



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 8, 2019

## THE NEWS & OBSERVER

### It's three games into the season, but here's what the Hurricanes are all about so far

By Chip Alexander

Raleigh

The question was posed to Carolina Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour a few days before the season opener: would he have a good gauge on his team after the first three games?

It would be the Montreal Canadiens in the opener, with goalie Carey Price in net. Then a trip to Washington to face the Caps in their home opener, with all the emotion and baggage from last year's playoff series. Finally, back home against Tampa Bay, the Presidents' Trophy winner last season.

"Where are we at after three games? I think we'll have a pretty good idea," Brind'Amour said last week. "But I think it's going to take some time with this team to figure that out, what we're all about."

The three games have come and gone and the Canes are 3-0, rallying from behind each game, making "resiliency" the operative word. The Canes followed up a shootout win over the Canadiens with overtime victories over the Caps and Lightning, beating Tampa Bay 4-3 on Sunday at PNC Arena on Jacob Slavin's goal.

The 3-0 start is the Canes' best since the 1995-96 season and they're 3-0 when trailing after the second period, matching last season's three wins (3-20-3). What are the Canes all about? Still hard to say. Remember, they started last season 4-0-1, then went 2-7-1 in their next 10. It's early. As Brind'Amour said, the season is an 82-game grind.

But there have been some early snapshots:

Surge of offense from the defense

Dougie Hamilton had the only shootout goal in the opener against the Habs. Jake Gardiner had the overtime goal against the Caps. Then, Slavin on Sunday.

See a trend here? All from defensemen. Not to be overlooked: Slavin also scored against the Caps, Brett Pesce had the first goal Sunday and Hamilton's power-play blast tied the score in the third period in another Canes comeback.

Brind'Amour wanted more offensive help from the blue line this season. He's getting it.

"It's defense first, defend, but when they get a chance they've got the green light," he said.

Said Slavin: "We've got a pretty skilled group of defensemen. All of us can skate and so we're trying to contribute any way we can."

As for the defensive work, Tampa Bay did not have a shot in the second period, two in the third and 13 for the game. According to the NHL, it's the first time a Presidents' Trophy winner has been held without a shot in period in the season after taking the trophy.

Early verdict: Erik Haula is good

There were questions about Erik Haula from the time the Canes obtained the center in the June 27 trade with the Vegas Golden Knights. Was his knee OK? Could he replicate his scoring with the Golden Knights two years ago, when he had a career-high 29 goals?

Haula's answer has been a goal in each of his first three games. He has scored on the power play, done the dirty work in penalty killing and won 57 percent of his faceoffs, going 15-4 against the Lightning. He has put the bad knee injury from last season — and the long rehab it required — behind him.

What does he think of his start? "We've got a three-game winning streak, that's good," Haula said.

Special teams a plus

If Brind'Amour had a boondoggle in his first year as a head coach, it was the power play. It had its moments -- some good, some very bad.

But Brind'Amour might have found a unit that can click: Hamilton, Haula, Teuvo Teravainen, Andrei Svechnikov and Ryan Dzingel. It produced two power-play goals against Tampa Bay, Haula punching in the rebound of a Hamilton shot and then Hamilton — named the game's first star — ripping one from just inside the blue line. Haula also scored against the Caps off a Teravainen pass.

The Canes' other power-play unit has Gardiner, Sebastian Aho, Nino Niederreiter, Jordan Staal and Martin Necas. It hasn't been as threatening. For now, it's the second unit.

"We feel we have two equal groups," Brind'Amour said. "We'll definitely need both groups going, I know, and we'll probably tinker as we go along. But it's nice to see it working right now."

The Canes' penalty killing also has been on point. Against the Caps, the Canes were 6-for-6 on kills. Tampa Bay did get a power-play goal in the first period, but the Canes killed off a Hamilton tripping penalty early in the second with the Lightning leading 3-1 and later two other penalties.

"That might be the difference in the whole game right now," Brind'Amour said. "We're getting a special-teams goal here and there and that gets you back in the game. At the right



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time, special teams can be huge. We kill a penalty at the right time. They had a chance to go up 4-1 and we kill that penalty and it keeps you in the game and obviously getting the power-play goals gets you right back in the game.”

Reimer impressive in first start

Granted, one game is the smallest of sample sizes but Brind'Amour liked what he saw from goalie James Reimer in his first start.

Being sent out against the Caps on Saturday was a thankless task. The Caps had won two road games to start the season and wanted nothing more than to rip the Canes in their first home game at Capital One Arena.

