forward Ryan Reaves did the same two days later, and three white players — teammate Robin Lehner and the Dallas Stars' Jason Dickinson and Tyler Seguin — knelt with him.

"You can't keep coming to the minority players every time there's a situation like this," Dumba said in a radio interview Wednesday. "The white players in our league need to have answers for what they're seeing in society right now, and where they stand."

So while the protests in the NBA, WNBA, MLB and MLS were all player-driven, NHL players on four teams chose not to

follow their lead Wednesday. Boston's Zdeno Chara said "it was so close to our game." Colorado Avalanche center Nazem Kadri, whose teammates had a few extra hours to deliberate before the late game in Edmonton, said "it crosses your mind when you see other leagues doing something like that."

Carolina Hurricanes captain Jordan Staal said Thursday that it was hard to imagine what he or his teammates would have done if they were still playing amid what he called a "hard situation."

"I know the feeling walking into the arena, going into a big game and what the focus is on," Staal said. "There'd be no question I'm sure there would be guys talking about it. Yeah, it's a hard situation obviously. But it would be hard. Yeah, it would be very hard. I don't really know what I would feel if I was in that situation, what those players went through, if they talked about it a ton or they left it alone or what the scenario was. My focus is on the game when I'm walking into that room, that's No. 1. So who knows what happened, but it's obviously a very hard situation."

But late Wednesday night, three Philadelphia Flyers players reached out to HDA member Chris Stewart, and on Thursday more than 100 players on the eight teams still in the NHL's bubble cities joined Dumba and San Jose Sharks forward Evander Kane on a conference call, TSN and the Athletic reported. That led to the decision by the players to sit out Thursday.

It took that kind of external push to provoke that kind of reaction from NHL players unaccustomed to such activism in a league that's almost 95 percent white. As Hurricanes forward Jordan Martinook acknowledged Thursday, much of this was new territory for players like him.

"I think everybody's just trying to make our way through this, trying to learn," Martinook said. "Obviously six months ago I probably wasn't fully aware of it. Probably most people weren't. It's terrible the way we've had to learn about it but it is the way that we have. The NHL is in the same position."

"Obviously the NBA went the way it did and the NHL is probably, definitely they're going to have to address it. We'll see where they take it. Obviously, I think the way that I can, I have a son that I'm definitely going to try and teach the lessons that I'm learning daily about this to him. ... It's definitely a hard situation to gravitate around. We're all just trying to do our best."



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## Carolina Hurricanes' Staal, Martinook absorb lessons learned at season's end

By Luke DeCock

The two Jordans, Staal and Martinook, will have no say in how the Carolina Hurricanes' roster is tweaked this fall in response to a season that saw the Hurricanes finish sixth in the Eastern Conference and fall to the Boston Bruins in the playoffs for the second straight season.

As two of the team's core leaders — especially if Justin Williams retires, or takes another extended vacation before returning — they will have some say in how the players who are still around handle that success and that eventual disappointment.

With respect to the latter, it was clear enough in the third period of Game 4 that the Hurricanes found themselves in a situation they were unprepared to handle, an epic collapse that saw a two-goal lead become a two-goal deficit in less than seven minutes. The Bruins managed to grind out four wins in five games even as each game was within a goal in the final minute.

"It's obviously fresh in my mind, but looking back at the Boston series, you could just see they never got uncomfortable in a situation," Martinook said on a Zoom call Thursday. "We almost tried to push too hard in situations where we could have kept doing what we needed to do. There's an old saying when you try to do too much, it ends up going the other way. That's kind of what happened to us in some of those situations.

"Boston's the team obviously we're trying to be like, in the upper echelon of the league right now. That's where we want to be. Just to see how they handled certain situations, we obviously are going to learn from that try and be better in those situations."

As for the first part, the Hurricanes' success in making it back to the playoffs for a second straight year for the first time in two decades is no small achievement, and they did it while still laboring through goal-scoring and power-play droughts,

critical injuries, goaltending issues and the inevitable dips in form that might otherwise have derailed them in the past.

"It's a good feeling to have," Staal said. "We have a great group of guys who are starting to really understand how to win games, how to grind out teams and stuff. It's an exciting time in Carolina. The young core we have is very special, very driven. I love those guys. They work very hard. We have a bright future in Carolina.

"There is a learning curve of finding ways to win games and getting uncomfortable and being OK with that. I like the way our guys have responded over the last couple years. They're only going to mature and get better."

As for Williams, Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour talked about the emotional moments for the former captain in Toronto after the Game 5 loss ... but that was also true after the Game 4 loss to the Bruins in Raleigh in 2019 and Williams was back on the ice in January. He'll be 39 by the time next season starts, and the Hurricanes are once again preparing to go on without him. Maybe.

"It's well-known around the league what Willy's all about," Staal said. "He's taken control of rooms. He understands what it takes to win. He's done it plenty of times. He knows how to bring guys to their best. He's a huge part of that room."

The Hurricanes have a few months to rest and regroup before the next season begins, likely in December if all goes as planned. It goes against the hockey player's internal clock to be resting instead of ramping up in September, but it has been that kind of year.

"It was unique, but at the same time everybody was going through the same thing," Martinook said. "I don't think any of us have had — nobody has done the pause and then you get back going again. It was almost like an offseason."

Another unusual offseason awaits.



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## NORTH STATE JOURNAL

### NHL, Hurricanes try to find voice amid calls for social justice

The police shooting of Jacob Blake in Wisconsin has reverberated throughout the sports world

By Cory Lavalette

In the aftermath of the police shooting Sunday of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin, and the arrest of a 17-year-old in the shooting of three protesters on Tuesday night, the sports world has again joined the cause of social justice.

Five of the NBA's six teams set to play Wednesday in the league's Florida bubble — led by the Milwaukee Bucks — decided to sit out their scheduled games, leading to NBA postponing all games for the day.

Protests from Major League Baseball players led to the postponement of three games. Major League Soccer and the WNBA called off games. And two-time Grand Slam tennis champion Naomi Osaka's decision not to play in her Thursday semifinal match at the Western & Southern Open led to the tournament pausing play for the day. These were just some of the athlete-led protests that have again inserted sports into the center of a worldwide discussion about race relations and police brutality in the United States.

The NHL, meanwhile, offered a 27-second "moment of reflection" and "End Racism" signage on video boards before Wednesday's Bruins-Lightning game in its Toronto bubble.

Then on Thursday afternoon, hours after the recently formed Hockey Diversity Alliance — a group of current and former black hockey players committed to battling systemic racism inside and outside the sport — called for the day's games to be suspended, the NHL and NHLPA announced the games scheduled for Thursday and Friday would be postponed.

The league — made up of predominantly white team ownership, executives, coaches and staff, and players — has struggled to find its place in the social justice landscape, and the sport's "don't rock the boat" culture has further complicated its reaction to off-the-ice issues.

"I think everyone is just trying to make our way through this. Just trying to learn," Hurricanes alternate captain Jordan Martinook said Thursday morning, prior to the postponements, in a Zoom call with the media. "Six months ago, I probably wasn't fully aware of it. I'm sure most of us weren't. It's terrible the way we had to learn about it."

At the start of the NHL's return, most teams — including the Hurricanes — stood for the national anthems with interlocked arms, a gesture of solidarity that some viewed as half-hearted

in the wake of George Floyd's death at the hands of police that sparked nationwide protests. A handful of players — led by Minnesota Wild defenseman and Hockey Diversity Alliance member Matt Dumba, who made an impassioned speech about racism in hockey and beyond — knelt during anthems.

"I know first-hand, as a minority playing the great game of hockey, the unexplainable and difficult challenges that come with it," Dumba, who is black, said. "Black Lives Matter. Breonna Taylor's life matters. Hockey is a great game, but it could be a whole lot greater, and it starts with all of us."

Carolina defenseman Jaccob Slavin — who, along with his wife, Kylie, was the subject of an Aug. 5 article on The Athletic about the couple's adoption of a black child and how it further opened their eyes to racism — said on Aug. 6 that the Hurricanes collectively decided against any other form of protest when they opened the NHL's return Aug. 1 against the Rangers.

"I think we came to a conclusion as a team that we didn't want to do anything more," Slavin said. "And that, I think, Jonathan Isaac, the basketball player, said it really well, where kneeling and supporting black lives don't really go hand in hand, I think.

"If you look back at why [Colin] Kaepernick knelt the first place (it was) to get the conversation started about police brutality and racism that's still ongoing in our country, and that conversation is being had now. And so, the awareness is there, and there's other ways outside of the camera that we can be supporting black lives. And I think those are the action steps that need to be taken right now."

Isaac, an ordained minister, said his decision not to kneel came down to his faith and his belief that others accepting Christianity into their lives would cure all of the world's problems, including racism. Slavin is also a devout Christian.

Now the league, pushed by a group of players, is back to where it started on Aug. 1, but it's a discussion the Hurricanes — eliminated from the postseason — won't have to have on a public stage.

"Yeah, it'd be very hard," captain Jordan Staal said Thursday morning of having to choose between playing or protesting. "I don't really know what I would feel if I was in a situation and what those players went through ... but my focus is on the game when I'm walking in a room. That's number one. So who knows what happened, but, it's obviously a very hard situation."



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## Canes reflect on season, NHL's response to social issues

By Bridget Condon

RALEIGH, N.C. (WTVD) -- It's been a week since the Carolina Hurricanes came home from Toronto and ended one of the strangest NHL seasons. They're finally getting some time to reflect on everything that's gone on this year.

"It was almost like you were in an offseason and then had to get going again," Jordan Martinook said. "It was definitely different that way because you're coming back and you're not coming back to exhibition games and training camp and the feeling out part of it. Throughout the entire year just everything that went on, Coronavirus, obviously what we're dealing with now, it's something that I don't think anybody expected."

Martinook said it was a learning experience and looks forward to a normal hockey season next year with fans in attendance.

"I think everybody is trying to navigate it the best they can," he said. "Obviously, we are learning from everything. Hopefully we don't have a pandemic again that affects the hockey season and hopefully we can come back and play in front of fans and do what we do in front of full buildings which is obviously what we like to do."

Being out of the bubble the Canes are now wondering if they would've sat out any of their games after seeing the NBA, WNBA and MLB take stands against social injustice Wednesday night.

"There would be no question," Jordan Staal said. "I'm sure there would be some guys talking about it. It's a hard situation honestly. It would be very hard. I don't really know what I would feel if I was in that situation and if those players talked about it a ton or they left it alone or what the scenario was. My focus is on the game when I'm walking into that room - that's No. 1.

Martinook said he's become more aware of social issues.

"I think everybody is just trying to make our way through this," he said. "Trying to learn. Obviously, six months ago, I probably wasn't fully aware of it and I'm sure most people weren't. It's terrible the way that we had to learn about it is the way that we have. I think the NHL is probably in the same position. The NBA went the way they did, and the NHL is going to definitely have to address it and we'll see where they take it."

Martinook said he plans to do his part by teaching his son some of the lessons he's learned this year about social injustice.

"I have a son that I'm definitely going to try to teach the lessons that I'm learning daily about this to him and try and build him to not think anything about it," he said. "It's definitely a hard situation to gravitate around so, I'm, we're all just trying to do our best."



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## NHL, NHLPA postpone Thursday, Friday games, and we're refocusing our coverage tomorrow

Our site won't be business as usual until Saturday. Here's why.

By Andrew Schnittker

The past two days have been momentous in the sports world. Athletes are making the ultimate use of their platform to effect change, starting with the Milwaukee Bucks striking and deciding not to play their first-round playoff Game 5 against the Orlando Magic in protest of the police shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

That led to the postponement of all NBA games through today, with a return to play at a to-be-determined date. The WNBA also postponed all of its games, with individual games in the MLB and MLS being postponed as players agreed to sit out as well.

Today, the NHL and NHLPA followed suit, postponing Thursday and Friday's games as the players wish to take the time to reflect on the need for social change and combating racial injustice.

We at Canes Country feel it's important to join in this effort, so our coverage will look different tomorrow until Saturday. We will not be "sticking to sports." There will be no "strictly hockey-related" content on the site tomorrow.

### Jordan Martinook: 'Just trying to learn.'

The Canes forward spoke to the media via Zoom on social issues, leadership and improvements the team can make.

By Ryan Henkel

Jordan Martinook had a rough go at the season, missing a large chunk at the beginning of due to having to undergo core muscle surgery.

The Carolina Hurricanes forward scored two goals and 13 points in 45 regular season games in, but had two goals and three points in the playoffs.

He spoke to the media over Zoom Thursday morning along with captain Jordan Staal.

On where he sees the NHL fitting in with the social justice movements currently happening: It's definitely a hard situation because, and I know it's been around for forever, but it's really come to our attention in the past six months. I think everyone is just trying to make our way through this. Just trying to learn. Six months ago, I probably wasn't fully aware of it. I'm sure most of us weren't. It's terrible the way we had to learn about it and in the way that we have. I think the NHL is probably in the same position. Obviously the NBA went the way they did and the NHL is going to have to address it. We'll see where they take it. I have a son that I'm going to try and teach the

Any information we share will be related to the movement in the form of any statements or social media posts from the team, and any quotes from Jacob Slavin and Andrei Svechnikov in tomorrow's scheduled media Zooms about the NHL's pause and the Black Lives Matter movement.

