



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

THE NEWS & OBSERVER

Brind'Amour, on first day, sets different tone -- with different captain

By Luke DeCock

The first pivotal act of Rod Brind'Amour's first training camp as head coach of the Carolina Hurricanes wasn't the decision to name Justin Williams captain, because even though that was finally officially announced Thursday, it had been in the works for months.

"Big surprise, right?" Brind'Amour said.

No, it happened before the first of two practices, held a day early thanks to Hurricane Florence, when Brind'Amour spoke to the assembled team, four dozen players, for the first time. His speeches in his time as captain were typically short, intense and to the point – and the more effective for being so. This was a little different. There was more ground to cover, and Brind'Amour spoke for more than 15 minutes, leading up to the essential message that will underline this training camp, and indeed this season.

Without pointing fingers or assigning blame, the bar somehow got lowered around here, Brind'Amour said, to the point where mediocrity became acceptable, where the goal wasn't to win the Stanley Cup, but to compete, to squeak into the playoffs.

As far as Brind'Amour is concerned, the only reason to do this is to win the Stanley Cup. Unrealistic? Perhaps. But that's the starting point. That's where the bar will be set under Brind'Amour. With a new owner, new general manager, new front office and a handful of new players to go with a new coach. There's never been a better time for that kind of reset.

That wasn't the only reason that the mood was more relaxed and the practices more intense than a typical first day under the Bill Peters regime. Those conditions are not mutually exclusive, and the combination is a product of a no-nonsense coach who was a no-nonsense player and who now has a no-nonsense captain to rely upon.

Williams was the obvious choice last season, only to be kneecapped by Peters' dopey co-captaincy, an idea so bad that the ostensibly demoted co-captains both agreed Thursday that it was a bad idea and they thought so all along

"I didn't love it," Jordan Staal said, and Justin Faulk said much the same thing as well.

They both also endorsed Williams as captain, which has been a fait accompli since Brind'Amour was hired. There's a reason every player the Hurricanes added this summer said Williams called them right away. It wasn't so much that he felt obligated. He also felt empowered, knowing this was coming.

Brind'Amour knew Williams, his former teammate and linemate, was the player he needed to fill this role that is considerably more than honorable in hockey, where the captaincy may not be the mythical responsibility it is sometimes made out to be but certainly has an innate importance, both in terms of tradition and leadership. In its best representation, the captain can be both a conductor and a buffer between coach and team, in varying proportions as needed.

Williams, who may as well share a hockey brain with Brind'Amour, couldn't be better equipped to act as a conductor. But he's enough of his own man, a player with vast experience and a 36-year-old with deep character, to act as a buffer as well.

"That makes it certainly a lot more unique and a lot simpler in the captain-coach relationship," Williams said. "We know each other very well. We know what each other expects from other people. Obviously, Roddy is at a different stage of his career now. He's a head coach and he's taking on a different challenge as well. He's going to need all the help he can get. And I'm going to give it to him. Be his voice. Be our team's voice. It's important we believe the same things, which I know we do."

The news that Victor Rask needed surgery after slicing open his right hand in a kitchen accident threw some of Brind'Amour's preparations into disarray – the Hurricanes weren't exactly deep at center to start, and Rask is out indefinitely – but as far as his first day on the ice as a new head coach, things went more or less as he planned.

He has his captain in place. There was energy on the ice. The hard work is still to come, but at the least, the right tone was set Thursday.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Justin Williams 'humbled' to be named Hurricanes captain

By Chip Alexander

Had it been Rod Brind'Amour's call, Justin Williams would have been the Carolina Hurricanes' captain last season.

It wasn't Brind'Amour's call -- not as a Canes assistant coach -- and Williams wasn't the captain despite his experience, his leadership attributes, his three Stanley Cup rings.

But things have changed. Brind'Amour now is the head coach and on Thursday announced Williams would wear the "C" this season. Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk, who served as co-captains last season, have been named alternate captains.

"I'm very humbled and something I've very proud of and something that I don't take lightly," Williams said.

Brind'Amour told the team of the decision in a meeting before the Canes' first on-ice practices of training camp at PNC Arena. Not that it came as a surprise to anyone.

"Leadership is a big part of any success of a team, I think," Brind'Amour said. "and the best forms of leadership are earned and I don't think anybody in here would disagree that he hasn't earned the right to be the leader of this hockey club.

"This is the easiest decision I've ever had to make. He checks off all the list of things that makes a good leader. Comes to the rink every day, plays the same way, great person. And at the end of day he knows how to win."

Williams, 36, returned to the Hurricanes in July 2017 as a coveted free agent, signing a two-year, \$9 million contract. He was a tie to the Canes' best moments as a franchise, the 2006 Stanley Cup run, and had earned a reputation as "Mister Game 7" in the Stanley Cup playoffs as a clutch performer in the Los Angeles Kings' two championships.

After the trade of former Canes captain Eric Staal, Peters decided to use four alternate captains -- Staal, Faulk, Jeff Skinner and Victor Rask -- and not have a designated

captain in 2016-17. Many, including Brind'Amour, expected Peters to name Williams the captain last season.

"That's why we got him here," Brind'Amour said Thursday.

Instead, Peters went with Staal and Faulk as co-captains, and Jeff Skinner as alternate captain, in an unwieldy grouping that Williams has acknowledged surprised him and one that Faulk said Thursday never felt right.

"I don't know that we thought having co-captains was the best situation," Faulk said. "I'm not sure many people did. That's obviously a weird situation with how things normally work in the National Hockey League. I think it's better to have one guy and a couple of assistants. That way it's a clear message."

Staal said soon after returning to Raleigh that he was willing to give up the "C," if Brind'Amour wanted a change, and would remain a part of the team's leadership core with or without being a captain.

Of Williams' selection, Staal said Thursday, "There's no more deserving player. Obviously he has been a great leader for a long time and had different roles throughout his career. I think he fit a great role here and will be a leader for a young group that can do a lot of great things.

"I know my role doesn't change. Obviously the letter on the shoulder does but that doesn't bother me. What I'm worried about is winning games and however best I can do that is what I'm going to do."

Forward Teuvo Teravainen called Williams "the right person to lead us."

"He has the character and the work ethic and is a great guy in the locker room," Teravainen said. "He can help our young team to move forward. A team needs a leader who can bring you together. 'Willy' is that type of person."

Brind'Amour managed to chuckle later, saying, "The first decision I think I made is going to be one everyone goes, 'Hey, good job.'"

Hurricanes' Rask out indefinitely after hand surgery

By Chip Alexander

The Carolina Hurricanes' Victor Rask will be sidelined indefinitely after the Swedish center underwent hand surgery Thursday.

The Canes said Rask cut the fourth and fifth fingers on his right hand while slicing food in the kitchen of his Raleigh residence.

The surgery was handled by Dr. Harrison Tuttle at Raleigh Orthopaedic, the team said.

Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said Thursday that he was not sure how long Rask might be out, saying, "I know it's obviously serious and when you have serious injuries that's not a good thing."

Brind'Amour said Rask had put in a significant amount of work this summer rehabbing after undergoing shoulder surgery in March. Rask was one of the early arrivals back in Raleigh for the informal skates at Raleigh Center Ice, saying he was healthy and eager to get to camp.

"I thought he looked great (before) the injury," Brind'Amour said. "I talked to him about it. I had a very similar injury and kind of talked it through with him a little bit.

"We'll get him when he gets back and when he does it's almost like adding a player in a trade. That's how I look at it, that we've got a good player coming at some point."

Rask, 25, is beginning his fifth NHL season with the Canes, having scored 14 goals and added 17 assists last season.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Five pressing questions as Hurricanes begin training camp

By Chip Alexander

The most pertinent comment about the Carolina Hurricanes was recently made by veteran forward Justin Williams.

"The fact of the matter is you have to let your play speak for itself," Williams said. "Words are just words."

The Canes can talk about changing the makeup of the team, of the coaching staff. They can talk of establishing a different "culture" and being a tougher team to play against. They can talk of ending a streak of missing the Stanley Cup playoffs for nine straight years, the longest in the league.

Words are just words.

All that matters is what happens on Oct. 4, when the puck drops against the New York Islanders and a new season begins. No one knows that more than Rod Brind'Amour, who once joked that he'd rather be called "Rod" than "Coach" while an assistant coach and now has a new title, head coach Rod Brind'Amour, and the responsibility that comes with it.

It all begins Thursday, when the first preseason training-camp practices are held at PNC Arena. Because of the threat of Hurricane Florence, the NHL has allowed the Canes to begin on-ice practices a day earlier than scheduled.

Just before practice began, it was announced Williams would be the team captain this season.

"At the end of the day we have to win," Brind'Amour said. "It's easy to talk about, right? You've got to go and do it."

Here are five pressing questions entering training camp:

1) How will Brind'Amour run practices?

One word quickly comes to mind: competitive. Brind'Amour was ultra competitive as a player and should be as a head coach, demanding intensity and attention to detail in practices.

"Everyone knows the type of work ethic he has and the type of guy he is," defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk said. "The whole summer he's probably been looking at every detail and planning out every little situation. We know we're going to be an extremely prepared team."

Former coach Bill Peters also was detail-oriented and well-organized in his practices. But the vibe should be different with Brind'Amour in charge.

2) Is there a No. 1 goalie?

Some *deja vu*, yes? But with a new mix. A year ago, the goaltending tandem was Scott Darling and Cam Ward, with Darling newly signed and set to be the No. 1 guy.

That didn't work out. Now, it's Darling and Petr Mrazek, with a slimmer, seemingly more relaxed Darling out to prove he can get the job done in his second season with the Canes and be their No. 1 guy.

Asked if he was comfortable with the goaltending situation, Brind'Amour said, "I have to be. What I like is we have

competition there. We have two guys trying to jumpstart their careers and I think they're motivated for that."

3) What about the D pairs?

This could be Brind'Amour's best "problem" because there are several options with the defensemen.

One would be to pair the two new additions, Dougie Hamilton and Calvin de Haan. and keep Jaccob Slavin and Brett Pesce together. Justin Faulk and van Riemsdyk could be paired, although both are right-handed shots and one would have to play their off-side. Haydn Fleury would be the seventh defenseman.

"I don't know who I'm going to play with but it doesn't really matter because we've got so many good guys," Hamilton said.

Brind'Amour said Pesce missed some conditioning work this summer dealing with an upper-body issue, but Pesce was at the first camp practice Thursday and at full speed.

4) Where do Necas, Svechnikov best fit?

Martin Necas and Andrei Svechnikov have been roommates since coming to Raleigh and the hockey question is will Brind'Amour keep the rookie forwards on the same line in training camp?

Brind'Amour has indicated that might not happen. Better to have each on a line with older, more experienced forwards.

In the first on-ice practice Thursday, Svechnikov often was used with Sebastian Aho at center and Michael Ferland on the opposite wing. Necas centered Teuvo Teravainen and Brock McGinn in the split-squad practice.

But that's what training camp is for -- to experiment, look at different combinations. Both are highly skilled players who could bring a dimension of speed (Necas) and power (Svechnikov) to their line. Or another line.

5) Who grabs the open forward spots?

If Necas and Svechnikov have roster spots all but secured, which should be the case, it will leave several forwards competing for a couple of openings, one created by the Jeff Skinner trade to Buffalo.

There's now the matter of Victor Rask, who is out indefinitely after cutting his hand in a kitchen accident. Rask required surgery.

Phil Di Giuseppe, Valentin Zykov, Lucas Wallmark, Warren Foegele, Julien Gauthier, Aleksii Saarela, Janne Kuokkanen ... it's an expanded list and there are others on it.

Di Giuseppe and Zykov have one-way contracts and Di Giuseppe played 49 games for the Canes last season, but Brind'Amour is interested in seeing how it all shakes out, in practices and in the six preseason exhibition games.

"For me the No. 1 goal is to figure out, we've got some young players, can they play?" Brind'Amour said. "We've got to give them every opportunity to see what they can do."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"We know the guys who can play and know who's going to be on the team. But we have some spots we're not sure about and want to make sure we don't have any doubt going

into the season. That's the focal point of training camp for me."



Hurricanes name Williams captain, announce Rask injury as camp opens

Hurricane Florence pushes the start of training camp up a day

By Cory Lavalette

RALEIGH — After a summer of watching film, mixing and matching potential line combinations and putting in place a plan to return the Carolina Hurricanes to relevance, new coach Rod Brind'Amour finally got his team on the ice to begin training camp.

He even got to start a day early.

With a different hurricane, Florence, barreling toward the coast of the Carolinas, the Hurricanes received league approval to start camp Thursday and will cancel one of the next two days of practice.

The first-year head coach, while not looking forward to the impending storm, was glad to get a jumpstart on the 2018-19 season.

"We needed that moved up like three months," Brind'Amour said. "Because we were all set to go. It was no adjustment for us, the coaches. It was an adjustment for the players, obviously."

Just before the first of two groups — named Team Grit and Team Grind — took the ice at 2:45 p.m., the team made official Brind'Amour's first major decision as the man in charge when Justin Williams was named captain.

"I think one of the most important things that I'll take into this is not to change myself or be anybody that I'm not," Williams said following the first practice. "Leadership comes naturally, and it comes from years of watching other great leaders, and that's what I've done. ... I'm very humbled and something I'm very proud of, and something I don't take lightly."

It was a decision that seemed obvious the moment Brind'Amour was named coach. Williams, the coach's former linemate, was already recognized in the locker room as the team's most outspoken veteran, and the organization's from-the-top-down message of accountability can easily be carried from owner Tom Dundon to Brind'Amour and then his trusted on-ice courier.

"Like I said back in May, it's pretty much the easiest decision I've ever had to make," Brind'Amour said. "For me, he checks off all the lists of things that would make a good leader. He comes to the rink every day, plays the same way,

great person and at the end of the day, he knows how to win."

Williams replaces Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk, who were co-captains last season under departed coach Bill Peters — a decision Brind'Amour said he wasn't a part of and Williams called "a little bit of a mess." Staal and Faulk, who will wear the A's, agreed last year's setup didn't work and welcomed the move.

"To be honest, I'm not sure we maybe thought the best situation was co-captains anyway. I don't know if many people did," Faulk said. "That's obviously a weird situation with how things normally work in the National Hockey League."

"Obviously, we probably weren't in a position probably to tell you guys that last year," Faulk said through a smile, "but now we can say it's better to have one guy and a couple assistants and go from there."

The other news of the day was not as positive. Victor Rask, coming off a season in which he had a career-low 31 points and then had shoulder surgery, is out indefinitely after surgery on his right hand, the team announced. Rask cut the fourth and fifth finger on that hand while slicing food in his kitchen.

"I don't know how long," Brind'Amour answered when asked about Rask's return date. "I know it's obviously serious, and so when you have serious injuries, that's not a good thing."

Rask's absence means even more competition in a training camp that already has several young players jockeying for a place in the lineup for the Oct. 4 opener against the Islanders at PNC Arena.

Teenagers Martin Necas, the team's first-round pick in 2017, and Andrei Svechnikov, this summer's second overall selection, both have spots to lose in camp, and Rask's injury could give another center — Lucas Wallmark being the frontrunner — an inside track on earning a spot.

But second-year pros Warren Foegele, Janne Kuokkanen, Aleksis Saarela and Nicolas Roy, along with newcomer Saku Maenalanen from Finland's Liiga, could all push for a job in Raleigh.

Openings are more scarce on defense, where the addition of Calvin de Haan in free agency and the trade that, in part,



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

swapped Noah Hanifin for Dougie Hamilton give Carolina seven blueliners who spent the 2017-18 season in the NHL.

With Day 1 of camp in the books, the players will now await Hurricane Florence and see how much more inconvenience comes with the storm.

"I still have to move my patio furniture, and my parents have been worried sick," defenseman Haydn Fleury said. "It will be my first hurricane, so I guess we'll see."

Jordan Martinook, acquired from Arizona during the offseason, said he had to "get his mindset right" with camp starting a day early. But at least Martinook isn't facing something totally new with Florence: He was with the AHL's Portland Pirates in October 2012 when Hurricane Sandy brushed Maine.

"So I can relate a little bit, but I don't think anything like what's coming," he said.

"I've got a bunch of ice frozen in the freezer. Hopefully it stays there."



Williams finally named Hurricanes' captain

By Adam Gold

Better late than never, I guess.

Almost one year after being inexplicably passed over for the role, Justin Williams was announced as the captain of the 2018-2019 Carolina Hurricanes — yes, the ONLY captain, as I beat you all to the joke. The reveal came not with a press conference, or a rose ceremony, but with a simple, 20-second video released by the team that showed the "C" being sewn onto the front of Williams' number 14 sweater.

"It's something I'm extremely proud of", Williams said Thursday afternoon with Adam and Joe on 99.9 the Fan. "It's an absolute honor to be the captain of an NHL hockey team and is something I'll work very hard at. But it doesn't really change my role."

Williams, one of the catalysts that helped Carolina to the Stanley Cup in 2006, returned to the Hurricanes last summer after adding a pair of championships and a Conn Smythe Award to his resumé after helping to lead the Los Angeles Kings to titles in 2012 and 2014. However, in spite of being the popular choice to be the team's first captain since Eric Staal was sent to the Rangers at the 2016 trade deadline, then-head coach Bill Peters surprised — and even angered — some by not naming Williams as any of his captains at the end of training camp in 2017.

Peters, one year after not choosing a captain at all, opting to go with Jordan Staal, Justin Faulk and rotating alternate captains "du jour" like Jeff Skinner, Victor Rask and Ron Hainsey, took it up a notch by going with home and road captains. In Raleigh, Staal would don the "C", while on the road, it would be Faulk. Then they'd switch at the season's halfway point.

It was confusing and silly and maybe it had no bearing at all on yet another disappointing year, but it was an immediate and lasting punchline. At the time, Williams said that he was a "bit surprised" to not even wear an "A", but had you spent 15 minutes inside the Hurricanes' dressing room you'd easily understand that it was his voice, his presence, that carried the most weight.

"Justin has earned the right to lead this club", according to new head coach Rod Brind'Amour. "He comes to the rink every day and leaves it all out there. He will be a great leader for this young team."

If there's a situation in the game that Williams hasn't experienced, let me know.

Williams was an 18-year old rookie with the Philadelphia Flyers in 2000. He's been traded (twice), dealt with injuries, and endured disappointing seasons. He's played alongside some wonderful players noting that good captains learn from those who came before them. "I've had the privilege to have played for a lot of great leaders", Williams observed. "Obviously I have a head coach who I really looked up to and I'll be taking things from when he was captain as well."

The connection between Williams and Brind'Amour can not be overstated. The pair clicked as teammates — often-times line mates — and I'd bet my life that Rod was privately frustrated a year ago that Justin was snubbed for an official leadership role. And, lest you think this decision will put Williams in an awkward position, that of playing for a friend, think again. "It comes with the circle of life in the NHL", said Williams. "Friends and teammates move into coaching and that's the way it is. I'm more excited than anything to play under his tutelage."

Funny thing about Brind'Amour and Williams is that you wouldn't necessarily think they were similar, but they're a whole lot more alike than they are different. Each was incredibly smart as players, fierce competitors, responsible in all zones and had a knack for coming through at the most important times. Both are incredibly well-respected within the room and around the league, not just for what they've accomplished, but how they went about their business.

They also have a way of not making this about themselves, even when it clearly is. Brind'Amour was that way as a captain, and get him going on the topic of Williams and he's likely to talk your ear off. Same goes for "Willie", who obviously can't wait for the opportunity.

"I can tell by Roddy's face that he's giving this his all", observed Williams. "And, if that doesn't excite you as a



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

player, you're not the type he wants around." Peas in a pod, if you ask me. That these two men are once again linked is not an accident.

"As you get older there are new challenges", says Williams. "There's one on my plate and there's certainly one on Rod's

with this being his first head coaching gig. But, he's got a sense of empowerment and he's going to put everything he has into this."

So will the new captain. He learned that from the old captain.

Victor Rask undergoes surgery on right hand, is out indefinitely

RALEIGH, N.C. — Victor Rask underwent surgery Thursday on the fourth and fifth fingers of his right hand, the Carolina Hurricanes announced. The 25-year-old is out indefinitely.

Rask suffered the injury while slicing food in his kitchen. The Leksand, Sweden, native completed his fourth NHL season in 2017-18, totaling 31 points (14g, 17a) in 71 games for the Hurricanes. Carolina's second-round selection, 42nd overall,

in the 2011 NHL Draft, Rask has scored 62 goals and added 95 assists (157 points) in 313 career NHL games.

The Hurricanes play their first exhibition game of the 2018 preseason at Tampa Bay on Sept. 18, and open their 2018-19 regular season against the New York Islanders on Oct. 4 at PNC Arena 7 p.m. For information about Hurricanes ticket packages, please visit www.CarolinaHurricanes.com/tickets, or call 1-866-NHL-CANES (1-866-645-2263).

Canes name Justin Williams as team captain

Justin Williams will serve as the Carolina Hurricanes captain for the 2018-2019 season, head coach Rod Brind'Amour announced Thursday.

Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk will serve as alternate captains.

Williams, 36, is the 16th player to serve as captain for the franchise and the eighth since the team's arrival in North Carolina. The Cobourg, Ont., native scored 16 goals and added 35 assists (51 points) in 82 games with the Hurricanes in 2017-18, ranking third on the team in points and assists.

Now in his 18th NHL season, Williams has totaled 733 points (289g, 444a) in 1,162 career NHL games with Philadelphia, Carolina, Los Angeles and Washington. He is a three-time Stanley Cup winner (Carolina, 2006; Los Angeles, 2012 and 2014) and won the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP in 2014.

The Hurricanes play their first exhibition game of the 2018 preseason at Tampa Bay on Sept. 18, and open their 2018-19 regular season against the New York Islanders on Oct. 4 at PNC Arena 7 p.m. For information about Hurricanes ticket packages, please visit www.CarolinaHurricanes.com/tickets, or call 1-866-NHL-CANES (1-866-645-2263).



Williams Earns Captaincy

Veteran forward will be 16th player in franchise history to serve as team captain

by Michael Smith

On the back of his sweater, from shoulder to shoulder, is his surname: Williams. Below that, a large No. 14.

On the front of his sweater, above the Carolina Hurricanes crest that adorns the chest, is a new addition: the letter C.

Justin Williams will be the 16th player in franchise history to serve as team captain, as announced by the Canes on Thursday.

"Big surprise, right?" head coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "Leadership is a big, big part of any success of a team. The best forms of leadership are earned. I don't think anyone in here would [say] that he hasn't earned the right to be the leader of this hockey club."

"Willy is the right captain for us. Everyone knows that. He's just a great leader. I'm going to follow him and watch and learn how he does things," said Sebastian Aho, whose stall is positioned beside Williams' along the back wall of the locker room. "He earned it."

Williams, 36, is entering his 18th NHL season and seventh with the Hurricanes. The three-time Stanley Cup champion and 2014 playoff MVP - affectionately known as Mr. Game 7 - has totaled 733 points (289g, 444a) in 1,162 regular-season NHL games, in addition to 94 points (36g, 58a) in 140 playoff contests.

Even with that pedigree, Williams has never officially worn a letter, aside from designations during the preseason or with others injured.

That changes now.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"I think one of the most important things that I'll take into this is to not change myself or be anybody that I'm not. Leadership comes naturally and comes from years of watching other great leaders," Williams said. "Certainly, my current coach is one of them. I'll be taking little things from his leadership and instilling them in mine. It's something I'm very humbled by and very proud of and something I don't take lightly."

Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk, who were named co-captains for the 2017-18 season, will now serve as the team's alternate captains. Brind'Amour talked with both individually over the summer before announcing the not-so-unexpected news to the team as training camp opened on Thursday.

"Jordan was great when I talked to him. When I told him what I was thinking about doing he was like, 'It's obvious. Justin's the captain,'" Brind'Amour recalled. "When you get that kind of confirmation - not that I really needed it - it's nice because those are the guys who matter. It's in that room. I think everyone has his back."

Everyone, including Staal and Faulk.

"We're all here to get better, help each other out and make sure everyone's voice is heard," Staal said. "We want to make sure everyone's improving."

"We're obviously happy. We think the world of Willy, and I think everyone else in this room does, too," Faulk said. "We're ready to go."

"I think we can all admit last year, the double captaincy was a little bit of a mess," Williams said, echoing a sentiment expressed in the room. "We're moving on from that. It takes Brind'Amour Takes Reins as Canes Open Training Camp

First-year head coach sets tone, expectations on day one

by Michael Smith

The first day of training camp is akin to the first day of school. New faces. Set expectations. Endless potential. A group brimming with excitement and ready to get going.

Thursday afternoon at PNC Arena was no different, as the Carolina Hurricanes opened their training camp a bit earlier than usual with a new head coach leading the charge.

Here are five takeaways from the first day of Hurricanes training camp.

Brind'Amour Takes the Reins

With the opening whistle of training camp, a new era of Hurricanes hockey was ushered in under first-year head coach Rod Brind'Amour.

He was vocal in what he wanted to accomplish. The pace was high. Everything was executed with speed. Hard work was the bare minimum, not the expectation.

"He was fired up, as well as everyone else. There was a lot of great energy out there," forward Jordan Staal said. "I thought it was a good, hard practice and a good start to the season."

"It's a full day of camp. High tempo, full team practice," goaltender Scott Darling said. "It was great to be back."

a lot of leaders in the dressing room to build a championship team. The three of us are going to do our best to be the voice of the team and create new leaders out of it."

Staal, 30, has tallied 482 points (206g, 276a) in 843 games, including 234 points (86g, 148a) in 412 games with the Hurricanes. Faulk, 26, has played in 477 games with the Hurricanes over seven seasons and is a three-time NHL All Star.

The Canes' leadership group is experienced, strong and united in their goal.

"I think it's key for every organization - certainly every successful one - that everybody knows what each other is capable of and everybody is pulling in the same direction. Everybody wants the most out of everybody, and the only way you get that is through internal competition," Williams said. "We're going to lay it all out there. We're really excited about the direction of this team, and I think the fans and community should be as well."

Of the decisions Rod Brind'Amour will make as head coach, his team's captain was one of his first and one of his easiest.

It was the right choice. It was Justin Williams.

He's a veteran. He's a leader. He's a champion. Now, he's the captain of the Carolina Hurricanes.

"He checks off all the list of things that would make a good leader. He comes to the rink every day and plays the same way. He's a great person," Brind'Amour said. "At the end of the day, he knows how to win. That's what we've got to get to."

Team Grit and Team Grind each spent a jam-packed hour on the ice. Breaks between drills were minimal: A one-player shootout decided whether skaters or goalies would skate, and time at the whiteboard was limited. A grueling sprint skate wrapped each session.

"Intense. A lot of skating," forward Sebastian Aho said. "I think that's what we needed. It's a good way to start camp."

"It was a lot of up-and-down. It was a good skate. Definitely got the heart rate up," Staal said. "Roddy is going to demand a lot with work ethic, practices and skating. I think we're going to be a quick team, anyway."

In 2005-06, Brind'Amour captained the Hurricanes to a Stanley Cup championship. Justin Williams was playing in just his sixth NHL season. Now, Williams is the wily veteran of a perhaps underrated group helmed by Brind'Amour.

"Watching Roddy evolve into what he's become today is pretty amazing," Williams said. "He's a terrific motivational speaker. He's very thorough with what he wants and expects of everybody. One of the good things is he's a player, a damn good one who belongs in the Hall of Fame. He knows the players, what the players are thinking and feeling."

So, what did the first-year head coach think of his first day of training camp?



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"The first group I liked. I thought the second group was a little, kinda, meh," he said. "It's a long day for those guys. ... It was OK. We're trying to get a couple concepts across, and we'll keep building on that. I liked a couple things we saw. We'll keep building."

A Team Comes Together

It was a summer of change for the Hurricanes. A new head coach. A new general manager. The second overall pick in the 2018 NHL Draft practically fell into their laps. They signed a top free agent defenseman after trading for one of the league's best defenseman to bolster what was already one of the top blue lines in the league. And, there's young talent waiting in the wings.

"We're really deep. You look at all the D. Every guy can play, play well and play a lot," said Dougie Hamilton, who joined the Hurricanes in a draft-day trade from Calgary. "Right now, we're good on paper. We have to make it work on the ice."

"I like being here. I'm hoping we can turn it around," defenseman Justin Faulk said. "I want to be a part of that solution. I'm here ready to work and get things going."

Over the next three weeks, a final roster for Opening Night will be assembled. It will be young, but it won't be short on skill.

"Our new pieces are going to be huge. Our D corps is unbelievable. You can argue it's one of the best in the league, no problem," Darling said. "The new forwards coming in is huge. And Petr coming in is great. They're all great guys, and we're happy to have them here."