A year ago, Washington raised its Stanley Cup championship banner and then blasted the Boston Bruins 7-0 in the home opener. The Caps probably had something like that in mind for Saturday after the disappointment of losing the first-round playoff series to the Canes last spring, blowing a lead in Game 7 and losing in double overtime.

But Reimer was up to the challenge. He gave up a couple of goals but made some high-quality saves among his 32 stops

-- ask the Caps' Alex Ovechkin -- to keep the Canes in the game, then picked up his 145th career victory.

The Canes had the right goaltending fit last season with Petr Mrazek and Curtis McElhinney. Will it be the same with Mrazek and Reimer?

Is Sebastian Aho stressing?

It's a different kind of season for Sebastian Aho. His first three in the NHL have been about establishing himself, first as a rookie, then as a center and as a player worthy of being selected an NHL All-Star.

Then came the offer sheet from Montreal on July 1. When the Canes matched it, Aho had a contract that would pay him \$21 million in bonus money the first 12 months. His total salary for the 2019-20 season, according to CapFriendly.com, is \$12 million -- almost twice that of any other player on the Canes' roster -- although his cap hit is \$8.454 million.

Aho has 13 shots in the first three games, so he's getting his offensive looks, but does not have a point. Is he stressing a bit? Too soon to say, perhaps, but it bears watching.

## THE ATHLETIC

### DGB weekend power rankings: It's way too early but we're doing this anyway

By Sean McIndoe

Welcome back to the Weekend Power Rankings. I hope you all had a great summer and came back well-rested and ready to debate some NHL rankings. Grab a seat and get comfortable, and we'll get started by ... OK, I see a lot of hands waving out there. Is there a question you'd like to ask?

Why yes, it is way too early for this. Thanks for pointing that out.

It's admittedly kind of silly to be doing power rankings when the season is less than a week old and some teams have only played one game. That's part of the fun. The first few days of the season are chaos, and there are always plenty of results that, in hindsight, mean absolutely nothing. Last year, the Bruins lost their first game 7-0, then came within a win of the Stanley Cup. The year before that, the Blackhawks flexed on everyone by crushing the defending champs 10-1, then missed the playoffs for the first time in a decade while finishing dead last in their division. October likes to lie to us.

In fact, it can be tempting to say that we should just ignore all of it. But that's not quite right, because even in the very earliest days of a season, certain truths are starting to emerge. For example, the first two weeks of last year suggested that the Knights were bad and the Ducks were good, which was wrong. But it also told us that the Panthers and Coyotes could be in trouble and that the Hurricanes might finally be for real. There's always a little bit of signal buried in all the noise. We just have to find it.

But first, an important reminder about what exactly these rankings are trying to do. Unlike most power rankings you might read, the idea here is not to capture a snapshot of who's playing well right now. Instead, we're looking at the big picture and trying to predict who's ultimately going to win the Stanley Cup, and which teams will finish in the running for dead last. If your favorite team beat the Lightning last week, that's great, but it doesn't mean they automatically move past them in the rankings. The question here isn't "Who had the best week?" or even "Who would be the favorite if the playoffs started right now?" We're thinking long term.

For our purposes this week, that long-term view means a few things. We won't see the sort of wild swings you might see from other rankings, where a surprise hot start can vault a team straight to the top of the list. This week's rankings will look an awful lot like the preseason projections since a few games shouldn't change our views of the top (and bottom) teams all that much.

While you won't see any overreactions, that doesn't mean no reactions at all, because even with only a few games to work with, we already know a little bit more about the 2019-20 season than we did a week ago. Let's get started on trying to figure this out.

Road to the Cup

The five teams that look like they're headed towards a summer of keg stands and fountain pool parties.



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Goal of the week honors goes to Blake Coleman, who turned a rough night into a spot on the highlight reels.

That also gives us a chance to talk about the Jets, who roared back to win that game. It always feels a little bit silly to try to spin October games as must-wins or crucial moments or whatever, but with the Jets losing again last night and narrowly avoiding a winless start that we'd all overreact to, Friday's turnaround did feel a bit like the sort of thing we look back on months later as being important.

5. Toronto Maple Leafs (2-0-1, +5 true goals differential\*) – Regular readers will know that last year's rankings fought a season-long battle over the Atlantic Division heavyweights and whether it made sense to include three teams from the same division as elite Cup contenders when only two could even make the second round. You may be wondering if I managed to solve that problem over the offseason. The answer: No, I did not. Sorry. I had all summer to think of it.