Sports, and sports coverage, often serves as a distraction from the issues of the real world. But this is not the time for distraction. The issues of systemic racism and police brutality have been far too prevalent for far too long, and this is a time for focusing on those issues and the best ways to support marginalized communities.

Many view sports as an escape from the "horrors" of the "real world," and that's understandable. But for people of color and other marginalized communities, the luxury of an escape does not exist, because those "horrors" are their real world.

Black Lives Matter, and there are still far too many in our society, including many in positions of power, who don't recognize that.

So, with all of that in mind, Canes Country will be taking this time to direct attention and awareness to this movement, and the larger, important issues at hand.

lessons that I'm learning daily about to. It's definitely a hard situation to gravitate around so we're all just trying to do our best.

On leadership and Justin Williams: One of the main reasons that Willy leads so well and can control the room is because of the respect level he gets. Everybody in our room and around the league respects him so much. When he talks, everybody listens. Going forward, we have our captain, [Jordan Staal] and he kind of commands the same thing. He's not the most vocal guy. He's not going to come in and scream, but when he talks, everybody listens. They have that same comparison. When something needs to be said, they'll say it and all eyes are on them.

On the unusual season: It was unique, but at the same time, everybody was going through the same thing. Nobody has done the pause and then get back going again. It was almost like you were in an offseason and then had to get back going. It was different that way because you're not coming back to exhibition games and training camp and the feeling out part of it. Instead you're thrown right into the middle of the fire. Throughout the entire year with everything that went on; coronavirus, what we're dealing with now, it's something I don't think anyone expected. I think everyone is just trying to navigate it the best they can. We're learning from everything



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and hopefully we don't have a pandemic again that affects the hockey season and we can come back and play in front of fans and do what we do. What we love to do.

On one area the team can improve on: It's fresh in the mind, but looking back on the Boston series, you could just see that they never got uncomfortable in a situation. I feel like we would almost try to push too hard in situations when we could have just kept doing what we were doing and have been fine. The saying is, 'You do too much,' and it ends up going the other way and I think that's what ended up happening to us. Boston's a team that we're trying to be like. They're kind of in the upper echelon of the league right now and that's where we want to be. To see how they handled certain situations I think we are obviously going to learn from that. Just try to be better in those situations.

## Jordan Staal: 'It's an exciting time in Carolina.'

The Canes' captain spoke with the media via Zoom Thursday morning about social justice, the season that was an what lies ahead.

By Andrew Schnittker

Following two straight years of making the playoffs, the Carolina Hurricanes are looking to take the next step to becoming a legitimate Stanley Cup contender.

Captain Jordan Staal figures to be a big part of that process, and it's one he's gone through before with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Here's a full breakdown of everything Staal had to say in his exit Zoom call with media Thursday morning:

On leadership and Justin Williams: I think it's well-known around the league what Willy's all about. The guy has taken control of rooms. He understands what it takes to win. He's done it plenty of times. He knows how to bring guys to their best and bring the best out of every player. He's a huge part of that room. I watched the day-to-day stuff and the way he carried himself. The things he says and how he gets guys going, that gets him going as well. It's obviously a group effort, and he did a great job of building that atmosphere of we're in this together. I learned a lot from him just watching him, understanding what he does. I'm trying my best to do a lot of the same things he did for our team.

On if there would have been a discussion on sitting out for social justice: I know the feeling walking into the arena going into a big game and what the focus is on. There'd be no question, I'm sure it'd be some guys talking about it. It's a hard situation, obviously. It'd be very hard. I don't really know what I would feel if I was in that situation, what those players went through or if they talked about it a ton, left it alone or what the scenario was. My focus is on the game when I'm walking into that room. That's No. 1, so who knows what happened, but it's obviously a very hard situation.

On the goal of winning the Stanley Cup: There's definitely that feeling in the room. Every team starting the season wants to make the playoffs and do all those things. We're not trying to creep into the playoffs, we're trying to be the team to beat. It's a good feeling to have. I know that feeling in Pittsburgh. We have a group that can do it, it's just a matter of finding the right

On how the odd timing of the offseason affects him: Coming out of a normal season, you're nicked up more. Especially if you go through a full season and a playoff run, you're definitely going to have a lot more bumps and bruises. Coming out of this, I'm healthier, so I don't know how much time I'm going to take off. It's a weird situation because we haven't even figured out when we're playing next. You don't want to get going too soon. I'm the type of guy who kind of gets sick of working out. I just want to go play. I don't want to get my juices going too soon, but you definitely need to keep moving. I have a 19-month old so I'm flying around after him daily. It's just all about knowing your body and I'm old enough and have been through enough offseasons. It's something you kind of go off of feel and once we know when we're actually starting you can ramp it up as you need to.

pieces, getting a little lucky at the same time, getting a good run and getting hot. That's all it takes. It's a good feeling to have. We have a great group of guys that are starting to really understand how to win games and grind out teams. It's an exciting time in Carolina, and the young core we have is very special and very driven. I love those guys. They work so hard, so it's going to be a bright future in Carolina.

On similarities to his first playoff runs in Pittsburgh: I think so and I really hope so. I know my first year when we made the playoffs, I didn't know what to expect. We stepped into that game and our whole team was just in shock. There's another level there that players get to, especially that first round when you have all the juices flowing and the energy. It's something that I think if you watch our first series, I think the team already knew that and we brought it that first round, first five-game series.

We played well with Boston, we're going to learn from that. There's a learning curve of finding ways to win games, getting uncomfortable and being OK with that. The young guys, I think, have learned a lot the last couple years in understanding how to just keep grinding through stuff that comes up throughout a game, not get too rattled, not push too hard and just finding ways to win games, sticking around and hanging around. I like the way our guys have responded over the last couple years. They're only going to get more mature and get better.

On applying lessons learned to the offseason: The offseason is about getting your body right, maybe getting away from the hockey grind a bit. But at the same time, kind of unraveling the season you had, learning from it and learning how to best win games. I think, like I said, our group is moving towards that. We've got a lot of guys that are eager to bring the cup home to Carolina. It's about putting it all together.

Some years it just doesn't work, and some years it clicks. We had a taste of it two years ago, and it felt good. Our fans are going crazy. That feeling is what you need, just to kind of keep pushing towards that same feeling, the more you do that, the more opportunities you have to finish it off, so we have to be that consistent team and bring that every season. It's not easy to get in the playoffs, so we've got to make sure you're bringing that every night throughout the year and riding it into the playoffs.



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1192246 Carolina Hurricanes

Carolina Hurricanes' Staal, Martinook absorb lessons learned at season's end

BY LUKE DECOCK

AUGUST 02:46 PM

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The Athletic / Clark: Silence on Wednesday. Solidarity on Thursday. No games on Friday.

By Ryan S. Clark

Once the cameras started streaming from Edmonton, the players came in one-by-one. You could see Pierre-Edouard Bellemare, Jason Dickinson, Bo Horvat, Nazem Kadri and Ryan Reaves make their way to the dais as if it would just be them in a Marriott conference room.

But it wasn't. More and more players kept arriving. They were from the Colorado Avalanche, the Dallas Stars, the Vancouver Canucks and the Vegas Golden Knights. It took more than three minutes for all of them who entered this space to find a place to stand. Some of them cut in front of the camera. Others were off to the side, making it impossible for anyone who was watching this visual preamble to determine exactly how many NHL players were in that room.

Maybe that was the point.

The image itself was telling. Here was a room filled with White hockey players who play in a league and in a sport often criticized for its lack of diversity standing silent in a show of solidarity behind those leading the conversation. Dickinson and Horvat, who are also White, spoke but it was Bellemare, Kadri and Reaves doing most of the talking.

A Black man from France, the son of Lebanese immigrants from Ontario and a Black man from Winnipeg. Naturally, they have always stood out. Because that is indeed the nature of what it means to be a person of color in hockey. Yet here they were at the forefront of a player-driven movement that has led to the NHL following suit with what other leagues, such as the NBA, WNBA, MLS and MLB, have done in protesting games because of what happened to Jacob Blake.

Blake is the latest Black man at the center of the discussion about race and racism. He was shot seven times by police in Kenosha, Wis. The common thread he shares with George Floyd, Elijah McClain and Breonna Taylor is that all of them had violent encounters with police officers. What makes Blake's situation different is that he is still living, while Floyd, McClain and Taylor all died.

Racism itself is polarizing. Some don't believe it actually exists. And that if it really does, it's not their concern. Some get angry when athletes and leagues start wading into a conversation they are trying to escape. But here's the thing about that. Those leagues? Those players? Many of them are Black. For someone who is a racist, all they see is just that: Race.

Those seeking a "refuge from it all" do not get the complexity of what they are saying. They can escape. Black people don't get that luxury. Even when they are athletes who make millions. Money buys access. Money buys material items. Money, however, does not purchase equality. And that's the point. Players such as Bellemare, Kadri and Reaves have wealth, but they still carry with them what it means to be a minority. It's knowing that for some, it will never be enough. That, for some, they are more of an entertainment device than a human being.

Some people tired of hearing about racism claim race and sports do not intersect. Nor should they ever. But they always have. For Black people in the United States, the two main forms of advancement were entertainment and sports. From that came the need to use those mechanisms to raise awareness around items like race. Jesse Owens, Jackie Robinson, Bill Russell, Muhammad Ali, John Carlos, Tommie Smith, Colin Kaepernick, LeBron James, among others, have all done this. It is the baton that keeps getting passed from generation to generation.

Just how often is that baton passed in hockey?

"I think if you look around this room, there's a lot of White athletes in here," Reaves said. "I think that's the statement that's being made right

now. It's great that the NBA did this and the MLB and the WNBA. They have a lot of Black players in those leagues. But for all these athletes in here to take a stand and say, 'You know what? We see the problem too and we stand behind you,' I go to war with these guys and I hate their guts on the ice but I couldn't be more proud of these guys.

"The statement that they've made today is something that it's going to last. These two days isn't going to fix anything. But the conversation and that the statement that's been made is very powerful, especially coming from this league."

Silence on Wednesday. Solidarity on Thursday. No games on Friday.

Going through such a drastic sequence of events is what makes this such a complicated moment. There is the need to believe what happened Thursday could be the latest step toward change. That White players like Tampa Bay Lightning defenseman Kevin Shattenkirk, along with the Canucks, can reach out to Reaves to take a more active role in a movement might very well be a sign.

Yet where it gets difficult to fully invest in that premise is what happened Aug. 1: The day Matt Dumba addressed the world with his speech and became the first NHL player to kneel for the Star-Spangled Banner.

Everything the Minnesota Wild defenseman did that day was supposed to be the turning point. It was going to lead to more discussions about race and racism with the idea that the NHL and its players would gradually engage in these discussions. Sure, the questions were there at first about what Dumba said and did. It continued when Reaves and his Golden Knights teammate, Robin Lehner, were joined by Dickinson and Stars center Tyler Seguin when they also knelt during the national anthem.

From there? Those questions were fleeting. It became more about the games and the strategies behind those victories or defeats.

It's a contrast from leagues like the NBA and WNBA where some coaches and players do not even need to be asked. They open up Zoom press conferences with their feelings on racism and the latest incident. To them, George Floyd, Elijah McClain and Breonna Taylor are daily reminders of the stories they heard as children from their parents and grandparents. It is knowing that no amount of money means you're exempt from dealing with racism.

That is why Jacob Blake hurt. Because it keeps happening. And it is going to continue to happen. That is why they cannot escape.

But hockey and the NHL? It felt like Blake being shot was another world event that didn't penetrate the Edmonton and Toronto bubbles. Until it did when other leagues began protesting with the NHL soon coming under question about why it did not follow suit.

Perhaps that is the complexity within this entire discussion. The same White athletes who can take to social media en masse to talk about why a change is desperately needed after watching Floyd die in an eight-minute, 46-second video are the same ones remaining silent about Blake. Both incidents were caught on tape. One was longer than the other but the images were the same in that it led to another discussion about police brutality and racism.

So what made them different? Because Floyd happened when everyone was at home while Blake happened when people are concentrating on a Stanley Cup?

Getting society – and hockey as a whole – to understand those nuances is among the challenges that come with these conversations. It is knowing that these players have shown they can identify these moments and even state they want to get better. But if that education does not continue? If they remain silent while it is still happening? Then it raises another question altogether.

Did they ever really get the message in the first place?

"I think this is a big enough statement with all these guys sticking together," Kadri said. "I got so much respect for every single player in this



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league by doing something like this. Obviously, systemic racism, we can use these next couple days to further educate ourselves and for the betterment of society. It's something that needed to be done and I think hockey is a team sport and a team game and every single one of these guys are on the same page and stands with each other."

Points have been made about what makes the NHL and hockey so different compared to Major League Baseball, the NBA, the NFL, the NWSL, the MLS and the WNBA.

Those leagues have a higher concentration of minorities. In the case of the NWSL and WNBA, they have women and minorities who are part of marginalized groups that can identify systemic challenges and struggles.