"We have some veterans, but we only have - well, Jordan just turned 30, so he's the only other guy in his 30s here. We're a young team, but we've got some guys who have been around a long time," Williams said. "We're going to let the play speak for itself."

Questions Down the Middle

The Hurricanes' injury report already had a name listed on it, even before the on-ice proceedings began. The team announced Victor Rask will be out indefinitely after undergoing surgery on his fourth and fifth right fingers due to an injury sustained in the kitchen.

"From his perspective, he was pretty sad because he really put in a lot of work. He had [shoulder] surgery to start the summer and really worked hard to get back. I thought he looked great," Brind'Amour said. "It is what it is. I talked to him about it. I had a very similar injury, so we talked it through a little bit."

Rask figured to be, at the very least, a center in the top nine to begin the season. His absence now begets questions and perhaps opens the door a little wider for a player like Lucas Wallmark. Or, maybe it's Sebastian Aho who will play his natural position. Ideas will be tinkered with in the coming

weeks, as the Canes prepare to be without the Swedish center for an unknown period of time.

"I don't know how long. I know it's serious, and when you have a serious injury, it's not a good thing," Brind'Amour said. "We'll get him when he gets back. It's almost like adding a player or making a trade. That's how I look at it. We've got a good player coming at some point."

Florence Forces Schedule Shift

As Hurricane Florence barrels toward the North Carolina coast, the Hurricanes took advance precautions with their weekend training camp schedule. Originally slated to begin Friday morning, the first skates of camp were moved up to Thursday afternoon - an adjustment that required league approval - in order to give the team some flexibility heading into the weekend.

For a group that was already anxious to hit the ice, the schedule adjustment wasn't a big deal.

"I'm happy to get it done whenever we can. Obviously a little different when a hurricane is coming in, so things change," Staal said. "It was good to get out on the ice today, get the tests over with, move on and do the things we need to do to get better as a group."

"We needed that moved up like three months, to be honest with you. We were all set to go," Brind'Amour joked. "No adjustment for us, the coaches, but it was an adjustment for the players. I think everyone got through it all right."

Considering Florence's expected arrival and the scope of the storm's impact, the team plans to skate Friday and cancel Saturday's camp sessions in order to preserve the safety of players, coaches and staff.

"We told everyone that the number one priority is to be safe," Brind'Amour said. "We want to make sure everyone is safe. That's first and foremost."

Expectations

Brind'Amour was asked about expectations at Prospects Development Camp in late June. Someone in the crowd yelled out, "Playoffs!"

Brind'Amour responded: "Not playoffs. We're trying to be the best team in the league. That's our goal."

His message to the team today echoed that sentiment.

"We're going to lay it all out there," Williams said. "We're really excited about the direction of this team, and I think the fans and community should be as well."

"It's important to know that what's been going on isn't good enough. At the end of the day, we've got to raise the expectation level of the group and the organization and everybody in it. It's got to be higher," Brind'Amour said. "Too many teams in this league - it's pretty much every team - has the bar set at winning the whole thing. Why wouldn't we be doing that?"



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

TriangleSportsNetwork

Carolina Hurricanes open training camp under stormy conditions

Team adjusts schedule due to impending impact of Hurricane Florence

By Peter Koutroumpis

RALEIGH, N.C. – Some may say that the Carolina Hurricanes opening training camp under real and impending storm conditions presented by Hurricane Florence is fitting.

With so many changes and adjustments in front office, coaching and player personnel during the offseason, throwing a weather-related incident – albeit a hurricane – into the mix plays right to script.

With the currently Category 2 storm strengthening and weakening all week and expected to make landfall off the southeast North Carolina coast Thursday, the NHL team released an adjusted schedule to begin preparation for the upcoming 2018-2019 season.

The team announced on Wednesday that it received approval from the National Hockey League (NHL) to begin on-ice practice on Thursday afternoon, rather than waiting to do so at originally scheduled morning times on Friday.

Following the afternoon sessions, the team has planned to cancel practice on either Friday or Saturday in order to keep players and staff off of the roads when Raleigh is expected to face its worst effects from the storm.

The team will still practice in two groups on Thursday, beginning with Team Grit taking to the ice at PNC Arena from 2:45-3:45 p.m., followed by Team Grind skating from 4 p.m.-5 p.m.

As previously announced, due to the expected inclement weather conditions, both sessions will be closed to the general public.



Carolina Hurricanes 2018-19 Season Preview

By Mark Shiver

This is not the same Carolina Hurricanes team that has gone through the motions over the past four seasons producing the same frustrating results. There are new faces on the ice and upstairs in the corporate offices. The overarching issue for fans of this new model of Hurricanes is will they finally make the playoffs again?

The “experts” in Las Vegas are not impressed with the offseason moves, the Hurricanes were one of the busiest teams in the league. They set the total points line, for those wishing to wager, at 84.5, eight points lower than the sportsbooks predicted them to have prior to the start of last season.

There are two burning questions as the season approaches. Can the Hurricanes score consistently – an issue made larger after dumping Jeff Skinner – and will the goaltending be improved? Answering ‘no’ to even one of these questions will likely mean another playoff-less year. A ‘yes’ answer to both could see this new-model Hurricanes team in the playoffs and making a significant run.

2017-18 Record: 36-35-11, 83 Points (6th in Metropolitan Division, 10th in Eastern Conference, 21st in NHL Standings)

Offseason Moves

Key Roster Additions

- Dougie Hamilton
- Micheal Ferland
- Calvin de Haan
- Petr Mrázek
- Jordan Martinook
- Cliff Pu

Key Roster Losses

- Elias Lindholm
- Noah Hanifin
- Jeff Skinner
- Joakim Nordstrom
- Derek Ryan
- Cam Ward
- Klas Dahlbeck
- Marcus Kruger



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

2018 NHL Entry Draft

- Andrei Svechnikov (1st Round, 2nd overall)
- Jack Drury (2nd Round, 42nd overall)
- Luke Henman (4th Round, 96th overall)
- Lenni Killinen (4th Round, 104th overall)
- Jesper Sellgren (6th Round 166th overall)
- Jacob Kucharski (7th Round, 197th overall)

Organizational Changes

The Hurricanes' new owner, Tom Dundon decided to look in-house to replace former head coach Bill Peters. Peters exercised a clause in his contract that allowed him to leave a year early. He left for the Calgary Flames in April and Dundon was ready. He promoted assistant coach Rod Brind'Amour to head coach rather than look outside of the organization for a candidate with head coaching experience.

Since Dundon had ousted former general manager Ron Francis roughly a week prior to hiring Brind'Amour, it made sense that Dundon would also look inside the organization for Francis' replacement. He found Don Waddell who had been serving as president since 2014. The Hurricanes are a changed group from top to bottom with the owner, general manager and head coach all different from this time last year.

Jeff Daniels is back in the role of an assistant coach which he held from 2003-08. He has served as manager of pro scouting and as head coach of the Canes' minor league affiliate Charlotte Checkers. Also serving as an assistant coach is Dean Chynoweth, his first season as such.

The Hurricanes also lost Steve Smith who resigned on July 10. They named Darren Yorke director of player personnel and promoted Eric Tulsy to vice-president of hockey management and strategy.

On-Ice Organizational Change

Justin Williams has been named the captain of the Hurricanes for the upcoming season. Last year's co-captains, Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk will now be the two alternate captains. This was a move that was expected given the close relationship that Brind'Amour has with Williams.

Also, it was expected that the fiery leader would be named a captain last year, but then coach Peters went with the two-headed captaincy. Naming Williams sets the locker room in order in a big way – Williams already leads vocally and by example.

Projected Lines: Forwards

Teuvo Teravainen – Sebastian Aho – Andrei Svechnikov

Valentin Zykov – Jordan Staal – Michael Ferland

Brock McGinn – Victor Rask – Justin Williams

Jordan Martinook – Martin Necas – Phillip Di Giuseppe

This is a completely arbitrary projection. My colleague with The Hockey Writers, Carter Fricano, penned his opening

night projections recently and they are different from what is projected herein.

However, Sebastian Aho moving to center has been talked about for some time and since most other aspects of the team are new going into this season, why not make Aho a center and see if he shines even more.

Projected Pairings: Defense

Jacob Slavin – Dougie Hamilton

Calvin De Haan – Brett Pesce

Haydn Fleury – Justin Faulk

The Hurricanes also have Trevor van Riemsdyk who could alternate with Fleury while Michael Fora, Roland McKeown, and Trevor Carrick are trying to nab a spot. It is unlikely that they will.

Many view this defense as one of the best in the NHL. Discussing Darling's chances at having a better year, Adam Gretz wrote at NBC Sports on Sept. 3, "The Hurricanes have definitely given him some help by assembling what should one of the league's best defenses around him (they have been one of the best shot suppression teams in the league in recent years) and adding to it this summer with the acquisitions of Dougie Hamilton and Calvin de Haan." There is no question that the defense is the team's strength.

Between the Pipes

In goal, Scott Darling and Petr Mrázek are vying to be the starter. For now, Darling is presumed to be the first string. He has been doing the work to get in shape for the season. He admitted that he was not in shape last season. He is essentially getting a mulligan.

If Darling has not improved, Mrázek will be ready to step in. At least that's the plan. J.J. Regan at NBC Sports thinks it might be a questionable plan. In his Hurricanes season preview, he wrote, "Ward and Darling both had subpar years, but to replace Ward the Hurricanes picked up a goalie who was worse."

Mrázek has been good and he has been not so good, inconsistency is the word that best describes his game. If the Hurricanes are to have any chance of sniffing the playoffs, both he and Darling will have to play much better.

What to Expect

In his Hurricanes season preview for The Athletic on Sept. 12, Dom Luszczyszyn wrote, "Without poring over video and better data it's hard to tell exactly what's really been going on in Carolina the past few seasons. The team's expected goal share hasn't been much lower than its shot share over the past few seasons meaning the problem likely lies outside the realm of public data. However, a coaching change may answer some questions this season as it's possible Peters' systems put too much weight on shot quantity and not quality, hindering the team's goal share," (from '2018-19 NHL Season Preview: Carolina Hurricanes', The AthleticNHL – 9/12/18).

It's a fair assessment. The Hurricanes have been shooting the puck at a torrid pace, leading the NHL last season. But, it is true that many of those shots were not quality shots.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Luszczyszyn's point is one that Peters screamed about but it fell on deaf ears: The players need to go after rebounds, crash the net, and put themselves in position to score a goal rather than blast away.

The bottom line for this year's model of the Hurricanes is that they will need to score more – a task more difficult after trading away Skinner – and they must have better goaltending. I'm taking a "show me" stance, especially for the goaltending. I believe it will be better which is one positive in trying to make the playoffs.

I'm not as sold on the scoring and am taking a "show me" stance on this also. Aho should light it up again and Hamilton should help make up for the loss of Skinner. But for all their

glistening, the new "young guns", Necas, Svechnikov and even Zykov (if he makes the roster), have not proven anything at the NHL level yet.

I'm not of the same mindset as the oddsmakers with their mid-80 points projection. I think, if the goaltending improves, the team will reach a higher point total. But, I don't think at this stage that the Hurricanes will make the playoffs this season. I'd love for them to prove me wrong.

2018-19 Record Prediction: 42-32-8, 92 Points (7th in Metropolitan Division, 13th in Eastern Conference, 19th in NHL)



Canes name Williams captain; Rask out indefinitely after right hand surgery

A news-filled day greets the Hurricanes to begin training camp.

By Brian LeBlanc

When Rod Brind'Amour took over as head coach of the Carolina Hurricanes in May, one of the first questions posed to him at his press conference was who would serve as captain in the 2018-19 season. Speculation quickly descended on Justin Williams, who had won a Stanley Cup in 2006 with Brind'Amour as his captain, and the seemingly inevitable came to pass today as Williams was named the Canes' eighth permanent captain since the team moved to North Carolina.

Williams, 36, is entering his sixth season as a member of the Hurricanes. He joined the team in a 2004 trade for Danny Markov, and remained with the Canes until 2009, when he was traded to Los Angeles at the trade deadline in the deal that brought Erik Cole back to the franchise.

Williams did not have a designation as a captain or alternate captain last season, although there was much speculation that he would receive a letter upon signing with the team as a free agent in July of last year. Instead, the Hurricanes went with a co-captaincy and designated both Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk as captains for the season. Those two players will serve as alternate captains this season, and the Hurricanes will have no other permanent designations of alternate captains beyond those two players.

In other news, the Hurricanes announced today that center Victor Rask underwent surgery earlier today to repair injuries to his right ring and pinky fingers sustained in a kitchen accident. Rask will be out indefinitely following the surgery.

Training camp for the Hurricanes opens today, moved up due to the expected impact of Hurricane Florence on the

Triangle over the next few days. The releases from the team about Williams' captaincy and Rask's surgery are below.

CANES NAME JUSTIN WILLIAMS AS TEAM CAPTAIN

Jordan Staal, Justin Faulk will serve as alternate captains

Rod Brind'Amour, Head Coach of the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes, today announced that Justin Williams will serve as the team's captain for the 2018-19 season. Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk will serve as alternate captains.

Williams, 36, is the 16th player to serve as captain for the franchise and the eighth since the team's arrival in North Carolina. The Cobourg, Ont., native scored 16 goals and added 35 assists (51 points) in 82 games with the Hurricanes in 2017-18, ranking third on the team in points and assists. Now in his 18th NHL season, Williams has totaled 733 points (289g, 444a) in 1,162 career NHL games with Philadelphia, Carolina, Los Angeles and Washington. He is a three-time Stanley Cup winner (Carolina, 2006; Los Angeles, 2012 and 2014) and won the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP in 2014.

VICTOR RASK UNDERGOES SURGERY ON RIGHT HAND

Center is out indefinitely after suffering injury in his kitchen

Don Waddell, President and General Manager of the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes, today that center Victor Rask today underwent surgery on his right fourth and fifth fingers. The procedure was performed by Dr. Harrison Tuttle at Raleigh Orthopaedic and Rask is out indefinitely.

Rask, 25, suffered the injury while slicing food in his kitchen. The Leksand, Sweden, native completed his fourth NHL season in 2017-18, totaling 31 points (14g, 17a) in 71 games for the Hurricanes. Carolina's second-round selection, 42nd



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

overall, in the 2011 NHL Draft, Rask has scored 62 goals and added 95 assists (157 points) in 313 career NHL games.

Setting expectations for the Canes' rookie duo

There's been a lot of buzz this offseason about Andrei Svechnikov and Martin Necas possibly putting up massive numbers for the Hurricanes in year one. But is that reasonable?

By Andrew Schnittker

Due to the impending arrival of Hurricane Florence off the North Carolina coast, the Carolina Hurricanes will hold their first practices of training camp shortly today, as opposed to tomorrow morning, as originally scheduled. One of the biggest, if not the biggest, storylines entering this year's camp is a pair of rookies in Andrei Svechnikov and Martin Necas.

The No. 2 pick in the 2018 draft and No. 12 pick in 2017, respectively, arrive with considerable fanfare. Given Svechnikov's pedigree as the No. 2 pick who scored 40 goals in 44 games in the OHL last year and the success Necas had playing against men in the Czech league, there are fairly high expectations for the duo.

The Canes will certainly need the two young guns to score at a decent clip to have success this year, especially with Jeff Skinner shipped off to Buffalo. But is that reasonable to expect? The answer that jumps to mind is, 'No, it's not reasonable to expect two first-year players to carry the load'.

However, while it is right that the youngsters shouldn't be able to do everything, there is some precedence for rookie production giving teams a big boost.

Svechnikov, in particular, has history on his side. I wrote about this in depth over the summer, but No. 2 picks have a track record for producing out of their draft year, particularly big, European wingers (see Laine, Patrik).

In 2013-14, the Tampa Bay Lightning had a pair of rookie in Ondrej Palat and Tyler Johnson combine for 47 goals and

109 points to help vault the Bolts into the playoffs after a bottom-five finish the year before. That pair did not have the draft pedigree of Necas and Svechnikov (Johnson was undrafted), but did have some time in the AHL to marinate.

Another important factor for those two was having a pair of veteran scorers in Steven Stamkos and Martin St. Louis on the top line in front of them to draw the opposition's best defenders. While Sebastian Aho and Teuvo Teravainen aren't on that duo's level, they definitely check that box for Svechnikov and Necas.

Key for the duo will also be who their third linemate ends up being. Right now, that looks like Micheal Ferland, the oft-forgotten piece of the Dougie Hamilton trade who scored a career-high 21 goals for Calgary last season. Ferland did so playing primarily with one of the best top-line duos in the league in Sean Monahan and Johnny Gaudreau.

If he can play an important role of providing sandpaper and protection on that line for the rookies, while also driving the net to create space for them, that should help drive their production as well.

So, what's a reasonable expectation for Svechnikov and Necas? Both are capable of earth-shattering rookie years, but a middle ground is probably more realistic for two players that have a combined one game of professional hockey experience on North American soil between them.

I'd peg the pair at somewhere from 20-25 goals and 40-45 points each, though each are certainly capable of more. If Aho and Teravainen can pick up where they left off, and the team can get secondary scoring from guys like Jordan Staal and Justin Williams, that kind of production would be a big boost for the Hurricanes. If Svechnikov and Necas can really hit that next level in year one, look out.



Carolina picks Williams as captain; Rask has finger surgery

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The Carolina Hurricanes picked forward Justin Williams as their captain and said center Victor Rask had surgery on two fingers he injured while slicing food in his kitchen.

Team officials made the announcements Thursday when the team opened training camp.

General manager Don Waddell says Rask will be out indefinitely after having the procedure on the fourth and fifth fingers on his right hand.

Coach Rod Brind'Amour says Williams, a three-time Stanley Cup winner and 2014 playoff MVP, will wear the "C" with Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk serving as alternate captains. Staal and Faulk shared the team captaincy last season.

The Hurricanes opened camp a day early due to the threat of Hurricane Florence and will cancel practice either Friday or Saturday, depending on the storm's severity.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018



Hurricanes name Justin Williams team captain

By Andrew Schnittker

The Carolina Hurricanes will have one captain this season. And after months of who that person would be seeming like a foregone conclusion, it's now official. Head coach Rod Brind'Amour announced Thursday that forward Justin Williams will serve as the team's captain. Forward Jordan Staal and defenseman Justin Faulk will serve as alternates.

Williams, 36, returned to Carolina as a free agent during the 2017 offseason after stints with the Los Angeles Kings and Washington Capitals. He previously spent parts of five seasons with the Hurricanes from 2004-2009, and was a member of the 2006 Stanley Cup Championship team.

"I feel very comfortable in it," Williams said. "A year here now; I'm on my second tour around. I know a lot of the players even though there's been a lot of turnaround. And in turn they know me and I feel that's a big thing and that's a comfort thing that they know what they're getting out of me."

For Brind'Amour, naming Williams captain was a no-brainer, and a choice he knew he wanted to make shortly after he was named head coach in May.

"Big surprise, right," Brind'Amour said. "I think leadership's a big, big, part of any success of a team. When you talk about the best forms of leadership are earned, I don't think there's anybody in here that could disagree that he's earned the right to be the leader of this hockey club. Like I said back in May, it's pretty much the easiest decision I've ever had to make. He checks off all the lists of things that would make a good leader."

Williams, who is a veteran of 1,162 NHL regular-season games and has 289 goals and 733 points in his career, has earned a penchant for being a clutch performer and leader. He knows he needs to just keep doing what's allowed him to have such a successful career in order to be a good captain.

"I think one of the most important things that I'll take into this is not to change myself or be anybody that I'm not," Williams said. "Leadership comes naturally and it comes from years of watching other great leaders. And that's what I've done. My current coach now is one of them. I'll be taking things from his leadership and instilling them into mine. I'm very humbled, and it's something that I'm very proud of. It's something I don't take lightly."

Williams has also made a name for himself in the playoffs. He has won three Stanley Cups, including the aforementioned one with the Hurricanes, and has earned the nickname 'Mr. Game 7' for his playoff performances. Williams has 36 goals in 140 playoff games, including the empty net clincher in the Canes' game seven win over the Edmonton Oilers in 2006.

No one knows what Williams brings to the table better than Brind'Amour, who played with him during those five seasons and captained the 2006 team.

"That's all part of it," Brind'Amour said. "We know what Justin Williams brings every night. He brings that in the playoffs too. To me, that's where he leads the most. We've got to get there, but we will. And when we do, he's the kind of guy everyone's going to be looking to. If that happens, and you make the playoffs, you've got a pretty young team in there. And they're going to be looking at him and how he responds to everything. Super important to have a guy that's been through it all."

The Canes had a bizarre leadership situation last year, with Faulk and Staal serving as co-captains. Everyone agreed that having one player wear the C will work much better.

"I don't know if we maybe thought the best situation was co-captains anyway," Faulk said. "I don't know if many people did. That's obviously a weird situation with how things normally work in the NHL. ... Now I can think we can say it's better to have one guy and a couple assistants and go from there. That way there's a clear message and there's no one wondering who's voice carries what."

Williams is now "The Guy", the number one voice in the room and the man tasked with leading a young group that will include a pair of top rookie forwards in Andrei Svechnikov and Martin Necas to Carolina's first playoff appearance since 2009.

"We have some veterans, but actually [Staal] just turned 30, so he's my only other guy that's in his 30s here," Williams said. "So we're a young team, but we've got some guys who've been around a long time. We're going to let the play do the speaking for itself. No one's going to come here and be like, 'This is what we're going to do; this is what we expect. We're just going to lay it all out there. But we're really excited about the direction of this team, and I think the fans and the community and everybody should be as well.'"



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018



Williams named captain of Hurricanes

36-year-old forward replaces co-captains Staal, Faulk

Justin Williams was named captain of the Carolina Hurricanes on Thursday.

"I think one of the most important things I'll take into this is not to change myself or be anybody I'm not," the 36-year-old forward said. "Leadership comes naturally and it comes from years of watching other great leaders, and that's what I've done. Certainly my current coach is one of them."

One of Williams' teammates on the Hurricanes' 2006 Stanley Cup winning team was Rod Brind'Amour, who was hired as coach by Carolina on May 8.

"We have a good relationship (and) we'll continue to have a good relationship," Williams said. "I've talked with Rod quite a bit over the summer. He'll bounce some things off me and maybe I can be his ears (in the locker room) and help out as best I can."

Williams is the 16th captain in Hurricanes history and the eighth since the Hartford Whalers moved to North Carolina in 1997. He had 51 points (16 goals, 35 assists) in 82 games with the Hurricanes last season, third on Carolina in points and assists.

Williams has 733 points (289 goals, 444 assists) in 1,162 games during 17 NHL seasons with the Hurricanes, Philadelphia Flyers, Los Angeles Kings and Washington Capitals, and 94 points (36 goals, 58 assists) in 140 Stanley

Cup Playoff games. He won the Stanley Cup with the Hurricanes in 2006 and the Kings in 2012 and 2014, when he won the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP, scoring 25 points (nine goals, 16 assists) in 26 games.

"[He] is the right captain for us; everyone knows that," Carolina forward Sebastian Aho said. "He's a great leader. I try to watch and learn how he does things. He earned it."

Defenseman Justin Faulk and center Jordan Staal who were Hurricanes co-captains last season, were named alternate captains.

"I think the world of [him] and I think everyone in this room does too," Faulk said. "I don't know if we maybe thought the best situation was co-captains anyways. I don't know if many people did. Obviously that's a weird situation with how things normally work in the National Hockey League. Obviously we weren't in the position to tell you guys that last year. Now we can say it's better to have one guy. That way it's a clear message and no one is wondering whose voice carries what."

The Hurricanes open their season at home against the New York Islanders on Oct. 4.

"It takes a lot of leaders in the dressing room to build a championship team, and that's what we want," Williams said. "The three of us (including Staal and Faulk) will do our best to be the voice of the team and create new leaders out of it."

TODAY'S LINKS

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/article218364010.html>

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/article218343475.html>

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/article218344980.html>

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/article218319785.html>

<https://nsonline.com/article/2018/09/hurricanes-name-williams-captain-announce-rask-injury-as-camp-opens/>

<https://www.wralsportsfan.com/williams-named-hurricanes-captain/17842101/>

<https://www.wralsportsfan.com/victor-rask-undergoes-surgery-on-right-hand-is-out-indefinitely/17840964/>

<https://www.wralsportsfan.com/canes-name-justin-williams-as-team-captain/17840950/>

<https://www.nhl.com/hurricanes/news/justin-williams-earns-canes-captaincy/c-300087828>

<https://www.nhl.com/hurricanes/news/rod-brindamour-takes-reins-hurricanes-open-training-camp/c-300104016>

<http://trianglesportsnet.com/carolina-hockey-network/carolina-hurricanes-open-training-camp-under-stormy-conditions/>

<https://thehockeywriters.com/carolina-hurricanes-2018-19-season-preview/>

<https://www.canescountry.com/2018/9/13/17856254/carolina-hurricanes-justin-williams-captain-rod-brindamour-victor-rask-hand-surgery-injury>

<https://www.canescountry.com/2018/9/13/17853784/rookie-expectations-carolina-hurricanes-martin-necas-andrei-svechnikov>

<https://www.apnews.com/6e4f3442806d471f918a8b6994e3cb56/Carolina-picks-Williams-as-captain-Rask-has-finger-surgery>

http://www.technicianonline.com/sports/article_1fc0f69a-b788-11e8-8184-4b16b87eb772.html

<https://www.nhl.com/news/justin-williams-named-captain-of-carolina-hurricanes/c-300098628>



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

SportScan

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

1104365 Carolina Hurricanes

Brind'Amour, on first day, sets different tone -- with different captain

BY LUKE DECOCK

RALEIGH-The first pivotal act of Rod Brind'Amour's first training camp as head coach of the Carolina Hurricanes wasn't the decision to name Justin Williams captain, because even though that was finally officially announced Thursday, it had been in the works for months.

"Big surprise, right?" Brind'Amour said.

No, it happened before the first of two practices, held a day early thanks to Hurricane Florence, when Brind'Amour spoke to the assembled team, four dozen players, for the first time. His speeches in his time as captain were typically short, intense and to the point -- and the more effective for being so. This was a little different. There was more ground to cover, and Brind'Amour spoke for more than 15 minutes, leading up to the essential message that will underline this training camp, and indeed this season.

Without pointing fingers or assigning blame, the bar somehow got lowered around here, Brind'Amour said, to the point where mediocrity became acceptable, where the goal wasn't to win the Stanley Cup, but to compete, to squeak into the playoffs.

As far as Brind'Amour is concerned, the only reason to do this is to win the Stanley Cup. Unrealistic? Perhaps. But that's the starting point. That's where the bar will be set under Brind'Amour. With a new owner, new general manager, new front office and a handful of new players to go with a new coach. There's never been a better time for that kind of reset.

That wasn't the only reason that the mood was more relaxed and the practices more intense than a typical first day under the Bill Peters regime. Those conditions are not mutually exclusive, and the combination is a product of a no-nonsense coach who was a no-nonsense player and who now has a no-nonsense captain to rely upon.

"I didn't love it," Jordan Staal said, and Justin Faulk said much the same thing as well.

They both also endorsed Williams as captain, which has been a fait accompli since Brind'Amour was hired. There's a reason every player the Hurricanes added this summer said Williams called them right away. It wasn't so much that he felt obligated. He also felt empowered, knowing this was coming.

Brind'Amour knew Williams, his former teammate and linemate, was the player he needed to fill this role that is considerably more than honorable in hockey, where the captaincy may not be the mythical responsibility it is sometimes made out to be but certainly has an innate importance, both in terms of tradition and leadership. In its best representation, the captain can be both a conductor and a buffer between coach and team, in varying proportions as needed.

Williams, who may as well share a hockey brain with Brind'Amour, couldn't be better equipped to act as a conductor. But he's enough of his

own man, a player with vast experience and a 36-year-old with deep character, to act as a buffer as well.

"That makes it certainly a lot more unique and a lot simpler in the captain-coach relationship," Williams said. "We know each other very well. We know what each other expects from other people. Obviously, Roddy is at a different stage of his career now. He's a head coach and he's taking on a different challenge as well. He's going to need all the help he can get. And I'm going to give it to him. Be his voice. Be our team's voice. It's important we believe the same things, which I know we do."

The news that Victor Rask needed surgery after slicing open his right hand in a kitchen accident threw some of Brind'Amour's preparations into disarray -- the Hurricanes weren't exactly deep at center to start, and Rask is out indefinitely -- but as far as his first day on the ice as a new head coach, things went more or less as he planned.

He has his captain in place. There was energy on the ice. The hard work is still to come, but at the least, the right tone was set Thursday.

News Observer LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104366 Carolina Hurricanes

Hurricanes' Rask out indefinitely after hand surgery

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

RALEIGH-The Carolina Hurricanes' Victor Rask will be sidelined indefinitely after the Swedish center underwent hand surgery Thursday.