Anyway, through three games the Leafs have looked a lot like what we all expected: A ridiculously talented offensive force that can blow opponents out of the water with skill but will also occasionally cost themselves points by forgetting how to play defense. Saturday's third-period collapse against the Canadiens was maybe somewhat understandable – the old tired team traveling to play a rested one trap – but it was still comical. Let's all point and laugh at Kasperii Kapanen's brain cramp:

4. St. Louis Blues (1-0-1, even) – Here's a fun fact: The 2019 champs never appeared in the top five of last year's rankings, but did show up in the bottom five on a few occasions. OK, maybe that's less "fun" and more "embarrassing."

Or is it? After all, as we've all heard a hundred times by now, the Blues were in dead last in January. And even after their excellent second half, they were hardly considered sure-thing contenders; heading into the playoffs, the oddsmakers had them tied with two other teams for the sixth-best Cup chances, so in that sense, they weren't a top-five team at any point during the season. The system worked!

Did that sound convincing? I'm not sure it did. Anyways, the Blues are the defending champs, so I'll work them into the top five this week despite needing a third-period comeback against Dallas to avoid a winless start.

3. Boston Bruins (2-0-0, +2) – While other teams around the league are doing that annual October thing where the games are 8-5 and we wonder if we can proclaim the Dead Puck era over before everything goes back to normal the rest of the way, the Bruins are already in playoff mode with a pair of close, low-scoring wins. An early western road trip isn't the ideal way to start a season, but last year's Eastern Conference champs don't seem concerned.

2. Vegas Golden Knights (2-0-0, +7) – We sometimes talk about teams having a game circled on the schedule. Given how last year ended, the Knights probably had a season-opening home-and-home with the Sharks circled, highlighted, underlined and then soaked in lighter fluid and set on fire. This was a chance for some payback. And they got it, with a pair of easy wins.

That only gets you so far – I'm pretty sure the Sharks will still take a win in Game 7 of the playoffs over Games 1 and 2 of a regular season. But it's a good start for a Vegas team that already looks pretty scary on paper. They host the Bruins tomorrow in an early-season showdown that should be all sorts of fun.

By the way, does anyone know the answer to this? (Excluding goalies of course, for you loophole types.)

1. Tampa Bay Lightning (1-1-1, +1) – The Lightning could have started with three embarrassing blowout losses and I still would have had them ranked in the top spot. In my book, they're that far ahead of the pack. They certainly didn't overwhelm anyone in Week 1 and the Panthers and Hurricanes can feel good about beating the defending Presidents' Trophy winners. But like I said in the intro, these rankings are looking long term and we haven't seen anything yet that would suggest the Lightning aren't still the top dogs. After all, who's going to start casting judgment on a powerhouse after a few bad games?

(Checks earpiece.) Huh, I'm being told their own captain is doing that.

That's maybe not a great sign. You're on the clock for next week, Tampa.

\*Goals differential without counting shootout decisions like the NHL does for some reason.

Not ranked: San Jose Sharks – Whoo boy. That was ugly.

You could kind of see the Vegas sweep coming; as we said up above, it meant so much more to the Knights than it did to the Sharks. Still, you'd like to grab a point or two. Or at least hang in there and keep it close. Or maybe respond with a big effort against the Ducks. Or maybe at least look like last year's glaring weak spot won't be an issue yet again.

Nope. That leaves the Sharks alongside the Stars as the only 0-3-0 teams in the league, which isn't where you want to start when you're a Cup contender whose window is closing. It doesn't get much easier this week either, with trips to Nashville and Chicago before hosting the Flames. There's still plenty of time to get right, and sure enough, we're already hearing about how nobody should panic because of what the Blues did last year. We'll probably hear that about every team by some point this season. We just didn't think it would be opening weekend for the Sharks.

As for teams who had an actual shot at the top five, you could make an argument for the Capitals and Avalanche. The Hurricanes probably have the strongest case, with a 3-0-0 start that includes last night's win over the Lightning. It's weird to call an OT win "dominant," but Carolina was awfully close.

But the team that actually finished sixth in the balloting? You guessed it: Just like every other week, it's whichever team you happen to cheer for. Congratulations, and keep up the good work.

The bottom five

The five teams that are headed towards the best lottery odds and lots of Alexis Lafreniere junior highlight reels.



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There isn't much worse than a star player getting hurt in Week 1. We had a couple of scares on Saturday, with both Evgeni Malkin and Taylor Hall exiting games. Hall was shaken up on a collision with Jake McCabe but eventually returned to finish the game. Malkin went into the boards awkwardly after getting his feet tangled with teammate Kris Letang and limped off. He didn't return, and we didn't get an update yesterday; the Pens don't play again until tomorrow night.