Clearly, the NHL does not have that level of personal experiences like those leagues. Neither did NASCAR and yet it found a way to ban the Confederate flag. Figures like Dale Earnhardt Jr., who is royalty within that sport, spoke out against racism. An entire sport stood up and walked with Bubba Wallace as a way of showing support. It all comes back to a single premise.

If there are other leagues that have created a blueprint to follow, if there are other leagues with similar challenges who have stepped up, then, why can't the NHL be next?

Bellemare, Kadri and Reaves are examples of how people of color have pushed this movement. Knowing there are figures like Dickinson, Horvat and Shattenkirk, along with many other White players, who support them adds to that. It appears the onus now turns to the NHL when it comes to what it can do to join this movement in a manner that is clearly defined and not open to interpretation like it's "We Skate For" initiative that has sent mixed messages.

Dumba speaking and kneeling was the first step. Seeing the players unite with a group like the Hockey Diversity Alliance was the next piece.

What the NHL decides to do going forward appears to be the only item left unanswered at a time when people are asking more questions than ever before.

"It's not an easy subject and it's an awkward subject for a lot of people," Bellemare explained. "The fact that we are all here together right now, it's going to bring a lot of awareness. There are going to be a lot of questions asked and it's going to be able to help everybody educate themselves and to educate the people who ask the questions and the fact that everybody's right here with us, standing up together, it's huge. It's great unity."

The Athletic LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192315 Websites

The Athletic / 'We see the problem too' – NHL players stand together as games postponed

By Jesse Granger

Dozens of NHL players packed into the press conference room in Edmonton to announce the postponement of NHL playoff games scheduled for Thursday and Friday.

Players came to the decision after pro sports leagues across North America walked out from games on Wednesday to protest social injustice following the shooting of Jacob Blake.

Thursday afternoon Ryan Reaves, Nazem Kadri, Pierre-Edouard Bellemare, Jason Dickinson and Bo Horvat stood in front of their

microphones, but their NHL teammates stood behind them, both literally and figuratively.

"I think if you look around this room there's a lot of White athletes in here, and I think that's the statement that's being made right now," Vegas' Reaves said. "It's great that the NBA did this, and the MLB and WNBA. They have a lot of black players in those leagues. But for all these athletes in here to take a stand and say, 'You know what? We see a problem too, and we stand behind you.'

"I go to war with these guys, and I hate their guts on the ice, but I couldn't be more proud. The statement they made today is something that's going to last."

After the NHL held games Wednesday while other leagues walked out, Reaves wrestled with his thoughts that night in his hotel room in Edmonton, unsure of what the morning would bring.

"Am I really going to walk out on my team, and be the only guy," he said, "Or are there going to be a couple guys?"

Instead, Reaves awoke to a text from Lightning defenseman Kevin Shattenkirk, who said he had players in the Eastern Conference bubble in Toronto that wanted to talk.

"I think we felt that we took our time and were able to process this as a whole and speak as a group of players and make the right decision and today I think unify us as a group to realize that any Black player in this league, any Black player who is a kid coming up playing hockey can feel they have a voice that the NHL and the sport itself is a safe place and a place that obviously is a predominantly White sport, they feel alienated," Shattenkirk said. "But they have the support of every single one of us. That's what we're striving to achieve here is inclusion, and making sure everyone feels welcome in the sport of hockey."

Reaves then received a text from Vancouver players showing support as well.

"I think it was more powerful that the conversation started with White players on other teams wanting to talk, and I think that's the most powerful thing that happened today," Reaves said. "You see us all coming together, all opponents."

The in-person conversations began between Golden Knights and Canucks players, but eventually spread across all eight teams remaining in the playoffs.

"I'm proud of them for taking the time to get together, not just with the players here in our bubble but also the bubble out East," Colorado coach Jared Bednar said. "I think when you get together as a group it sends a stronger message."

Shortly after the players spoke, the Minnesota Wild's Matt Dumba pointed out that the decision was pushed for by the players.

"This must be clear! This is not a league mandated action this has been solely driven by its PLAYERS and damn I'm proud to stand with them!" Dumba tweeted.

The Golden Knights-Canucks and Flyers-Islanders series were scheduled to play Game 3 of those second round series on Thursday. Game 4s of the Lightning-Bruins and Avalanche-Stars were scheduled for Friday.

"The NHL supports the players' decision and will reschedule those four games beginning Saturday and adjust the remainder of the second round schedule accordingly," the NHL Players' Association wrote in a release Thursday.

"Black and Brown communities continue to face painful experiences. The NHL and NHLPA recognize that much work remains to be done before we can play an appropriate role in discussion centered on diversity, inclusion and social justice. We understand that the tragedies involving Jacob Blake, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others require us to



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recognize this moment. We pledge to work to use our sport to influence positive change in society.”

NHL players and the league faced questions about their decision to play on Wednesday when games in the NBA, WNBA, MLB and MLS were all postponed.

“It happened really fast,” said Avalanche forward Pierre-Edouard Bellemare, who played in Wednesday night’s game. “I don’t want to give the blame to anybody, but by the time we got to the rink, games were on, and the news came out that the NBA postponed. I feel like after reflecting on it, and us getting together, this is the best response we could’ve had.”

According to The Athletic’s Pierre LeBrun, more than 100 NHL players in the bubbles had talks with Evander Kane and Dumba, both members of the Hockey Diversity Alliance. The organization has a mission “to eradicate racism and intolerance in hockey.”

The HDA released a statement Thursday morning, saying “The Hockey Diversity Alliance is deeply saddened by the Jacob Blake shooting – yet another example of police brutality against African Americans that continues to go unabated and unaddressed in the communities where NHL teams play.

“Earlier today, the HDA formally requested that Commissioner (Gary) Bettman and the NHL suspend all playoff games today to allow players and fans to reflect on what happened and send a message that human rights must take priority over sport.”

Golden Knights coach Peter DeBoer coached Kane in San Jose and said he thinks Kane is proud of the players’ decision today.

“Evander has been way out in front of this,” DeBoer said. “He’s been discussing this for years, and I know he’s really proud of what’s going on today with the NHL. He knows, and everybody in this room earlier, knows that this one act isn’t going to change anything. But hopefully it shines a brighter light on systemic racism.”

The NHL plans to restart play on Saturday, but an updated schedule has not been released yet.

The Athletic LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192316 Websites

The Athletic / LeBrun: Hockey missed a moment, but it still has a chance to make real change

By Pierre LeBrun

Where does the NHL go from here?

Make no mistake, as colleague Scott Burnside wrote, the NHL was on the wrong side of history Wednesday night. You can’t take that back now. All you can do is try to make amends, if at all possible, with meaningful action. But what does that mean, exactly?

In the short term, postponing Thursday’s games would be a start. Even if it will be met with the “too little, too late” tag. But it still beats not doing it, in my humble opinion.

And sources Thursday morning suggested there were discussions between the NHL, NHL Players’ Association and players in both bubble cities about what to do regarding the two games on Thursday. Let’s see where that goes.

In the bigger picture, Stars forward Jason Dickinson’s postgame quote Wednesday hit home for me. It’s the awkward truth about hockey.

“I think the hardest thing to realize for this league, for all of us here in this situation, we come from all walks of life, we’ve got guys from all over the country,” Dickinson said.

“It’s hard for some guys to have this hit home. I don’t want to say anybody’s blind to it or ignorant but we are a league of a lot of Canadians, a lot of Europeans, so it’s hard when something like that doesn’t hit home. You look at the MLB, you look at the NBA. They’re primarily American players. It’s easy to hit home for them. It’s easy for them to take a stance against something. (Tyler Seguin) and I take a knee and we get backlash that we are not Americans, we shouldn’t be speaking up for something like this.

“But we believe that we’re close enough as Canadians that we have a right to say something and in Canada, we face or have seen similar things. I think it’s difficult to appreciate things as outsiders to America, but we try to give our two cents where we can. You know what, tonight just didn’t seem like that was the right call to do.”

Dickinson and Seguin took a knee along with Ryan Reaves and Robin Lehner before their first round-robin playoff game against the Golden Knights earlier in August.

As Dickinson alluded, the NHL is 75 percent non-American. And, let’s just say it, it’s predominantly White. I think hockey’s lack of diversity is only going to get worse, too. The cost of playing elite hockey is through the roof. Worse than ever. It’s going to leave many people of different backgrounds behind.

I think we can all agree that systematic racism is part of socioeconomic inequality. They go hand in hand. So when only kids of a certain financial standing can afford elite hockey in North America, we have a problem. The NHL needs to be a leader in bringing down the cost of equipment, for starters.

As far as the cultural makeup of the game, being non-American or non-Black does not mean you turn a blind eye to what’s happening.

We have plenty of racism here in Canada. Ask any Canadian of colour about that. As a guy from Northern Ontario, that’s why I wrote about the Indigenous experience in hockey back in mid-June. It was an emotional story for me to write in part because of my own guilt of not tackling the story earlier in my career.

And I think some NHL players are dealing with similar emotions over the past few months. Their lack of understanding in the past, their willingness to learn more. And we’ve seen some of that. Seguin has certainly tried. Lehner taking a knee was powerful.

We need more of it.

This can’t just be about the Hockey Diversity Alliance. This can’t be about Evander Kane and Matt Dumba carrying the torch every time. They need more support. It begins with more education, to be sure, for hockey players who didn’t grow up with this first-hand.

But it also means action. Wednesday night was tough to watch if you love the sport of hockey. Imagine what it felt like for any youth hockey player of colour.

The next few days still matter. As do the next few weeks and months and years. Let’s see real change.

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1192317 Websites

The Athletic / The quietest day: Why the puck dropped in the NHL on a historic day for sports



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

## NEWS CLIPPINGS • August 28, 2020

By Thomas Drance and Ryan S. Clark

EDMONTON — Silence in an empty arena. The absence of noise. Of atmosphere. Of fans. Of community.

Hockey is a game of sounds. Skates shredding ice. Sticks clacking. Bodies being checked into boards. Wednesday was no different. Except that it was.

The NHL was playing games while most other leagues in North America came to a halt. The NBA, WNBA and MLS postponed their games while three MLB games were canceled due to player protests.

It was a historic, player-driven moment that stretched across sports with athletes showing solidarity with the NBA's Milwaukee Bucks, who decided not to take the floor ahead of Game 5 of their first-round series. The Bucks' walkout was in reaction to the shooting of Jacob Blake by police. Blake was shot in Kenosha, Wisc., about 40 miles away from where the Bucks call home.

The Bucks were making a point to protest systemic racism and the persistence of police violence targeting Black people in the United States. That discussion can be expanded across the border where similar issues persist in the experiences of Black and Indigenous communities in Canada.

On Wednesday, the NHL continued as scheduled. Business as usual. It was a contrast. The rest of the sporting world remained largely silent while the NHL played games inside empty arenas in Edmonton and Toronto.

It all started at around 2:10 p.m. Mountain Time. The tip-off was delayed in the Bucks game. NBA referees began to give up on looking down the players' tunnel in the Orlando bubble as they waited for the Bucks to take the floor. It became clear something was happening. Within the hour — 3:05 p.m. MT — the NBA reacted to the unified player protest by postponing their entire slate of playoff games.

Here is how the NHL and the hockey world as a whole reacted on one of the most unprecedented days in sports history.

The first NHL personality to comment on the rapidly developing, earth-shaking sports story unfolding was retired goaltender Roberto Luongo through his unverified, intentionally mysterious Twitter account.

Luongo responded to a request for comment on his decision to support the Bucks' protest from The Athletic by sending the following, simple quote from Martin Luther King Jr.: "There comes a time when silence is betrayal" — MLK.

After George Floyd was slain by Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin in late May, Sharks forward Evander Kane broke through the traditional, stoic collectivism of NHL hockey culture and was incredibly outspoken about the need for change in society at large and within the hockey world specifically.

Within five minutes of the NBA postponing Thursday's games, Kane became the first active NHL player to express his support for the collective action of his NBA peers:

On TSN 1040 Vancouver's afternoon drive time show Sekeres and Price the news broke that — barring something drastic — the NHL was expected to play their two scheduled evening games on Wednesday night.

It was said that while the league was monitoring the rapidly evolving situation, the games were widely expected to go ahead.

"I don't expect the League to initiate a game stoppage," NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly said in a statement to Sportsnet's Chris Johnston. "Obviously, our Players are free to express themselves in any manner they feel is appropriate."

Daly's brief statement was the only public comment from the NHL or the NHLPA on Wednesday.

The statement itself seems bland, but in fact, it spoke volumes. The key phrases: The league itself wouldn't be the one to initiate a game stoppage, however, if players were to express themselves in any manner they feel is appropriate, the league would be supportive.

NHL sources indicated to The Athletic on Wednesday that getting a sense of how the players felt about the collective action in the NBA bubble was a shaping factor guiding the league's response. The NHLPA would not confirm on Wednesday night whether players had been formally polled for their opinions, indicating only that discussions continued to be held internally and with the NHL as of the time of publication.

While the news was breaking that NBA players had staged a walkout, an NHL game was ongoing in Toronto.