The Canes said Rask cut the fourth and fifth fingers on his right hand while slicing food in the kitchen of his Raleigh residence.

The surgery was handled by Dr. Harrison Tuttle at Raleigh Orthopaedic, the team said.

Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said Thursday that he was not sure how long Rask might be out, saying, "I know it's obviously serious and when you have serious injuries that's not a good thing."

Brind'Amour said Rask had put in a significant amount of work this summer rehabbing after undergoing shoulder surgery in March. Rask was one of the early arrivals back in Raleigh for the informal skates at Raleigh Center Ice, saying he was healthy and eager to get to camp.

"I thought he looked great (before) the injury," Brind'Amour said. "I talked to him about it. I had a very similar injury and kind of talked it through with him a little bit.

"We'll get him when he gets back and when he does it's almost like adding a player in a trade. That's how I look at it, that we've got a good player coming at some point."

Rask, 25, is beginning his fifth NHL season with the Canes, having scored 14 goals and added 17 assists last season.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

News Observer LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104367 Carolina Hurricanes

Justin Williams 'humbled' to be named Hurricanes captain

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

RALEIGH—Had it been Rod Brind'Amour's call, Justin Williams would have been the Carolina Hurricanes' captain last season.

It wasn't Brind'Amour's call -- not as a Canes assistant coach -- and Williams wasn't the captain despite his experience, his leadership attributes, his three Stanley Cup rings.

But things have changed. Brind'Amour now is the head coach and on Thursday announced Williams would wear the "C" this season. Jordan Staal and Justin Faulk, who served as co-captains last season, have been named alternate captains.

"I'm very humbled and something I've very proud of and something that I don't take lightly," Williams said.

Brind'Amour told the team of the decision in a meeting before the Canes' first on-ice practices of training camp at PNC Arena. Not that it came as a surprise to anyone.

"Leadership is a big part of any success of a team, I think," Brind'Amour said. "and the best forms of leadership are earned and I don't think anybody in here would disagree that he hasn't earned the right to be the leader of this hockey club.

"This is the easiest decision I've ever had to make. He checks off all the list of things that makes a good leader. Comes to the rink every day, plays the same way, great person. And at the end of day he knows how to win."

Carolina Hurricanes forward Justin Williams says he believes Canes will be a really good team this season but will have to prove it on the ice, not talk about it.

Williams, 36, returned to the Hurricanes in July 2017 as a coveted free agent, signing a two-year, \$9 million contract. He was a tie to the Canes' best moments as a franchise, the 2006 Stanley Cup run, and had earned a reputation as "Mister Game 7" in the Stanley Cup playoffs as a clutch performer in the Los Angeles Kings' two championships.

After the trade of former Canes captain Eric Staal, Peters decided to use four alternate captains -- Staal, Faulk, Jeff Skinner and Victor Rask -- and not have a designated captain in 2016-17. Many, including Brind'Amour, expected Peters to name Williams the captain last season.

"That's why we got him here," Brind'Amour said Thursday.

Instead, Peters went with Staal and Faulk as co-captains, and Jeff Skinner as alternate captain, in an unwieldy grouping that Williams has acknowledged surprised him and one that Faulk said Thursday never felt right.

"I don't know that we thought having co-captains was the best situation," Faulk said. "I'm not sure many people did. That's obviously a weird situation with how things normally work in the National Hockey League. I think it's better to have one guy and a couple of assistants. That way it's a clear message."

Carolina Hurricanes forward Sebastian Aho talks about the start of preseason training camp and the selection of Justin Williams as team captain after the first on-ice session at PNC Arena on Sept. 13, 2018.

Staal said soon after returning to Raleigh that he was willing to give up the "C," if Brind'Amour wanted a change, and would remain a part of the team's leadership core with or without being a captain.

Of Williams' selection, Staal said Thursday, "There's no more deserving player. Obviously he has been a great leader for a long time and had different roles throughout his career. I think he fit a great role here and will be a leader for a young group that can do a lot of great things.

"I know my role doesn't change. Obviously the letter on the shoulder does but that doesn't bother me. What I'm worried about is winning games and however best I can do that is what I'm going to do."

Forward Teuvo Teravainen called Williams "the right person to lead us."

"He has the character and the work ethic and is a great guy in the locker room," Teravainen said. "He can help our young team to move forward. A team needs a leader who can bring you together. 'Willy' is that type of person."

Brind'Amour managed to chuckle later, saying, "The first decision I think I made is going to be one everyone goes, 'Hey, good job.'"

News Observer LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104368 Carolina Hurricanes

Five pressing questions as Hurricanes begin training camp

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

RALEIGH—The most pertinent comment about the Carolina Hurricanes was recently made by veteran forward Justin Williams.

"The fact of the matter is you have to let your play speak for itself," Williams said. "Words are just words."

The Canes can talk about changing the makeup of the team, of the coaching staff. They can talk of establishing a different "culture" and being a tougher team to play against. They can talk of ending a streak of missing the Stanley Cup playoffs for nine straight years, the longest in the league.

Words are just words.

All that matters is what happens on Oct. 4, when the puck drops against the New York Islanders and a new season begins. No one knows that more than Rod Brind'Amour, who once joked that he'd rather be called "Rod" than "Coach" while an assistant coach and now has a new title, head coach Rod Brind'Amour, and the responsibility that comes with it.

It all begins Thursday, when the first preseason training-camp practices are held at PNC Arena. Because of the threat of Hurricane Florence, the NHL has allowed the Canes to begin on-ice practices a day earlier than scheduled.

Just before practice began, it was announced Williams would be the team captain this season.

"At the end of the day we have to win," Brind'Amour said. "It's easy to talk about, right? You've got to go and do it."

Here are five pressing questions entering training camp:

1) How will Brind'Amour run practices?

One word quickly comes to mind: competitive. Brind'Amour was ultra competitive as a player and should be as a head coach, demanding intensity and attention to detail in practices.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"Everyone knows the type of work ethic he has and the type of guy he is," defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk said. "The whole summer he's probably been looking at every detail and planning out every little situation. We know we're going to be an extremely prepared team."

Former coach Bill Peters also was detail-oriented and well-organized in his practices. But the vibe should be different with Brind'Amour in charge.

2) Is there a No. 1 goalie?

Some deja vu, yes? But with a new mix. A year ago, the goaltending tandem was Scott Darling and Cam Ward, with Darling newly signed and set to be the No. 1 guy.

That didn't work out. Now, it's Darling and Petr Mrazek, with a slimmer, seemingly more relaxed Darling out to prove he can get the job done in his second season with the Canes and be their No. 1 guy.

Asked if he was comfortable with the goaltending situation, Brind'Amour said, "I have to be. What I like is we have competition there. We have two guys trying to jumpstart their careers and I think they're motivated for that."

3) What about the D pairs?

This could be Brind'Amour's best "problem" because there are several options with the defensemen.

One would be to pair the two new additions, Dougie Hamilton and Calvin de Haan, and keep Jaccob Slavin and Brett Pesce together. Justin Faulk and van Riemsdyk could be paired, although both are right-handed shots and one would have to play their off-side. Haydn Fleury would be the seventh defenseman.

"I don't know who I'm going to play with but it doesn't really matter because we've got so many good guys," Hamilton said.

Brind'Amour said Pesce missed some conditioning work this summer dealing with an upper-body issue, but Pesce was at the first camp practice Thursday and at full speed.

4) Where do Necas, Svechnikov best fit?

Martin Necas and Andrei Svechnikov have been roommates since coming to Raleigh and the hockey question is will Brind'Amour keep the rookie forwards on the same line in training camp?

Brind'Amour has indicated that might not happen. Better to have each on a line with older, more experienced forwards.

In the first on-ice practice Thursday, Svechnikov often was used with Sebastian Aho at center and Michael Ferland on the opposite wing. Necas centered Teuvo Teravainen and Brock McGinn in the split-squad practice.

But that's what training camp is for -- to experiment, look at different combinations. Both are highly skilled players who could bring a dimension of speed (Necas) and power (Svechnikov) to their line. Or another line.

5) Who grabs the open forward spots?

If Necas and Svechnikov have roster spots all but secured, which should be the case, it will leave several forwards competing for a couple of openings, one created by the Jeff Skinner trade to Buffalo.

There's now the matter of Victor Rask, who is out indefinitely after cutting his hand in a kitchen accident. Rask required surgery.

Phil Di Giuseppe, Valentin Zykov, Lucas Wallmark, Warren Foegele, Julien Gauthier, Aleksii Saarela, Janne Kuokkanen ... it's an expanded list and there are others on it.

Di Giuseppe and Zykov have one-way contracts and Di Giuseppe played 49 games for the Canes last season, but Brind'Amour is interested in seeing how it all shakes out, in practices and in the six preseason exhibition games.

"For me the No. 1 goal is to figure out, we've got some young players, can they play?" Brind'Amour said. "We've got to give them every opportunity to see what they can do."

"We know the guys who can play and know who's going to be on the team. But we have some spots we're not sure about and want to make sure we don't have any doubt going into the season. That's the focal point of training camp for me."

News Observer LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104441 NHL

No appeals made of KeyArena renovation study as Thursday deadline passes

Originally published September 13, 2018 at 5:10 pm Updated September 13, 2018 at 5:36 PM

By Geoff Baker

A deadline to appeal a final environmental impact statement (FEIS) on the \$700 million KeyArena renovation project came and went Thursday with nobody doing so, clearing one of the most serious hurdles to beginning construction on time.

The Los Angeles-based Oak View Group wants to complete the renovation by October 2020 in time to launch a National Hockey League expansion franchise at that time. OVG had built a three-month delay into its construction schedule — stretching into December — to accommodate any appeals that could have been dismissed as frivolous.

A more serious appeal could have delayed construction and postponed the arrival of an NHL team by at least a year. OVG and members of the NHL Seattle group bidding for an expansion franchise had worked feverishly the past few months to head off potential appeals by working out mitigation arrangements with neighborhood stakeholders that expressed concerns about the project.

Since none were filed by Thursday's 5 p.m. deadline, it paves the way for a Seattle City Council vote Sept. 24 on ratifying the full renovation deal ahead of an October meeting of the NHL executive committee in New York City. On Friday, the council's Select Committee on Civic Arenas is set for a final review of those documents before a vote on whether to forward them to the full council.

Both votes are expected to pass rather easily.

After that, the NHL Seattle group headed by David Bonderman, Jerry Bruckheimer and CEO Tod Leiweke are to give a presentation to the league's executive committee on Oct. 2 along with Seattle Mayor Jenny Durkan.

If the NHL's executive committee approves, it would then likely hold a vote of the league's full board of governors in Florida in early December on approving an expansion franchise for this city in time for the 2020-21 season.

The city has imposed conditions on OVG that prevent demolition on KeyArena from beginning until after the NHL franchise is awarded. That would still fall under the December time frame OVG has built into its construction schedule in order to have the facility ready for the October 2020 opening date.

Several clauses within the agreement between OVG and the city also allow for the construction restrictions to be waived ahead of the team being awarded if officials are convinced that one is imminent. A favorable meeting with the NHL's executive committee and its tacit approval of awarding Seattle a franchise could potentially lead to such waivers being granted.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Seattle Times LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104518 Websites

The Athletic / 'Time is now' for the Sharks to win a Stanley Cup after acquiring Erik Karlsson

By Kevin Kurz Sep 14, 2018

After pulling off his biggest trade in more than a decade, Sharks general manager Doug Wilson made it crystal clear on Thursday that he expects defenseman Erik Karlsson to be wearing a teal sweater for much longer than just the one season left on his current contract.

"Yes, it's a long-term approach," Wilson said on a conference call, when asked about a potential contract extension for the two-time Norris Trophy winner and five-time All-Star. "We think Erik fits with us now and for a long time."

It's unlikely that Wilson, who typically keeps his public comments close to the vest when it comes to how he runs the Sharks hockey operations department, would be so blunt if he didn't expect an extension for Karlsson to be forthcoming. In fact, Wilson was already in Ottawa, leaving the rookie tournament in Las Vegas last weekend to fly there to meet with the player and his agent on a trip that can now only be described as an utter success.

For his part, Karlsson didn't want to talk about the possibility of an extension just yet. Although he made a California trip in the offseason, visiting San Francisco, Napa Valley and Palo Alto all for the first time, his familiarity with the Bay Area has been limited mostly to just a once-a-year trek to San Jose as a member of the Senators.

Still: "I'm extremely appreciative that they made the effort that they did to acquire me, and it shows that I'm someone that they want. So I'm taking it like that," Karlsson said. "As of right now I'm just going to prepare every way I can to be ready to play hockey as soon as possible."

Karlsson is already hearing from some of his new teammates, including one that went through a mutual feeling-out process himself just a few months ago. Evander Kane landed in San Jose on Feb. 26 from Buffalo, and after playing just a little more than two months with the Sharks he didn't take long to sign a contract extension on May 24, passing up the opportunity to become an unrestricted free agent.

Kane, who is now signed for the next seven years, revealed his message for Karlsson, also a pending UFA, on Thursday.

"I texted him right after the trade happened, and just told him that he's going to love it here," Kane said. "The boys are really excited to get him here and see him on the ice. I think he's going to quickly realize what a special organization this is, how passionate our hockey fans (are) here in San Jose, what a great place it is to play, and a good team to play for, kind of just like I experienced last year. I'm sure things will go smoothly in that regard. We hope to have him here for a long time."

The process to acquire Karlsson, according to Wilson, started back before the most recent trade deadline when the Sharks inquired about his services. Although nothing came to fruition then, the dialogue between the Sharks and Senators remained ongoing throughout the following months.

Wilson said the discussions picked up steam in the last two to three weeks, but even before then, the thought of a Karlsson acquisition was "never really off the burner, because it's something that you always want to be involved in," Wilson said.

The Sharks, of course, were also in on another big name earlier in the offseason, when they aggressively pursued John Tavares before the top-line center signed with Toronto.

There were several top players that Wilson could have gone after on July 1 when free agency opened, even if none of the available names was as highly regarded as Tavares or Karlsson. But instead, he waited — and pulled the trade off by sending center Chris Tierney, defenseman Dylan DeMelo, prospect forwards Josh Norris and Rudolfs Balcers and a conditional 2019 second-round and a 2020 first-round draft pick (and a 2021 second round pick if the Sharks re-sign Karlsson) to Ottawa.

In Wilson's mind, he needed to keep his line in the water for another big fish to add to a roster that was solid, but not quite good enough to be considered a true Stanley Cup contender.

"We were looking for a difference-maker, and there's probably two main ones, both John and Erik, in the last little while," Wilson said. "We kind of kept our powder dry, hoping that this type of opportunity would come to fruition, and it did."

"It doesn't always happen that way, sometimes you've got to wait a little bit more time. I think the timeline that Ottawa was operating under was (trading Karlsson) prior to the season, and it worked well for us. To me, it's great to get him in sooner than later so he can integrate into our group."

Coach Pete DeBoer echoed Wilson in suggesting that the roster just wasn't quite strong enough without another major acquisition.

"Let's be honest, we weren't good enough last year," DeBoer said. "Our goal here is to win a Stanley Cup, and there's no parades for winning a round or winning two rounds. You want to win a Stanley Cup. This guy puts us closer to doing that."

From Karlsson's perspective, he's going from a team in utter disarray — capped off by owner Eugene Melnyk's bizarre video that was posted late Monday night — to one that now has, arguably, as good a chance as any to win a Stanley Cup.

"(The Sharks have) been a good team for a number of years now," Karlsson said. "They were really good last year. I obviously know most of their players from playing against them and watching them on TV. So it's a real good team that I'm going to be joining. I'm obviously excited about that, and I'm looking forward (to) the challenge that we have ahead of us. I'm going to do everything I can to be as good and as ready as possible for when I do arrive."

Karlsson continued: "I think it's going to be an extremely competitive team. The culture that they have there is a winning culture. They were recently in the Stanley Cup Final, and they've been making the playoffs year after year, so I know I'm going to be walking into a group that's going to be extremely hungry to be successful every night. I'm looking forward to that. It matches up with my personality and what I want to do, as well. In that aspect, I do think that they do have an extremely good team, and I'm going to be extremely excited to be a part of that. We're all hoping for the best."

DeBoer said he hasn't yet thought about how he's going to utilize Karlsson. Perhaps he'll replace Justin Braun on the right side of Marc-Edouard Vlasic, bumping the right-hander Braun to the third pair with Brenden Dillon. Or maybe Karlsson skates with Brent Burns, giving the Sharks arguably the two best offensive defensemen in the entire league on the same pair, something that seems almost unfathomable.

But one aspect of their game that should be immediately better is the power play. That's something that was uneven last season, going through some brutal stretches, particularly after Joe Thornton's season-ending knee injury in late January. The Sharks finished 16th in the NHL on the power play last season, and 25th in 2016-17.

In 2015-16, the year the Sharks went to the Stanley Cup Final, it was third.

Karlsson has 195 power play points since breaking into the league in 2009-10, the most among all NHL defensemen over that span.

"(The power play) needs to be elite again, and this guy gives us a chance to I think get it back there again," DeBoer said.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

The Karlsson trade injected even more enthusiasm into a tight-knit group that's already excited to get back on the ice on Friday for the first day of training camp.

"It's nice to see our organization step in and make a deal like that," Joe Pavelski said. "We know what they think, this organization, and how they want to win. For them to go out and do another move like that, it just reassures us."

Burns said: "It's incredible. He's a huge talent. It just gets everyone fired up about getting started."

A few hours after the trade, the Sharks held a full team meeting at SAP Center that also included all hockey staff and personnel. DeBoer said the message to the players was two-fold.

"It was, one, to look around the room and look at the people in the organization, staff, and players who have dedicated their entire working lives or careers, or decades of their careers, to win a Stanley Cup, and haven't yet," he said. "This is our opportunity. Our time is now. Our window is now.

"And two, names on a sheet of paper or on a depth chart don't win you a Stanley Cup. Washington probably had their poorest team on paper in 10 years and won last year because of intangibles and buy-in and commitment, and other things. It's not as easy as putting names down on a piece of paper."

Still, Karlsson is a gigantic name to add to that sheet of paper. Not only is he considered by many to be the NHL's best two-way defenseman, he may be one of the top 10 players in the world, regardless of position.

2018-19 is now officially a Stanley Cup-or-bust season.

"You look around the room, the type of players we have, the other players getting better, bringing in a guy like Erik Karlsson who's a Norris Trophy winner, having another Norris Trophy winner like Brent Burns on the back end — there's really no excuses," Kane said.

"It's up to us to put it all together, put it on the ice, and have a good season. Having that focus on not being satisfied getting to the playoffs or getting deep in the playoffs, but winning the Stanley Cup."

The Athletic LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104519 Websites

The Athletic / Instant analysis: Addition of Erik Karlsson gives Sharks an unparalleled defensive group

By Kevin Kurz Sep 13, 2018

In what can only be considered the biggest trade in Sharks franchise history — other than when they acquired Joe Thornton in 2005 — two-time Norris Trophy winner Erik Karlsson is on his way to San Jose.

The Sharks traded center Chris Tierney, defenseman Dylan DeMelo, prospect forwards Josh Norris and Rudolfs Balcers and a conditional 2019 second round and 2020 first round draft pick (and a 2021 second round pick if the Sharks re-sign Karlsson) to Ottawa for the services of the 28-year-old, considered by many to be the best defenseman in the NHL. The Sharks also acquired forward Francis Perron, a seventh-round pick in the 2014 draft that has spent the last two seasons with Ottawa's AHL affiliate.

The addition of Karlsson gives the Sharks a defense core that is unparalleled in the NHL. Karlsson joins a group featuring 2017 Norris Trophy winner Brent Burns, who finished tied for second in the NHL last season in scoring among defensemen with 65 points, and defensive

stalwart Marc-Edouard Vlasic, who routinely shuts down the opposition's top lines while playing the more difficult minutes. Justin Braun, Brenden Dillon and Joakim Ryan round out the Sharks' top six.

"It's extremely rare that players of this caliber become available," general manager Doug Wilson said in a team-issued statement. "The word 'elite' is often thrown around casually but Erik's skillset and abilities fit that description like few other players in today's game. With Erik, Brent Burns and Marc-Edouard Vlasic, we feel we have three of the NHL's top defensemen and stand as a better team today than we were yesterday. We are thrilled to welcome Erik and his wife, Melinda, to San Jose."

WOW!! WELCOME TO @SANJOSESHARKS @ERIKKARLSSON65!
UNREAL! CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THAT SAUCE IN PERSON!
PIC.TWITTER.COM/S1UXDIAEUN

— BRENT BURNS (@BURNZIE88) SEPTEMBER 13, 2018

Although Karlsson is a pending unrestricted free agent next summer, the Sharks will undoubtedly attempt to sign him to a contract extension. After all, team owner Hasso Platter was willing to open his sizable wallet for John Tavares in the Sharks' failed pitch for the centerman in June, reportedly offering Tavares upwards of \$13 million annually, and Karlsson is just as much of a superstar in his own right as Tavares. Karlsson won the Norris Trophy as the NHL's best defenseman in 2012 and 2015, and was the runner-up for the award in 2016 and 2017.

The Sharks have been successful over the years at keeping players in the fold after they get a taste of playing in San Jose, most recently inking Evander Kane to a seven-year, \$49 million extension after acquiring him from Buffalo at last season's trade deadline.

Since he broke into the league in 2009-10, no defenseman has more points than Karlsson, who posted 126 goals and 518 points in 627 games, all with the Senators. Twice, he's finished in the top 10 in league scoring among all skaters, including 2015-16 when he was fourth overall with 82 points in 82 games. The native of Sweden has been named as a first team NHL All-Star on four occasions (2011-12, 2014-15, 2015-16 and 2016-17), and has been named to five midseason NHL All-Star games. He has served as Ottawa's captain since the start of the 2014-15 season.

Last season in Ottawa, Karlsson was second in scoring with 62 points, and led the team in average ice time (26:44).

Karlsson should also give a boost to the Sharks' power play, which finished 16th in the NHL last season and really struggled after Thornton's injury. Having Karlsson and Burns both on the ice at the points during a man advantage is downright scary.

The deal looks like a home run for Wilson, who had been hinting at a major move since early in the offseason, but stayed quiet after Tavares signed with the Maple Leafs. The Sharks were able to keep Timo Meier and Tomas Hertl, two young forwards that could continue to develop, as well as defensive prospect Ryan Merkle, who was selected 21st overall in the June draft and is coming off an impressive showing at a rookie tournament in Las Vegas last weekend.

The loss of Tierney does leave a hole. The center, who signed a two-year, \$5.875 million contract extension in the offseason, showed last season to be a solid third line NHL center as well as a key member of the Sharks' second-ranked penalty-killing unit. He finished with 17 goals and 40 points in 82 games.

DeMelo, who had a capable year as the sixth defenseman, signed a two-year, \$1.8 million contract in the offseason after he was not qualified as a restricted free agent.

Norris, a 19-year-old center currently at the University of Michigan and the 19th pick of the Sharks in the 2017 draft, most recently attended development camp in July. Balcers, a 21-year-old forward, was the AHL Barracuda's top scorer last season with 48 points in 67 games. Neither player is a can't-miss prospect.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

One possible replacement for Tierney is Hertl, who was drafted as a center and was projected to skate in the middle at some point by Wilson. Hertl, however, has shown to be a more effective power winger, particularly last season when he skated alongside Logan Couture.

Or, perhaps center Antti Suomela, signed as a free agent in June, is ready to jump in right away. Suomela, 24, led the Finnish league with 60 points last season. He'll likely get a closer look by the coaching staff beginning Friday when the Sharks hit the ice for the first day of training camp.

Karlsson is set to make \$6.5 million this season. The Sharks should still have approximately \$1.5 to \$2 million in salary cap space when the season begins on Oct. 3 against Anaheim.

It's a season that just got much more intriguing.

The Athletic LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104520 Websites

The Athletic / State of the Franchise: Rangers' season is about the future

By Rick Carpiello Sep 13, 2018

The Rangers hope to be competitive in 2018-19. If they are, great. If they aren't, so be it.

But they are nothing if not honest about where they are as a franchise, and they are resolute and forthcoming about where they want to go and how to get there.

The run the Rangers had from 2012 to 2017 (15 playoff rounds, a Stanley Cup final and two other conference finals, plus a Presidents' Trophy) was over.

So they did the smart thing, the gutsy thing, and decided to tear it down in order to try to make another run with a rebuilt team.

By the way, the popular notion across North America is that Rangers GM Jeff Gorton had this epiphany around last February. The fact is he had it late the previous season, and last June he began the process by buying out Dan Girardi and trading Derek Stepan. He knew what would happen at the next trade deadline, and many around the team knew it too.

So the Rangers, their owner James Dolan, team president Glen Sather and Gorton did another smart thing: They announced to the world in February their intent to rebuild, to make all decisions going forward based on the future, not the present.

The plan is being executed, and it's really in its early stages.

This season isn't about 2018-19. It might not even be about 2019-20, depending on what Gorton can do at the trade deadline, again as a seller, and what he might do in free agency next July if, for example, Artemi Panarin actually hits the open market.

So the opening night roster will feature a lot of the same faces who played in last season's finale, which was Alain Vigneault's final game as Rangers coach. Many of the current players are place-holders until most of the much-deepened pipeline of prospects are NHL-ready.

Others are assets to be used by Gorton to add more draft picks, prospects and young players before the trade deadline.

Biggest on-ice question

For the Rangers to even dream about competing they have to tighten up defensively – and by a lot. Their declining defense corps, and more importantly their overall defensive play, collapsed into utter chaos in the

second half of last season. Goalie Henrik Lundqvist, in his 35-year-old season, faced 40 or more shots — a career-high by a lot — 12 times; and even when he was at his best he was often helpless to keep the Rangers in games.

So what will change? Well, the roster of defensemen won't change much. Kevin Shattenkirk will return from a knee injury that bothered him all of the first half of last season and cost him all of the second half. Brendan Smith looks to bounce back from a nightmare season that ended in a demotion to Hartford (AHL). Fredrik Claesson was signed from Ottawa where he spent time as Erik Karlsson's partner — though that can be seen as a positive or a negative. Marc Staal had his best season in a while and was the team's most consistent defender, but was hardly stellar. Brady Skjei should rebound from a sophomore slump, while Neal Pionk looks to avoid one.

On Monday, the Rangers traded for Boston's rugged and rather large righty defenseman Adam McQuaid.

Unless a rookie makes the team (Libor Hajek is the top candidate), the personnel is largely the same.

So the change must come from new coach David Quinn's system — sticks in lanes, good decision-making and obviously lots more help from the forwards. Quinn added defensive assistant Greg Brown (and assistant David Oliver) to staff holdovers Lindy Ruff and Benoit Allaire.

Whether this all means fewer quality scoring chances and, in turn, fewer goals allowed, can't be answered yet.

Depth chart analysis

There is going to be room for prospects and young players to make the opening-night roster, but the Rangers won't rush anybody. The kids will get a good long look in training camp and preseason games, but Quinn and Gorton have made it clear that jobs must be earned.

And that they won't be force-feeding players onto the Garden ice if it's in their best interest to play in Hartford first.

Down the middle, the Rangers are fairly set for now, with Mika Zibanejad and Kevin Hayes ensconced as the first two centers, and rookie centers Lias Andersson (who turns 20 in October) and Filip Chytil (who turned 19 last week) are almost certain to make the team. Brett Howden, 20, a top-five prospect in the organization, is another center.

That means that Vlad Namestnikov and Ryan Spooner, who both play center, will be on the wings, along with holdovers Mats Zuccarello, Chris Kreider, Pavel Buchnevich, Jimmy Vesey and Jesper Fast. Rugged vets Matt Beleskey and Cody McLeod will fight (sometimes literally) for maybe one spot, as will undrafted free agents Ville Meskanen and Michael Lindqvist.

A guess on the regular lineup, though certain to evolve and change a lot in the next few weeks:

Forward lines

Kreider-Zibanejad-Buchnevich

Vesey-Hayes-Spooner

Namestnikov-Chytil-Zuccarello

Lindqvist-Andersson-Fast

Defense pairs

Claesson-Shattenkirk

Staal-Pionk

Skjei-Smith/McQuaid

Goalies

Lundqvist



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Alexandar Georgiev

Shattenkirk, Hayes, Kreider, Zuccarello and Zibanejad would likely be the No 1 power play unit. Hayes became the team's best penalty killer last season and could team with Fast on the first pair, followed by Andersson and perhaps Zibanejad; while Staal, Claesson, Smith and Skjei are the defense pairs on the penalty kill, though McQuaid will probably muscle his way into the rotation.