5. Minnesota Wild (0-2-0, -5) – They lost their first two games, which somewhat amazingly is the first time that's happened since their very first season. They were two tough games, with visits to Colorado and Nashville. But for a team that's low on firepower and figures to rely on defense and goaltending to hang in the Central mix, seeing seven shots go by Devan Dubnyk (plus two more into empty nets) can't be a good sign.

4. Columbus Blue Jackets (0-2-0, -8) – Well that went just about as bad as it possibly could have.

We all know the story in Columbus heading into the season, as the Blue Jackets try to recover from an offseason exodus of their top stars. They've tried to turn that into a rallying cry for those left behind, including a pretty cool pump-up video that doesn't pull any punches. But the first week's schedule served up a pair of tough games against the Leafs and Penguins on back-to-back nights, which was either an opportunity to make an immediate statement or a risk of early-season disaster. We got the latter.

It's only two games, so all the standard overreaction caveats apply. But with both goaltenders looking shaky, struggling special teams and a lack of the sort of timely scoring that a highly paid winger can provide, it hasn't been a great start. Week 2's schedule looks better on paper with the Sabres and Ducks in town, although both of these teams have started strong. There's a chance here to get right back on track. It could also go very badly, which could make for a tough hole to climb out of. Their coach is a patient, low-key sort of guy, right?

3. Detroit Red Wings (2-0-0, +3) – Will the Red Wings finish dead last? I don't think so, which is why they're slotted in here instead of a few spots down. But it's certainly not an implausible scenario, as the Steve Yzerman rebuild writes its first chapter, and some smart people already have them lightly penciled in for dead last. Others figure the Senators are still the favorite. Either way, it was a nice start by the Red Wings over the weekend, with impressive wins over the Predators and Stars and a monster night from Anthony Mantha.

2. Los Angeles Kings (0-1-0, -1) – The trio of the Kings, Wings and Senators combined to hold down the No. 1 spot in the bottom five for all but two weeks last year. I wouldn't be surprised to see them do it again, although I'm betting that it's Detroit and Ottawa who do most of the heavy lifting as the Kings start the long slog back to respectability in the Pacific. Saturday's fun but sloppy loss in Edmonton wasn't a great start.

1. Ottawa Senators (0-2-0, -5) – The Senators looked reasonably frisky against the Leafs, and somewhat less so against the Rangers. It's shaping up as another long season in terms of wins and losses, and a second-straight dead last finish wouldn't surprise anyone. But the "who's getting traded" cloud won't hang over them quite as much as last year and most of the kids have arrived. Look, we said most.

In other words, there shouldn't be as much negativity around the Senators as there was last year. Well, except when they play the Rangers and the New York papers decide to weigh in with absolute hatchet jobs. That wasn't even the low point of the weekend, as Senator fans had their hopes for new ownership cruelly raised by an intriguing string of emojis, only to be quickly crushed.

Not a bad swing of ups and downs for a season that's five days old. Buckle up, Sens fans, you live in interesting times.

Not ranked: Buffalo Sabres – Well well well, look who's not destroying their season by tripping over their laces and face-planting right out of the starting gate?

Yet. It's only two games. And if any fan base knows not to overreact to a winning streak, it's the Sabres – we all remember last year's ten-game odyssey that ultimately didn't mean a thing. There's still lots of time for it to all go bad.

But it hasn't yet, and in Buffalo, that's already progress. Ever since the Great McDavid Tank-Off of 2015, the first few weeks of the season haven't been kind to the Sabres. They started the 2015-16 season 2-6-0, then followed that with a 1-3-2 start in 2016-17. Two years ago, they went into the season with optimism and immediately lost their first five and seven of their first eight, and it was all over before it had even started. Last year was 3-4-0, which was better but still left them with ground to make up. You had to go back to 2013 just to find a season that started with two wins.

Until this year. The Sabres are 2-0-0, and they've done it with a pair of impressive showings. They went into Pittsburgh to beat the Penguins on opening night and then pumped the Devils on Saturday. Those looked like winnable games, sure, but most games are winnable in today's NHL. You still have to win them. The Sabres usually don't.

That doesn't mean that Buffalo is suddenly a contender. But for once they're not looking up at the playoff race just a few games into the season. That's a nice change and it's the sort of thing that could translate into some nice momentum for a team that's young enough to believe in that sort of thing. At the very least, it's enough to keep them out of their usual bottom five spot for the season's first week.