The Flyers and Islanders were deadlocked through 60 minutes, the result of a frenetic Islanders comeback in the final 10 minutes of the game.

After Flyers defender Philippe Myers won the game in overtime, Islanders captain Anders Lee became the first NHL player to address the situation in the NBA directly to the media. Lee professed that he'd yet to properly consider the underlying facts, but expressed support for the actions of his NBA peers:

Wild defenceman Matt Dumba became the first NHL player to kneel during the anthem during the first game of the NHL's return to play Stanley Cup playoff tournament on Aug. 1. He gave a raw, emotional, extemporaneous speech that afternoon in Edmonton and for the balance of the playoffs, rose his fist from the Wild bench during the singing of both "O Canada" and "The Star-Spangled Banner" before games.

On Wednesday afternoon, Dumba tweeted his support for the activism of the Bucks and NBA players.

An hour before the puck dropped on the Bruins-Lightning game in Toronto, the hockey world's leading analytics website NaturalStatTrick announced that — in protest — they would not be pulling their usual game data for the NHL contests scheduled for that evening.

Most might view Natural Stat Trick as a site with heat maps and numbers, but the person behind the site — Brad Timmins — saw what was going on and felt the need to show support. Timmins said he saw what was happening with the NBA and when TNT analyst Kenny Smith walked off the 'Inside The NBA' studio set in a show of support for the players, he made up his mind.

Timmins told The Athletic he felt like the NHL was "not going to do much, if anything" and wanted to do something on his own. He believed there were not enough people in hockey who have platforms — large or small — who were drawing attention to Blake's shooting. For him, he was not worried about those who disagreed with his decision not to track the league's only two games on the schedule.

"I think the league only kind of recently got over the idea they could ignore it completely," Timmins said. "I think the league still kind of thinks or believes that they can just pay a little bit of lip service to it. Take minor, little steps and that is going to be good enough. I think it takes more people standing, speaking with whatever platform they have available to them and taking their own steps to get that conversation stronger within hockey before the league realizes what they need to do to take this more seriously.

"What did they call it? A moment of reflection? A moment of reflection when other leagues are cancelling games? Or teams and players are cancelling games? Entire leagues are going dark for the night. A moment of reflection just doesn't stack up."

Former NHLer Akim Aliu revealed in the fall that former Flames and Hurricanes head coach Bill Peters had berated him in front of his teammates and used a racial slur while he was an AHL player in the



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Blackhawks organization. Aliu's account set off a moment of soul searching in the hockey world through the fall and winter of 2019.

As the afternoon progressed on Wednesday, Aliu, one of the founding members of the Hockey Diversity Alliance (HDA), pointedly noted on Twitter that while NBA players had staged a walkout, MLB teams had cancelled a variety of games and the WNBA had cancelled their scheduled slate, the NHL was still pushing ahead.

Shortly after Aliu's pointed criticism of the NHL's inaction, Dumba jumped on The Program, the drive-time program for Sportsnet 650 in Vancouver.

Speaking from the heart about what he'd like to see from the NHL, Dumba didn't mince words, calling out the NHL's majority of White players to step up and lead.

"You know what, it's kind of a loaded question because I know what's going to happen and I don't think much is going to happen from that standpoint," Dumba responded honestly when asked what he'd like to see from the league. "The NHL we're always last to the party on these topics, it's kind of sad and disheartening for those of us in the HDA and I'm sure other guys across the league. If no one stands up and says anything, it's that silence, you're just outside looking in on being leaders and invoking real change, when you have such an opportunity to do so. So that's my thoughts on it.

"I hope guys find it in them to stand up," Dumba continued when asked a follow-up question about the role of his fellow players and the league in being leaders on topics of social justice. "You can't keep coming to the minority players every time there's a situation like that. The White players in our league need to have answers for what they're saying in society too and where they stand in making a change, doing good for the league. There's a lot of them that are good people, in hockey, there's a lot of good people in hockey, but the silence is as bad as the violence."

As Dumba spoke from the heart on the radio in Vancouver, former NHL goaltender Kelly Hruddy prepared to broadcast to the nation.

Hruddy was critical, on the Canadian rights holder's airwaves, of the NHL's decision to go ahead with the scheduled games, noting "I don't think we should be here."

He beseeched viewers to have difficult conversations with their families. He stated unequivocally that for him and his family, Black Lives Matter.

As Dumba finished his radio hit in Vancouver and caught wind of what Hruddy had said on television, he took to Twitter to thank him. "Preach," Dumba wrote. "I'm with you."

At Scotiabank Arena in Toronto, before puck drop, a brief 27-second pregame ceremony preceded the game between the Lightning and Bruins.

While Jacob Blake was mentioned by name, the short pregame moment of reflection was defined by what was absent, in particular, the absence of the words "Black Lives Matter," "Systemic racism" and any mention of law enforcement.

Sportsnet analyst Anthony Stewart, who was on the panel on Wednesday night, shared a childhood photo of himself and his brother Chris Stewart as children with the Stanley Cup on Instagram, tagged to Scarborough Town Centre.

In a lengthy caption that accompanied the photo, Stewart touched on his upbringing and on his goal of making hockey more accessible.

"We were taught that we have to work twice as hard for half the opportunity of others and that is wrong," Stewart wrote, later adding, "We don't want your pity, your hashtags, your courtesy tweets. We want the system to make hockey more accessible and affordable so people that look like us have the opportunity to change their lives through this great game. The real tragedy is that the way the current hockey system is constructed, families that aren't affluent have very little opportunity to excel in the game."

On the American national broadcast, the social activism of athletes representing the other North American sports leagues was occasionally addressed by Liam McHugh. Otherwise, there wasn't the same level of panel discussion of these issues as there was on Sportsnet.

Before the beginning of the second game of the night, however, NBC broadcaster Anson Carter commented that he had no issue with the NHL games proceeding on Wednesday. Carter went on to suggest that tying athlete protests into voter enrolment efforts would be his preferred route forward, as

Carter's statements were widely shared on social media, where they would later draw criticism from Aliu, who tweeted in disagreement with Carter, "If you ain't with us you against us."

At Rogers Place in Edmonton, the Avalanche and the Stars took the ice for Game 3.

After a short warmup skate during which the starters were announced in a darkened, empty arena, the starters lined up along the blue line and the other players filed to the bench.

NHL sources had indicated earlier in the day that the "moment of reflection" would play in both hubs pregame on Wednesday evening. It was conspicuously absent, however, from the Avalanche-Stars game.

A video played on the Jumbotron of the Stars' anthem singer, and "The Star-Spangled Banner" played. There was no moment of reflection in the NHL's second game of the night. Multiple inquiries on Wednesday evening to the NHL requesting comment as to why there was no moment of reflection in the western bubble went unanswered. As the anthems played, all 20 players on both clubs stood with their hands by their sides.

"It's a game that you and I don't even feel should be played," Sportsnet host Christine Simpson said to Johnston, introducing a segment as the Bruins and the Lightning prepared for the third period.

"I feel actually sick to my stomach that we're here doing this game," Simpson added.

It was a powerful moment, an honest one. It was a moment that underscored the absence of normality, even as the NHL playoffs plowed ahead amidst a torrent of public criticism on social media and on the NHL broadcast itself in Canada.

In the strongest statement of the evening from a current NHL player, Kane suggested that the league's "lack of action and acknowledgement" was "just straight up insulting."

After 5:30 p.m. MT, only the six teams actively participating in games on Wednesday continued to post content to Twitter.

Over a three-hour window on an NHL playoff game night, a total of two tweets were posted from NHL team accounts: Content tweets from the Flames and Canadiens, respectively. Finally, following the Bruins' lopsided defeat at the hands of the Lightning, the last tweet issued from an NHL member team's account belonged to the Coyotes:

At the time of publication, no active NHL member club had released any type of statement specifically reacting to the news of the day or to the active protests from professional athletes in the other major North American sports leagues. At approximately 10 p.m. MT, the 2021-22 expansion Seattle Kraken became the first NHL club to address the issue at hand with a statement and a link to their Black Lives Matter page on their team site.

Postgame in Toronto, the Bruins and the Lightning discussed the experience they'd gone through in the lead up to their game. Asked directly about whether their club had considered cancelling the game, Patrice Bergeron and Zdeno Chara denounced racism and expressed support for human rights and for NBA players.

They went on to indicate that they'd been surprised to learn about the events elsewhere in the professional sporting world on arriving at the rink ahead of Wednesday night's game:



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It was a sentiment echoed by Lightning coach Jon Cooper, although Cooper's most intriguing answer was on the subject of whether the NHL is behind the rest of the professional sporting world on social justice issues.

"It's hard for me to comment right now," Cooper said. "Being part of a professional league, I've watched so many good things that all professional leagues do, from charities to, I look around our arena, I sit back and look back at what happened when we first got here and the emotional speech that Matt Dumba gave that was extremely moving and still guys talk about what's gone on, what's happened.

"We can't control some of the things that go on in the outside world," Cooper added. "I truly believe, whether it's pro sports or the business world or whatever it is, at some point, we are all going to have to come together. And I think whether you say the NHL is behind or ahead, the league done so many good things in so many different areas. This is one we need to pick our head up and take notice and no doubt we will. It's hard for me to answer this question, especially what happened while we were playing and before that ... but I know the league and the people running it at some point everything will be addressed and we'll get ourselves up to speed and support what needs to be done."

The Avalanche and Stars did not have a moment of solidarity before their game like the one held at the start of the Bruins and Lightning game.

However, both teams were asked about the subject from reporters. Dallas forwards Jason Dickinson and Tyler Seguin, who kneeled for "The Star-Spangled Banner" with Golden Knights players Robin Lehner and Ryan Reaves during the play-in round were both made available postgame.

Seguin, who has been one of the more active and outspoken players about race and racism, suggested that there are different ways to show support like what he and Dickinson did when they kneeled.

"I fully support what the NBA and MLB is doing and we just had the decision tonight to play the game," Seguin said. "We look forward to showing our actions more in the coming days."

In his postgame discussion with the media, Dickinson addressed the multinational dynamics in NHL locker rooms and approached the subject of why NHL players didn't follow their NBA and MLB peers in pushing to boycott scheduled games on Wednesday night.

"It's a difficult situation," Dickinson said. "There are different ways, like Seggy said, that we can show support. Does this not playing solve things? No, but it brings attention to it and you know what, it happened kind of last second, like Seggy said. We woke up to it and we were already in game mode and it was kind of one of those things that it's hard to come together that close to game time... I think the hardest thing to realize for this league, for all of us here in this situation, we come from all walks of life, we've got guys from all over the country, it's hard for some guys to have this hit home. I don't want to say anybody's blind to it or ignorant but we are a league of a lot of Canadians, a lot of Europeans, so it's hard when something doesn't hit home. You look at the MLB, you look at the NBA, they're primarily American players so it's easy to hit home for them, it's easy for them to take a stance against something. Seggy and I take a knee and we get backlash that we are not Americans, we shouldn't be speaking out for something like this. But we believe that we're close enough, as Canadians, that we have a right to say something and in Canada, we have seen similar things."

Seguin was asked if the Stars had a serious conversation about not playing. He said there was "not a big, serious conversation" but a few Stars' players talked before the game. The centre said he woke up from a nap and did not realize what was happening in the NBA, which did not leave him with a lot of time to think when it came to opting to play or not.

Avalanche veteran centre Nazem Kadri, a member of the HDA, said it "crosses your mind" when other leagues are opting to strike. He said they applaud and support the NBA for taking that stance.

"I understand this is a problem that has gone on for far too long," Kadri said. "The signs and the (optics) is great and everything. Eventually, words get stale and it's about action and making a difference."

The Athletic LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192318 Websites

The Athletic / Down Goes Brown: The playoff performer Hall of Fame (for non-Hall-of-Famers)

By Sean McIndoe

Ah, the Stanley Cup Playoffs. That magical time of year when reputations are made, legacies are written, and superstars become legends.

Of course, it's also the time of the year when pretty ordinary players can become legends too. That's one of my favorite parts. For some reason — a knack for the clutch, an abundance of heart, or just the joy of small sample sizes — certain players seem to level up in the postseason. Some were already stars, some were borderline scrubs, but they found a way to elevate their game when it mattered most.

There's no such thing as the NHL Playoffs Hall of Fame. But there should be. So today, let's honor those players who took their game to the next level when it mattered most by building a roster's worth of inductees.

There's one important criteria for making our squad: The player can't already be in the real Hall of Fame. Spoiler alert: Wayne Gretzky and Mario Lemieux and Bobby Orr were all really good in the playoffs too. There's no fun in that. So we're only looking for playoff heroes who haven't been inducted into the real Hall. (In the same spirit, we're also ruling out active players, and recently retired ones who aren't eligible yet.)

We need 12 forwards, six defensemen and two goalies, and maybe a few Black Aces along the way. We won't worry too much about position beyond that, because it's the playoffs and everyone will do what they need to do to help the team. Let's remember some guys.

First Line

Barry Pederson

Today, most fans know Pederson as a key piece of one of the most lopsided trades of all-time. He was the guy that the Canucks acquired in 1986 in exchange for both a first-round pick and a young Cam Neely. It's probably the worst trade in Canucks history.