It should be mentioned, too, that in Ruff's first season as an assistant, his penalty killing unit leaped from near the bottom of the NHL to the top 10 – despite losing regular penalty killers Ryan McDonagh, Girardi, Stepan, Rick Nash and Michael Grabner.

In the Pipeline

The Rangers have the advantage of having seen a number of their prospects and depth players at points last season while cleaning house.

Their top prospects other than Chytil and Andersson may not make the team right out of the gate – then again, they could.

Those would include Hajek and Howden, new free agents Meskanen and Lindqvist.

But if Howden, for example, isn't ready and the Rangers need a forward, they've seen plenty of Boo Nieves and Vinni Lettieri to feel comfortable with either as a fill-in (again, assuming they don't make the team out of camp). Ty Ronning, a former seventh-rounder who lit it up in junior hockey, could also be a call-up, as could big Tim Gettinger, who will get a good look in camp. The Rangers aren't likely to need a center since Namestnikov and/or Spooner can move to the middle. So their call-ups would probably be wingers, other than Howden and Nieves.

The same applies on defense, where Tony DeAngelo, John Gilmour and Rob O'Gara all got good looks last season, and all could start the season in Hartford.

The Rangers also bolstered their backup goalie position by re-signing Hartford goalie Marek Mazanec, signing former NHLer Dustin Tokarski, either of whom could be the backup if Georgiev goes back to Hartford to play instead of sitting behind Lundqvist. After this season, Lundqvist's heir apparent, Igor Shesterkin, gets out of his KHL contract and would be eligible to come to North America.

Looking longer term, the Rangers expect big things from the three 2018 first-rounders, winger Vitali Kravtsov (playing in Russia), defenseman K'Andre Miller (playing at Wisconsin) and defenseman Nils Lundkvist (playing in Sweden), as well as several of their lower-round picks.

But high on their prospects list are players they obtained with their deadline deals – Hajek and Howden (from Tampa Bay), defenseman Yegor Rykov (from New Jersey for Grabner), defenseman Ryan Lindgren (from Boston for Nash).

Salary Cap Watch

According to CapFriendly.com, the Rangers have about \$3.576 million in cap space headed into the season – a number that can be massaged depending on which vets make the team, which contracts are buried, or partially buried, in the minors, and trades or waivers.

The Rangers have been speculated as a team that could take on another team's troubling contract – such as ex-Rangers captain Ryan Callahan's remaining two years at \$5.8 million if Tampa Bay needs to clear space for a Erik Karlsson trade. But with the McQuaid deal they would have to move some money to add a Callahan-type of contract.

They can also shed cap space at or before the deadline if they were to deal Zuccarello (\$4.5 million or Kevin Hayes (\$5.175 million) or McQuaid (\$2.75 million). Failing that, but extremely unlikely, they could allow any of them to walk as free agents next July. They might also be able to trade Smith's \$4.35 million, due each of the next three years, if he has a big comeback season, though that's far-fetched. Another way to find money

would be a buyout of Staal's remaining two years (\$5.7 million) next summer

The Rangers are not going to be big buyers as the coming season unwinds, then they will be set up in July to take a big run at a big free agent (Panarin?), the type of top offensive talent that they still lack.

Lundqvist remains their biggest ticket, with three years remaining at \$8.5 million per, followed by Shattenkirk's three years, \$6.65 million. The Rangers have only two players signed beyond 2020-21 when Lundqvist and Shattenkirk will be off the books – Skjei and Zibanejad.

By then their roster ought to be made up largely of players who are on the organizational depth chart but not here yet, many of who won't be here at all this season.

Final assessment

The Rangers proved that they are sticking to the plan at the draft, and again during free agency, and Gorton won't stray.

That means, very likely, that Zuccarello – who was coveted and nearly moved at the last deadline – should be available as a rental again in February. It means Hayes, on his one-year deal, is as likely to be traded as he is to be signed to an extension (which can't happen until January).

It means more selling, more draft picks and prospects coming, and more in the way of making decisions based on the future, not the present.

It will be bumpy, for sure. There will be growing pains, absolutely. And most of the kids who will be the cornerstone when the Rangers turn the corner won't even play a shift in 2018-19.

But this is where the Rangers are and that is where they're going.

The Athletic LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104521 Websites

The Athletic / Islanders goalie Robin Lehner opens up about his addiction and bipolar diagnosis: 'I could not stand being alone in my brain'

By Robin Lehner

Editor's note: Robin Lehner is a nine-year NHL veteran goaltender. The 27-year-old Sweden native signed a one-year deal with the New York Islanders in July.

March 29, 2018 was the day my life would change forever. It all started the night before. I made a phone call to my goalie coach with the Sabres, Andrew Allen. I told him that I was personally in a bad place and was not sure that I would be able to play in the game we had the next day. I was having trouble making up my mind if I could suit up. I was mentally and physically battling a lot of things. The conversation ended with him telling me we could talk about it in person at the rink in the morning. When I arrived, I said I was good to go... as I always did.

I was not good to go.

The game began as usual, but a few minutes in I noticed I was feeling very exhausted. I didn't have a ton of action, so I was starting to feel a little worried. As the period continued, I started to feel some pain in my chest and I was breathing heavily. During the intermission as I came back into the room, I really felt something was wrong. I sat with our trainer in a side office and started to calm down a little. I thought I was able to get back in for the second. Maybe I was just tired.

The second period began and everything started to get worse. That pain in my chest now felt more like pressure. Towards the end of the period, things started to get blurry and I couldn't focus. I felt very fuzzy, but I



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

battled like I always did. The scoreboard clock was ticking down so slowly. I just wanted to get back to the locker room. When zero finally hit, I walked back and sat in the trainer's room. I could barely get my gear off. I broke down. I was having a major, full-blown panic attack. I thought I was suffering a heart attack. I had no idea what was happening. I could not go back on the ice.

Our doctors and trainers were able to calm me down. Our GM Jason Botterill came down from the press box to check on me. He was pretty concerned. I don't know if this made things better or worse in terms of the anxiety I was feeling. I don't remember much after that. After checking with our team doctors, I was sent home to get away from the rink. I was not going to the hospital because the media along with everyone else would find out and I did not want that. I felt so drained both physically and mentally. Everything hurt. On my way home, I did the one thing that was common for me ... I stopped to grab beer. I went home and drank ... and drank. I finally woke up my wife in the middle of the night and said the five words I never had the courage to say.

I have to go away.

With those words, I'll go back to that dark place I talked about in the first part of this story. This dark place is full of self-medication and thoughts of suicide. The phone call I made to Andrew the night before? I was drunk. I wanted to kill myself. I was extremely close multiple times. The battle playing hockey was nothing compared to the battle inside my brain. It was at its worst.

Since the new year began I had been feeling severely depressed and my drinking increased. I was heavily drinking a case of beer a day just to settle the demons in my mind and then took pills to sleep. I was self-treating myself because I could not be inside my own head by myself. The thoughts of ending it all ... it was real and close.

So close that weeks before that game in March, I met with my lawyer Frank. He had suggested we sit down and go through some things I needed to do to get my life back on track. Frank mentioned life insurance to me at one time and it came to me I needed to have a larger policy. It was then that he asked if I had a drinking problem. I had clarity for a moment to ask myself where I was. I haven't been there for my wife and kids nor for myself. I finally realized I needed help and would come to find out I had no clue what I needed. But I know one thing: If it wasn't for Frank I probably wouldn't have gone to rehab. He gave me that last push.

I contacted "the program" supported by the NHL and the NHLPA. I told them I needed help, but I never let on to the severity of the situation. No one knew. After some discussions, the plan was to take steps once the season was over, which was only a few weeks away. I thought I could deal, but March 29 changed everything.

When I told my wife that night, she was happy. My wife had tried so many times in the past to make me stop and wanted me to get help. I never wanted to listen. She was also scared for me. While I had been thinking about suicide, she had been witnessing that process right in front of her for years. I know she always wanted to help, but I never wanted to show any sign of weakness. What a terrible thing to put someone through. I don't think I wanted to get help because of my additional problems overall. I was addicted to alcohol and drugs and I didn't want to stop. I couldn't.

It was true powerlessness. I was aware of the pain this caused my family, but still could not stop doing it. I wasn't in control of my own mind. It always had a reason and excuse to do whatever it felt like it wanted. I wished there was something else I knew I could do other than abusing pills and alcohol. There always was, but I never had the courage to get help. I was scared. What was going to happen to my career and everyone's perception of me?

It finally didn't matter. I was going to rehab for myself and my family. It was the one thing I have done in my life that made me feel like a true man.

The call was made back to the program. I couldn't wait any more. It's a call I never had the courage to make before. I needed to go now. The few days that I was given away from the rink before I left, I drank ... a lot. So, I was set up to go to Arizona to one of the best treatment centers in North America for addiction and trauma. In the airport ready to fly, I sat by myself with a hoodie over my head drinking beers. At that point I thought I had only two options. Get on that plane and do this or end this once and for all now.

I got on the plane.

When I arrived, I was put into a small room to help sober up and ween off everything in my body. Besides the drinking and other pills, did I mention I had been taking sleeping pills to sleep almost every night for seven years? My detox lasted three weeks in that room. I was told my detox was one of the worst that they had seen. I had not had an honest sleep in so long, my mind was in shock. I was hallucinating, fighting demons in my mind and having extreme and vivid dreams. I was stuck in a constant state of REM sleep and the dreams kept waking me up and making things worse. Sleep was only in short spurts. I was truly living on autopilot for three weeks in a constant fog.

It was during all this that the doctors realized that my situation went beyond addiction. They started to dig as they do. The doctors, having knowledge of past issues, moved me to the regular rooms when I was cleaned from the detox phase. I was in a group with mostly members of the military and made several new friends. I would come to find out later how similar things were between us all in the group. I got a whole new perspective of what they go through and what a sacrifice it truly is to be a part of the military.

There were a lot of things growing up that I dealt with and were surrounded by. I saw and experienced things I want to forget. My personal battle was now complicated by my own childhood experiences of abuse, addiction and mental illness. Growing up was a seemingly endless wave of horrible violations. I started drinking young and was around a lot of the wrong people. My family surrounded me with the stress of addicts and other nefarious people on a day-to-day basis. The good relationships I had were impossible to keep because my family kept pushing them away. It was an all too comfortable environment within a very bad part of the world. I was left with many regrets and a lot of true friendships wasted.

Five weeks into treatment and I was diagnosed bipolar 1 with manic phases.

Now all this is not the sole reason for bad decisions I have made in life, but they were definitely affecting my mental state in ways that I did not realize. During the treatment I went through stages of grief, anger, sadness and hopelessness. I was broken and they were trying to put me together. My mind had been tricked into thinking that the terrible things that had happened to me were somehow OK. I didn't try to change it. It was what I was used to.

For a long time, I always lived at the extremes mentally — manic and hyper-manic and depressed. What that means is the highs are high and the lows, well very low, and the depression is awful.

When I am manic I usually feel great, but I make a lot of impulsive decisions and dangerous mistakes. When I was on the manic extreme I didn't care about any type of consequence or repercussions. I didn't care about anything that was going on around me. My ego thrived and my personality changed. I thought I was the best at everything and all my thoughts were the right ones. I was usually an easy person to be around at these manic stages. I had lots of energy and didn't need much sleep. I would never take pregame naps and my confidence was at its peak.

Then the other extreme was depression, which was total hell. I could not function properly performing basic life skills without a lot of effort. If I really needed to get something done and didn't want to really do it, it would not happen. Family didn't matter. Nothing did. I was always so paranoid in this stage. I felt that everyone was against me and wanted to hurt me. I was constantly angry, irritated and tired. The depression didn't



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

just affect my mind but also my body. I was physically hurting every day. I didn't want to practice. I barely wanted to play in games.

I managed to get through it all, but it wasn't easy for me. And it was even harder for those around me. My brain was going in all different directions and I could not focus on anything.

All these feelings mixed in together were finally all too much. I wanted to die. I could not handle it. I had tried to have this hidden from people around me. The only one that truly understood my pain was my wife and she still didn't know everything.

The drinking and pills I was taking were to bring me down and "even me out." Nothing else worked to calm down my brain. When I had a concussion in Ottawa, the only thing that helped me feel better during that time was to drink. I knew that was not good to do, but it was the only thing that would take away my headaches. No one was aware of my need to drink or to take sleeping pills until I would pass out. I could not stand being alone in my brain at night time.

As I said, the doctors dug deep. So deep, I felt I could not function. I made the decision to stay an additional four weeks for additional treatment. I was scared to leave the doors. I was told if I ever drank again, I would probably die. Now, that mattered.

The next few weeks in there would be life altering. I started to get very emotional and determined. I wanted to feel happiness. I had not felt real happiness in a long time. I deserved better for myself and so did my family. I started to make a lot of big life decisions during this time.

The Meadows in Arizona helped map out my life and it was something I never had the courage to do. I always just suppressed things with substances, impulsive thoughts and behavior. The therapists went through my whole life and opened my eyes to what truly happened. For truly the first time, I found religion. I was baptized in Arizona during this time. This new faith is what helped me through. This was truly one of the best things that ever happened to me and I have to thank Pastor Greg for that.

Today, I am here a happy man, that is for the first time, trying to live in the moment, day to day.

The only way I was leaving those doors was when I was 100 percent certain that I was going to make it. I never want to make my family go through anything like that again. They deserve a dad and my wife, a real husband. If I felt I could not give them that, I wanted to die. I could not let happen what I did to my wife again. There was never domestic violence, but the mental suffering over the years watching her husband killing himself slowly was brutal. When I was away, she was never sure I was going to come home.

I got to speak to my wife often on the phone during treatment. My family came and saw me in treatment during the last week. When I saw my kids for the first time after this ... I broke down. I was ready to really be a husband and dad for the first time. I was finally ready to love and feel love.

Life does go on living without you being around. One of the hardest things now was getting back to hockey. I am an addict that was diagnosed as bipolar and ADHD with PTSD and trauma. I had never had a sober season of hockey my entire career. With those manic swings, I could see the pattern. When I was hypomanic and in a good mood, I was a solid goalie. The depressive state, not so much.

But now there is a new reality. I can focus on my career.

During this whole process our GM in Buffalo was so incredibly supportive. We met when I came back and had a great and productive discussion. Jason and the Sabres organization had decided to move on from me as their goalie and, in the end, my family and I thought a restart would be the best thing. I still wanted to stay if they wanted me. But deep inside I knew changing scenery would be the best thing for my recovery. Now what to do. My relationship with Jason didn't end in that meeting. He

contacted me during the summer a few times to check in on me. His check-ins still continue today, despite me not being on his team.

My agent received a few calls, which was encouraging, but most teams were hesitant because I had a reputation. Those meetings with teams were some of the hardest things I've had to do in my life, now sober. I couldn't tell them I was bipolar. I couldn't tell them anything.

One meeting in particular was worse than any other. I was bombarded with questions about why I was a bad person or a bad teammate and I couldn't say anything. I just took it for hours. I was told that I was a bad influence and I had less than one chance or I would be buried in the minors and that would end my career. Sitting and hearing from these people who don't know me and think that I am a bad person was extremely hard. I was crushed.

The scary thing was all I wanted to do after these horrible meetings was to drink. I was put down for so long and could not defend myself, all from fear of my diagnosis going public. After one meeting, I was in the airport staring at the bar, so I picked up my phone and spoke to friends and my wife for a long time to get through it. I walked past that bar and got on the plane sober.

I never got an offer and learned through the media that the teams I had met with had signed other goalies. My faith that I didn't have before rehab was now being tested. It all changed when I got a call from Lou Lamoriello and the Islanders. I had two great meetings with him and, looking back now, those meetings became some of the of the best moments in my life. We talked about family and life.

The Islanders were ready to take a chance with me. I was relieved that I could start a new chapter. When I was finally offered the deal, I was so happy. I finally had someone who believed in me, now sober.

The one thing that was still making me nervous was that bipolar stigma. I didn't understand why I was so ashamed to say anything. Would I lose my job? I finally was able to gather enough courage to talk about this with management. To my surprise, they were very accepting, knowing that I would still need more help at certain times. With my last GM checking in on me, my new one working with me, I am finally beginning to find a place of comfort without having to find something to make everything go away.

I am truly ready to battle now.

I cannot say enough about the NHLPA/NHL substance abuse program. I don't think I would be alive without them. Dan Cronin, Dave Lewis and Dr. Shaw have done so many amazing things for my family and me during this time. They were out visiting me every week to make sure I was OK. They check on me all the time on the phone. I owe them so much. I can't thank my wife and family enough for their support. My close friends checking up on me and my friend and lawyer, Frank Muggia, who came to visit me through all of this. I owe so much to every single one of them.

It's important to know that I am not blaming any of my actions in the past on my conditions or diagnosis. I take ownership of what I have done. I let myself become what I was. I never had the courage to get help earlier.

I am not sharing this story to make people think differently of Robin Lehner as a professional goalie. I want to help make a difference and help others the way I have been helped. I want people to know that there is hope in desperation, there is healing in facing an ugly past and there is no shame in involving others in your battle.

My journey is still new. Every day is a battle and each day a new chance to grow as a man. It is time to take the "crazy person" stamp from bipolar disorder. I am working hard to become the latest to battle this unfair stigma. Our battle together is just beginning.

And now that I have begun my battle with what's behind me, it's time to battle what's in front of me.

The Athletic LOADED: 09.14.2018



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

1104522 Websites

The Athletic / 2018-19 NHL Season Preview: Los Angeles Kings

By Dom Luszczyszyn Sep 13, 2018

Read this to learn more about how these projections work and this to understand the uncertainty each projection carries.

Since winning the Stanley Cup in 2014, it's been an uneven road for the Los Angeles Kings. In each of the last four seasons they've either been knocked out in the first round or missed the playoffs entirely. That's not good enough for a club that once looked like it was putting together a mini-dynasty. The team's goals this season are clear: win a round in the playoffs and keep playing past April.

That goal will be easier said than done, though. The Kings' stars are a year older, other teams around them are improving and there are some question marks surrounding the team's depth. The fact Los Angeles' preview falls today and not a week from now attests to that.

That doesn't mean the Kings will be bad this season, nor does it mean they'll necessarily be good either. It means they're in an extremely mushy middle where any number of things could go either way and shape how the season plays out. According to my model, there are 11 teams between 89.5 and 94.5 points. The Kings sit right in the middle, ranked 16th in the NHL with 92 points – in other words, dead average.

To really drive home how tight things are for the Kings, their chances of finishing anywhere from first to seventh in the Pacific are all between 11 and 15 per cent.

Even the playoffs are a virtual coin flip, with the Kings having a 55 per cent chance of making it. Having 18 teams above 50 per cent when there are only 16 spots may seem counter-intuitive, but it's just a weird probability quirk where a high number of competitive teams means we know which teams have a shot, but not which teams will make it in the end. In a scenario where there are two spots up for grabs and three teams tied with one game left – all three would have a 66 per cent chance, despite only two making it. That's the Kings in a nutshell; they'll be in the hunt.

Being in the hunt isn't what this team wants, though; they want to win at least a round of playoff hockey. At 26 per cent, that's not impossible, but also not the likeliest scenario. Even if the Kings do make the playoffs, they'll likely be the underdog against whoever they play, though a very weak division could make things close.

The issue, as usual with teams in this range, is depth. The Kings have some uber-talented players at the top of the lineup, but things get dicey at the bottom.

Nowhere is that more present than on the back end. The Kings have Drew Doughty, the heart and soul of the team, Jake Muzzin a perfectly respectable top pairing defender, and... four other players. It's likely the team will have to keep that duo separate as the bottom pairs would get eaten alive otherwise.

It goes without saying that Doughty is one of the game's best defenders and considering the state of the rest of the defence, he may be the team's most important player. He does it all and he does it all well. From exiting the zone, to defending entries, to creating chances for his teammates and everything in between that we can't currently measure, Doughty is a force on both sides of the puck. He's been incredible during his peak and last season was arguably one of the better ones of his career. Finally free from Darryl Sutter's system, he had a career-high 60 points while posting an incredible plus-5.4 per cent relative Corsi, in tough minutes to boot. By WAR, it was his third best season according to

Evolving Hockey while Corsica had it at fourth. By Game Score it was third. Muzzin looked very good as well last season. Like Doughty, he's a smart, two-way player who does well with or without the puck – at a level slightly below Doughty in each facet.

It's after those two where there are issues. Derek Forbort is solid defensively and can move the puck, but is mostly a passenger on the Doughty pairing. He does have room to grow, though. Dion Phaneuf has really fallen off and I'm not sure how much he has left. He's replacement level no matter where he slots in the lineup, as he gets caved in by strong competition (in Ottawa) and weak competition (in Los Angeles) alike. He was at 45 per cent Corsi (minus-5.2 per cent relative) in Los Angeles despite getting softer minutes in the bottom four. Daniel Brickley is an unknown commodity with decent, but not exactly show-stopping numbers in the NCAA who will likely battle for the final spot with Paul LaDue and Oscar Fantenberg. My model is particularly fond of LaDue, who has done very well in sheltered minutes.

That leaves Alec Martinez, a player who the Kings are counting on to be their third pillar on defence but needs to bounce back tremendously after arguably the worst season of his career. All players react differently under new coaches and it seems Martinez didn't handle the transition all that well. His production fell off completely and he posted the worst possession numbers of his career. He's slipped in that regard over the last four seasons, especially on the defensive side of things, but 2017-18 was by far his worst, relatively speaking. Of course, being compared to Doughty isn't favourable for any defender, but it's a problem when the raw possession totals drop to the 46 per cent range.

For the Kings to compete, they need a second pairing that can tilt the ice, or at least keep things even. If Martinez plays the way he did last season, they won't have that. It didn't really matter who he played with, either. His shot share was at 47 per cent or lower with every regular defender the team partnered him with. You'd think a player with Muzzin's reputation for play-driving could help, but even that duo got outplayed on most nights. The Kings seemed to recognize the problem, as Martinez's most common linemate last season was Phaneuf (340 minutes), who was acquired in February. Bottom line, Martinez needs to be better.

Another important thing this defence crew needs to figure out is how to stay out of the box. All five of the defenders who played in L.A. last season are projected to have a penalty differential at minus-10 or lower. Defencemen have a natural tendency to take more penalties than they draw, but not at this rate. The only other team with five defenders projected to have a penalty differential of minus-10 or worse is Detroit, the league's worst projected defence corps. That's not great company to keep. The Kings had terrific special teams last season, but any advantage there is somewhat mitigated by the fact they're a bottom 10 team when it comes to discipline.

The defensive issues mean the team will need to rely heavily on goaltending once again, a strength that the team has no guarantee of repeating. Jonathan Quick had his best season since 2011-12 posting a .921 save percentage, and while he's one of the league's best goalies, it's possible he regresses slightly. That's especially true considering he had an astounding .895 save percentage on the penalty kill last season, the sixth-highest mark among goalies that faced 200 or more shots while shorthanded. It's the third highest mark of his career, and his career average there is .877. Considering that penalty kill save percentage is even more volatile than it is at even strength, Quick could see a slight drop overall next season.

The bigger issue is behind Quick, though. The Kings starter was excellent last season, but the team's backups were even better. In 24 games, Darcy Kuemper and Jack Campbell combined for a .930 save percentage, an extremely high number that seems unlikely to continue next season, especially with the large uncertainty surrounding Campbell, who has just six NHL games under his belt. Had the Kings been just average behind Quick last season, the team would've given up 12 more goals against which would've put them in a tie for the final wild-card spot with St. Louis.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Based on public data, this doesn't seem like a product of the new system, either. The Kings expected save percentage last season was .905, which ranked 25th in the league. The difference between the team's actual save percentage and what was expected was the second largest in the league behind only Anaheim. Regression on that front seems likely.

Even if that does happen, the Kings should still be a strong defensive team and it helps that the club is no longer as inept on offence. The forward group features five first-line calibre players that few other teams can stack up against. A sixth isn't far behind, either.

Anze Kopitar arguably belongs in the elite tier. At 2.7 projected wins he's on the cusp and with further sustained excellence to start the season it won't be long until he breaks through.

The reason he's a lowly regarded here is mostly due to the signs of decline he was exhibiting prior to last season's Hart-nominated campaign. For four straight seasons his raw and relative Corsi dropped until he was a negative relative player in 2016-17. It was the same story by goals, too, which contributed to the lowest 5-on-5 points per 60 of his career in a 52-point season, also the lowest. It was especially startling considering the minutes he was getting and that lack of efficiency plays a role.

Last season he was able to reverse those trends, a slightly surprising resurgence given his age that likely had much to do with the new coaching staff in place. My model doesn't account for that new coaching staff that was able to get the best out of Kopitar offensively – all it sees are the last three seasons and what he did in them. That might mean it's unfairly low when it comes to projecting Kopitar's production this season. Skepticism on repeating his nearly 17 per cent shooting percentage at 5-on-5 is warranted.

He's expected to be a 77-point player, a sizeable dip from his 92-point season from a year ago. That basically means that anywhere between 70 and 90 points is a good range for Kopitar, making last year a likely best-case scenario. At 31 he's still an excellent player, but it's hard to see him topping 90 points again unless everything goes right.

The team's addition of Ilya Kovalchuk does give us reason for optimism. At 35, he's not young either, but he can still score and that's something this team has always been desperately looking for. Based on his KHL output (and adjusted for age and likely ice time) a 60-point season is an appropriate expectation for Kovalchuk. That might be enough to keep Kopitar above the point-per-game range, especially if Dustin Brown can keep playing at the level he was at last season where he reignited his possession game and rediscovered his scoring touch. Brown's 1.72 points per 60 last season was his highest mark since 2010-11, the team's last full non-Sutter year.

The second line should be much stronger this year too with a healthy Jeff Carter. That the team was able to reach the heights it did, especially on offence, while Carter was out with an injury for all but 27 games is nothing short of remarkable. He's an easy bet for 60 points and should provide a boost to Tyler Toffoli and Tanner Pearson's production.

He does need to clean up his two-way game, though. Like Martinez's troubles on the second pair, the Kings need the second line to tilt the ice or at least break even and they weren't getting that with Carter last year. His defence has always been questionable, but his offence at least made up for it. That wasn't the case in 2017-18 and he was one of the team's worst play-driving forwards.

At 33, there's no guarantee Carter can manage that, as he's hitting an age where players begin their descent. It's a problem facing a lot of this team's best players and one reason to be pessimistic about the team's chances going forward. The team has nine players that will be over 30 this season, a list that includes Carter, Kopitar, Quick, Kovalchuk, Brown and Martinez – players the team is really relying on to be difference-makers this season. Doughty and Muzzin at 29 are close, too.

It likely won't happen all at once for the Kings stars, but there is a chance some of the team's key players fall off to varying degrees next season. Many of them are at an age where it becomes a much likelier possibility, and that's a scary reality considering those players are the team's best.

The organization doesn't currently have the supplemental depth to offset that, either. Adrian Kempe and Gabe Vilardi (if he's healthy and makes the team) are the team's lone forwards under the age of 25 and make up a third line with Alex Lafallo (who is 25). While they may provide some decent secondary scoring (Kempe was second behind Kopitar in 5-on-5 points per 60), they will likely struggle on defence. I'm not so certain Kempe can drive his own line either unless he takes a big step in his second full season. While he's great in transition, he isn't as effective in the offensive zone where his primary shot contributions (shots and shot assists) are very low. His high points per 60 was likely linemate and secondary assist driven, not to mention his own personal 14.7 per cent shooting percentage at 5-on-5. Most of Lafallo's value comes from being a passenger on the Kopitar line, too, making the third line a tough one to depend on.

The fourth line is even worse, mostly due to the contributions, or lack thereof, from Nate Thompson. He's the player projected to be the least valuable regular in the entire league this season. He's where offence goes to die as his teams take 12 fewer attempts per 60 with him on the ice compared to off over the last three years, which contributes to a relative Corsi of minus-6.4 per cent. Both marks are among the bottom three among players who still have an NHL job. Replacing him with someone worth zero value would be enough to vault the Kings to 93.6 points and become the 12th ranked team according to my model.

Depth problems have been plaguing the Kings for years now and it's the biggest reason the team hasn't been able to reach the next level and make it past the opening round of the playoffs. The Kings' bottom six and bottom pair collectively rank as the projected fourth worst group in the league. Unless Kempe and Vilardi really prove themselves, those problems may remain there. On defence, Forbort needs to take another step and Martinez needs to find his game again. There are avenues to success for the bottom of this roster, but as it stands now the team will be relying heavily on its top players again.

Considering the age of those involved, I'm not sure how long the team can continue to depend on everyone to play high-end hockey without much of a succession plan. Due to a lack of depth, the last few seasons have been mired in mediocrity, a waste of some of this talented core's best seasons. With the core likely in decline going forward, the team will need to support its best players more than ever. It may just work out enough to make the playoffs this year and next, maybe even put the team in contention if everything goes right, but the clock is slowly ticking on the current era of Kings hockey.