Other possibly bad teams that got off to 2-0-0 starts include the Ducks and the Oilers, which might tell us something about the impact of new coaches. We'll keep both of them out of the bottom five too, if only because there's enough competition for those spots that we can afford some kindness for the usual suspects. But we tend to see a fair bit of bottom-five churn in the early going, so nobody should get too comfortable. We've got a long way to go, and it's still way too early.





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## Preview: Hurricanes at Panthers

Canes have come from behind to win three straight in extra time

by Michael Smith

SUNRISE, Fla. - The Carolina Hurricanes aim to extend their season-opening win streak to four games when they visit the Florida Panthers.

The Hurricanes have won each of their first three games in extra time, with two overtime wins and one shootout victory.

"I think it just shows that the guys believe in each other already, which is great, and I think they understand how to play to be successful. Our game, they trust it," head coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "Still some things to shore up, but I like the effort. You can't fault that. It's been right there from the get-go."

### Comeback Kids

Not only have the Canes won three straight games in overtime or shootout to begin the season, but they've also come from behind in the third period in each of those victories.

Just 3-20-3 a season ago when trailing after two periods, the Canes are already 3-0-0 when entering the third period in a deficit this season.

"We've got a resilient group in here. We've got to learn how to not put ourselves in those holes," said Jacob Slavin, who was the overtime hero against Tampa Bay on Sunday. "It's definitely a confidence builder for the group. Hopefully we can continue on that path."

The Canes are the 13th team in NHL history to overcome a deficit to win each of their first three games, and they've started 3-0-0 for just the second time in franchise history (1995-96).

"Our team doesn't quit," said Dougie Hamilton, who is tied for the team lead in points with four (1g, 3a). "We just keep going."

### Roddy Nears 50

Brind'Amour enters Tuesday's game in Florida with a 49-29-7 record through 85 games as head coach of the Hurricanes. He was the fastest coach in franchise history to achieve 20, 30 and 40 wins, and he's a victory away from becoming the fastest to reach the 50-win mark; Peter Laviolette recorded 50 wins in 96 games.

Haula, Haula Bill, Y'All

A knee injury ended Erik Haula's 2018-19 season in early November, so it had been nearly 11 months since he last played a regular-season game.

The Finnish forward is making up for lost time, having scored three goals in his first three games with the Canes. With his power-play goal against Tampa Bay on Sunday, Haula became the sixth player in franchise history to score a goal in each of the team's first three regular-season games, and of those six players, he's the first to do so in his first season.

"He works hard," Brind'Amour said of Haula after Opening Night. "It's nice to see a newcomer contribute right away. I think that's going to help him feel good about where his game is."

### The Opposition

The Panthers opened the season with a home-and-home set against the Tampa Bay Lightning and went 1-1 in those two games. The Lightning took the first game at home, while the Panthers, led by Mike Hoffman's hat trick, responded two nights later with a 4-3 win in their home opener.

### WORTH A CLICK

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## Slavin adapting to fatherhood, increased responsibility with Hurricanes

Defenseman balancing growing family, role as alternate captain for undefeated Carolina

by Tom Gulitti

RALEIGH, N.C. -- Jacob Slavin's teammates say fatherhood hasn't changed the Carolina Hurricanes defenseman.

Nor did the spotlight thrust upon him during Carolina's surprising run to the Eastern Conference Final last season.

Maybe that's because the 25-year-old's maturity, down-to-earth personality and strong faith suited him well for both before his adopted daughter Emersyn arrived so dramatically, and coincidentally, at the start of his first foray into the Stanley Cup Playoffs last season.

The difficult part for Slavin, other than getting a little less sleep, has been going back to work with the Hurricanes, who are 3-0-0 heading into their game against the Florida Panthers at BB&T Center on Tuesday (7 p.m. ET; FS-F, FS-CR, NHL.TV), following an offseason of joyful parenting time with wife, Kylie, and 5-month-old Emersyn.

"I got to be there all summer and now it's a little bittersweet getting back into the season," said Slavin, who has scored two goals in three games, including the game-winner in overtime against the Tampa Bay Lightning on Sunday. "But she's starting to sleep better, so it will be better for the wife when I do have to leave that she's actually getting some sleep, too. So I won't feel as guilty leaving."

Still, Slavin's growing family, which includes Goldendoodles Simba and Lola, provides an important balance to his professional life.

"It definitely continues to put things in perspective for me that hockey isn't the end-all be-all," Slavin said. "I knew that's how it was beforehand, but more so now with a family at home."

Someday, Jacob and Kylie will share with Emersyn the exciting story of her birth. The Slavins had been on the adoption waiting list for about a year when Emersyn was born on April 12, the day after Slavin and the Hurricanes played Game 1 of the Eastern Conference First Round against the Washington Capitals at Capital One Arena in Washington.