But there's a reason that Vancouver gave up so much to get Pederson: He was really good in the playoffs. Like, historically good. In four postseasons from 1982 through 1986, Pederson appeared in 34 playoff games for the Bruins, and he racked up 22 goals and 52 points in those games. That total includes his 1983 run, in which he banked 32 points in 17 games.

All told, Pederson's lifetime points per game in the playoffs of 1.53 ranks behind only Gretzky and Lemieux among players with 10 games. The next three guys on the list: Mark Messier, Mike Bossy and Orr.

Ironically, injuries and diminished production meant Pederson never played another postseason game after the trade. But he did get his name on the Stanley Cup with the 1991 Penguins, along with our next guy...

Kevin Stevens

If you run a list of the top 40 postseasons by points scored, it won't surprise you to see a lot of names show up multiple times. Gretzky is



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there six times. Messier has four. Lemieux, somewhat surprisingly, only has two. Jari Kurri, Doug Gilmour and Bryan Trottier show up a few times each.

But only one player who isn't in the Hall of Fame manages the feat, and that's Stevens. And that's because in the early 90's, Stevens was a freaking beast. He had 33 points in the Pens' first Cup run in 1991, then followed it up with 28 more in 1992. More impressive, his 30 goals in those two years ties him with Gretzky for the most in consecutive postseasons by anyone other than Bossy, Kurri or Lemieux.

He was on his way to a three-peat, with 16 points through 12 games in 1993, when tragedy struck. A brutal fluke injury against the Islanders ended his season and, indirectly, his career as an impact player. It might be hyperbole to say it cost the Penguins a third straight Cup, but I'm not entirely convinced it would be wrong. Stevens was that good.

Reggie Leach

He has to be on the team, because it's possible that nobody ever had a playoff run quite like Leach's masterpiece back in 1976. It's not easy to follow up a 61-goal season by finding another gear in the playoffs, but that's what Leach did when he set an all-time record with 19 playoff goals that year, a mark that still hasn't been beaten to this day — guys like Gretzky, Bossy and Lemieux cleared 15 in a postseason, but never topped Leach's mark. It wasn't quite enough to lead the Flyers to a third straight Cup, but it did earn Leach the Conn Smythe, making him the only non-goalie from a losing team to ever win it.

Leach had some other solid postseason runs, including 16 points in 1980, so he wasn't a one-hit wonder in the same way as some other guys we'll meet. But man, his biggest hit was an all-timer.

Second line

Claude Lemieux

Yeah, I hated him. You probably did too, even if you were his teammate. But you have to admit, the guy's reputation as a playoff warrior was well-earned. His teams always seemed to go deep, and his 234 career playoff games ranks second all-time among forwards, just two back of Messier. And as much as it made you want to swallow your own tongue, he usually produced in those games.

Lemieux led the postseason in goals scored twice, and finished with 80 playoff goals, good for ninth all-time; the full list of guys within five goals of him is Mike Bossy, Joe Sakic, Rocket Richard, Jean Beliveau and Jaromir Jagr. Pretty good company. And that's not even including all those empty-net goals in the warmups.

Dale Hunter

Yeah, there's a bit of a theme here on our second line. Don't turn your back on this group. But Hunter was no one-dimensional goon. He managed 118 career playoff points despite playing on the 80's and 90's Nordiques and Capitals, which is like winning a bunch of Oscars while starring in Police Academy movies. He makes this team by virtue of his knack for the big moment. Scoring in overtime in a winner-take-all deciding game is supposed to be a once-in-a-lifetime experience, but Hunter managed to do it twice: Against the Habs in 1982 and again with the Flyers in 1988:

(But yeah, he was a bit of a goon. With 731 career playoff PIM, he's the all-time leader by almost 200 over the runner-up, Chris Nilan. Look, somebody's got to keep the Red Wings away from Claude.)

Ken Linseman

"The Rat" was best known for, well, being a rat. The NHL's original agitator set the stage for generations of Matthew Barnabys, Sean Averys and Alex Burrows to come. But he was no one-trick pony. While Linseman wasn't a big scorer by 1980s standards, with 807 career points in 860 games, he was money when the playoffs started. He racked up 120 points in 113 games with the Flyers, Bruins and Oilers, topping 20 points in a postseason three times. On the list of 22 players with 100

career playoff points and a points per game above 1.0, only two eligible names aren't in the Hall of Fame: Stevens and Linseman.

Third line

John Druce

Chris Kontos

Daryl Evans

I'm going for more of a Lifetime Achievement vibe with this roster. But I have to at least mention these guys, so let's call this the One-Hit Wonder Line.

Druce remains the poster-child for out-of-nowhere playoff heroes, thanks to his 17 points in 15 games for the 1990 Capitals. Kontos had a deeply weird 1989 postseason, scoring nine times in 11 games without recording an assist a few years before he had a monster season with the expansion Lightning and then disappeared. And Evans, as you Grab Bag readers already know, had 13 points in 11 games for the 1982 Kings, including the overtime winner in one of the most famous games of the decade.

Fourth line

Bobby Smith

Smith was never really a star, at least outside of one outlier season where he had 114 points and finished 10th in Hart voting. But he made the playoffs in 13 straight seasons in Minnesota and Montreal, and won at least a round in 11 of those while racking up 160 points, the most of any player who won't be in the Hall of Fame.

Bob Nystrom

He didn't score as often as some of the other guys on our list — in 157 career playoff games, all with the Islanders, he had 83 points, never more than 18 in a season. But he sure had a knack for the big moment. With four playoff overtime goals, he's tied with Gretzky and others for fifth on the all-time list, trailing only Joe Sakic, Rocket Richard, Glenn Anderson and Patrick Kane. And of course, one of those was just a little bit bigger than the others.

Brian Propp

Poor Propp. You can't say he didn't do his part in the playoffs, racking up 64 goals and 148 points in 160 games. And you can't say that he didn't help his teams win, because they did a lot of winning. Propp's team went to the Stanley Cup Final five times in his career, including one five year stretch where he did it with three different teams: the Flyers (1980, 1985, 1987), Bruins (1990) and North Stars (1991). But you may notice something about those teams. They all lost. We'll put Propp on our roster, but bench him if we get to the Final.

Late cuts: Fernando Pisani was a legend for one Oilers run but had one playoff point the rest of his NHL career. Steve Payne lived up to his name with 17 goals in 1981, including two overtime winners in eight days. Wendel Clark was a playoff warrior who had six Game 7 goals while winning fights and throwing crushing hits, in my unbiased opinion. Some 1980s snipers like Craig Simpson, Tim Kerr and Rick Vaive and had better numbers than you might remember. And Johan Franzen had a fantastic three-season stretch where he was a point per game in the playoffs.

First pair

Brian Rafalski

There are 13 defensemen in NHL history with 100 career playoff points. The first 12 are in the Hall of Fame. The 13th, with 100 on the nose, is Rafalski. He outscored Orr, Scott Niedermayer and Duncan Keith on his way to three Cups with the Devils and Red Wings, and is also one of the few players from the modern era who can say he made the playoffs each and every year of his career.



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Eric Desjardins

He played 17 NHL seasons and made the playoffs in 16 of them, ranking him in the top 20 for games played by a blueliner. Not surprisingly, he racked up a decent point total with 80, ranking sixth among guys who aren't in the Hall. But did any of the five guys ahead of him single-handedly turn around a Stanley Cup final? Not likely, which is why Desjardins makes the top pairing.

Second pair

Paul Reinhart

Reinhart was a good defenseman; not a Norris candidate, but he played in two All-Star Games. Once the playoffs started, though, he became a legitimate stud, including three years with double-digit points. The best of those came in 1984, when he had 17 points in 11 games for the Flames. Among defensemen who played at least two rounds in a single postseason, that ranks third in points per game, behind two schlubs named Paul Coffey and Bobby Orr.

Sadly, the clutch playoff gene apparently skips a generation. Despite having three sons who made the NHL and played parts of a combined 11 seasons, Paul has watched Max, Griffin and Sam total just two career playoff games so far, and one point.

Charlie Huddy

We all know that plus/minus is a flawed stat, but when you get into the extremes it can still tell you something. For example, only two players have a lifetime rating of +100 or better in the playoffs: Larry Robinson and Jari Kurri. But Huddy, who had 14 postseasons with the Oilers, Kings, Sabres and Blues, is right behind them at +98; the next three defensemen on the list are Denis Potvin, Nicklas Lidstrom and Orr

Third pair

Niclas Wallin

What a weird career this guy had. He played 10 NHL seasons, and he wasn't much of an offensive threat, with just 21 career regular-season goals, not counting this one. But once the playoffs started, he ... well, he still barely scored, with just four goals in 93 games. But playoff scoring, like comedy, is all about timing. And while Wallin didn't really know how to score, he certainly knew when to score — three of his four career goals were in overtime, tying him for all-time lead among defensemen in that category.

(In case you're wondering about that fourth goal, the only one that came in regulation, it was merely a third-period game-winner.)

Joe Micheletti

You probably know Micheletti as a broadcaster. But in his playing days, he was a consistent playoff performer who could be counted on for putting up 1.09 points per game in each and every postseason he appeared in.

OK, fine, he actually only had one postseason run. But with 12 points in 11 games for the 1981 Blues, Micheletti earns a fun distinction: Among the 36 players with at least 10 playoff games and a points per game average of 1.0 or better, he's the only one in NHL history with just one postseason run to his name.

Late cuts: Sandis Ozolinsh and Sergei Gonchar both have solid cases. Steve Duchene, Jeff Brown and Gary Suter were underrated 80's stars. Ken Daneyko didn't score much, but he was a rock when it mattered. And Dan Boyle produced plenty of offense, although not always in the right direction.

Goaltenders

Chris Osgood

We can argue over whether Osgood should be in the real Hall of Fame. (That argument will involve me saying "no," and being right.) But he isn't,

at least not yet, and that means he pretty much has to be on our team. His 74 postseason wins ranks in the top-10, he won three Cups, he once took Dominik Hasek's starting job, and his 15 postseason shutouts ranks behind only Martin Brodeur, Patrick Roy and Curtis Joseph. Was he a product of the great teams in front of him? Sure, that's part of it, but he got the job done. Keep him out of the real Hall, but we'll give him a spot in ours.

Chico Resch

Maybe this is a homer pick, since Resch was always one of my favorites growing up. He was an above-average goaltender throughout a 14-season career that saw him earn second-team All-Star honors twice. His career numbers: a 3.28 goals-against average and .891 save percentage, both of which were extremely solid for a guy who played in the high-scoring 70's and 80's. But when the playoffs arrived, Resch got better. In 41 games, he posted a 2.57 GAA and .913 save percentage. Those would be good numbers today. Back then, they were ridiculous.

His best run was his first, as a rookie back in 1975. After getting shelled for six goals on just 14 shots in his second career playoff start and temporarily losing his job, he returned and went on an all-time heater; in 10 games, he posted a save percentage of .960 or better six times. It was nearly enough to derail the Flyers' quest for a second straight championship, and remains the best playoff season in terms of save percentage by a goalie with at least a dozen games in the pre-Dead Puck era.

Late cuts: The nature of the playoffs means that we could list literally dozens of guys that have a strong case for being on our team, especially since the real Hall of Fame doesn't have anywhere near enough goalies. That list includes borderline candidates like Curtis Joseph, Mike Vernon, Tom Barrasso, Mike Richter and Tim Thomas, as well as some slightly lesser known names like Marty Turco, Tomas Vokoun, and even Jake Allen.

But here's a good one: Can you name the goalie with the lowest postseason goals-against average since the start of the Original Six era (minimum 20 games)? Would you believe Patrick Lalime, with a 1.77? For a guy with a reputation as a playoff choker, Lalime was kind of amazing in the playoffs. Well, except for that one period ...

The Athletic LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192319 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Postponement of NHL games an opportunity for overdue reflection, conversation

Chris Johnston | @reporterchris

August, 6:46 PM

TORONTO — The arenas inside the bubbles will go dark tonight.

As they should.

The NHL found a way to safely conduct the Stanley Cup Playoffs in the middle of a pandemic, but it couldn't keep the most important issue of the day outside the walls of the secure zones it constructed in Toronto and Edmonton.

The Black Lives Matter movement has finally arrived in a predominantly white sport, and it's at least a day late and a dollar short. But it's here. The players have used their voices like those in bigger, more culturally diverse and profitable sports leagues and decided not to play the two games originally scheduled for Thursday (Islanders vs. Flyers, and



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Canucks vs. Golden Knights), plus two more scheduled Friday (Bruins vs. Lightning, and Stars vs. Avalanche).

The Hockey Diversity Alliance helped guide the decision-making process, first by formally asking the league to suspend all playoff games to make a statement about human rights taking precedence over sports, and then by leading a conference call with a meaningful number of players inside the bubble.

Evander Kane, Matt Dumba, Akim Aliu, Wayne Simmonds, Nazem Kadri and the HDA's other founding members have clearly articulated the biggest impediment to change: They can't be the only ones taking up these issues.