What Other Models Say

Emmanuel Perry, Corsica: 94.0 points, 14th

Rob Pizzola, Semi-Professional Sports Bettor: 93.1 points, 17th

Andy MacNeil, Vegas Stats & Information Network: 92.1 points, 16th

Over/Under Point Total, Bodog: 93.5 points, T-17th

Pretty much no disagreement from all the models that all agree the Kings are right around average, or just barely above if that. That might not be good enough this year as their rank league-wide ranges from 14th (Perry) to 17th (Pizzola).

What Fans Expect

Public Sample: 1,956

Fan Sample: 99

I think the public has this one right on the money: the Kings are an average club, with a very tight range of outcomes. It's difficult to see a tremendously successful season, or an epic disappointment and somewhere between 80 and 100 points is fair. Of course, fans are much



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

more optimistic about a team that earned 98 points last season and is adding Kovalchuk to that roster. About 97 per cent expect the team to make the playoffs, but this team is far from certain in that regard in an extremely competitive Western Conference.

What The Athletic Insider Thinks

Lisa Dillman: Whenever the Kings used to trade a prospect or sign a loyalty contract under the previous regime, a lot of people would say: "Well, that's Rob Blake's problem." It was widely known that Blake was on track to eventually becoming Kings GM. The Kings were in an understandable win-now mode but it was also known Blake was going to have to deal with a LOT of problems coming home to roost when he got the job.

Blake has efficiently dealt with some of them (one minor miracle was getting out from under the Marian Gaborik contract) but others still loom heading into his second full season as Kings GM.

They are still tight against the cap, secondary scoring is a concern, as is the continuing health of prospect Vilaradi, who is doubtful for the start of training camp because of back problems.

But it is my contention that they will be a playoff team because their core is still intact, and highly productive, starting with Kopitar, Doughty and Quick. And think about this: the big move in the summer of 2017 was to sign Michael Cammalleri. Contrast that with the Kovalchuk signing in the summer of 2018 and a healthy Carter, and it should be enough of a difference to get them into the playoffs. I suspect, however, it might be suspenseful until the final weekend of the regular season.

The Athletic LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104523 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Erik Karlsson's final day as a Senator overshadowed by sadness

Luke Fox | September 13, 2018, 8:20 PM

KANATA, Ont. – Erik Karlsson's time as an Ottawa Senator has gradually yet suddenly expired sooner than he ever wished it to.

So, he's buying a little more.

A cluster of credentialed messengers are gathered in the club's press room. Some have been hanging around the Canadian Tire Centre for more than eight hours waiting for Ottawa's most dynamic hockey player to appear at camp and speak his mind.

They can wait a few extra minutes for his heart.

Karlsson — now devastatingly, dangerously a San Jose Shark — is making his way around the bowels of a rink he wowed for nine seasons with those sky-high saucer passes that grazed the Jumbotron and a skating stride that blew his hair like a poem, on half an ankle you'd swear was a full and on an Achilles he'd make you forget was once hanging by a thread.

Two floors removed from the cameras, the man they affectionately call "Karl" wants a moment to dish out hugs to employees, to friends, those who watched all those thrilling highs and crushing lows of arguably the franchise's greatest pure talent. A gift whose unceremonious departure is being cursed.

"I wanted to say goodbye to everyone first," says Karlsson. "I don't think I'd ever in my wildest imagination thought I'd leave this place."

In truth, the way things, hockey and otherwise, unravelled in the nation's capital over the past 12 months, Karlsson must've known.

Twitter traded him thrice already.

He'd made a point of digging out the game puck of his final home game here from the net and tucking it into his pants for a keepsake.

But what the left side of the brain understands, the left side of your chest can't always process.

"Ultimately, having been through it in Anaheim, [trades] all take time," says Bobby Ryan, who thought he might be part of the parcel.

"Then, when you're least ready for it, it happens."

So once the dispatched captain wraps his goodbyes and finally goes up to the podium, he brings no prepared statement. He wants to speak unscripted, and while grateful to the Sharks for wanting him to join a contender, he has no interest in turning this into a celebration. This isn't time to dream about how he and Brent Burns will keep Pacific Division coaches up at night.

"It's a very emotional and sad day for me and my family," says Karlsson, successful in his effort to fight back tears. "Even though I'm not going to represent this hockey club anymore, it's always going to be my home and a community I'm going to be involved in as much as I can and give back in whatever way I can."

He dubs Ottawa "my forever home."

Tellingly, in his list of thank-yous, the two-time Norris champ expresses his gratitude first to the late Bryan Murray and Daniel Alfredsson, the best man at Karlsson's wedding and another Ottawa icon who has left the organization under prickly terms.

Never mentioned by name are lightning-rod owner Eugene Melnyk or general manager Pierre Dorion, the man tasked with taking a machete to his 2017 Eastern Conference finalist roster for inexpensive youth and advertising these cost-cutting moves as a rebuild toward a faster, younger contender down the road sometime.

"They made it very clear what direction they were going with," said Karlsson, avoiding a chance to dig into the Sens' low-ball contract-extension offer this summer.

"Unfortunately, you know, I wasn't part of that."

Of the several Sens veterans available for trade, Dorion understood Karlsson would yield the greatest return. Karlsson never once requested a trade.

"Today we made the proper decision," Dorion says. "We all know when you get to a certain point and it is probably best for all parties to move on."

Dorion knew the Sens wouldn't or couldn't pay Karlsson what he's worth (think: Drew Doughty dollars) on July 1, 2019 and didn't want to bank on blind faith and come up empty, the way Garth Snow did on Long Island.

The GM says he's happy with the return Doug Wilson provided, outbidding Dallas, Vegas and possibly others with a six-piece package of players, picks and prospects that better yield something but couldn't possibly yield something quite like Karl, right?

We ask some players.

Matt Duchene: "You're never going to replace a guy like that. You can go in a different direction and shore up other parts of your hockey club, but that's a piece you're not going to replace."

Colin White: "A one-of-a-kind talent. It'll definitely be a loss."

Mark Stone: "He's a superstar player. He's our best player. He's our captain. But if he's not, then we'll have to move on with the group we have."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Thomas Chabot: "One of if not the best D-men in the world. You see the way he thinks the game, and it's different from anybody else. That's what makes him so special. He's a great guy off the ice, too. Loves to have fun. Loves to make jokes and laugh. You learn a lot from him."

In Ottawa today, regardless how a man in a suit might sell it, the opening of training camp feels more like the end of something rather than the start.

A day where Quantity used to the trap to defeat Quality in a blowout, and the curtain drew on another class act.

As Erik Karlsson steps away from the podium and on his way to San Jose, he takes time to look his questioners in the eye, shake their hands, say thank you, and summon that killer smile.

"I was not part of the plan. That's why we're standing here today. And from my point of view, that's sad," he says.

"I never wanted to leave this place."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104524 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / NHL Training Camps Blog: Erik Karlsson is a San Jose Shark

Rory Boylen |September 13, 2018, 12:38 PM

Panarin, Bobrovsky comment on pending free agency

John Tavares' decision to use unrestricted free agency to leave the only organization he'd played for must have made every GM around the league with big-name pending free agents just a little nervous. And on a day where Tyler Seguin inked an extension to stay with the Dallas Stars, while the Senators dealt Erik Karlsson, the Columbus Blue Jackets' two biggest pending UFAs were asked about their situations.

Artemi Panarin and Sergei Bobrovsky are a season away from potentially being the most valuable players at their positions on the open market.

Elliotte Friedman reported in June that Panarin was unwilling to negotiate an extension "at this time" and it was believed the Blue Jackets were exploring trade options at the draft. Just last week, GM Jarmo Kekalainen said he couldn't guarantee both Panarin and Bobrovsky would even start this season on the roster.

Panarin was asked about his situation as camp opened, and a new contract doesn't appear to be on the horizon.

"This summer, I said I'll take some time to think about the future and really, nothing's changed," Panarin said. "I want to say, I've really enjoyed every day here. It's been great here. These thoughts are really nothing that has to do with the organization specifically."

In August, it was reported Panarin would consider a return to the Blackhawks, who he spent his first two NHL seasons with after they signed him out of Russia.

Bobrovsky was even more cryptic. He said that he had expressed his plan for the season to Blue Jackets management, but wouldn't elaborate.

"They know exactly what we're going to do," he said. "You have to ask them. They know my plans."

Kekalainen has previously stated that his goal is to re-sign both players.

How would you grade Ottawa's return in the Erik Karlsson trade?

Details on players Ottawa is getting for Erik Karlsson

Chris Tierney: A 24-year-old centre coming off a career 17-goal, 40-point season. Tierney was buried on the Sharks' depth chart behind Joe Thornton and Logan Couture. Tierney had the sixth-highest average ice time among Sharks forwards and a key player on their penalty kill. He was drafted in the second round of the 2012 draft.

Dylan DeMelo: A sixth-round pick in 2011, DeMelo averaged 14:12 per game last season, the lowest mark among Sharks defencemen. DeMelo has three goals and 32 points in 133 career games spread across three seasons.

Josh Norris: A first-round pick in 2017, Norris scored 23 points in 37 games as a freshman at Michigan. He's identified as a pass-first player and more of a long-term prospect.

Rudolfs Balcers: A fifth-round pick in 2015, Balcers turned pro last season and led San Jose's AHL team in scoring with 48 points in 67 games. The 21-year-old winger is 5-foot-11 and 164 pounds.

Erik Karlsson traded to San Jose Sharks

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104525 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Canadiens' Weber confident he can be 'as good if not stronger' when healthy

Eric Engels September 13, 2018

BROSSARD, Que., — It's fairly evident what the Montreal Canadiens will be missing in Shea Weber's lengthy absence to start the season, but no one can be entirely sure about what the big man will be capable of when he returns from his injuries.

At his best he's one of the most feared defencemen in the world. A take-no-prisoners type who does nearly everything at an elite level. A player who's scored at least 15 goals in nine of 13 seasons. A player who's also built up a reputation as one of the most effective leaders in the game.

But Weber is also a 33-year-old playing in an NHL that's graduating 18 and 19-year-olds at an unprecedented rate. He is also a player who's never been considered fleet of foot, and he's playing in a league that now moves at warp speed.

And he's a player who's logged many hard miles. One who has played the bulk of his 867 NHL games as a top pairing defenceman forced to endure upwards of 30 punishing minutes of ice time per game.

Considering that, it's only natural to wonder whether Weber still has what it takes to consistently play at the level we've become accustomed to seeing from him. And you can't really blame anyone for wondering if he'll be less effective once he's finally able to return from two off-season surgeries that have hampered his summer training and forced him into a situation where he'll have to play catch up.

The thing is, the Sicamous, B.C., native isn't sweating this challenge.

"I'm confident in my body and in what it's done for me before," Weber told Sportsnet on Thursday. "I'm confident that I can come back just as good if not stronger from just doing the rehab and having these problems fixed. Hopefully it even makes me better for the long run and can improve my durability moving forward."

That would be a bonus considering Weber has eight years left on a contract that pays him an average of \$7.87 million per season.

But for now the Canadiens would settle for an on-schedule return from the June surgery he underwent to repair the meniscus in his right knee.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

When Weber was asked earlier in the week about the complicated March procedure he underwent to fix tendons in his right ankle, he's almost fully healed and that his ankle, "feels amazing." Just seeing him walk around on Thursday you'd never know anything was ever wrong with it.

Same goes for his knee. But Weber's admits rehabilitation from that surgery has been particularly trying.

"Obviously the hardest part was not being able to bear weight on my leg for six weeks," he said. "That was the hardest six weeks for me maybe ever. And I'd go in and train and was able to do some stuff, but it's hard not being able to do what you know you're capable of doing. But now those times are over and I'm looking forward to getting back in there and doing what I know I can."

Is Weber concerned about how hard it might be to catch up once he finally does return?

"For sure it'll be a challenge, but that's what you put the time in for," he said. "All you can do is give yourself the best opportunity, and that means getting yourself ready. Even in practices I'm going to have to get used to the pace. It's probably going to take a few games to get used to it. I don't expect to come in and be fully dominant right away."

But a couple of Weber's teammates who we spoke to on Thursday don't believe it will be long before he's back to himself.

Sportsnet insiders ranked the 100 best players in the NHL for the 2018–19 season, from Alex Radulov to Connor McDavid. Check out the list, then create your own top 10.

Canadiens defenceman Karl Alzner spent time training with Weber in Kelowna, B.C., over the summer and came away impressed with what he could even in his limited capacity.

"I haven't seen too many guys that are built the way he is," Alzner said. "I worked out with him in the summer and he was still better at a lot of things that we were doing—and he hasn't been able to train the way we have."

Canadiens winger Paul Byron said on Thursday that he's in awe of what Weber is capable of and added that he expects to see him return at full force.

"I think he had six goals and nearly 20 points in 20 games last year (it was six goals and 10 assists for 16 points in 26 games), and he did it on a broken foot and a bad knee," said Byron. "So I think he'll be just fine. I think he'll be the best he's been in a few years when he gets back."

"I think the way he plays and the intelligence he plays with kind of reminds me a bit of [Hall of Famer] Chris Pronger. He doesn't rely on speed; he relies on body position and he relies on a good stick. I think if you asked a lot of players which side they want to come down, they're avoiding his side of the ice at all costs, and that won't change. I'm sure he'll be fine."

Perhaps the rest will even do Weber some good.

"I guess we'll find out," he said. "It definitely let my body heal up in other spots where I've had aches and pains from over the years. But I guess time will tell us if the rest was beneficial."

Just as time will tell if Weber can be who the Canadiens need him to be come December.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104526 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Maple Leafs' path to raising bar begins at training camp

Chris Johnston | @reporterchris September 13, 2018

TORONTO – Well, this is a bit different.

This is a group being pegged the Stanley Cup favourite by Vegas bookies and NHL stars alike – an unfamiliar place for an organization that has gone more than 14 years since last playing beyond the first round.

It is due to the sharp progression of the last two campaigns and the arrival of John Tavares, who is still being celebrated more than two months after returning home on a \$77-million, seven-year contract. Camp will bring his first game as a Maple Leaf, and potentially his first goal, and should feel like an extended touchdown dance in a city where many folks are still coming around to the idea that his decision in free agency wasn't just a dream.

As the Leafs reported for medicals at their suburban practice facility on Thursday morning, there was enough hoopla to quiet the only story with any real news value at the outset of this camp: The whereabouts of William Nylander.

The 22-year-old winger isn't here, as expected, after failing to agree on a new contract over the off-season. He was a notable omission on the list of 73 invited players released by the team on Wednesday afternoon.

"Marleau, Marnier, Matthews ... Mueller, O'Brien," it read.

Now, the only way this becomes something more than a footnote is if Nylander remains absent in the days leading up to the Oct. 3 regular-season opener against Montreal.

Until then, it is a mere nuisance for head coach Mike Babcock – who'd prefer to plug him into his expected spot at 1RW alongside Auston Matthews and Patrick Marleau – and something for the rest of us to talk about. But it's hard to ignore the reality that these situations typically get resolved without much animus. Nylander is one of eight RFA's currently unsigned league-wide.

This will not be a camp with much emphasis placed on the battle for jobs. The decisions lie only on the fringes of the roster, with Curtis McElhinney trying to hold off Calder Cup champion Garret Sparks and keep his backup goaltending job (unlikely), and newcomer Par Lindholm looking to establish himself as the preferred option at fourth-line centre.

There's also a large group of contenders for the sixth or seventh spot on the blue-line with Justin Holl, Igor Ozighanov, Andreas Borgman and Calle Rosen among those vying for a spot with the Leafs rather than the Marlies.

But what these next few weeks are truly about is building towards becoming the kind of team worthy of the hype they've already been getting. We will get some hints at how Babcock plans to keep his three-headed-centre-monster happy – although with eight exhibition games it'll be a while before Tavares, Matthews and Nazem Kadri are in the same lineup together – and how he'll handle assignments on new-look power-play units.

That's an open-ended question with the free-agent departures of James van Riemsdyk and Tyler Bozak, and the need to get Matthews more ice time at 5-on-4. The fact it's even a talking point shows just how far the organization has come in the three years since Babcock arrived here and promptly oversaw a last-place finish.

The bar has been raised. They are looking to push it much higher again.

"We want to be a contender for years to come, but we've got to earn the right to do that," Kadri said earlier this week. "No team's going to give it to us or hand it over. Over the last few years this team has headed in the right direction, and the direction we've wanted to go in."

"A lot of hard work's gone into that behind the scenes."

Now, it begins anew on the ice where everyone can see it.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104527 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Pressure on Boeser, Horvat as Canucks move on from Sedins

Iain MacIntyre | September 13, 2018

VANCOUVER – To understand how starkly different the Vancouver Canucks' landscape looks without Daniel and Henrik Sedin, imagine the city's own landscape. Now take away the mountains and ocean.

Sure, there are still majestic trees, about 10,000 cappuccino joints and half that many bike lanes, but Vancouver isn't on anyone's most-beautiful-cities-in-the-world list without the Pacific Ocean and Coast Mountains.

And so it is with the Canucks minus the Sedin twins, the future Hall of Famers who retired in April at age 37 while still productive National Hockey League scorers.

For the first time this century, the Canucks open training camp Friday without the Sedins, who apart from becoming two of the most consistent scorers of their generation were the conscience of the hockey team for the last dozen years.

The Canucks choreograph their pre-camp press conferences the way lions eat. The leaders go first. Instead of Danny and Hank sitting behind the head table Thursday in the media room at Rogers Arena, the leaders were Chris Tanev, Alex Edler, Brandon Sutter and Loui Eriksson.

"You're not going to replace the twins," Edler, whose 758 games in Vancouver are nearly double the next longest-tenured Canuck, told reporters. "That's impossible. But together, I think we can work together and lead the team. Everyone has to be part of that."

"For sure we're going to miss those two guys," Eriksson said. "But now it's a totally different team."

How different?

The two guys who matter most to the Canucks were in the third press conference: Brock Boeser, 21, and Bo Horvat, 23. Horvat should be the next captain, although coach Travis Green and general manager Jim Benning made it clear they see no need to quickly stitch Hank Sedin's 'C' on to anyone.

The most exciting stories of training camp will be rookie prospects Elias Pettersson, 19, Jonathan Dahlen, 20, Adam Gaudette, 21, and Thatcher Demko, 22. These players are, in order: the best player from the Swedish Hockey League, the best player from Sweden's second division, the Hobey Baker winner from U.S. college hockey, and the minor-league prospect considered about the best goalie in hockey not already in the NHL.

Outstanding offensively at last weekend's Young Stars tournament in Penticton, Pettersson already seems to have a Canuck roster spot to lose. But any of the other three could also make the opening-night lineup if he has an excellent training camp and pre-season.

The skaters will be pushing an incumbent group of pros only a few years older than they are: Markus Granlund, 25, Ben Hutton, 25, Brendan Leipsic, 24, Brendan Gaunce, 24, Derrick Pouliot, 24, and Jake Virtanen, 22.

"We have some young players that need to take that next step," Benning said. "They're 23, 24 years old, they've been around now for a couple of

years and they have to, you know, take that next step whether it be offensively or whatever their game is. I'm excited about that."

"First of all, everyone should feel pressure; our team had 73 points last year," Green said. "Everyone has pressure to become better hockey players and we've made that clear. That's part of the business – you've got to perform."

"There's a lot of 'what ifs?' There's a lot of: 'How's this guy going to look?' We don't know yet. That's going to be a good problem to have if we have a lot of young guys ready."

Green said the Canucks could have two or three "true rookies" make the team, plus others who have some experience but are still trying to build their careers.

Pettersson, who could centre Vancouver's second line and play on the first-unit power play, has Calder Trophy potential. He is the most gifted Canuck prospect since Pavel Bure.

But it's last season's Calder Trophy runner-up, Boeser, from whom so much is expected — and required if the Canucks are to somehow eclipse last season's 73 points and climb away from the bottom of the overall standings.

By Christmas of his rookie season, Boeser was Vancouver's best player. He led the Canucks with 29 goals and co-led them with 55 points despite missing the final 16 games with a broken bone in his lower back. Boeser also required a medical procedure on an injured wrist and wasn't fully cleared for off-season training until July.

If he and Horvat, his linemate who had 44 points in 64 games, don't reach another offensive level this season after the departure of the Sedins and their combined 105 points, the Canucks have no chance to be any better than they were last year.

"Honestly, I don't feel any pressure yet," Boeser told Sportsnet. "But training camp hasn't even started. That could change once the season gets going. I don't like to sound cocky (but) I expect to score. Even when I'm skating in the summer and practising, I expect to score."

"This is the strongest I've ever felt. I've gained eight to 10 pounds without gaining any body fat. I don't think Bo and I need to do anything more than what we've been doing. We're both competitive kids. If we play our game, we'll get the numbers we got last year and, hopefully, even better."

The Canucks may not be any better this season. But with a wave of talented prospects surging towards the NHL, they should be more fun to watch.

"I'm excited," Green said. "It's a different era in Vancouver."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104528 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / What Oilers need to return to contention this season

Mark Spector | September 13, 2018, 1:47 PM

EDMONTON — As training camp opens on Thursday, the tact Edmonton Oilers head coach Todd McLellan will take is to invoke the recent past as a motivator, but avoid burying his players in negatives. It's kind of like trying to talk American politics without ever mentioning Donald Trump.

Here in Edmonton, everyone needs to learn from the past. But at the same time, as they like to say these days, his players need to simply "move forward."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

So McLellan will be talking in three- and five-year increments. Think descending goals-against average, power play success, a stingy penalty kill versus what happens when the PK leaks.

But regardless of McLellan's bigger picture views, here in The Big E there is only one time period that anyone is interested in discussing:

Two years ago, when this team had 103 points and nearly won the Pacific. Versus last season, when they had 78 and were buried by Christmas.

Which team represents the real Oilers? Which season was the aberration?

Lets talk about what has to happen this year for the answer to that question to become the one Oilers fans would prefer. And it starts in goal:

Cam Talbot

Talbot had a career .919 save percentage prior to last season. Then he posted a .908. That stat from your No. 1 can be the difference — all by itself — between a playoff team and one that comes up short. Of course, in reality, it is also a team stat.

We've always thought a goalie is like a good roof on your house. If your team isn't structurally sound, the goalie won't hold it together. But when the roof leaks, even a solid foundation will rot. The conclusion: If you don't have both team structure and good goaltending, it becomes a long, leaky winter.

Corsica gives us Delta Save Percentage (dSv%), which accounts for shot quality as well as shot quantity. It also tells us how well Talbot stacks up against a league-average goalie over the past two seasons.

In 2016-17 Talbot had a 1.42 dSv%. Translation: he was 40 percent better than the average goalie.

Last season, he was -0.08. And, yes, that stat meets the eye test.

Goals Against

How did McLellan's club end a 10-year playoff drought in 2016-17, going from 70 points and last in the West to 103 points and fourth? They got control of their goals against, plain and simple.

Three seasons ago the Oilers allowed 245 goals against — ranking 26th in a 30-team NHL. The next year they pared that down to 212 (eighth), and made the playoffs.

Last season? How about 263 goals against and 25th in the NHL, posting a minus-29 goal differential. Forty-one more goals against represents a half-goal per game. It equals a losing season, simple math.

Of the bottom 15 teams in goal differential last season, only one (New Jersey) made the playoffs. Fix that and you have a chance at the dance.

Zack Kassian

Really, it's not just about Kassian. But rather, the fact he personifies what has to happen in Edmonton for success to follow. Kassian, Drake Caggiula, Milan Lucic, Oscar Klefbom, Adam Larsson, Leon Draisaitl... Which Oiler DOESN'T have to get back on track this season, other than the obvious one?

Two seasons ago, Kassian, a fourth-line right-winger and penalty killer, provided momentum shifts with timely hits, the odd scrap, and some simple, raw emotion. Last season, like his teammates' games, Kassian's performance was too often flat.

He did all the same things, scored the same seven goals, but nary a game turned on a Kassian play, the way they had the season before. Like so many teammates, Kassian needs to rise to an occasion again. He can turn momentum, and has to for Edmonton to recoup.

Ryan Dixon and Rory Boylen go deep on pucks with a mix of facts and fun, leaning on a varied group of hockey voices to give their take on the country's most beloved game.

Special Teams

Seldom have we seen a season where so much depends on a group of assistant coaches, but the resuscitation of the Oilers special teams is absolutely imperative in 2018-19. An embarrassment last season, poor special teams was at the root of the coaches office cleanout — except for McLellan — and now new assistants Trent Yawney (penalty kill), Manny Viveiros (power play) and Glen Gulutzan (both) will be on the hook for the expected improvement.

Example: Connor McDavid and Draisaitl combined for 54 power-play points two seasons ago. Last year they had 31, with Draisaitl's power-play production dropping off by 59 per cent.

On the penalty kill, there were too many backdoor tap-ins that left Talbot chanceless, and then when he could see the shot he did not play the role of Edmonton's best penalty killer often enough. Either those units change, or the Oilers don't recover. Simple math.

Oscar Klefbom

Klefbom might not be a true No. 1 defenceman, granted, but he is Edmonton's No. 1 defenceman, and in order to be so, he has to remain healthy. He's been injured through two of the past three seasons, and I'll bet you can guess which year the Oilers thrived.

In '16-17, Klefbom played all 82 games, averaged 22:22 per game, had 16 power-play points and posted 12-26-38 overall. At age 23, he had finally arrived.

Then last season began with a shoulder injury that he nursed all year long. It hindered his shot, his defence, his production (5-16-21), and absolutely killed the power play, where he had just one goal.

Klefbom is a very good defenceman, when healthy. This blue line isn't good enough to survive another injury-marred season from the young Swede.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104529 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / A question for each NHL team heading into training camp

Rory Boylen | @RoryBoylen September 13, 2018, 1:37 PM

And just like that, summer is over.

NHL training camps are opening up around the league, which means the new season is upon us. Games will start next week and the season opens less than a month from now, on Oct. 3.

Every team comes into this part of the calendar with optimism and hope that everything will work out. Roster battles are plentiful around the league as rookies look to make their mark, while injured players try to get back in time for puck drop next month. All of these storylines will have an impact on the 2018-19 season.

Here's a look at a question facing each team heading into training camp:

ATLANTIC DIVISION

Boston: Can one of three young rookies earn third-line centre spot?

When the Bruins head to China to play a couple pre-season games against the Calgary Flames this week and next, their top two centres



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

won't be with them. So as Patrice Bergeron and David Krejci rest up at home, a trio of youngsters will be given prime minutes and an opportunity to make the case to stick with the NHL team when the real games start in October.

Jakob Forsbacka-Karlsson, Trent Frederic and Jack Studnicka all became pros last season, the latter two of whom graduated after their NCAA and OHL seasons, respectively. Forsbacka-Karlsson scored 32 points in 58 AHL games and may have the inside track as the most offensively gifted of the bunch, but Frederic brings the tenacity some teams love in their bottom-six, while Studnicka comes with a playmaking ability that saw him lead the Oshawa Generals with 50 assists in 2017-18. The departure of Riley Nash has opened the door for someone to take advantage.

Buffalo: Can Casey Mittelstadt break in as a productive second-line centre?

The Sabres are expected to be one of the most improved teams in 2018-19, but as natural as the Jack Eichel-Jeff Skinner connection appears to be, they'll need to get a good amount of support scoring from the secondary unit to actually take that step.

Mittelstadt will be a massive factor in this regard. The eighth-overall pick in 2017 was a leading scorer for the University of Minnesota last season, tied for the scoring lead at the world juniors and ended the year with one goal and five points in six NHL games with the Sabres. Zemgus Girgensons is a bottom-six player at this point and Patrik Berglund, acquired in the Ryan O'Reilly trade, hasn't topped 40 points since 2010-11.

Detroit: Can Evgeny Svechnikov crack the roster out of camp?

His brother will break into the NHL with great fanfare as the second-overall pick, but can the older Svechnikov earn an opening-night spot one year after a bit of bad luck set him back? While Andrei is one of the early Calder Trophy favourites with Carolina, Evgeny is coming off a disappointing season that started with an injury in the pre-season.

Heading back to the AHL, he followed up his 20-goal rookie season with just seven goals and 23 points in 57 games. First-rounders Michael Rasmussen and Filip Zadina may already have the inside track on cracking the roster, so the longer Svechnikov goes without making it, the harder it will become. This is an important camp for the soon-to-be 22-year-old.

Toronto: Who will be the No. 6 defenceman?

Morgan Rielly, Nikita Zaitsev, Ron Hainsey, Jake Gardiner and Travis Dermott are the expected five locks to man Toronto's back end this season, barring injury. But that No. 6 spot appears wide open heading into training camp.