That was Carolina's first postseason game since 2009, and the first of Slavin's NHL career in his fourth season. Slavin

played 25:00 in a 4-2 loss in Game 1, but he had no time to dwell on it.

With an assist from Hurricanes center Jordan Staal, who loaned him some hours he owned on a private jet, Slavin flew back to North Carolina and was at the hospital the following day when Emersyn was born. Slavin also took Carolina owner Tom Dundon up on his offer to use his private jet during the playoffs to help him spend more time with Emersyn without missing any games.

"I did a lot of traveling back and forth in between Washington and where she was born: in DC, where she was born, back to DC, back to home," Slavin said. "She was born during an exciting time. I remember my wife saying, 'Out of all the years the Canes make it back to the playoffs, it has to be this year right when our daughter is being born.'"

Perhaps it was the newly-found "dad strength" Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour joked at the time, but Slavin had a breakout series offensively against the Capitals. He had nine assists, including three in a 4-3 double-overtime win in Game 7 that put the Hurricanes in the second round and eliminated the defending Stanley Cup champions.

"Super impressive, I think," defense partner Dougie Hamilton said. "Traveling wherever he was, sleeping in the hospital, I'm not sure exactly everything he went through. We talked about it a lot, but to be able to have that going on and the playoffs at the same time and playing that well is pretty impressive."

After the Hurricanes swept the New York Islanders in four games in the second round, with Slavin playing a key role in limiting them to two even-strength goals in the series while getting two more assists, his days flying under the radar as one of the better defensemen in the NHL were suddenly over.

Those in Carolina already knew how good Slavin is, which is why the Hurricanes signed him to a seven-year contract extension July 12, 2017 (average annual value of \$5.3 million). But playing in the Eastern Conference Final, where the Hurricanes were swept by the Boston Bruins, brought a level of national attention Slavin hadn't experienced before.

"It was a little crazy," Slavin said. "Obviously, that doesn't come without the team success that we were having. So it was fun. I think everyone knows where I stand now, but I'm definitely going to give all credit to God for him giving me the opportunity and the ability to play this game. But it was fine."



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It doesn't change what I'm going to go out there and try to do every night."

The Hurricanes were happy to see Slavin receive recognition for a change.

"I've known how good he is since before Carolina, just growing up playing against him, so it's no surprise to me," Hurricanes defenseman Brett Pesce said. "But I am happy he got the credit he definitely deserves."

Slavin is taking on a bigger role with the Hurricanes this season as one of their alternate captains. With forward Justin Williams, Carolina's captain last season, taking some time away to decide if he wants to continue playing, and Justin Faulk, an alternate captain, traded to the St. Louis Blues, other players will have to step up to fill the leadership void.

Brind'Amour believes Slavin is ready for that responsibility.

"He's a leader on the ice, obviously he logs a ton of minutes, and how he is off the ice, he's a class act," Brind'Amour said. "He's the one guy who lives here year-round. He's part of the community. He's entrenched. So that matters, too. For us it does."

Although not the most outspoken player, Slavin said he welcomes the opportunity to lead in his own way.

"Whether that's with a letter or without a letter, we've got a good group of guys in there and everyone kind of plays their own role in the leadership," he said.

Like with becoming a father, there will be added responsibility. But Slavin seems to be adapting to that quickly.

After Emersyn's adoption became official Aug. 5, he announced it proudly on his Instagram account.

"He's definitely a proud dad," Pesce said. "He's such a good kid. He's so genuine with everybody."

Although careful with their privacy, Slavin said he and Kylie believe it's important to be advocates for adoption. They're just getting started with Emersyn, but they intend to have a big family and another adoption sounds likely.

"I think if it was up to (Kylie), we'll adopt all of our children," Slavin said. "I may want to try biologically to have one, but we'll see how that works out and when we're ready to have our next kid we'll see what the Lord puts on our heart. But it was such a beautiful process and now the relationship we have with the birth mother, it's really something special."

"There's so many children out there that need homes. That's one of the biggest things for my wife. It's a pretty, I don't want to say unique experience, but it really is. It's just a whole different world once you get into the adoption world and the child that God placed in our lives is truly something special."



## Carolina visits Florida following overtime victory

By The Associated Press today

Carolina Hurricanes (3-0-0, first in the Metropolitan Division) vs. Florida Panthers (1-1-0, seventh in the Atlantic Division)

Sunrise, Florida; Tuesday, 7 p.m. EDT

**BOTTOM LINE:** Carolina visits Florida after the Hurricanes beat Tampa Bay 4-3 in overtime.

Florida finished 36-32-14 overall and 23-19-10 in Eastern Conference play during the 2018-19 season. The Panthers scored 264 total goals last season, 72 on power plays and three shorthanded.