If you only ever have Black players and Filipino players and Lebanese players speaking up, they're not truly going to be heard at the volume needed to make a significant impact. To understand why, you need only walk into a dressing room at any level of the sport in basically every place it is played.

I fell in love with hockey while growing up in small-town Canada, surrounded almost exclusively by kids who looked exactly like me. And I consider it one of my life's true blessings that I've been able to turn that passion into a job that never feels like work.

But on Wednesday night, I didn't want to be at work.

The empty stands at Scotiabank Arena couldn't have felt any more hollow while Boston and Tampa played Game 3 of their second-round series. After watching history get made inside the NBA's Disney World bubble, where the Milwaukee Bucks set off a wave of player-initiated strikes in the WNBA, MLS, MLB and professional tennis by refusing to take the court to face the Orlando Magic, it simply didn't feel right to see the NHL play on.

"I don't think anything feels right, right now, to be honest," Lightning coach Jon Cooper said Thursday morning when asked to reflect on the decision to go ahead with the game.

That's true, but continuing to put their heads down, withdraw further into the bubble and take the ice for games would have been downright wrong.

The hockey community has taken steps in the proper direction since George Floyd, a Black man, was killed by white police officers in Minnesota three months ago. We saw a huge number of NHL players put out statements condemning systemic racism. We saw entire teams wear "Black Lives Matter" T-shirts. We even saw a couple players take a knee during the national anthems at the outset of these playoffs.

But we also saw Dumba forced to kneel alone before the first game played at Rogers Place inside the bubble after delivering a heart-felt message about the need to fight racism.

"Hockey is a great game, but it could be a whole lot greater, and it starts with all of us," Dumba said that afternoon.

The truth is that we've trailed behind the collective conversations being held elsewhere in the sporting world in large part because we weren't forced to have them. Even after the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor at the hands of police, plus a list of others so long it should make you cry. Not even after all of that and then the shooting last weekend in Kenosha, Wis., of Jacob Blake, who was left paralyzed after taking at least seven bullets in the back from officers.

It took other leagues stopping to compel us towards action.

The NHL is largely composed of white players from North America and Europe, and largely covered by media members with those same backgrounds.

People like me. People who have incorrectly thought that not being overtly racist in our behaviour was enough, which is the very definition of white privilege. People who can do more to affect change and stand beside our neighbours regardless of ethnicity, gender or sexual orientation.

Do you want to know what postponing a couple hockey games in August accomplishes?

At minimum, it forces those of us inhabiting that world to step back, reflect and have some honest conversations about why it needed to happen. It's a step. The first of many more to come.

"The players are going to have to get involved, I'm going to have to get involved, everybody," said New York Islanders coach Barry Trotz. "And if you do that, that will effect change for our country. And it definitely needs it right now."

It's important to remember that none of us gets to choose the time we live in.

Sometimes a pandemic arrives without warning and turns the world upside down, which can be tumultuous and uncertain and scary even for those of us who enjoy the privilege of a comfortable life.

But we should not lose sight of the fact that with disruption comes opportunity — a chance to slow down, and reflect, and see some things we've been missing in plain view.

That's where we are right now.

I will be the first to put my hand up and say that there have been numerous times in the past when I could have been a stronger, more forceful ally to the Black Lives Matter movement. And I'm sure many others in the NHL community feel the same way, starting with the mistake made by playing games Wednesday night that thankfully won't be repeated here tonight.

That's action, and it means more than the words we've spoken before.

As the Chinese proverb goes, the best time to plant a tree was 20 years ago. The second best time is now.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192320 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Player-driven postponement an awakening for historically conformist NHL

Iain MacIntyre | @imacSportsnet

August, 10:58 PM

EDMONTON – It looked less like a protest than an awakening.

Nearly 100 National Hockey League players from four Western Conference teams trying to beat each other to go to the Stanley Cup, players from many countries and ethnicities, stood shoulder to shoulder Thursday in support of a two-day shutdown intended to shine a spotlight once again on systemic racism in the wake of the shooting of another unarmed Black man by a white police officer.

At the front and centre of the group, crowded into a press conference room inside the Edmonton bubble near the end of a historic day, stood Ryan Reaves, literally the biggest Black man in hockey.

This was a moment of empowerment – the manifestation of the players' realization that on issues that are most important to them and their communities beyond hockey, they need not wait for their teams and league to tell them how they should feel and act.

"I think if you look around this room, there are a lot of white athletes in here, and I think that's the statement that's being made right now,"



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Reaves, the battering-ram forward from the Vegas Golden Knights who had been scheduled to terrorize the Vancouver Canucks on Thursday night, told reporters.

"It's great that the NBA did this, and MLB and the WNBA. They have a lot of Black players in those leagues. But for all these athletes in here to take a stand and say: 'You know what? We see the problem, too. And we stand behind you.'

"I go to war with these guys and I hate their guts on the ice, but I couldn't be more proud of these guys. The statement they've made today is something that's going to last."

Racism is not a minority problem. It belongs to all of us. It is ridiculous to think the victims alone can fix it. Or should.

As the NHL allowed Wednesday night's playoff games to go on even as players from the NBA and other leagues refused to perform after a Wisconsin police officer shot Jacob Blake seven times in the back while his three young children watched, Reaves wondered how he could possibly play Thursday.

If he sat out, he wondered if he would be the only one – and how would that look? Instead, 200 players walked out with him, and none will play again until Saturday as all eight teams left in the Stanley Cup tournament will postpone one game.

Reaves said he woke Thursday to a text from former St. Louis Blues teammate Kevin Shattenkirk, still playing in the Eastern Conference playoffs with the Tampa Bay Lightning, asking Reaves to speak to some players in the Toronto bubble.

Then he received a text from a player on the Canucks, tied 1-1 with the Knights in the second-round series, asking for a meeting.

Representing one of the most culturally and racially diverse cities in North America, Canucks players had talked early Thursday and were uncomfortable playing. They reached out to Reaves and then met with players from the Golden Knights.

Later, the group invited Evander Kane and Matt Dumba from the Hockey Diversity Alliance to speak to players, and more than 100 of them listened and asked questions. Players from the Canucks, Knights, Colorado Avalanche and Dallas Stars all decided not to play and informed the NHL and its Players' Association.

The players decided.

"We were 100 per cent behind this from the moment it was brought up by the players," Vegas coach Peter DeBoer said in a coaches' press conference that followed the players' video call. "Yes, it's player-driven, but it's team-supported."

"There's sports and then there are things that are bigger than sports," Canuck coach Travis Green said. "I wasn't surprised at all this morning when I spoke to our players and they wanted to talk to Ryan. These guys, they're teammates within the league. They all care about each other, but when they go on the ice they still compete hard against each other. Yet they're family. I felt that our group wanted to make sure the Vegas team knew, or Ryan knew, that they were behind him. I was behind them all the way, supported them 100 per cent with whatever decision they made. It's hard not to be proud of them."

Reaves was joined at the front of the room by Canucks captain Bo Horvat, Colorado Avalanche players Nazem Kadri and Pierre-Edouard Bellemare, and Dallas Stars centre Jason Dickinson.

The sight of all these players standing together, surrounded by teammates, made for a powerful and lasting image. This defiance in the name of social consciousness felt like a watershed moment for a league in which conformity and compliance are hallmarks of its culture.

"We need to come together," Horvat said. "Obviously, this kind of stuff can't stand. We need to educate ourselves and realize what's going on in the world. I think (Reaves) hit the nail on the head: there needs to be

change, and us being all together here as one definitely shows the strength in the hockey community."

Kadri said: "Some things are bigger than sports and there comes a time you've got to start acting on your word. You can put up signs and have all that stuff, but at the end of the day, what are you really doing to make a difference? It's that time for action."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192321 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Trotz, Vigneault give thoughts on NHL platform for protest

Luke Fox | @lukefoxjokebox

August, 2:50 PM

TORONTO – Given time to digest the player-driven protests that dominated the sports landscape while they played Game 2 of their playoff series Wednesday, the head coaches of the Philadelphia Flyers and New York Islanders delivered two different responses Thursday.

Barry Trotz demanded involvement.

Alain Vigneault pleaded ignorance.

When they spoke around noontime, both coaches expected to be behind their respective benches for Thursday's first scheduled NHL game at 7 p.m. ET, while the NBA postponed its full slate of action for a second consecutive day.

The quieting of the courts is a result of a player-driven initiative to draw attention to police brutality of Black people in the United States and systemic racism. The shooting of Jacob Blake in Wisconsin Sunday by a police officer acted as the tipping point.

Both professional tennis circuits followed suit, cancelling play Thursday.

The newly formed Hockey Diversity Alliance, which includes Evander Kane, Matt Dumba and Akim Aliu, formally requested the NHL to act in unison with the NBA and suspend its two games Thursday.

Trotz said the Islanders held a team discussion on racism and whether to sit out Game 3, after the NHL and its players' decision to go ahead with Wednesday night's action drew criticism.

"I'm trusting that group, and the leadership of guys like [captain] Anders [Lee], and they're excellent that way," Trotz said. "They understand the importance of the playoffs, but they also understand where the world is right now. What happened yesterday, we really weren't informed what was happening. We were playing when all this happened. As you get to digest it, I think what happened last night is a great statement for the athletes. They have a great platform, and they used it.

"I just heard that the NBA is going to continue to play [at some point], and in my opinion I think all sports should play because I think the athletes in every sport have a great platform. Just like celebrities do. If you want to keep the issue in the forefront, then these athletes have a great platform. Continue to play, continue to express the message."

Vigneault felt unprepared to comment on the NBA players' boycott following the Flyers' victory Wednesday and his sole focus remained on the playoffs Thursday.

"I have no idea what's going on in the outside world," Vigneault said from the bubble.



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"Ever since we eliminated Montreal, the only thing that's been open in my room is my computer to hockey games. I've been trying to prepare my team the best way I can.

"I'm invested 24/7 on our team, working 20 hours a day, going through video and preparing our group. I don't do Twitter. I haven't read a sports article in I don't know how long, and I haven't read any type of article in I don't know how long. So, I guess I'm a hockey nerd."

Vigneault, apologizing for disappointing with his answer, added he believes the NHL is a great league "doing everything that they can to, obviously, help in their own way, what society is going through."

Trotz said the focus has to be on taking action and players using their platform. The HDA took the lead.

"What's the end game?" Trotz asked.

"You have to get involved. Players are going to have to get involved. I'm going to have to get involved. Everybody. And if you do that, that will effect change for our country. And it definitely needs it right now."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192322 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Dumba, Kane disappointed by NHL's lack of response to Blake shooting

Sportsnet Staff | @Sportsnet

August, 10:02 PM

Two of the faces of the Hockey Diversity Alliance, and the game's strongest proponents for the need to address anti-Black racism in the sport, are expressing their disappointment with the NHL's lack of response to the weekend shooting by police of Jacob Blake in Kenosha, Wis.

In an appearance on Sportsnet's 650 on Wednesday, Minnesota Wild defenceman Matt Dumba — who raised a fist to highlight social and racial justice issues during the anthems of his qualifying-series game against the Vancouver Canucks earlier this month — said the league's decision to hold playoff games Wednesday, despite cancellations across the NBA, WNBA, MLB and MLS, is "disheartening," but expected.

"I know what's going to happen, and I don't think much is going to happen from that standpoint. But it's just back to it, I don't know, the NHL we're always late to the party, especially on these topics, so it's sorta sad and disheartening for me and other members of the HDA, and I'm sure other guys across the league," said Dumba.

"But if no one stands up and does anything, it's the same thing — it's just that silence that you're just outside looking in on actually being leaders and invoking real change when you have such an opportunity to do so."

Kane — who also been outspoken on issues of racial injustice since the death of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police this spring sparked protests across North America — told Sportsnet's David Amber on Wednesday that it's "disappointing" the NHL has yet to acknowledge Blake, who was unarmed and was shot multiple times by police in Kenosha, rendering him paralyzed.

"First thing's first is acknowledging it," said Kane.

"It's another instance, unfortunately, that still hasn't been acknowledged and we're about, what? Three or four days into this video being released, or this incident occurring? And I still haven't seen or heard anything in

regards to it, so that's disappointing and as a Black player in this league, it's even more disappointing."

With the league's silence, the onus has fallen, once again, to players of colour, such as Dumba and Kane, to speak out against racial injustice. It's a torch they'll continue to carry, but one that's burdensome and that they've been forced into shouldering.

"I hope guys find it in them to stand up. You can't keep coming to the minority players every time there's a situation like this. The white players in our league need to have answers for what they're seeing in society right now, and where they stand," said Dumba.

"I know there's a lot of them that are good people. There's a lot of good people in hockey, but the silence is as bad as the violence. You gotta step out and really hear people's stories and have that empathy about why we're doing what we're doing now."

Dumba emphasized the need for their white peers to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with them in the fight.

"It's so much bigger than sports. In hockey, that's what it comes back to: you're relying on the minority guys to step up and say it. But what would really make the most impact is to have strong white leaders from teams step up and have their two cents heard," he said.