Justin Holl and his two goals in two NHL games will be a factor, along with Connor Carrick who signed a one-year, \$1.3-million extension to be a depth player for the club. After that, Russian rookie Igor Ozhiganov and the two Swedes brought in last season, Calle Rosen and Andreas Borgman, will be looking to make some noise. First-rounder Timothy Liljegren may be more of a long shot given the Leafs won't want to rush him, but he could end up in the call-up discussion at some point this season.

Montreal: What do the top-six forwards look like?

Max Domi and Tomas Tatar are the two newest faces and both figure to slot into the top-six somewhere, but just what those two lines look like is still to be determined. If the playmaker Domi catches pre-season chemistry with Brendan Gallagher and his 30-goal upside, it could make for a potent top unit. Phillip Danault is a candidate to have a breakout season, but does he end up on Line 2 with Tatar? Different combinations will surely be tried in the pre-season games, so it will be interesting to see what coach Claude Julien experiments with.

Florida: Will Owen Tippett make the cut this time?

The 10th-overall pick from 2017 cracked the NHL roster out of camp a year ago and played seven games with the team, scoring once. In his NHL debut, Tippett logged 11:39 of ice and recorded seven shots on goal, after which Panthers coach Bob Boughner said Tippett was his best player. Tippett didn't stick, however, and went back to junior where he scored 36 times in 51 games. Tippett didn't make last year's Canadian world juniors team and missed this year's summer camp due to injury, but should be given another chance to earn his way into the Panthers' lineup. Still just 19, if he doesn't earn a full-time job this time, he'll go back to junior again.

Tampa Bay: Will Andrei Vasilevskiy be able to overcome Tampa Bay's defensive issues?

Although Vasilevskiy was a Vezina Trophy finalist, he faded badly down the stretch. From Jan. 1 onward, his .905 save percentage ranked 38th in the league, tied with the likes of Petr Mrazek and Alex Lyon. During that time he also faced the third-most shots against so those numbers were negatively affected by the massive workload, but it is noteworthy how drastically he fell off from a .934 save percentage in his first 31 games. Tampa Bay had a bottom-10 defence when measured by shot suppression last season and figure to give up a lot again in 2018-19.

Ottawa: Will Brady Tkachuk make the team out of camp?

It could be a long season in Ottawa. In the bizarre Eugene Melnyk "interview" this week, the team owner alluded to the pending rebuild and that this year's team would run out a number of young players and that number would rise a season from now. Mark Stone and Matt Duchene are pending UFAs and now, with Karlsson gone, top trade candidates.

So what does that mean for a player like Tkachuk? On the one hand, you certainly don't want to rush a player to the NHL, only to thrust him into a difficult and losing situation. On the other, you don't want to hold him back if he's ready. The early reviews are positive and Tkachuk is eyeing a spot on the NHL roster, but would it be better for him in the long run to play this season in OHL London?

METROPOLITAN DIVISION

Carolina: Where is the scoring going to come from?

Usually at this time of year we're talking about how the underdog Carolina Hurricanes will surprise everyone by making the playoffs, and pointing to their strong underlying numbers as to why they're a smart pick. But last year the 'Canes were 23rd in goals with an average of 2.74 per game and bottom-10 in preventing goals, allowing an average of 3.09 per game. Jeff Skinner was dealt and Carolina made an immediate upgrade on defence with the acquisition of Dougie Hamilton, though that also set the team back another high-potential forward (Elias Lindholm), so how will an offence that fell short of the post-season improve?

Keep an eye on two players this pre-season who have the potential to step up big in this role: Valentin Zykov and Sebastian Aho. Zykov scored 33 goals in 63 AHL games and then was nearly a point-per-game player in 10 late-season NHL games, while Aho is somehow flying under the radar despite scoring 29 times in the NHL last season. On top of those two, highly regarded prospect Martin Necas is coming off a strong rookie tournament showing and, like Buffalo's Mittelstadt, dominated last year's world juniors.

Washington: Can first-round pick Ilya Samsonov earn the backup job?

Twenty-seven of the 30 players chosen in the first round of the 2015 NHL Draft have gotten into at least one NHL game — the only ones who haven't are Bruins prospects Jakub Zboril, Zachary Senyshyn and Washington goalie Ilya Samsonov. The Russian puckstopper has been playing well at a high level for nearly three years now, though, posting save percentages of .936 and .926 in the KHL the past two seasons.

Now 21 years old, the team suggests Samsonov will be given a chance to earn the backup job over Phoenix Copley this pre-season. After Braden Holtby's struggles led to an increased workload for backup



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Philipp Grubauer last season, the Capitals know the importance of having a backup goalie capable of carrying the water.

Ilya Samsonov posts a 21-save shutout as #Caps roll TB, 5-0.. Video quality isn't great.. But here's a couple of late saves to preserve the shutout.. pic.twitter.com/k1ATiBNFYg

— Rob Carlin (@RobCarlinNBCS) September 10, 2018

Pittsburgh: Is Daniel Sprong ready for the next step up?

After the Penguins were eliminated last season, GM Jim Rutherford pointed to Sprong as someone who was expected to make the NHL roster full-time in 2018-19. A second-round pick in 2015, Sprong played his first full pro season in 2017-18 and was a point-per-game player in the AHL. Sprong has been given NHL looks before: he played 18 games in 2015-16 and got into eight last season, but although he's shown positive flashes, has only scored five points.

"He should be (an NHL regular)," Rutherford told the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. "He has to have a good camp. You can't just give a job to somebody, but he's gone through his development stage. We know he can score. Now his training camp should be about who he's going to play with. That's going to be up to him."

Columbus: Will Joonas Korpi see an increased workload?

The top two storylines in Columbus this season centre around the futures of pending UFAs Artemi Panarin and Sergei Bobrovsky. With both up in the air, it's possible one or both players get traded. "I can't," Blue Jackets GM Jarmo Kekalainen told NHL.com when asked if he could commit to both players starting the season in Columbus. There is one obvious replacement should the team have to move on from one of their cornerstones. Korpi, 24, has apprenticed as Bobrovsky's backup for three seasons now.

"If he's gonna take some games, he's gonna have to earn it," coach John Tortorella said recently. Korpi played 18 games last season, posting an .897 save percentage.

N.Y. Islanders: Which rookies, if any, will make the cut?

Without John Tavares, the Islanders are going through a re-tooling of sorts, but already have a pretty good collection of young players to start with. Matt Barzal is looking to build off a very strong rookie campaign in which he won the Calder Trophy, and while getting Oliver Wahlstrom and Noah Dobson in the draft was a huge win, it may be too early to expect either to make the jump.

But what about Kieffer Bellows? If any rookie makes the cut he's got to be the favourite after scoring 41 WHL goals a season ago. Will Josh Ho-Sang be given a shot just to see if there's anything there? Sebastian Aho, the defenceman, earned a 22-game look from January to March and averaged 16:15 per game. The problem is that the Islanders threw so many contracts at veterans this summer that there may not be any room for these types of players to excite the fan base out of the gate.

N.Y. Rangers: How will the centres shake out?

A roster weakness last season, the Rangers will enter camp with all sorts of possibilities around their lineup of centres. Kevin Hayes and Mika Zibanejad are the returning veterans, Vlad Namestnikov can play the position and Peter Holland is likely set for the fourth line. But a trio of rookies are making things interesting. Rangers GM Jeff Gorton recently told the New York Post's Larry Brooks that he doesn't want to play any of Lias Andersson, Filip Chytil and 'Boo' Nieves out of their natural centre position and that he won't hold back any young player from a roster spot they've earned, regardless of the veteran contracts on the books.

Philadelphia: Will Carter Hart emerge as the starting goalie?

A two-time CHL Goalie of the Year and three-time WHL Goalie of the Year, Flyers fans are hoping Hart solves the team's long-running goaltending issues. The Brian Elliott-Michal Neuvirth tandem returns, but

their team 5-on-5 save percentage last season (.919) ranked 21st in the league and neither goalie was in the league's top 20.

It's not often a CHL goalie makes the jump this quickly — Hart was a second-round pick in 2016 and you have to go all the way back to the 2012 draft to find a goalie who has established himself as an NHL starter. So Hart is a long shot to make the team out of camp. He would need an exceptional showing to do it, but everything about his career to this point has been just that.

New Jersey: Will Cory Schneider return to form?

Long one of the more underrated goalies in the league, there are now legitimate questions whether or not the 32-year-old's best days are behind him. Over his past 100 games, Schneider has a .908 save percentage and is coming off an injury that may even delay the start of his regular season. He had surgery to repair torn cartilage in his left hip on May 1, and the recovery time takes him right up close to the start of the season.

If Schneider isn't ready, or doesn't return to form, Keith Kinkaid will again take the reins. The 29-year-old Kinkaid played a career-high 41 games last season, but the jury is still out on if he's capable of being a season-long starter for a playoff team.

Ryan Dixon and Rory Boylen go deep on pucks with a mix of facts and fun, leaning on a varied group of hockey voices to give their take on the country's most beloved game.

PACIFIC DIVISION

San Jose: How will Brent Burns and Erik Karlsson be used?

Last season, Burns averaged 25:15 per game and Karlsson was at 26:44 per game so, if the Sharks want, they could have either one of the Norris Trophy winners on the ice at all times.

Last season, most of Burns' even strength minutes were played with Joakim Ryan or Brenden Dillon, which would leave Karlsson to pair up with Marc-Edouard Vlasic if all stays the same. On the power play, San Jose would mostly run out four forwards along with Burns on the top unit — does that change so that the two share a unit, or will they be split across two? Either way, this is one heck of an exciting team and GM Doug Wilson is all in on getting his first Stanley Cup as GM.

Los Angeles: How does Ilya Kovalchuk look?

The last full NHL season we saw from Kovalchuk, he scored 37 goals (he had 11 in 37 games during the lockout-shortened 2012-13). But for the past five years he's been elite in the KHL and was last season's top point-getter in Russia's top league. Now he returns to the NHL on a three-year contract with a \$6.25-million cap hit and a whole bunch of questions. Kovalchuk is now 35 years old and the NHL game has gotten much faster since he last played. The Kings, too, are an aging roster with concerns if the NHL game is passing them by. Will Kovalchuk be able to adapt well enough to put up point and goal totals to make the Kings' investment worthwhile?

Anaheim: How will the Ducks 'get faster'?

Everything was trending up for Anaheim heading into the playoffs last season — they won eight of their last 10 regular season games and slid into home-ice advantage. But they were dismantled by San Jose in four games, and GM Bob Murray said "we've got to make some changes."

But the Ducks return with basically the same team, the only noticeable difference being that free agent signing Luke Schenn — who isn't exactly known for his speed — is on the roster. Without naming Corey Perry, the GM appeared to challenge the former sniper with those comments after Perry failed to score 20 goals for the second season in a row. The Ducks should remain a tough team to handle, but with the same players back and head coach Randy Carlyle still in place, what has changed?

Vancouver: How do the kids look?



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

With the playoffs a long, long, long shot, this season is again all about development for the Canucks. Brock Boeser set the bar high for any rookies joining the team and looks to build on his 29-goal season that was shortened to 62 games by injury. But now the attention turns to the next set of youngsters. At the top of the list is Elias Pettersson, a centre who could start on the wing and coming off a record-setting season in Sweden's top professional league, which he led in regular season scoring then earned playoff MVP.

While Pettersson is as close to a lock to make the opening night roster as you can get, some others will need to earn it in pre-season. Adam Gaudette won last year's Hobey Baker Award and played five NHL games at the end of the season. Thatcher Demko is the hopeful No. 1 goalie of the future, but can he earn NHL starts now, with the same tandem returning from last year's Canucks? Jonathan Dahlen is making his North American debut after sharing a line with Pettersson, and Olli Juolevi believes he's ready to step on to Vancouver's blue line now. The signing of various veterans over the summer will hold some of these players back, but it makes for an interesting training camp.

Calgary: Which winger will join Monahan-Gaudreau on top line?

The Flames have already skated informally and free-agent signing James Neal was skating with the top-liners, so he has to be the early favourite to stay there when the season opens. Elias Lindholm, acquired in the Dougie Hamilton trade and a favourite of coach Bill Peters, is another potential linemate as the Flames try to unlock the offensive potential held by 2013's fifth-overall draft pick. Keep an eye on how the lines work out in the pre-season.

Notes from informal #Flames skate:

- James Neal skating on right side of a line with Sean Monahan and Johnny Gaudreau
- T.J. Brodie is back on right side of Mark Giordano
- Austin Czarnik has really stood out
- Rasmus Andersson looks really trim
- No Matthew Tkachuk
- Derek Wills (@Fan960Wills) September 10, 2018

Edmonton: Can any of the low-cap forwards fill a secondary scoring role?

As Mark Spector wrote next week, can the Oilers find their own Jake Guentzel/Bryan Rust/Connor Sheary? Teams like the Pittsburgh Penguins thrive by being able to get strong supportive production from players cheap against the cap, and the Oilers need one of their own to help take part of the load off Connor McDavid and Leon Draisaitl.

Tobias Rieder was signed to a one-year, \$2-million contract and though he brings good foot speed, hasn't yet approached 20 goals. Ty Rattie was brought in late last year to try and fill that role, then scored five times in 14 games. Jesse Puljujarvi was picked fourth overall in 2016 and, at that time, was counted on to fill this role. At the very least, \$6-million man Milan Lucic needs to score more — much more — than 10 times.

Vegas: Was last year a mirage?

At least parts of the Golden Knights' first season appear unsustainable, the most obvious being that William Karlsson will not be a 43-goal scorer converting on nearly a quarter of his shots. The Stanley Cup finalists will have to prove it all over again, but may have actually upgraded their roster. Paul Stastny and Max Pacioretty are not only familiar with each other, but both are potential upgrades on the losses of David Perron and James Neal. Even if Karlsson's regression pulls back his line's production a bit, this new second line could effectively become the new first.

CENTRAL DIVISION

Chicago: Is Corey Crawford healthy?

The best chance Chicago has to return to the playoffs is having Crawford back fully healthy. One of the top goalies in the game, Crawford himself said he wasn't yet 100 per cent in July and just last week 'Hawks president John McDonough said he was hopeful the goalie would be at camp, but wasn't certain that would be the case. If he's out, Cam Ward would be the fill-in starter, but his combined .908 save percentage over the past four years ranks 30th among goalies who played at least 160 games.

Colorado: Who is the starting goalie?

Semyon Varlamov was a top-11 goalie by save percentage last season, but health has been a concern for him the past few seasons. He's also heading into the final season of a \$5.9-million deal and Colorado now has a backup to legitimately push him for starts.

Philipp Grubauer was brought in for a second-round pick, and though he's been a backup his whole career the signs of a starter are there. Not only did he wrestle the job away from Braden Holtby for a time last season, including the first playoff start, but over the past three seasons Grubauer has the third-best save percentage of all goalies with at least 70 games played.

Dallas: How quickly will Miro Heiskanen rise to stardom?

If Dallas were willing to give up 2017's third-overall pick, they may already have Erik Karlsson on their roster, but there's a reason why Heiskanen is a deal-breaker: The 19-year-old comes with an entry-level contract and sky-high potential. He played just half the games in Finland's top professional league last season, but was still a top-23 scorer at his position and finished with the best points-per-game average at 0.77. Heiskanen dominated the recent Traverse City Prospect Tournament, and now finally we get to see him against the world's best.

Minnesota: Will this be the team that ends the season?

The Wild have made the playoffs six straight seasons, but have gotten out of Round 1 just twice and have a total of two wins in Round 2. General manager Cliff Fletcher was let go over the summer and Paul Fenton could look to put his own stamp on this team to shift direction if the team isn't taking that next step.

Youngster Luke Kunin won't be ready to go at the start of the season, but Bruce Boudreau mentioned three other players he's looking forward to seeing in camp: Jordan Greenway, Nick Seeler and Joel Eriksson-Ek. The rise of some of these players could push Fenton towards a move. Though the GM didn't pull the trigger on anything major in the summer, the Wild were in the rumour mill connected to various players, namely Max Domi before he was dealt to Montreal.

Winnipeg: Which players from the next wave of prospects can crack the roster?

The Jets are all-in on taking a run at the Stanley Cup this season, but before long they'll be having to inject some players on entry-level contracts as the salary cap becomes an issue. There are no shortage of guys who could make the team even this season. Jack Roslovic has the inside track to earn a spot after he showed well late in the regular season and playoffs as an injury fill in, but the big one to watch up front is Kristian Vesalainen. If he doesn't make the NHL roster, he could still return to Europe for the season, but he has a big body and was a top scorer in the Finnish League, which could translate to immediate success.

And on defence, as long as RFA Josh Morrissey is without a contract, there could be opportunity for Tucker Poolman or Sami Niku to wiggle their way into a spot with strong camps. Without Morrissey there is a gap in left-shot defenders, which gives Niku an advantage.

St. Louis: Can any of Robert Thomas, Klim Kostin or Jordan Kyrou crack the roster?

The Blues missed the playoffs last season after qualifying for the previous six and never getting over the hump. But this is still a team that has designs on winning rather than stepping back. Ryan O'Reilly was



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

their big summer acquisition, but they could also look to these three highly regarded rookies to fill out the roster with speed and skill. Given the roster set up, it's not likely they all make it. Thomas is the only one who would have to be returned to junior if he didn't make the team.

Nashville: How many starts will Juuse Saros get?

Pekka Rinne had one of his best seasons in 2017-18 and won the Vezina Trophy as the league's top netminder. But he'll turn 36 in November and is in the last season of his contract, so the Predators need to start considering a succession plan. Saros has been the backup the past two seasons and has posted save percentages of .923 and .926. He's undersized at 5-foot-11, but it will be interesting to see if the Predators use him for more than the 26 games he saw last season for a couple reasons — not just to see how he takes to an increased workload, but also to rest Rinne a little more to keep him fresh for the playoffs.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104530 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / NHL's 8 RFAs still unsigned as camps open: Latest rumours

Luke Fox | @lukefoxjukebox September 13, 2018, 6:57 AM

Tick, tock.

We're now mere hours from the opening of NHL training camp, and the notion of an unsigned restricted free agent opting not to report feels real.

While the pressure of this soft deadline should snap most of these stalemates in short order — GMs prefer to avoid the distraction, and players hate playing catch-up — something has to give.

We've rounded up all the latest rumours and reports on the eight RFAs still looking for employment in 2018-19 for your panicking pleasure.

William Nylander

Age: 22

Position: Right wing / Centre

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$832,500

Any Leafs fan concerned that Nylander may be dangled as cap-saving trade bait breathed an audible sigh of relief when GM Kyle Dubas announced, "We can, and we will" keep all three young studs — Auston Matthews, Mitchell Marner and Nylander — in the fold, as well as UFA prize John Tavares.

Nylander is coming off back-to-back 61-point seasons and should expect to put up at least that many again in 2018-19 skating on Matthews' wing. Of the three, he's the only must-sign right now. Cap space isn't an issue yet in Toronto, but Dubas's first big extension must be made with the forthcoming raises for Marner and Matthews in mind.

"We'll be very patient," Dubas told Elliott Friedman and Jeff Marek on the 31 Thoughts podcast in early July. "I always think that when a player is going to make a commitment of any length, particularly when they're signing up long-term, that we need to sit with the player and make sure that the player knows where we're going as a program and what our vision and our plans are so those are discussions that I'll have with each of the individual players that are due extensions here or are due contracts for next season."

Nylander addressed his situation on Aug. 1 at Smashfest.

"Of course, I want long-term. That's what I want to do, but we'll take it slow, day by day, and see what happens," Nylander said.

OK, but what if the paperwork isn't signed when camp opens?

"I've not thought about that. That's between my agent and Kyle. I'm waiting to see what happens," Nylander replied. "They're going to negotiate it, so I don't think that'll be a problem."

The sides continue to work towards a solution, but details have been kept mum.

With medicals Thursday, Nylander has yet to join his mates in Toronto.

"Willy's obviously a big part of the team and a big part of the future," John Tavares said Monday. "Sometimes [negotiations] seem to come down to the wire a little bit, but we believe we're going to have Willy here to start camp.

"Hopefully it can get done very soon and we can get him in and build up the team."

Sam Reinhart

Age: 22

Position: Right wing / Centre

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$894,167

The second-overall pick of 2014 has performed better each season of his young NHL career. As with any Sabre not named Jack Eichel, Reinhart has had his name chucked into the trade rumour mill from time to time, but he's a 25-goal talent who doesn't miss games and whose ceiling has yet to be reached. With no arbitration rights, is Reinhart pushing for a bridge deal and betting on further improvement, or does Buffalo want to lock up its last remaining RFA?

A longer-term deal could compare to those of fellow 2018 RFAs J.T. Miller or Tomas Hertl: an AAV of at least \$5 million over at least five seasons. Mike Harrington of The Buffalo News reported, however, that the Sabres are more likely interested in pushing Reinhart with a two-year contract.

"That stuff's all between us," Reinhart said on Sept. 4 when asked about negotiations by Buffalo reporters. He has joined his teammates to train at HarborCenter.

"Right now, my focus is being around the rink, being with the guys, practising like I would for a normal season. That's the way it's going to turn out to be, so I'm just treating it like that."

Reinhart was listed by the Sabres on their camp roster list released Wednesday. (For those scoring at home, Nylander was not listed on the Leafs' camp roster.)

Joshua Morrissey

Age: 23

Position: Defence

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$863,333

Ineligible for arbitration, Morrissey has patiently waited his turn for an extension, watching Blake Wheeler, Connor Hellebuyck, Adam Lowry, Brandon Tanev, Nic Petan and Jacob Trouba get their money.

Morrissey was consistently and quietly excellent for the Jets all season and through the post-season. The big question is, with cap space at a premium, is it actually smarter to bet on himself, take a two-year deal and swing for the fences at age 25?

That is reportedly the player's preference, while the Jets are seeking something long-term, according to the Winnipeg Free Press.

Aside from dragging on, negotiations have been positive, with both sides saying they're confident a deal will be wrapped up within a week.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"I would suspect so. We have had lots of conversations with his agent throughout the summer with respect to our situation and how we have to look at it," GM Kevin Cheveldayoff said during a Sept. 4 conference call. "I guess show up to camp and we'll see how it goes."

Morrissey is already in Winnipeg skating with his teammates.

"From my standpoint as a player, my agent [Gerry Johannson] and from our conversations with the team, everything's been going great. Everyone's confident it will be handled and done, definitely in time for the season," Morrissey told the Free Press.

Two sides are cutting it close, but I'm still expecting RFA D Josh Morrissey to get a new deal signed with #NHLJets before training camp begins. Wonder if a one-year bridge could be a compromise before a long-term deal gets hammered out next summer

— Ken Wiebe (@WiebeSunSports) September 12, 2018

#NHLJets GM Kevin Cheveldayoff said he expects new contracts to get done with two remaining RFAs, D Josh Morrissey and G Eric Comrie. And that both will be in training camp late next week. #WFP

— Jason Bell (@WFPJasonBell) September 4, 2018

Shea Theodore

Age: 22

Position: Defence

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$863,333

Theodore averaged more than 20 minutes per game for the Stanley Cup finalists, and the youngster's point-every-other-game pace continued deep into spring. He posted 10 points through 20 post-season contests and, barring a big trade, figures to be a top-four Knight for years to come.

Theodore was reportedly requested by Ottawa in a trade for Erik Karlsson, but those talks have stalled if not disappeared. Cap space is no issue for the Knights as they look to re-sign Theodore.

"We'll hopefully have Shea under contract soon, and we'll see how that goes over the next few weeks," McPhee said Aug. 8 in an interview on Fox 1340 AM. "He's in a unique position in that he doesn't have arbitration rights... So, this might be a little bit different. It might take a little longer, but it's something that certainly he would like to have done and we'd like to have done."

The 20-game suspension of Knights defenceman Nate Schmidt (another mobile left shot) puts pressure on GM George McPhee to have Theodore in place for puck drop.

"It's always best to have all of your guys available, but I don't feel any particular pressure," McPhee said last week. "We'll do a deal when the deal is right, and if he's not here then someone else will play."

George McPhee on the only remaining VGK RFA Shea Theodore-

"We will continue discussions there and see if something can be done that makes sense for both parties. We've got time but it would be nice if we could reach an agreement there and know what to expect there."

— Jesse Granger (@JesseGranger_) August 4, 2018

Darnell Nurse

Age: 23

Position: Defence

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$863,333

Nurse led all Oilers defencemen in scoring last season, although that only took 26 points. Belief among both the player and the club is that there is another level to the defender's game. That and the fact Edmonton is down to just \$3.98 million in cap space — with which Peter Chiarelli must use to sign Nurse and maybe one of his PTO depth

forwards — suggests Nurse would be better off going short-term and betting on a breakout year. More power-play minutes could help his wallet.

"If they've got \$5 million in cap space, it's not going to be a long-term deal," Nurse's agent, Anton Thun, told the Edmonton Journal. "I don't see with their cap space being what it is that they can entice us with much term."

Oilers captain Connor McDavid succinctly reinforced the importance of Nurse's attendance at camp on Aug. 7: "He's going to need to be there. I'm not sure the extent of what they're talking about, but he definitely needs to be there."

Nurse began skating with the Oilers in Edmonton last week but said he won't participate in training camp without a contract.

"I know at some point I'll be playing in Oilers colours. I want to get it done before camp," said Nurse. He'd be fine with a bridge deal.

Oilers have no cap room but presume Darnell Nurse's camp has looked at Hanifin's \$4.9 mil over 6 years as comparable. Hanifin was 3rd pairing guy in Carolina, Nurse definitely top 4 in Edm. Both shoot left. Hanifin 32 pts last year, Nurse 26.

— Jim Matheson (@NHLbyMatty) August 31, 2018

Miles Wood

Age: 22

Position: Left wing

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$925,000

The speedy Devils sophomore broke out big-time in 2017-18, scoring 19 goals and 32 points in 76 games despite limited power-play time. Sixteen of Wood's goals came at even strength, and his underlying numbers should help the size of his raise. Wood averaged 1.11 goals per 60 minutes played five-on-five, which tied him for 23rd overall in that category. If you're his agent, you're hoping Tom Wilson's contract in Washington helps your case.

With no arbitration rights for the player, the sides are reportedly working toward a short-term bridge. Fans will recall Damon Severson's RFA negotiations with GM Ray Shero lasting until Sept. 11 last year, and everything ended amicably.

Miles Wood and the Devils are working on a bridge deal, as expected. Not sure it's too close yet but would expect the two sides to figure something out prior to camp.

— Todd Cordell (@ToddCordell) September 5, 2018

Nick Ritchie

Age: 22

Position: Left wing

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$894,167

Seeing mostly third-line minutes, Ritchie's production has been relatively flat over his first two full seasons in the league (28 points in 2016-17, 27 in 2017-18) and he failed to reach the scoreboard in the Ducks' swift playoff exit. A full year flanking projected centre Adam Henrique could help Ritchie take a step to realizing his top-10-pick potential, and a short-term bet may be in the player's advantage.

Offers between Ritchie's camp and Ducks GM Bob Murray have been exchanged, while Murray has also said he's begun working on extensions for John Gibson and Jakob Silfverberg, Anaheim's two big UFAs in 2019.

Murray prioritized a three-year extension for RFA forward Ondrej Kase (signed Aug. 15) but has said he's hopeful to get Ritchie's deal done soon.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

The notable omission is Nick Ritchie. Unless something changes dramatically (which it can), it's looking more and more likely the RFA winger won't be there when camp opens. Doesn't appear anything is close as to a new contract.

— Eric Stephens (@icemancometh) September 12, 2018

Marek Langhamer

Age: 24

Position: Goaltender

2017-18 salary cap hit: \$660,000

Last but of least concern on this list is Langhamer. The Coyotes goaltending has played a grand total of 45 NHL minutes since being drafted as a seventh-rounder back in 2012. Langhamer is back home in the Czech Elite League playing for Brno Kometa.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104531 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / New arena for Flames an issue for team and city, not Olympic bid group

Eric Francis |September 13, 2018

Those who've been following Calgary's potential Olympic bid weren't surprised this week's proposed budget unveiling said nothing of a new, NHL-sized arena. While casual observers outside Calgary are gob-smacked a legacy project of this undertaking wouldn't include the most obvious of fixtures, the reality is the Olympic and arena issues are mutually exclusive.

The sticker shock of hearing a price tag of \$5.23 billion for the 2026 Games will only land the city two new sporting venues is hard for many to swallow, especially when one doesn't include an NHL-sized rink. Granted, the city is already equipped with most of the winter venues required, thanks to the 1988 Games and the legacy fund that came with it. It's the reason why Calgary is even considering an Olympic do-over.