Carolina finished 27-21-4 in Eastern Conference action and 22-16-3 on the road during the 2018-19 season. The Hurricanes scored 243 total goals last season, 44 on power plays and eight shorthanded.

The matchup Tuesday is the first meeting of the season between the two teams.

Panthers Injuries: None listed.

Hurricanes Injuries: None listed.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 8, 2019



## Brind'Amour leaning on defence for Hurricanes' early season success

Jacob Slavin scored in overtime as the Carolina Hurricanes rallied to stun the Tampa Bay Lightning 4-3.

Emily Sadler

Between last season's thrilling playoff run and this year's 3-0 start, it's a fun time to be a Carolina Hurricanes fan — and not just because the victory celebrations are back.

But 2019-20 is also proving to be a little stressful so far, considering *how* they've won.

After settling their home opener against the Montreal Canadiens in a shootout, the Hurricanes have won back-to-back matchups in overtime against the Washington Capitals on Saturday and the Tampa Bay Lightning on Sunday. All three wins have seen the Hurricanes come from behind, shutting out opponents in the third period.

Call them a bunch of jerks, call them the Cardiac Canes — however you address the Hurricanes — just make sure you're talking about their defence.

We've measured Carolina's rebuild by the fast, young forwards they've developed, but it's their solid defence that took them on a surprise playoff run last spring and has them undefeated so far this season.

Sunday's victory over Tampa Bay, the most impressive of the bunch so far, saw Carolina limit the Lightning to just 13 shots on goal and held them to zero shots in the second period before rallying back to force overtime.

"Tampa's one of those teams that, they can over-pass it at times and they had some opportunities," Hurricanes head

coach Rod Brind'Amour said during an appearance on *Hockey Central* on Monday.

"I think I heard (Lightning head coach Jon Cooper) talk it about it after the game a little bit, where they could've shot some pucks and they look for those pretty plays and when it's on they can light you up. And fortunately for us that period they overpassed a couple and it enabled us to kind of get our game going."

The young core of Jacob Slavin, Brett Pesce and Dougie Hamilton shone under the playoff spotlight and are off to a hot start this fall, while the void left by Justin Faulk's departure is lessened by the presence of Jake Gardiner, Joel Edmundson and youngster Haydn Fleury.

"If we're going to be successful, those guys have to play like they have so far," Brind'Amour said. "I mean, it's obviously three games — not a very big sample size — but last year as well, those guys were the ones that really pushed us forward."

That small sample size includes two game-winners from two different defenders. Gardiner's first Hurricanes goal won them the game in overtime against the Capitals while it was Slavin — the club's best-kept blue line secret no more — who tallied the winner against Tampa.

"If they're playing like that, we have a chance every night to beat anybody," Brind'Amour said. "So we rely on them, they're a big part of our team, and obviously they've been good so far."

Next up, the Florida Panthers on Tuesday night. Prepare for overtime.





# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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**SB NATION**  
**CANES COUNTRY**

## Carolina Hurricanes vs. Florida Panthers: Preview and Storm Advisory

The Hurricanes take on the Florida Panthers tonight as they try to stay perfect on the season.

By Andrew Ahr

Carolina Hurricanes at Florida Panthers

Tuesday, October 8, 2019 - 7:00 PM ET

PNC Arena - Raleigh, NC

Watch: Fox Sports Carolinas

Listen: 99.9 The Fan

The Canes travel to Sunrise, Florida tonight as they take on their second Florida opponent of the season. Carolina is looking to retain first place in the Eastern Conference tonight as they search for their fourth straight win, which would be the second time in franchise history that they've accomplished that feat to start the season.

### Vital Statistics

| Category              | Hurricanes | Panthers    |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|
| Record                | 3-0-0      | 1-1-0       |
| Goals/Game            | 3.33       | 3.00        |
| Goals Against/Game    | 2.67       | 4.00        |
| Shots/Game            | 38.3       | 32.5        |
| Faceoff %             | 51.0%      | 41.9%       |
| Power Play % (Rank)   | 33.3% (T5) | 28.6% (T8)  |
| Penalty Kill % (Rank) | 84.6% (12) | 75.0% (T17) |
| ES Corsi For %        | 57.59%     | 50.35%      |
| ES PDO                | 95.6%      | 97.7%       |
| PIM/Game              | 9:19       | 5:00        |

### Goaltender #1

| Category | Petr Mrazek | Sergei Bobrovsky |
|----------|-------------|------------------|
| Record   | 2-0         | 1-1-0            |
| Save %   | .878        | .891             |
| GAA      | 2.84        | 3.54             |

### Goaltender #2

| Category | James Reimer | Sam Montembeault |
|----------|--------------|------------------|
| Record   | 1-0-0        | N/A              |
| Save %   | .941         | N/A              |
| GAA      | 1.87         | N/A              |

### Game Notes

The Hurricanes and Panthers are meeting for the first of three matchups this season. The Panthers will be in Raleigh twice in November and December.