"All the other white kids who grow up watching them, who might be their biggest fans, can look up and say, 'Wow, if he's seeing this and trying to stand up and listen, then why am I not as well? Why am I continuing to hold on to this ignorance or hate that I feel toward a subject that I maybe don't know everything about?'"

It's a sentiment shared by Kane.

"Here's another example, unfortunately, but it's another example of the lack of (response) with regards to our league and our players and our media that cover our game. It's not just my responsibility as a minority player in the NHL to be talking about these issues. It's not just Wayne Simmonds, or Akim Aliu or Joel Ward or Matt Dumba's stance or issues in this society — it's everybody's," he said.

"And until everybody decides to take it upon themselves, maybe step away from some of their privileges, to educate themselves and really fight with us, we're going to be in the same situation as we are our today."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192323 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / NHL missed opportunity to stand up for social justice Wednesday night

Luke Fox | @lukefoxjukebox

August, 2:12 PM

Maybe other parents have discovered the same thing.

That it's when you are tucking your children into bed, they most want to talk. Ask big questions.

Growing up with a sports-mad father, my nine-year-old son, Will, wants to know the other scores before he falls asleep after I let him stay up and watch the first period.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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On Wednesday night, that meant telling Will about the bravery of the Milwaukee Bucks, and it meant explaining the “PPD” next to all the NBA scores and a bunch of the baseball games as well.

It also meant a flood of follow-up questions building on a recurring topic in our home that began before George Floyd’s murder but has certainly spiked in frequency and detail since then:

“The cop was white, right?”

“I don’t understand. Why shoot seven times?”

“How old is Jacob Blake? Does he have kids?”

“Why didn’t the NHL players take a stand?”

“Are all NHL players white?”

I want my son to know that Jacob Blake is 29 years old. That he is a dad. That he was unarmed. That he may never walk again. And, you’re right, Will, that’s not fair.

What I wanted to tell my son is that the NHL players we’ve been entertained by each night this month stood by the NBA, members of MLB, WNBA, MLS and professional tennis. That they all banned united with athletes from other backgrounds and other sports for the common cause of decency.

That they boycotted, or they knelt, or they said something into a microphone we could feel. Be proud of.

The way Doc Rivers did. Or Kenny Smith. Or Chris Webber. Or Sam Mitchell. Or Dominic Smith.

Wednesday won’t be the only opportunity to stand up to police brutality against Black people — there’s no deadline for that — but it was a golden one.

Hockey is my favourite sport, and today I’m a little embarrassed to write that. I won’t pretend to imagine how people of colour who love the sport — fans, players, media members — must be feeling.

The 33-second moment of silence to “erase racism” and wish Blake’s family well before one of the three games played Wednesday felt flippant. The “We Skate for Black Lives” signage that hangs inside Scotiabank Arena rings as empty as the rink itself.

“The signs and the hockey ops is great and everything, but eventually words get stale,” Nazem Kadri said post-game. “It’s about action and making a difference.”

Wednesday night sure felt like a chance for some action, to spread the conversation to a largely white audience. To spark some discussion in households and make people pay attention to the injustice. For a start, watch this:

“If even one player had come to me and said, ‘Hey, I don’t think we should play,’ then we would’ve addressed it as a team. But I never got word from anyone in our room, and the league hadn’t said the players are thinking about not playing.” Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said.

“It’s obviously an important topic and something we need to think long and hard about as a country. But I just think tonight wasn’t maybe the time and place for us.”

So, in the hockey world, it was left to people with no Stanley Cup to play for this year — Evander Kane, Matt Dumba, Akim Aliu, Kelly Hradey — to speak up.

“I don’t think we should be here. I really think the NHL should postpone the games,” Hradey said on Hockey Night in Canada. “I really feel we should be more supportive of Black Lives Matter.”

The games felt unworthy of commentary outside of the disappointment that they happened at all.

Did players not protest out of fear of speaking or standing out as individuals while playoff hockey was front of mind for their teams? Peer pressure is powerful and ridding hockey culture of its rigid conformity and reluctance to embrace diversity won’t happen overnight.

But this one was on a platter for hockey players. A tap-in. They didn’t have to lead, just follow the pack of humanity. Listen. Support. Be an ally.

“The NHL, we’re always late to the party, especially on these topics, so it’s sorta sad and disheartening for me and other members of the HDA [Hockey Diversity Alliance], and I’m sure other guys across the league,” said Dumba, who once knelt alone.

“But if no one stands up and does anything, it’s the same thing — it’s just that silence that you’re just outside looking in on actually being leaders and invoking real change when you have such an opportunity to do so.”

“It’s another instance, unfortunately, that still hasn’t been acknowledged and we’re about — what? — three or four days into this video being released, or this incident occurring, and I still haven’t seen or heard anything in regards to it. So, that’s disappointing. And as a Black player in this league, it’s even more disappointing,” Kane said.

Kane also tweeted this: “Actually, it’s incredibly insulting as a Black man in hockey the lack of action and acknowledgement from the @nhl, just straight up insulting.”

Dumba, sounding defeated during his interview on Sportsnet 650, urged his white peers to join the fight.

“In hockey, that’s what it comes back to: you’re relying on the minority guys to step up and say it. But what would really make the most impact is to have strong white leaders from teams step up and have their two cents heard,” Dumba said.

“All the other white kids who grow up watching them, who might be their biggest fans, can look up and say, ‘Wow, if he’s seeing this and trying to stand up and listen, then why am I not as well? Why am I continuing to hold on to this ignorance or hate that I feel toward a subject that I maybe don’t know everything about?’”

On Thursday afternoon Kane, Dumba, Akim Aliu and the Hockey Diversity Alliance called on the NHL to postpone its games later that night. The players are now preparing for those cancellations.

There is power in numbers. In unity.

And there is incredible power, when you’re tucking your kids in at night, explaining to them why the NHL players chose not to play a game. Why they stood up for people who don’t look quite the same. And why they, too, believe what’s happening is unfair.

Why they chose not to skate for George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and Jacob Blake on Wednesday night?

Yeah, the NHL is in a bubble alright.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192324 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Bruins, Lightning to take time to craft response to Blake shooting

Chris Johnston | @reporterchris

August, 1:27 AM



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • August 28, 2020

TORONTO — The Tampa Bay Lightning and Boston Bruins didn't consider following the lead of other professional sports teams by boycotting their game on Wednesday night, according to veteran players on both sides.

Instead they went ahead with the 8:10 p.m. ET puck drop — three hours after the NBA announced it was postponing its entire slate of games in the wake of Milwaukee Bucks players choosing not to take the court to face the Orlando Magic.

The Bruins and Lightning were completing a back-to-back in their second-round Stanley Cup Playoff series and didn't become aware of the developments happening elsewhere until arriving at Scotiabank Arena, according to the players made available for Zoom interviews afterwards.

As a result, there doesn't seem to have been any serious discussion about the merits of playing.

"It was so close to our game," said Bruins captain Zdeno Chara. "After our pre-game meal we took naps and then we were on the bus so I don't think any of us were watching the TV until we got to the rink and at that point it was obviously too close to the game to start any discussions or trying to move the games to different dates."

"Just personally, with our team, we played last night, we played today, we didn't really find out that the other leagues had taken their stance until we got here tonight," said Lightning defenceman Kevin Shattenkirk. "So it was something that we found out by the time we got to the rink and something we'll have to address going forward."

The Bucks and Magic made history Wednesday afternoon when they refused to play in response to Jacob Blake's shooting by police in Kenosha, Wis., over the weekend. Blake, who is Black, was left paralyzed after taking at least seven shots in the back.

A wave of similar boycotts immediately followed.

The Milwaukee Brewers decided not to go ahead with their game against the Cincinnati Reds, one of four Major League Baseball contests that went unplayed. The WNBA called off its three scheduled games Wednesday as players stood in solidarity with their NBA brethren. And the Western & Southern Open tennis tournament announced that it would postpone play on Thursday to take "a stance against racial inequality and social injustice that once again has been thrust to the forefront in the United States."

The NHL decided to hold a moment of reflection before Wednesday's Lightning-Bruins game, but didn't do so for the Dallas Stars-Colorado Avalanche game played later in the night in Edmonton.

The Bruins had previously taken a public stance against racism with statements from Bergeron and Zdeno Chara following the murder of George Floyd by police in Minnesota. They also wore black t-shirts to the arena before their first round-robin game inside the Toronto bubble earlier this month.

"We stand against any type of racism," Bergeron said Wednesday. "My stance and our stance doesn't change."

"Definitely we support NBA players and all the leagues that showed their support," added Chara. "There's different ways to express that fight and obviously NBA players expressed their opinions by boycotting the games today. So we support it."

The teams will get an off-day in their series on Thursday and will have more time to reflect on what kind of response is needed, if any.

"I think the world's changed in just the short time that we were at the rink," said Lightning coach Jon Cooper. "I got here at 4:30. I think what's happening now at 11:15 is much different than what was happening at 4:30. I don't know all the details of what's happened in other leagues — I'm aware now — but at the time there wasn't things being discussed with our group."

"I mean we were preparing to play the Boston Bruins and when you have such a short turnaround from playing last night to today, that was really all the talk. So that was basically all that happened."

"Like I said, I think there's a lot of things we're aware of now that we weren't as aware of before the game."

The Lightning beat the Bruins 7-1 to take a 2-1 lead in the series. Game 4 is scheduled for Friday night.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192325 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Flames' Tkachuk breaks silence, is 'sick' over criticism of teammates

Eric Francis | @EricFrancis

August, 9:52 AM

CALGARY — Saddled with a concussion that made returning to the Calgary Flames' series against the Dallas Stars an impossibility, Matthew Tkachuk said he was still able to watch TV and use his phone.

It was on those devices he saw plenty of criticism levelled at lads who were supposed to be his top teammates, and it magnified the frustration he was already dealing with.

"I couldn't believe some of the criticism that some guys on my team were getting, and getting the blame for this — especially the criticism towards Johnny (Gaudreau) and Monny (Sean Monahan)," said Tkachuk in his first public comments since leaving Game 2.

"It makes me sick, and it really upsets me, and pisses me off. Everyone was upset about them for offensive production. Well, they produced more than me, so put the blame on me. I didn't do nearly enough to get this team over the top when I was in the lineup, and that's what hurts the most. That really upsets me to see some of the criticism for those guys, being really great players in this league and, even more important, great friends."

The consummate team player, it's not surprising Tkachuk would try falling on the sword for Gaudreau and Monahan.

Yet, when rolling through a list of players he praised for stepping up throughout the Flames' 10-game playoff stint, the two top-liners were noticeably absent.

It would have been impossible to include them.

Instead, he spoke in general terms when it came to those who still haven't found ways to turn the team's undying confidence and belief into something more tangible like a first-round win.

"As players and core players and myself mainly, our best players didn't do enough to get us over the top and into the next round," said Tkachuk, who had one goal and an assist in six playoff games.

"This just can't happen anymore. We have to make sure it doesn't happen. When you're sitting here at home it's all about the result and we've had the same result for how many years?"

"I know that to get us over, when it comes to myself, I have to do everything I can in this offseason to make sure I come back ready to go and not take this opportunity for granted because we don't know how many years together as a group we're going to have, if we even have one."



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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Changes are certainly in order.

Tkachuk won't be one of them, as he's not only the future captain of the club, but the only forward who can be deemed untouchable. (Juuso Valimaki would be the only one at the back end).

The 22-year-old left winger led the club in scoring this season with 23 goals and 61 points in 69 games, and while single-handedly reigniting the Battle of Alberta he demonstrated once again how many ways he can lead.

He was sorely missed late in the Dallas series when the Flames were outplayed in four straight games and couldn't find a way to turn the momentum around.

That is Tkachuk's forte, which is why Sportsnet had a camera fixed on him during the team's elimination game in which the masked forward was shown in a suite, tossing his toque and losing his mind as the team allowed seven unanswered goals.

"It was terrible – it sucked," he said of an evening he deemed the toughest of his young career.

"It was just so hard when you're watching and you're helpless. You want to be out there so bad. It just couldn't happen. At the end of the day, four years and the same result – it's not fun."

Tkachuk left the game three times on Aug 13, including a final disappearance that came after he was left woozy from a Jamie sandwich, courtesy Jamie Oleksiak and Jamie Benn.

"I obviously knew right away when I got back in the locker room things weren't great – I wasn't myself," said Tkachuk, who didn't want to get into the symptoms he experienced, which he said have since disappeared.

"You can't put a timeline on it, but in my mind it was going to be at least a week or two. I was definitely trending in the right direction too, feeling better each day. Right about now I'd be ready to go again and that's the hardest part."

Blessed with a self-awareness that comes with being raised in NHL dressing rooms, Tkachuk went out of his way to commend the team's medical staff for keeping him from harm's way.

"I have to applaud and thank our medical staff and our doctors for taking care of me and really caring about me and making sure we got this right," he said.

"Ultimately it comes down to my health. I can't thank them enough, because as much as I want to be out there, who knows if I would have went out there for one of the last games of the year and made it worse. Then I'd be back home and feeling worse and not normal, the way I feel now."

Emphasizing endlessly how tight the team is and how proud he is of their work ethic, he listed seven players who stepped up, including Cam Talbot, Rasmus Andersson, Noah Hanifin, Sam Bennett, Milan Lucic, Dillon Dube and Mikael Backlund.