What Calgary 2026 officials revealed before city councillors voted Tuesday to proceed to a Nov. 13 plebiscite, is that \$400 million has been earmarked to build a 6,000-seat arena and a fieldhouse in the Foothills cluster between McMahon Stadium and the University of Calgary.

They've also pledged to spend a portion of the \$500 earmarked for eight venue upgrades on places like 58-year-old McMahon Stadium and the 35-year-old Saddledome.

Ryan Dixon and Rory Boylen go deep on pucks with a mix of facts and fun, leaning on a varied group of hockey voices to give their take on the country's most beloved game.

Perhaps now is a good time to reconsider this: the Flames' CalgaryNEXT proposal in the west village was tabbed at \$900 million by the club (which the city disputes) and the Flames would've paid for half of it (which the city also disputes). It would have included a world-class NHL-sized stadium, a 25,000-seat football/soccer stadium and a fieldhouse all in one.

Now that's a legacy.

Did we happen to mention the Flames' proposal also included a 5,000-seat practice facility as well?

However, because the Olympic bid and the Flames' quest to get a new venue are completely separate issues, the five-ring budget will spend

untold millions upgrading the aging Dome and McMahon Stadium instead.

What a waste.

In the IOC's quest to make hosting future games more affordable, they say the Dome will be "adequate" to host the marquee event of the Games, which would almost certainly include the NHL's best. At least it's better than suggestions Edmonton would host the hockey tourney in Calgary's stead.

It's worth noting Mayor Naheed Nenshi also seemed puzzled at Tuesday's council meeting by the logic of building a 6,000-seat hockey venue that would serve very little purpose outside of the three-week Olympic party.

"If there's a new, big arena built, that obviates a plan for the mid-sized one," said Nenshi, well aware the Calgary 2026 plan includes a caveat suggesting a new arena could be incorporated into the Olympic plans. "I have a lot of trouble seeing a new 5,000-seat arena as part of a legacy. I just don't see what the future need of that will be."

A committee of several city councillors was formed in the spring with an eye on trying to re-open arena negotiations with the Calgary Sports and Entertainment Corporation, which owns the Flames. While CSEC CEO Ken King said he was open to talks under certain parameters (including a media ban) there have been no formal talks of yet.

King declined comment on Tuesday's proceedings.

So, for the next two months Calgarians will wrestle with an Olympic-sized arena debate of sorts: Pay hundreds of millions to put lipstick on two pigs, or pay a few hundred million more (and use the help of a well-heeled partner in CSEC) to get facilities capable of leaving legacies that will not only serve the city for decades, but help ensure pro sports remain in town.

Calgary Mayor Naheed Nenshi. (Todd Korol/CP)

The city claimed CalgaryNEXT would have cost \$1.8 billion, but at least the two agreed the price of a new rink next to the Dome would be \$555 million.

That's about all they can agree on.

Nenshi very much wants the Olympics to come to Calgary but has been seen as a major impediment to getting an arena deal done with the Flames. Of course, by no means is he the only one to blame. Successfully landing the Games a year from now would likely mean Nenshi would feel increased pressure to get an arena deal done to augment the fan, athlete, conference and concert-going experience.

But first, Calgarians have to vote 'yes' in the November plebiscite on whether to bid on the Games. Should they do so, the IOC's decision on the 2026 host will come a year from now.

What doesn't help the bid's cause is the inefficiency of sinking money into an aging Dome and football stadium, and paying a portion of the \$400 million for a 6,000-seat hockey rink when a new arena is clearly what the city needs, wants and deserves.

That's on the Flames and the city to figure out, not Calgary 2026 officials.

The disconnect is embarrassing. An arena should be part of the Olympic proposal — part of its legacy, just as the Saddledome was for the 1988 Games.

Should the city figure this out soon enough, the legacy of the Olympics could then also include keeping the Flames in town, which would be an enormous boost to this city's ever-deteriorating morale and economy

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104532 Websites



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

TSN.CA / Sens say goodbye to Karlsson in rebuild fuelled by Melnyk

Frank Seravalli

Tears welled up in Erik Karlsson's eyes and he wondered aloud how it had all gone off the rails, how the face of the Ottawa Senators was on his way to San Jose.

"I don't think in my wildest imagination that I would leave this place," Karlsson told reporters. "Nobody can tell you why it happened."

Senators general manager Pierre Dorion said the plan was put in place with owner Eugene Melnyk in a February meeting to move Karlsson, but really the germination was in what Melnyk said on Parliament Hill last December. That NHL 100 Classic weekend was supposed to be a celebration, but Melnyk's words foreshadowed what will now be some of the darkest days in franchise history.

"You see what's going on with player salaries and bonuses," Melnyk said on Dec. 15, 2017. "We can't keep spending at the top end and getting the lowest revenues. It just doesn't work."

"I have it. But I'm not going to spend a lifetime of working hard to support a hockey team. It's not going to happen."

The Senators were never going to pony up to pay the two-time Norris Trophy winner his worth.

That's how we got here, the teary goodbye at Canadian Tire Centre on the eve of training camp. The Senators shipped Karlsson to the Sharks on Thursday in exchange for Chris Tierney, Dylan DeMelo, prospects Josh Norris and Rudolf Balcers, a conditional 2020 first-round pick and a conditional 2019 second-round pick, as well as two other conditional picks.

"They made it very clear with the direction they were going in – and I wasn't part of that," Karlsson said. "I wish we were standing here under different circumstances. It's an emotional and sad day."

Thursday marked the most significant player trade in the NHL since Jaromir Jagr was dealt by Pittsburgh in his prime in 2001. Players of Karlsson's calibre – a four-time first team All-Star defenceman – are almost never on the move. Even on a surgically repaired foot, Karlsson drove play last season in a way that few ever have from the back end.

Karlsson, 28, is one of four active defencemen to net 70 points in a single season (he's done it four times) – and now he will join Brent Burns as one of two on the Sharks' blueline.

"We all know when you get to a certain point it's best for all parties to move on," Dorion told reporters. "Today we made the proper decision."

Add in Olympic gold medalist Marc-Edouard Vlasic and the Sharks could lay claim to the best defence corps in the NHL now. GM Doug Wilson finally reeled in his big fish after trying to hook John Tavares and Steven Stamkos over the past two summers, among others.

Karlsson has given no guarantee that he will re-sign in San Jose, a factor that limited the Senators' return. But Wilson is all-in for the short term, even if it's a one-year run, though he'd clearly like to keep him.

"Yes, it's a long-term approach and we think Erik fits for us for now and for a long time," Wilson said.

The about-face of the Senators in one year's time has been nothing short of incredible.

This time last year, Ottawa was set to open camp after a surprise run to the Eastern Conference Final, largely on the back of Karlsson's sublime playoff run.

It was just 312 days ago that Dorion dealt Kyle Turris, Shane Bowers, Andrew Hammond, and first and third-round picks for Matt Duchene on Nov. 5, 2017.

Three months after Dorion felt the Senators were close enough to mortgage the future on Duchene, Dorion then said he laid the foundation for this sudden rebuild in that February meeting with Melnyk. The owner then laid the groundwork for this unpopular pending trade in an awkward video message with bystander Mark Borowiecki earlier this week.

"This is the moment to rebuild our team, shape our future with all these core pieces," Dorion said.

One problem: the Senators may well be the first team ever to embark on an aggressive rebuild without their own first-round pick, which was conveyed to Colorado and is expected to be inside the top four.

The national capital's hockey team is burning.

For a generational star like Karlsson, the Senators got back a second or third liner in Tierney, a defenceman who was left unprotected in last year's expansion draft in DeMelo, what will likely amount to low first and second-round picks, and what Dorion labelled as two "A" level prospects in Norris and Balcers.

(Ah, and there is a conditional pick for the Sens in case Karlsson is flipped to the Eastern Conference this season – since apparently the Mike Hoffman flip didn't sit well.)

The burn is only just beginning.

That's because the Senators have north of \$20 million committed each of the next two seasons to Bobby Ryan, Craig Anderson, Zack Smith and Marian Gaborik.

Dorion wasn't able to hold firm on shedding Ryan and the four years remaining on his contract at \$7.25 million per season. Their 37-year-old goaltender Anderson has two years left and he reportedly requested a trade this summer. There is doubt as to whether Gaborik will be healthy enough to play again. Plus, the Senators are paying Dion Phaneuf until 2021 to play in Los Angeles.

To add injury to insult, an announcement is expected on Friday on the medical condition of centre Jean-Gabriel Pageau, who reportedly tore his Achilles during fitness training on Thursday and may miss the next four to six months.

Oh, and the Senators' two building blocks – Mark Stone and Duchene – do not have contracts beyond this season. Duchene sounded last week like a player intrigued by the possibility of free agency and Dorion didn't seem to make it Priority No. 1 on Thursday to re-sign the player he paid a king's ransom to get last November.

"They both love it in Ottawa," Dorion said, "and we'll just let nature take its course in the future."

It's a course that has seemingly changed with the wind over the last year, sweeping out maybe the best player the franchise has ever known with it.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104533 Websites

TSN.CA / Leafs not sweating Nylander's absence as camp opens

Mark Masters

TSN Toronto reporter Mark Masters was on hand as the Maple Leafs opened training camp with medicals and media availabilities at the MasterCard Centre on Thursday.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Despite being a rookie NHL GM, Kyle Dubas insists he's "very comfortable" entering training camp with restricted free agent William Nylander unsigned noting it's not an uncommon situation for teams.

"We continue to work away at it and we have a very specific process that we're going to follow," Dubas said during a news conference on the opening day of Leafs training camp. "And with all of our players over the next number of years that are going to be coming up and needing new contracts we're going to follow the same process."

Nylander is the first player in Toronto's young core that's needed a new contract. Mitch Marner and Auston Matthews are eligible for extensions, but still have a year remaining on their entry-level deals.

"Our goal is to have sustained success here and in order to do that in a salary-cap system you have to build a structure and abide by it and do things right by the players, but also right by the organization and give the collective group the best chance to have success so things might not move as quickly as people want as we chip away at it," Dubas explained. "Patience has always been something I've preached and will live by and I'm confident we'll continue to work away at it and come to a conclusion here in the coming days and weeks."

Dubas revealed that free-agent pick-up Tyler Ennis, bought out by Minnesota after last season, will get an opportunity to skate in Nylander's spot beside Matthews at the start of camp.

"Any time you're the player and you're not here today it's hard on you," said head coach Mike Babcock. "As the player, you want to be here, the guys would like you here and I would like you here, but that's part of the process they're going through right now. In the meantime, we get to find another player and so someone's going to play with Matthews that wasn't playing with Matthews and they'll get a heck of an opportunity and we might find a player out of that and then we're ahead of the game with that."

When will Nylander's contract situation become a big concern to the Leafs?

With William Nylander absent on the first day of training camp, when will his contract situation become a big concern to the Leafs? Steve Simmons gives his thoughts, and explains that it's a concern to him that Nylander is currently back in Sweden, suggesting the two sides aren't close to a deal.

—

In an interview with TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger, Babcock revealed his list of alternate captains for the upcoming season. John Tavares, who wore the 'C' in Long Island for the last five seasons, will join the formal leadership group alongside Patrick Marleau, another former NHL captain from his days in San Jose. Morgan Rielly will also continue to serve as an alternate captain.

"For management and the organization to feel that, as a new guy coming in, I can make that impact right away on this group and be looked upon as a leader is something I'm very thankful for and don't take for granted," said Tavares. "I understand what that means and what that represents and how important that is."

Babcock stressed that he's expecting leadership to come from many different age/experience groups on the team.

"When you look at Jake Gardiner and you look at Nazem Kadri and you look at (Ron) Hainsey, that's another group. Then there's the group of Auston (Matthews), Mitch (Marner) and Willy and then there's (Zach) Hyman and (Connor) Brown who do it right every single day. Our leadership group is very, very good. The guys who will have letters on their sweater this year are the three guys I mentioned, but when we get together with a leadership group meeting to decide what we're doing that's all those guys."

Tavares not taking privilege to wear 'A' for Maple Leafs for granted

After being named an alternate captain by Mike Babcock, Maple Leafs forward John Tavares describes what it means to him to wear an 'A' being a new player on the team, and explains that he understands the importance of that privilege and isn't taking it for granted.

With former alternates Tyler Bozak and Leo Komarov moving on in free agency, some turnover in Toronto's leadership group was guaranteed. Some believed Matthews would get a letter, but the third-year centre seemed unfazed by the decision.

"Whether there's a letter or not I don't think it really changes how I go about my business," Matthews told Dreger, "how I treat my teammates, my work ethic on and off the ice, none of that really changes whether I have a letter or not."

Babcock objected to the notion that the team was being indecisive when it comes to the captaincy question. He oversaw two captain changes during a decade in Detroit with Steve Yzerman giving way to Nicklas Lidstrom, who then passed the baton to Henrik Zetterberg.

"It's interesting, in Detroit they'd say to you, 'Oh, who picks the captain? Does the coach pick the captain? Do the players pick the captain? Does the owner pick the captain? Does the GM pick the captain?' Well, we all thought we did," Babcock recalled. "The GM thought the captain should be Nick. The owner thought the captain should be Nick. The players thought the captain should be Nick and the coach thought the captain should be Nick. When Zetterberg was the captain it was the same way. That's what's going to happen here. So, we'll just let that evolve. In the meantime, the leadership group, that's good leadership, I don't care what you say."

Matthews discusses Leafs' captaincy; Nylander contract situation

Auston Matthews shares his feelings on not being named to the Toronto Maple Leafs' leadership group, as he will not wear a letter on his jersey for the upcoming season. Matthews also shares his thoughts on the William Nylander contract talks, as well as his own upcoming contract situation.

—

Former Leafs general manager Lou Lamoriello wanted to put the emphasis on the team as a whole and as such installed a series of rules emphasizing sameness. The most notorious edict called for players to be clean shaven with short hair. After lengthy deliberations, Dubas has decided to lift that rule this season noting the journey is a lengthy one.

"When you ask someone to commit that amount of time, it's not just them it's their family, so I want the players to be at their best, whatever their individual best may be and I think part of that is letting them really express themselves, in a professional manner, but to try and be themselves as best they can."

So, is Marner planning to grow a beard?

"If Just For Men works very well then I guess so," he said with a laugh. "I got kind of lazy in the summer and didn't really shave and I had my whole family and everybody making fun of me for what I had on my face so I don't think I'll be coming back with that anymore."

Marner listed Kadri and Marleau as players who will likely benefit the most from the relaxed rules.

The Dubas decision, predictably, received positive reaction from players, many of whom were already enjoying the newfound freedom.

"It's always good to express yourself," said Matthews. "Guys are all different. I think hockey is a sport that kind of shies away from that so it would be nice maybe to see more of that in the game and I think it helps it grow as well."

After years of clean faces, Dubas confirms facial hair back in Toronto

After years under Lou Lamoriello's no facial hair policy. Maple Leafs general manager Kyle Dubas says he wants his players to be at their best by expressing themselves in a professional manner.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Babcock is a high-energy guy on most days, but on Thursday he seemed even more pumped than usual.

"I feel like it's my first year here," he told reporters. "So, now you get to coach the team. Before you were just trying to get the team to a certain level. This is kind of like being with the Red Wings all over again. Now we have an opportunity."

Babcock made the playoffs during all 10 seasons in Detroit, winning 12 series. The Leafs, meanwhile, have not won a playoff series since 2004.

"When you walk around the city, the fans in our city are happy, but they want more," Babcock said. "But we want more too. I think we're set up real good here for, I don't know, a five, seven-year run."

Toronto's defence is viewed as the team's Achilles heel in many circles, but Babcock believes the unit is underrated.

"I think the group's real good, better than a lot of people think," the coach said. "We got two 50-point d-men. I don't know how many teams in the league have two 50-point d-men."

The Leafs (Gardiner and Rielly) were one of three teams with two blue liners who cracked the 50-point plateau last season joining the Wild (Ryan Suter and Matt Dumba) and Predators (P.K. Subban and Roman Josi).

And yet, the fact remains the Leafs gave up 33.9 shots per game last season (28th in NHL) while finishing below 50 per cent on the Corsi ledger (49.82).

"We believe we can get way better defensively," Babcock acknowledged. "That's our focus to get better defensively. We think we can get way better in that area."

Babcock said this was one of three key areas of focus for the team, but did not reveal the other two.

"We think our guys are also getting better. Hains is what Hains is," Babcock said referring to 37-year-old Hainsey, "but the rest of the guys are getting better for sure. Now we'll find a fifth guy and sixth guy to put in every day and we'll work that out over a month here."

Babcock listed the following players as being in contention for a third-pairing job: Connor Carrick, Justin Holl and Igor Ozhiganov on the right, and Travis Dermott, Andreas Borgman and Calle Rosen on the left.

"We got a real good group of younger people coming," said Dubas, who served as Marlies GM before being promoted to the Leafs job. "I'm excited to see them in camp and early in the season. I'm probably a little more bullish on them than people on the outside, because I've been with those players every day for the last number of years and I see what they're capable of. They play the game the way we want to play it. They can all move. They can all move the puck and they can help us get out of our zone and get up the ice. I think if you have a set way that you want to play and play defensively and move the puck out of your end, you need to find players that play that style and not necessarily players that are the de facto top two or three defencemen in the league."

Dermott entering training camp with added confidence

After getting half a season with the big club under his belt, Maple Leafs defenceman Travis Dermott explains that he's entering training camp with much more confidence this year, and plans to work hard to secure a roster spot. Dermott also shares his first impressions of John Tavares.

The Leafs travelled to Niagara Falls on Thursday following medicals and media availabilities and, as is usual for GMs on the first night of training camp, Dubas will address the group this evening.

"It will, obviously, be my first time doing it at this level," the 32-year-old said. "I've done it in the Sault (with the OHL's Greyhounds) and with the Marlies in the past. I try not to be longwinded and keep it to a very specific message. And, for me, the message to our group is going to be: with the expectations on them and with the talent of the group I think we can have success if we abide by our process every day ... it's about not looking far ahead to the spring or the playoffs. We have to get there first and we have to set ourselves up for success once we're there by how we perform day in and day out during the season. And it will just be about continuing to push our group to be more process-oriented and not worrying about what the fans or anyone else says about our potential at the end of the year. We won't get to that point if we don't focus on the day-to-day."

Dubas said this is a similar narrative to the one he's delivered previously in the OHL and AHL.

"My message doesn't really change too often from year to year," he said with a smile. "It tends to always go back to that so roll with that."

The Leafs will hold on-ice sessions in Niagara Falls for the next three days.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104534 Websites

TSN.CA / Five storylines to watch as Leafs open camp

Kristen Shilton

NIAGARA FALLS, Ont. – It's been a long time since the Toronto Maple Leafs opened a training camp with so many legitimate expectations tied to the season ahead.

The addition of John Tavares, coupled with the continued growth of star forwards Auston Matthews and Mitch Marner, have made the Leafs a popular choice among their NHL peers to contend for the Stanley Cup next spring.

Unsurprisingly, no one in Toronto's dressing room is biting on that particular narrative, preferring to focus on the importance of "the process" that will play out over the next seven months.

That journey begins with training camp, which officially opened Thursday in Toronto and moves to Gale Centre in Niagara Falls on Friday, Saturday and Sunday for on-ice sessions.

The Leafs will be split into three teams for the duration as coaches and management start to decipher what their team might look like come fall. To that end, below are five storylines to watch as training camp gets underway.

1. Who will round out Toronto's centre group?

Tavares, Matthews dish on teaming up, Leafs' captaincy, Cup hopes, and more

In a sit-down interview with TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger, Maple Leafs teammates John Tavares and Auston Matthews open up about the admiration they have for one another, how excited they are to play together, how they're handling the big expectations for the team, whether the captaincy situation is weighing on them, their goals of trying to capture a Stanley Cup, and much more.

Few teams in the NHL can lay claim to the kind of depth down the middle that the Leafs have. Tavares, Matthews and Nazem Kadri project to fill the first three spots, but who slots in on the fourth line will be the most important roster battle at Leafs' camp. The players in contention for the



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

position all arrived in Toronto from different backgrounds, with the same ambition in mind of obtaining a full-time NHL role:

- Par Lindholm was among the most dominant centres in the Swedish Hockey League last season, posting 47 points in 49 games for Skelleftea AIK. Other NHL teams pitched Lindholm on coming to North America sooner, but the 26-year-old held out until the Leafs came calling last spring. Head coach Mike Babcock said on Thursday that Lindholm has already "looked good" in summer skates, and the job seems to be his to lose.

- Frederik Gauthier is entering his fourth season with the organization, after the Leafs drafted him 21st overall in the 2013 NHL Entry Draft. He's skated in seven NHL games to date but has never established the snarl Babcock demands from a 6-foot-5, 232-pound player. Still, Gauthier signed a two-year, \$1.3 million extension over the summer, a show of good faith by the front office that they still believe he has something to offer. Also of note in Gauthier's case is he will require re-entry waivers this year if the Leafs try to send him back to the AHL's Toronto Marlies.

- Josh Jooris is the dark horse in the fourth-line centre race, and would need a wholly outstanding training camp to win the gig. Signed as a free agent on July 1, Jooris was coming off a disappointing season with the Carolina Hurricanes that included a mid-season trade to the Pittsburgh Penguins and his first minor-league assignments (to the AHL's Charlotte Checkers and then Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins) in four years. The 28-year-old has 213 NHL games to his credit though and is strong on the penalty kill, which could help tilt the ice in his favour.

2. Is the Leafs' defence good enough?

Dermott entering training camp with added confidence

After getting half a season with the big club under his belt, Maple Leafs defenceman Travis Dermott explains that he's entering training camp with much more confidence this year, and plans to work hard to secure a roster spot. Dermott also shares his first impressions of John Tavares.

Leafs general manager Kyle Dubas makes no apologies for being more "bullish" on Toronto's defence than others. That partly explains why he didn't go out and secure a top-four defenceman on the free-agent market or via trade to round out of the current group, funnelling the Leafs' financial resources more toward the offensive side of the ice.

Toronto's only acquisition for the blueline was Igor Ozhiganov, a career KHL player who, at age 25, will try and transition to North American ice for the first time. Outside of Ozhiganov, it will be Connor Carrick, Martin Marincin and Justin Holl duking it out for the spot next to Travis Dermott on the Leafs' third pairing. Regardless of who comes out on top, there haven't been enough significant changes on the backend to suggest it will be markedly better. But a good camp and preseason for the Leafs' defensive players could start to illustrate whether they're up to the task of helping Toronto contend this season.

3. Which goalie are the Leafs willing to risk losing?

Much like with their centre group, the Leafs have a depth of goaltenders that any team would covet. After starter Frederik Andersen, who played 66 games in the regular season last year with a .918 save percentage, the Leafs will have to sift through journeyman Curtis McElhinney and rising stars Garret Sparks and Calvin Pickard to eventually name his backup. Complicating the matter is that all three of those players require re-entry waivers for an AHL assignment, which may play into who ultimately wins the job.

Also like the Leafs' centres, each of Toronto's potential backups took a unique route to this point. McElhinney, 35, has been in the league since 2007, and behind Andersen since being claimed off waivers in January 2017. Last year McElhinney put up the best numbers of his career with 2.14 goals-against average and a .934 save percentage. Sparks has been in the Leafs' organization since 2012, mostly backstopping in the AHL. He played 17 games for the Leafs back in 2015-16 but since then has been honing his craft only in the minors, picking up the AHL's goaltender of the year award last season en route to a Marlies' Calder

Cup win. Pickard was Spark's backup for the run, but had previously won the starting job for the Colorado Avalanche in 2016-17. He boasts a career .913 save percentage in 87 games.

Dubas said all three players will get a fair chance at proving themselves in camp, but only one can stick around in the NHL. So the question is: Which player could Toronto ultimately most stand to lose on waivers?

4. How long will Nylander Watch go on – and what ripple effect will his absence create?

When will Nylander's contract situation become a big concern to the Leafs?

With William Nylander absent on the first day of training camp, when will his contract situation become a big concern to the Leafs? Steve Simmons gives his thoughts, and explains that it's a concern to him that Nylander is currently back in Sweden, suggesting the two sides aren't close to a deal.

William Nylander won't start training camp with the Leafs, and he may not finish with them either. But he will be a storyline unto himself until the restricted free agent gets a contract extension done. Toronto has to prepare in some fashion for the possibility Nylander won't be signed or physically ready by the time October rolls around, which means adjusting their offensive game plan now.

Nylander has 122 points in the last two seasons – the third-most among all Toronto's skaters – while playing a prominent role at 5-on-5 and on the power play. Replacing his contributions won't be easy for Babcock, but the coach does have options. Tyler Ennis will start camp in Nylander's usual spot next to Matthews, but if that doesn't yield results, Kasperii Kapanen could also be ready for a top-six role that has eluded him in recent years.

Babcock said on Thursday his power-play units won't be figured out in full until at least game five of the preseason, so addressing Nylander's absence there isn't as big a concern out of the gate. But developing chemistry is an important part of camp, and even the best intentioned coaches can fail to put players together who find it. Where a spark ignites for the Leafs as their line combinations are juggled will be worth watching.

5. How will the culture of the Leafs evolve under Kyle Dubas?

After years of clean faces, Dubas confirms facial hair back in Toronto

After years under Lou Lamoriello's no facial hair policy, Maple Leafs general manager Kyle Dubas says he wants his players to be at their best by expressing themselves in a professional manner.

Like any new general manager, Kyle Dubas wants to put his own fingerprints on the Leafs – without negatively disturbing the culture already in place. In that vein, Dubas made the decision to move away from the more old-fashioned rules instituted during Lou Lamoriello's tenure as general manager, and will allow players to grow beards and "express themselves" (professionally) as they so choose. It's a small victory for the players, especially those who relish the chance to avoid shaving on a daily basis, but also a sign of how Dubas may be loosening the reins on his team and giving them more freedom to show individuality.

"It's always good to express yourself," Auston Matthews said on Thursday. "Hockey's a sport that maybe shies away from that, so it will be kind of nice to maybe see more of that in the game."

Whether a shift in attitude ends up translating to a more successful on-ice product for the Leafs remains to be seen, but it's an intriguing plot to monitor as camp goes on and players become more entrenched in a dressing room that not only includes a few new faces, but also perhaps doesn't promote the same homogeneity as before.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

1104535 Websites

TSN.CA / Statistically Speaking: Karlsson a major addition to Sharks

Scott Cullen

It seems like it's been a long-time coming, like a car crash in slow motion, but it has finally happened – the Ottawa Senators have traded their franchise player to the San Jose Sharks.

Statistically Speaking examines the quantity-over-quality package that helped the Sharks acquire superstar defenceman Erik Karlsson.

Erik Karlsson	Ottawa	D	71	9	53
62	50.9	5.7	97.0	54.9	26:44
Chris Tierney	San Jose	C	82	17	23
40	49.3	-2.2	99.1	51.4	16:00
Dylan DeMelo	San Jose	D	63	0	20
20	49.7	-0.7	99.6	49.3	14:12
Rudolfs Balcers	San Jose (AHL)	LW	67	23	
25	48	-8			
Josh Norris	Michigan (Big 10)	C	37	8	
15	23	-8			
Francis Perron	Belleville (AHL)	LW	44	4	
11	15	-8			

The Sharks Get: D Erik Karlsson and LW Francis Perron

Karlsson, 28, is the most dynamic defenceman in the game, a freewheeling rover who generates offence and has been a play-driving force for the Senators. He has won two Norris Trophies and finished second in voting on two other occasions.

He's far-and-away the highest-scoring defenceman over the past five seasons, and he's joining the team with the No. 2 scoring defenceman over that period of time.

Erik Karlsson	Ottawa	394	83	272	355
Brent Burns	San Jose	328	85	193	278
Victor Hedman	Tampa Bay		368	66	209
275					
P.K. Subban	Nashville	380	57	206	263
Roman Josi	Nashville	381	68	190	258

Over that same period of time, Karlsson ranks second among defencemen in relative Corsi, meaning that the Senators have been consistently better in terms of shot differentials with Karlsson on the ice. Imagine that.

One statistic to note with respect to Karlsson, though, is that over the past five seasons he has an on-ice save percentage of .914 and that's on the low end. Only 10 defencemen have played more than 2,000 minutes at 5-on-5 over the past five years and have a lower on-ice save percentage.

How much you think that is player dependent may vary. For my money, I'd take my chances that Karlsson isn't destined to be submarined by on-ice save percentage, but last season's rate of .891 was a career-low, so he's likely to at least be better than that moving forward. When a player is coming off a season with historically low percentages, it's usually a great time to make a deal for that player.

One way to mitigate those effects in San Jose could be to partner Karlsson with a stay-at-home ace like Marc-Edouard Vlasic. Vlasic has

been playing shutdown minutes forever and his reliability would figure to be a nice complement to Karlsson, but the Sharks now have the option of having Karlsson and Brent Burns on the ice on separate pairs and both have a history of driving the puck the right way when they are on the ice.

Karlsson is heading into the last year of his contract, with a \$6.5-million cap hit, but he's likely looking at a massive raise on his next deal. Drew Doughty got \$11-million per season on his contract extension and Karlsson will likely be expecting at least that much on a new contract.

Perron is a 22-year-old winger who was a seventh-round pick in 2014. He had a strong finish to his junior career, but has a modest 41 points in 112 AHL games through his first two pro seasons. It would be a surprise if he turns into anything of note with the Sharks.

Chris Tierney is going to play a significant role for the Senators.

The Senators Get: C Chris Tierney, D Dylan DeMelo, C Josh Norris, LW Rudolfs Balcers, a second-round pick and a first-round pick in 2020 (would be 2019 if Sharks miss the playoffs) plus a conditional pick if Karlsson re-signs.

Tierney, 24, is a decent two-way centre who had a career-high 17 goals and 40 points last season, taking on a bigger role with Joe Thornton out of the Sharks lineup for a large portion of the season. He seems like a natural third-line centre, but with Jean-Gabriel Pageau reportedly suffering an Achilles injury they may need Tierney to slot in behind Matt Duchene on the depth chart while they wait for prospect Logan Brown to establish himself in the NHL.

With a cap hit of \$2,937,500 for the next two seasons, Tierney is reasonably priced, and he will be a restricted free agent at the end of his deal.

25-year-old Dylan DeMelo had something of a breakthrough season for the Sharks last season, recording 20 assists in 63 games. He's a serviceable third-pair, right-shot defenceman who can play for the Senators, but isn't likely to move the needle.

DeMelo is signed for two more years with a cap hit of \$900,000.

While Josh Norris was a first-round pick in 2017, the 19-year-old is coming off a freshman season at Michigan in which he produced 23 points in 37 games. If he's going to be an impact player in the National Hockey League, he will have to produce significantly more in college to have any reason to expect that he can do it as a pro.

21-year-old Latvian winger Rudolfs Balcers is something of a wildcard. He was a fifth-round pick in 2015 and has developed over the past couple of seasons, scoring 23 goals in 67 games as an AHL rookie last season. If he can carry that production forward, he may be positioned to get a look with the rebuilding Senators at some point this season.

Presuming that the Sharks make the playoffs, they won't have their 2019 first-round pick, due to last season's Evander Kane trade. That means the Senators will most likely receive a 2019 second-round pick, the highest of a second-round pick between Florida and San Jose. A second-round pick offers a little better than a one-in-three chance of turning into an NHL player.

If the Sharks do make the playoffs next season, that means the Senators will receive their 2020 first-round pick. The value of that pick could vary a great deal, depending on what the Sharks' season is like in 2019-2020.

There are also some conditional picks in the deal. If Karlsson re-signs in San Jose, the Senators would get a 2021 second-round pick. Additionally, if the Sharks reach the Stanley Cup Final in 2019, the pick will be a 2021 first-rounder instead.

After the Sharks and Senators made a trade earlier this summer, in which winger Mike Hoffman was dealt to the Sharks and immediately flipped to the Florida Panthers, there is yet another clause in this deal. If Karlsson ends up on the reserve list of an Eastern Conference team at any time in the 2018-2019 season, then the Senators receive a first-round pick.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

Verdict: The deal is an obvious win for San Jose, because adding Karlsson makes them a contender next season, and none of the pieces that are going to Ottawa, including the draft picks, are likely to become impact players. There might be a few pieces that turn into NHLers, and that's something, but it's not a lot when it comes to moving the best defenceman in the league. That the Senators couldn't get a young NHL winger like Timo Meier or even Kevin Labanc out of San Jose seems to limit the upside of their return.

On the Sharks side of the deal, the only downside is if they can't convince Karlsson to stay beyond the 2018-2019 season. If that happens, the Sharks will still have loads of financial flexibility to be players in free agency or future blockbuster trades.

Ultimately, the Sharks are a veteran team that was a good bet to make the playoffs. Adding Karlsson at minimal cost raises the bar for what they might be able to achieve this season.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104536 Websites

TSN.CA / Statistically Speaking: Vegas makes a big move for Pacioretty

Scott Cullen

The Montreal Canadiens traded away their captain, to last year's expansion team, strangely enough a team that is in a much better position to win now.

Statistically Speaking examines the deal sending Max Pacioretty to Vegas.

Max Pacioretty	Montreal	LW	64	17	20
37	53.3	3.1	96.5	57.2	19:01
Tomas Tatar	Vegas	LW	82	20	14
34	49.9	1.4	98.3	51.5	16:16
Nick Suzuki	Owen Sound (OHL)	C	64	42	
58	100	+30			

The Golden Knights Get: LW Max Pacioretty

Pacioretty, 29, was the Canadiens' captain and had been one of the league's most prolific goal-scorers before an injury-plagued 2017-2018 season. He also scored on just 8.0% of his shots, his lowest rate since 2009-2010. Given his track record, it's reasonable to expect that Pacioretty can rebound and score at a more typical rate next season.

About that track record, from 2013-2014 through 2016-2017, Pacioretty scored 141 goals. Over those four seasons, only Alex Ovechkin, Joe Pavelski and Sidney Crosby scored more goals. Pacioretty comes by those goals honestly, too, because he ranked fourth in total shots on goal over that four-year stretch.

In Vegas, Pacioretty is likely to have a favourable situation, as he should fit alongside Paul Stastny, a veteran playmaking centre who should provide Pacioretty plenty of opportunities to put the puck in the net.

Pacioretty is entering the final year of a bargain contract that comes with a \$4.5-million cap hit. He's going to be looking at a significant raise, either on an extension from the Golden Knights or in free agency next summer.

Tomas Tatar struggled in Vegas, but had been a solid contributor in Detroit.

The Canadiens Get: LW Tomas Tatar, C Nick Suzuki and a second-round pick

Tatar is a 27-year-old winger who had been solidly productive with the Red Wings before stumbling upon his arrival in Vegas at last season's trade deadline. He finished with 20 goals for his fourth straight season, but had just six points in 20 games after he was acquired by Vegas, 34 points was a career low, and he was a healthy scratch for much of the Golden Knights' postseason run to the Stanley Cup Final.

For much of his time in Detroit, though, Tatar was a positive play driver. He topped out at 29 goals and 56 points in 2014-2015 and, from 2013-2014 through 2016-2017, he ranked fourth among forwards in relative Corsi, behind Patrice Bergeron, Brad Marchand and Joe Thornton.

In Montreal, Tatar may have trouble scoring for the same reason that many wingers have trouble scoring in Montreal – they don't have enough playmaking talent down the middle of the ice. At the same time, Tatar could still be a 20-goal scorer who helps move the puck in the right direction.

Tatar is under contract for three more seasons. The Habs and Golden Knights are both retaining some salary on the deal, so Pacioretty's contract has a \$4.05-million cap hit this year, while Tatar comes with a \$4.8-million cap hit for the next three years.

Suzuki may be the real prize of the trade for Montreal, yet the 19-year-old comes with uncertainty because he's still a prospect. Drafted 15th overall in 2017, Suzuki has produced 196 points in 129 games over the past two seasons in the Ontario Hockey League, so there is legitimate reason to hope that he can be a productive scoring centre in the NHL, but the fringes of NHL rosters are littered with players that scored a bunch in junior.

Perhaps most importantly for Montreal, though, is that Suzuki is a playmaking centre, and if he's capable of fulfilling that role in the National Hockey League, he will address a major need for the Habs. It's not inconceivable that Suzuki would have a chance to make the Canadiens club this season, but there's no rush. If he's not ready, there's no point in force-feeding him minutes on what is likely to be a bad team in 2018-2019.

The second-round pick that Montreal receives in the deal originally belonged to Columbus. A second-round pick, in general, has about a 34% chance of turning into an NHL player. In the middle part of the round (which seems like a reasonable place for Columbus' pick), it's a shade higher.

Verdict: Vegas has to be happy with their end of the deal. They got out from under the Tatar contract, which isn't terrible, but it was for someone who didn't fit at all with that team, so making a quick decision on it is probably for the best, especially since it yielded Pacioretty, an elite scoring winger coming off a bad year.

It's possible that Suzuki will develop into a significant NHL player, but the Golden Knights also have William Karlsson and Paul Stastny as established vets down the middle, and their top prospect is Cody Glass, another centre, so maybe Suzuki was a little bit more expendable, especially if Vegas has some doubts about his development thus far.

Montreal painted themselves into a corner with Pacioretty – shopping him around the league, unsuccessfully, when it was clear that they wouldn't sign him to an extension – and, not surprisingly, that didn't leave them in a good spot to maximize a return. Nevertheless, if Suzuki does pan out, and the future of Montreal's centre position involves Suzuki along with recent first-rounders Jesperi Kotkaniemi and Ryan Poehling then a position of organizational weakness may finally be headed in the right direction.

Of course, it's probably a couple of seasons before those players are ready to make an impact in the league, so the times could be tough in Montreal for a while. Also, a couple of years from now, Carey Price will be 33 and Shea Weber will be 35, so that's another piece to keep in mind about Montreal's two highest-paid players and how they might fit with the young core that the Habs are trying to build around.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

1104537 Websites

TSN.CA / Nylander's absence creates opportunity for Ennis

Kristen Shilton

TORONTO – The Maple Leafs held the first official activities of their 2018-19 NHL season on Thursday, with one prominent piece of the team's forward group missing: William Nylander.

The restricted free-agent winger has been in ongoing contract discussions with the Leafs for months, but the two sides have failed to come to an agreement.

TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger reported on Wednesday that league sources told him Nylander may be asking the Leafs for a deal worth \$8 million per season, a figure Toronto can't pragmatically offer the 22-year-old.

When asked about the situation at the team's media day at MasterCard Centre, general manager Kyle Dubas said there was a continuing dialogue with Nylander's camp but no further updates.

"We have a very specific process that we're going to follow with all of our players over the next number of years," Dubas said. "Our goal is to have sustained success. In order to do that in a salary cap system we have to structure and abide by it and do things right by the players but also do things right by the organization and give the collective group the best chance we can."

For now, that means moving ahead without Nylander. The winger is one of eight restricted free agents around the NHL not attending the early days of camp.

In Nylander's case, he's being shepherded through the process by an agent familiar with high-profile holdouts. Lewis Gross (of Sports Professional Management) also represents Flames' forward Johnny Gaudreau, an RFA in 2016 who missed all of the team's preseason activities before a six-year, \$40.5-million deal was reached on Oct. 10, two days before Calgary's first game of the season.

Boasting the third-highest point total (122) on the Leafs over the last three seasons is an indication of Nylander's worth to the organization. Head coach Mike Babcock alluded to just that when asked how Nylander's regular linemate Auston Matthews will be able to achieve his goal of earning more assists in the coming season – while also leaving the door open for someone else to fill the void.

"Willy's got to show up and he's got to shoot it under the bar, then, how's that?" Babcock joked about increasing Matthews' helpers. "The guys would like you here and I would like you here, but that's part of the process we're going through. In the meantime, we get to find another player. So someone's going to play with Matthews who wasn't playing with Matthews and they're going to get a heck of an opportunity. We might find a player out of that and then we're ahead in the game for that."

Dubas let slip it would be Tyler Ennis, a free-agent signee from last summer, who will step in first to replace Nylander on Matthews' wing. Nylander has missed only one game for the Leafs since the start of the 2016-17 season, skating almost exclusively with Matthews in that stretch.

Facing the prospect of moving forward without Nylander for a spell, his teammates were equal parts disappointed and sympathetic.

"You'd love to have him here, but that's part of the game," Matthews said. "It's part of the business side of things. It's unfortunate. He wants to be here and everyone knows that and he's made that clear."

"He's not going to come here and risk an injury if something goes wrong. You understand that from a player's perspective," added Mitch Marner. "He's a big part of our team. Hopefully the contract [dispute] ends soon and he gets back out here ... [but] you've got to do what's best for yourself and your family. You understand that."

Both Marner and Matthews will be restricted free agents next summer, where they could face the same situation Nylander is in now. The fact Toronto has three elite young stars to lock up within 12 months of each other could be slowing Nylander's negotiations down.

"Things may not move along as fast as people want as we chip away at it," said Dubas. "Patience is always something I've always preached and lived by. We'll continue to work away at it and come to a conclusion here in the coming days and weeks."

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104538 Websites

TSN.CA / Ottawa's roster overhaul plan aggressive but not unprecedented

Travis Yost

The Ottawa Senators haven't been short on drama this off-season, and that trend continued this week. The team released a video outlining the front office's vision for a lengthy rebuild – one that will emphasize a quick transition of the roster and the growth and development of the team's young players.

One of the interesting parts of the rebuilding plan was the focus on gutting the 2017-18 lineup. It's clear the organization is prepared to move on from what was a disastrous season, and that inserting waves of rookies or newly acquired assets into the lineup (and, perhaps just as notably, into the locker room) was the first step in restoring order and building a winning foundation.

The plan, as it was explained, could include 10 rookies or newly acquired players on a 22-man roster. By 2019-20, Ottawa believes that number could grow to 15.

I was particularly struck by the magnitude of this transition. Gutting nearly half of your lineup in one off-season seems a tall order, even for a team that got a head start with last year's trade deadline. But we've seen teams go through pretty rapid transitions before. One of the things I became curious about was whether or not any teams in recent history could offer up a template for not only how to execute such a plan, but also whether or not such a massive overhaul was practical or feasible.

Starting with the 2008-09 season, I went back and looked at every team's roster by year, and then every skater who logged at least 10 games of action with a respective team. I then looked at that same team's roster in the following season to understand how many active players rolled over to the next year.

Naturally, you would expect contending teams to carry higher return rates and weaker/rebuilding teams to carry lower return rates. For what it's worth, the average NHL roster maintains about 70 per cent of their players from one year to the next.

If Ottawa's plan comes to fruition, they'd be around 54.5 per cent (12 of 22) of players returning from last year's roster, as highlighted by the orange bar. It might seem aggressive, but the reality is that this degree of turnover has been seen a number of times before. In fact, around 15 per cent of rosters have that kind of roster flip each year, which indicates that Ottawa's plan, in a vacuum, seems eminently feasible.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

You might scratch your head a bit for an example of a team that transitioned year-over-year more radically than Ottawa's proposal. There aren't many, but a couple in recent history show that this is an achievable objective – though, obviously, a different and more important debate would centre on whether or not this type of gutting would make sense.

Remember the 2007 and 2008 Tampa Bay Lightning? They were effectively two different teams. The below table shows rostered players in 2007-08 who weren't around for 10 games the following season and rostered players in 2008-09 who were 'new additions' from the prior year:

That's an astonishing number of names – Tampa Bay barely returned a third of their roster. Some of the unique players from the 2008-09 season came by way of free agency (like centre Paul Szczechura), others by trade (like winger Gary Roberts), and yet others by the draft (like centre Steven Stamkos – you may have heard of him). This was a total gutting, driven in large part by being the league's worst team in 2007-08, injuries and corresponding off-season activity.

Here's a more recent example – the 2015-16 Toronto Maple Leafs. This team, you may recall, had a full game plan to blow up their roster following the purging of most of the front office and coaching staff. Their transition was similarly incredible:

Not as emphatic as Tampa Bay's turnover but pretty darn close. This Leafs roster returned about 40 per cent of their team year-over-year, which is on the low end of our distribution. But this was still a radical change – certainly more radical than the one Ottawa is proposing.

Long story short, Ottawa's plan doesn't appear impractical by any measure. In fact, you could say that they're following a tried and true plan. There is one caveat, though.

Ottawa doesn't have the same type of roster flexibility as a lot of prior teams who have transitioned quickly. As Dorion and the front office pointed out, the team's core age is much higher – by about four years – then they'd like it to be. With that comes a number of contracts that may be harder to move or a number of key players that you may not want to transition from.

In the first group, you have Bobby Ryan, Marian Gaborik (whose status remains uncertain), Mikkel Boedker, Craig Anderson, and Zack Smith – all guys who are eating substantially into the salary cap and have a significant number of playing years under their respective belts. In the latter category, you have three core players: Erik Karlsson, Mark Stone, and Matt Duchene, all elite talents with contracts that expire at the end of the year. So the Senators, as it stands today, have eight players with futures that are uncertain for very different reasons occupying roster spots.

I should also point out that, unlike the aforementioned Tampa Bay and Toronto, Ottawa has no pick relief on the way. Their first-overall pick in the 2019 draft sits with Colorado. Those types of picks tend to accelerate rebuilds because of the star talent they bring, like Auston Matthews did with the Maple Leafs.

So clearly there's a path forward, and taking Ottawa at their word, they're prepared for a substantial rebuild. Now we will have to wait and see how the front office engineers the plan.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104539 Websites

TSN.CA / Senators reveal more pieces of rebuilding plan

Ian Mendes

Inside a boardroom at Canadian Tire Centre on Wednesday morning, Ottawa Senators general manager Pierre Dorion showed select members of the media his projected lineup for the upcoming season.

Eyes inside the room quickly scanned for the position of the top, right-shot defenceman on the roster. And sure enough, Erik Karlsson's name was right there for everyone to see – penciled in for opening night.

"He's here. Here's part of the team," Dorion said.

When pressed to divulge more information about Karlsson's status – and if there had been any concrete trade or contract negotiations – Dorion politely declined to elaborate.

"When it comes to contract negotiations, we don't believe you can negotiate in the media," Dorion said.

The general manager emphasized that he was willing to start the season with Karlsson in the fold and didn't appear too worried about any potential distractions that may come as a result of his presence.

"We are prepared for every scenario," Dorion said, leaving the door open for multiple scenarios to play out.

For his part, Karlsson declined to speak to the media at the club's annual charity golf tournament on Wednesday, but he is expected to address reporters when training camp opens on Thursday.

Dorion, Senators owner Eugene Melnyk and chief operating officer Nicolas Ruzskowski were part of an editorial meeting with members of Bell Media in Ottawa today – which included TSN 1200.

The meeting – which had been scheduled well in advance – was to allow the club an opportunity to discuss their rebuilding plan with key stakeholders in the marketplace.

The first step in the process was the club releasing a video late Monday night, featuring Melnyk in a conversation with defenceman Mark Borowiecki. That video has been widely panned by critics in the past 48 hours, who dismissed it as an awkward attempt to reveal a rebuilding plan.

Ruzskowski acknowledged that the reception from the video had not been overly warm, but firmly said that was merely a "first step" in trying to change the narrative around the team.

The organization did try and clear up one misconception from Monday's video, involving Melnyk's suggestion that 10 new players would be on the roster for opening night of this season.

Melnyk – they say – was actually comparing this year's opening-night roster to last year's, which featured the likes of Kyle Turris, Mike Hoffman, Derick Brassard, Dion Phaneuf, Nate Thompson, Alex Burrows, Johnny Oduya, Andrew Hammond and others.

The club says that comparing those two rosters side-by-side is how Melnyk came up with the number of 10 fresh faces for the 2018-19 campaign.

In the 90-minute session Dorion repeatedly used the word rebuild and suggested all his decisions would be based on the long-term health and stability of the franchise. They would no longer be in the market for quick-fix, stop-gap solutions that have landed them in trouble in the past.

Dorion alluded to the fact that he did not own his own first-round pick for next season because of the Matt Duchene trade with Colorado. When asked if he would be motivated to finish high in the standings in order to worsen the Avalanche's draft standing, Dorion said that would not be the case.

"That ship has sailed on the first rounder," Dorion said. "Every move we make is geared towards the rebuild."

Dorion said the club's new philosophy in the rebuild will be predicated on a couple of key pillars.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"We will rebuild by trading for younger, faster, stronger players who commit to our team-first philosophy, play with discipline and earn the freedom to take risks that help the team," said Dorion.

As part of the presentation, Dorion showed a slide that indicated the club's average age by the 2020-21 season would be 25 years old. By comparison, last year's opening night roster had an average age of 29.

The general manager alluded to the broken dressing room from last season and said that there is "no question" those issues have been resolved to his satisfaction. He believes that the chemistry inside the locker room will be better this season, which should lead to improved results on the ice.

The general manager also said that analytics will play a role in their decision-making. "We will embrace the power of data and insights to measure our impact."

Dorion — who has been working without an assistant general manager since Randy Lee stepped down last month — said he should be ready to announce Lee's replacement in that role within the next few days.

Dorion also indicated the team needs to play with a defence-first philosophy — something that cost the team dearly last season. He added that head coach Guy Boucher would be changing his tactics on things like the power play and forechecking.

In particular, Dorion said, the club would move away from a passive approach and deploy an "unrelenting" forecheck.

Based on how things are going to shake out to start training camp, it appears as though Jean-Gabriel Pageau has an inside track on the second-line centre position. As it stands now, Pageau is set to be flanked by Mark Stone on the right side and an educated guess would put rookie Brady Tkachuk on the left.

Dorion was gushing about Tkachuk's ability and believes he may be ready for NHL games right away.

At this point, Duchene heads into the season as the club's number-one centre. Ryan Dzingel — who tied for the team lead in goals last season — is pencilled in as the left winger, while the right spot is up for grabs.

Dorion didn't rule out Colin White — who he said Boucher was pushing for all last season — to be the opening-night right winger. Rookie Drake Batherson is also said to have a shot there.

The only line that appears to be fully formed at this point is the club's third unit. At the present time, it features Zack Smith back in his role as a centre, with Bobby Ryan on his left side and newcomer Mikkel Boedker on the right.

Max McCormick and Tom Pyatt will be the fourth-line wingers and there will be an audition for the fourth-line centre job in camp. Logan Brown and Filip Chlapik could fit that need — though more seasoning in Belleville might be in store for them.

The status of Marian Gaborik was addressed, as the winger has been in limbo since suffering an injury late last season. The injury prevented him from being a buyout candidate and, according to Dorion, Gaborik is still recovering from surgery in Los Angeles.

"He still has back issues and has not been cleared medically," Dorion said.

On the back end, the club appears poised to maybe let Thomas Chabot start the season alongside Karlsson.

Cody Ceci is locked into his usual spot of the second pairing right-shot defenceman, with Christian Wolanin and Ben Harpur battling for the job to be his partner.

The third pairing appears set with Mark Borowiecki playing the left side, with Chris Wideman on the right.

The club also announced a number of marketing initiatives, aimed at winning back fans to games at Canadian Tire Centre.

For starters, the club will announce that the price for parking in all general lots for this season will be reduced to \$12. In the past, parking had become a major source of frustration with fans, as the prices in certain lots reached \$30 on a nightly basis. The team was adamant that they listened to their feedback on this issue.

The Senators will also be re-opening the top portion of the 300 level of the west end of the arena — an area that was infamously covered in tarp last year.

The team is unveiling a new social area in that section, which will be geared towards standing and mingling in a fully licensed area. It is slated to be called the Coke Zone and the club is hoping to offer tickets for as little as \$29 in that new area.

The Senators will also wear their red Centennial Classic jerseys for every Thursday night home game this season — that is the jersey they sported for the outdoor game against the Montreal Canadiens last season.

According to Ruskowski, the club is working diligently on a plan for a permanent logo for the 2019-20 season — and he did not dismiss returning to the original 2-D Sens logo or moving forward with the Heritage O version.

Dorion said he's not going to be bothered if media and fans constantly bring up the swirl of negativity that has surrounded the team for the past few months. He said that by laying out the plan in a clear and transparent fashion, he's hoping that everyone can move forward and focus on the future.

"We can't control the outside stuff," said Dorion. "We've past the tipping point, I think. For us, this rebuild started in February."

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018

1104540 Websites

TSN.CA / Humboldt celebrates Broncos in emotional first game since tragedy

Frank Seravalli

HUMBOLDT, Sask. — In any normal circumstance, it would be a hockey parent's dream - to stand near centre ice in a packed barn to watch your son's number be retired for his Junior "A" team.

Except, this night was the worst kind of nightmare, the on-ice ceremony no parent wants to attend.

Somehow, in the middle of his awful dream, Scott Thomas stepped forward. Minutes after a gold banner with his son's name - Evan Thomas - was unfurled to honour him as one of the 16 dead in April 6's horrific bus crash, he approached the microphone.

He said addressing the crowd on behalf of the Humboldt Broncos' parents was one of the easiest decisions he'd ever made.

Thomas choked back his tears because the Broncos' families wanted to say thank you.

His words embodied the spirit of Humboldt and Saskatchewan: Simple. Respectful. Honest.

Thomas corralled every sentiment and gesture expressed over the last five months to highlight that the absolute best of Canada and the hockey world came from the worst accident imaginable.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • September 14, 2018

"If you left a stick out, wrote a song, made a card, or signed a banner at school; if you created clothing; if you sat and prayed, or if you simply sat with us and cried, we say thank you," Thomas said. "If you gave to the GoFundMe, or a scholarship fund, or if you sewed a quilt, sent a picture or a message, cooked a meal, signed a donor card, or were one of the brave souls helping our boys and Dayna at the accident site, we say thank you."

After all, that desire to say thank you was ultimately the reason why the rest of the hockey world was invited to watch.

The Broncos showed they truly are Humboldt Strong

The Humboldt community wanted to share the Broncos' return to the ice with all the people around the globe who showed their support following the tragic bus crash on April 6th, 2018. Frank Seravalli and Ryan Rishaug discuss the emotional night and the strength shown by survivors Brayden Camrud and Derek Patter who played with heavy hearts.

There was no shortage of controversy about whether the Broncos and their families would want such an emotional and painful night to be broadcast across the continent. They decided yes in part because they wanted the opportunity to say thank you - to those who raised money, donated time and talent, cared for the Broncos as billets, first responders and fans.

The Humboldt Broncos tragedy gripped the world. But Humboldt didn't owe the world anything in return. It would have been perfectly natural to want to grieve in peace.

Yet, in the Broncos' two darkest moments - during April's vigil and Wednesday night's return to the ice - Humboldt bared its soul for all.

What we saw was not just Humboldt Strong, but Humboldt Proud.

It centred around a hockey game because, well, that is what we do.

"Life is just a place where we spend time between games," Thomas said, quoting Hockey Hall of Fame coach Fred Shero. "Hockey is where we live."

Hockey gave Humboldt something to cheer for again. No one will remember that the Broncos were nipped, 2-1, by the defending SJHL champion Nipawin Hawks.

Patter happy with Broncos' strong effort in 'tough, emotional' game

Humboldt crash survivor Derek Patter discusses the Broncos' effort in their season opening loss against the Hawks, and talks about the emotions returning to the ice.

Instead, no one will be able to forget the sights and sounds from a night that sent shivers down the spine of Canada.

Elgar Petersen Arena roared as Brayden Camrud and Derek Patter stepped onto the ice to write the next chapter for the Broncos, as they admirably shouldered the weight of the 27 others on the bus that fateful Friday afternoon.

We watched teammates pick up and console survivor Tyler Smith, who dropped to his knees when he was overcome with emotion while standing on the goal line during the national anthem.

We saw netminder Dane Dow's mask shimmer with the names of the 16 fallen, including goaltending brethren Parker Tobin. He allowed just two goals as co-SJHL rookie of the year Jacob Wassermann watched on from his wheelchair, still adjusting to his life-changing injury from the accident.

We saw a young boy and girl circle centre ice with Broncos flags wearing the jerseys of Layne Metchuk and Morgan Gobeil, the two crash victims who remain in hospital with traumatic brain injuries.

We heard the inconsolable crying and wiped away the tears as 29 banners were unveiled in a postgame ceremony unlike any other.

Oystrick: We battled through emotions, Camrud and Patter 'were tremendous'

Broncos head coach Nathan Oystrick discusses the team's 'resilient' season opener and praises the play of Brayden Camrud and Derek Patter in their emotional return to the ice.

The closing rendition of "Amazing Grace" left nary a dry eye in the building. It was a near perfect program to show respect, honour the victims, say thank you and celebrate the players who will carry on the Broncos crest with pride. But it was impossible to put a neat and tidy bow on it all.

For most of the community, this was a chance to move forward, a way to wade into the new normal. But for 16 families, there is no healing those wounds. For them, the first game was a painful night they chose to endure together, to honour their loved ones and respect the future Broncos. It also marked the end of the very public part of the grieving process.

Cameras will roll out of town on Thursday, some to return next for the one-year anniversary of the crash, if at all. Hockey will be played. But Humboldt will never be able to go back to the Humboldt from April 5, when it was just another dot on the prairie landscape.

The truth is, Humboldt has a permanent scar, forever known to most as the place where the unthinkable happened. It's a scar Humboldt didn't want and didn't choose, either.

But it's a scar they were tough enough to wear for all to see, as a beacon amid darkness, because they are Humboldt Strong.

TSN.CA LOADED: 09.14.2018