No Gaudreau or Monahan, who have been widely criticized for failing to score an even-strength goal.

"Individuals can't carry us through the whole playoffs – we need the full team," said Tkachuk. "If it was about individuals we'd be playing tennis or golf right now and quitting hockey."

He said Lucic told him earlier this week about how his Bruins hit an all-time low one year before winning the Stanley Cup the following season – a tale he hopes his team can mirror.

"We don't have an old team but we have a lot of key pieces of all ages – we want to go after it and bet on ourselves when nobody else is," he said. "Probably nobody had us making a splash in these playoffs except us. We have that belief."

"The next step is doing it."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192326 Websites

TSN.CA / Hockey Diversity Alliance asks NHL to postpone Thursday's games

Rick Westhead

The Hockey Diversity Alliance, a group of nine active and retired professional hockey players, has asked the National Hockey League to postpone its games tonight following a one-hour conference on Thursday morning.

"We don't feel it's right for the NHL to be playing today," said Hockey Diversity Alliance co-head Evander Kane in an interview with TSN. "It's a very small thing for [the NHL] to do. We've had some players reaching out to ask for our advice about what they should do."

According to TSN Hockey Insiders Pierre LeBrun and Darren Dreger, indications are that the league is leaning towards postponing Thursday's games. The Philadelphia Flyers are scheduled to play the New York Islanders in the NHL's Toronto bubble, while the Vegas Golden Knights and Vancouver Canucks are scheduled to play in Edmonton.

The HDA made the request a day after professional athletes from the NBA and other leagues sat out games to protest police brutality and racial injustice.

The HDA has also asked that NHL team owners make their rinks available as voting stations in the upcoming U.S. presidential election and that the league commit to \$100 million worth of funding over 10 years to battle systemic racism.

The association has suggested that money go towards grassroots programs, social justice initiatives, anti-racism education, youth scholarships, and executive and coach training.

The HDA was formed in June by Kane, former NHL player Akim Aliu, Minnesota Wild defenceman Matt Dumba, Buffalo Sabres forward Wayne Simmonds, Detroit Red Wings defenceman Trevor Daley, Ottawa Senators forward Anthony Duclair, recently retired NHL player Joel Ward and Chris Stewart, a forward who split this season with the Flyers and their American Hockey League affiliate. Colorado Avalanche forward Nazem Kadri subsequently joined the HDA.

The hockey players have been advised by former NFL quarterback Colin Kaepernick on how to help effect change in hockey, a predominantly white sport.

The HDA also provided the NHL with a proposed pledge on July 14 to sign. It wants the NHL to commit to diversifying NHL and team staff and suppliers. The HDA also wants the NHL to be fully transparent about "all information related to the policies, targets and commitments" related to the hiring of employees who are visible minorities.

The NHL has not indicated whether it plans to sign the pledge, Kane said.

TSN.CA LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192327 Websites



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • August 28, 2020

TSN.CA / Bo Horvat's value on the rise in Vancouver

Travis Yost

No NHL player is enjoying life in the bubble more than Vancouver Canucks forward Bo Horvat.

The Canucks centre has made the most of Vancouver's captivating playoff run, scoring eight goals in 12 games while looking like one of the league's most dangerous forwards whenever he is on the ice. With the level of competition having significantly jumped in the second round against the Vegas Golden Knights, Horvat's offensive explosion has been a blessing for head coach Travis Green.

It's not as if Horvat's scoring has come out of thin air – he's been a reliable top-six forward since entering the league back in 2014-15, and has put together four consecutive 20-goal seasons on a rebuilding Vancouver team. Horvat's development, plus an influx of more capable players around him (ahem, Elias Pettersson and Quinn Hughes), has allowed him to take the next step in the offensive zone.

A lot of Horvat's success this postseason has to do with three components – the pace and space he's creating for himself, the passing lanes his teammates are creating for him to set up a high volume of scoring chances, and his new position in the Canucks' lineup.

Let's work in reverse order on those items. As Horvat's progressed through his career, so too has the quality of the teammates around him. Five years ago, he spent most of his minutes chasing the puck with Jannik Hansen and Derek Dorsett.

It's a different story these days at even strength – Horvat routinely sits in the Vancouver top six, and this postseason has played most of his minutes with Tanner Pearson and Loui Eriksson up top, backed by both of Vancouver's higher-quality defensive pairings:

It is an interesting collection of talent. While there are some limitations, as a unit they do a solid job of trying to drive the puck into more dangerous areas of the offensive zone. Horvat, in particular, is outstanding at this – whether he's carrying the puck or creating shooting space with sound positioning and off-puck play, the Canucks know he's most dangerous working in the slot between the circles.

It's that same core competency that has made Horvat an elite power-play weapon, and it's why he is a fixture on Vancouver's lethal first unit. Up a man, Horvat generally has two roles – acting as the bumper in the high slot or working his way down low, playing the role of screener and rebound collector. With the puck on his stick, Horvat's role out of the slot is setup man. With the puck off his stick, he's creating chaos.

Just look at how effective he's been at doing that in these playoffs. He's already managed 54 shot attempts in 12 games, and though his shooting percentage is unsustainably through the roof (25 per cent), his scoring is quite meritorious. In fact, only two forwards – Boston's Brad Marchand, and Colorado's Nazem Kadri – have tallied more expected goals than Horvat this postseason. In large part, that's because Horvat is shooting from where goaltenders get burned, over and over again (via EH):

That is an outstanding number of shots from the low slot. To show just how emphatically different it can be, even with players generating similar shot volumes, consider what it looks like for Philadelphia's Claude Giroux this postseason – another very talented forward, but one who has been forced much more to the perimeter and remains goalless:

Horvat has always been a reliable player for this team, but his value as a weapon on the team's second line and on the first power-play unit is pronounced with the progress of the rest of Vancouver's core. He is the exact type of scoring redundancy and depth you need to advance in the playoffs and, perhaps, pull off upsets against superior competition.

TSN.CA LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192328 Websites

USA TODAY / NHL postpones four playoff games on Thursday, Friday after players push to suspend play

Lorenzo Reyes

USA TODAY

As professional athletes continue to protest racial injustice after the shooting of Jacob Blake, a Black man, by police in Kenosha, Wisconsin, the NHL has granted the players' request to postpone four playoff games on Thursday and Friday, the league and NHL Players' Association said in a statement Thursday.

"After much discussion, NHL players believe that the best course of action would be to take a step back and not play tonight's and tomorrow's games as scheduled," the statement reads. "The NHL supports the players' decision and will reschedule those four games beginning Saturday and adjust the remainder of the Second Round schedule accordingly.

"Black and Brown communities continue to face real, painful experiences. The NHL and NHLPA recognize that much work remains to be done before we can play an appropriate role in a discussion centered on diversity, inclusion and social justice."

The move came after several players made public calls for the league to suspend play.

Thursday afternoon, dozens of NHL players gathered at the league's hub in Edmonton to discuss the decision.

"I think if you look around this room, there's a lot of white athletes in here. I think that's a statement that's being made right now," Vegas Golden Knights winger Ryan Reaves said. "I go to war with these guys and I hate their guts on the ice, but I couldn't be more proud of these guys.

"The statement that they've made today is something that's gonna last. These two days isn't going to fix anything but the conversation and the statement that's been made is very powerful, especially coming from this league."

Thursday's postponed games were between the Philadelphia Flyers at the New York Islanders in Toronto and the Las Vegas Knights at the Vancouver Canucks in Edmonton, Alberta. Both series are tied 1-1.

Friday's games were between the Tampa Bay Lightning and the Boston Bruins and the Colorado Avalanche and Dallas Stars. Those series are both at 2-1, with Tampa Bay and Dallas holding leads.

The NHL and players association also said in the statement that they "pledge to work to use our sport to influence positive change in society" and that both groups are "committed to working to foster more inclusive and welcoming environments" within the league.

An "End Racism" message is displayed before Game 3 of an NHL hockey second-round playoff series between the Tampa Bay Lightning and the Boston Bruins, Wednesday, Aug.

'Disheartening': NHL forges ahead Wednesday as teams in other pro leagues protest Jacob Blake shooting

The decision to postpone comes after public calls from the Hockey Diversity Alliance to suspend play. San Jose Sharks left winger Evander Kane, representing the player-formed group, tweeted a statement Thursday afternoon.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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A longer statement released Thursday afternoon by Kane said, in part, that the Blake shooting was "yet another example of police brutality against Black Americans that continues to go unabated and unaddressed in the communities where NHL teams play."

On Wednesday, several teams across the NBA, MLB, WNBA and MLS opted not to play their scheduled games. The NHL, however, played all three of its scheduled playoff games Wednesday night and has faced criticism for that decision.

Blake, a 29-year-old Black man, was shot seven times by police August 23 as he was walking around a car. Bystander video was shared on social media and has led to outrage and protests throughout the country.

Several professional athletes are using their platform to bring awareness to systemic racism and are protesting inequities in policing by choosing not to play their scheduled games.

Prior to Wednesday night's game between the Boston Bruins and Tampa Bay Lightning, the NHL displayed the words "End Racism" on video boards and held a "moment of reflection" for Blake, who is paralyzed from the waist down and may never walk again, family and lawyers said.

"You can throw blanket statements out there and it's not going to create much change," Matt Dumba, a member of the Minnesota Wild and the Hockey Diversity Alliance, told Sportsnet 650 in Vancouver.

Kane, responding to the NHL's actions on Wednesday night, posted a message to his Twitter page to express his displeasure.

"Actually it's incredibly insulting as a black man in hockey the lack of action and acknowledgement from the @NHL, just straight up insulting," he wrote.

The Milwaukee Bucks chose not to show up to the court for their first-round playoff game against the Orlando Magic on Wednesday afternoon. That game was then postponed, and sparked ongoing conversations among NBA players about how to handle the rest of their season. The MLB's Brewers joined their counterparts in Milwaukee and also chose not to play, leading to one of three postponements in baseball.

The MLS postponed all but one of its six games Wednesday and the WNBA postponed all of its three scheduled games.

"It's kind of sad and disheartening for me and for members of the Hockey Diversity Alliance, and I'm sure for other guys across the league," Dumba told Sportsnet 650 Wednesday night. "But if no one stands up and does anything, then it's the same thing, that silence. You're just outside, looking in on actually being leaders and evoking real change when you have such an opportunity to do so."

USA TODAY LOADED: 08.28.2020

1192329 Websites

USA TODAY / 'Disheartening': NHL forges ahead Wednesday as teams in other pro leagues protest Jacob Blake shooting

Chris Bumbaca

USA TODAY

While teams across the sports landscape — the NBA, MLS, WNBA and several in MLB — refused to play Wednesday in the wake of police shooting a Black man in the back, the NHL played all three of its scheduled playoff games.

The New York Islanders and Philadelphia Flyers' game began at 3 p.m. ET, before the Milwaukee Bucks' decision to not play Game 5 of its opening-round playoff series against the Orlando Magic became clear. Their choice impacted the rest of the NBA, and the WNBA, MLS and six MLB teams followed suit.

The NHL did not.

Matt Dumba, a member of the Minnesota Wild and the player-formed Hockey Diversity Alliance, said the league's decision to play games was "disheartening."

"It's kind of sad and disheartening for me and for members of the Hockey Diversity Alliance, and I'm sure for other guys across the league. But if no one stands up and does anything, then it's the same thing, that silence," he told Sportsnet 650 in Vancouver. "You're just outside, looking in on actually being leaders and evoking real change when you have such an opportunity to do so."

Prior to the game between the Boston Bruins and Tampa Bay Lightning, the NHL displayed the words "End Racism" on video boards and held a "moment of reflection" for Jacob Blake, who was shot seven times in the back by Kenosha, Wisconsin, police on Aug. 23. Blake is paralyzed from the waist down and may never walk again, family and lawyers said.

"You can throw blanket statements out there and it's not going to create much change," Dumba, who is Filipino-Canadian, told the radio station.

Dumba added that in a predominately white league, the burden lays on non-persons of color to lead the change.

"You're just relying on the minority guys to step up and say it," said Dumba, who knelt before a qualifying-round game earlier this month and read an anti-racism message. "But what would really make the most impact is to have strong white leaders from teams step up and have their two cents heard. All the other white kids who grow up watching them, who might be their biggest fans, can look up and say, 'Wow, if he's seeing this and trying to stand up and to listen, then why am I not as well? Why am I continuing to hold on to this ignorance or hate that I feel towards a subject that I maybe don't know everything about?'"

Bruins captain Zdeno Chara said his team simply did not have enough time before their game against the Lightning to make a decision.

"After our pregame meal, we took naps and then we were on the bus, so I don't think any of us were watching the TV until we got to the rink," Chara said, per ESPN. And at that point, obviously, it was too close to the game to start any discussions or try to move the games to different dates. We were basically following the schedule the NHL provided to us.

"We support fighting against racism and injustice. There's different ways to express that fight. NBA players expressed their opinions about it by boycotting the games today. We support NBA players and all the leagues that showed that support."

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