The Hurricanes swept Florida last season with a 3-0-0 record in the series. They are an impressive 7-1-1 in their last nine games against the Panthers.

Dougie Hamilton has posted 11 points (5g, 6a) in 18 career games against the Panthers.

The Hurricanes acquired James Reimer from the Panthers this summer in exchange for Scott Darling and a sixth round pick.

Rod Brind'Amour comes into tonight's game with a head coaching record of 49-29-7. Brind'Amour has already become the fastest Hurricanes coach to reach 20, 30, and 40 wins. Tonight he looks to become the fastest in team history to reach 50 wins as well.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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## Storm Advisory

There are high expectations for new Checkers Head Coach Ryan Warsofsky. [WSOC (video)]

Former Hurricanes goaltender Michael Leighton is hanging up the skates after nearly two decades in the league. [The Athletic]

Newly appointed Alternate Captain Jaccob Slavin is adapting to fatherhood and new responsibility in Carolina. [NHL]

The five biggest surprises of the NHL's opening week. [NBC]

## Behind Enemy Lines: Previewing the Panthers, Islanders, and Blue Jackets

A trip to Florida starts off the week before a weekend of divisional matchups at PNC.

By Andy House

### Florida Panthers

Tuesday, 7:00 p.m. at BB&T Center

The Carolina Hurricanes will look to keep their perfect start alive as they travel to Sunrise, Florida to take on the Florida Panthers on Tuesday. The new-look Panthers now feature a familiar face in net, as their main offseason move involved adding former Vezina winner Sergei Bobrovsky. While the Panthers look to improve their defensive work both in front of the crease and within it, the main driver for this team remains their stellar top line featuring Aleksander Barkov, Jonathan Huberdeau, and Evgenii Dadonov. Along with second-line snipers in Mike Hoffman and Vincent Trocheck, the Panthers possess a high-octane attack that together forms one of the more dangerous power play units in the NHL.

Carolina was consistently hurt when working against the man advantage a season ago versus Florida, specifically yielding two tallies in the last matchup in February. If the Canes are to control the action against the Panthers, they will need to remain at five-on-five to take advantage of their depth and style of play.

The Panthers are off to a reasonable start at 1-1, as they have completed an unusual back-to-back against their in-state rival Tampa Bay Lightning. With Bobrovsky familiar to the Canes from his days in the division with Columbus, expect Carolina to throw as many pucks as they can to the net and to try and create as much traffic as possible to take the eyes away from the big Russian netminder.

### New York Islanders

Friday, 7:30 p.m. at PNC Arena

Just months after exiting the 2019 Stanley Cup Playoffs with a whimper, at the hands of a sweep from the Hurricanes, the New York Islanders return to PNC Arena seeking a measure of revenge. Last season, the Islanders completed a transformation under head coach Barry Trotz to transform from the worst defensive team in the NHL to the best team statistically. That style of play appears to have carried over to this season as the Islanders are 1-1 on the season, but have yielded only three total goals in their two contests thus far.

The biggest change for the Islanders is in net where Vezina Trophy finalist Robin Lehner has exited for Chicago, with the void being filled by Semyon Varlamov. Most observers

believe that the change in net will have little effect on the overall performance from the Isles, as the lion's share of credit for their turnaround has been directed towards the system of play rather than the ability of the goalies in net. It is certainly true that Trotz has created a team in his image as the Isles look to grind each and every shift and expect to play low-scoring, physical hockey.

The Islanders offense will continue to be led by Mathew Barzal, the sniping speedster, but in the first two contests they have been led by Anthony Beauvillier who has notched three points (one goal, two assists) to get his season off to a nice start. Regardless of their proclivity for a phone booth battle, expect the Isles to come into Raleigh motivated and eager to prove a point to the Canes that they are ready for another spring matchup if that ends up being in the cards.

### Columbus Blue Jackets

Saturday, 7:00 p.m. at PNC Arena

The offseason was a tumultuous one for the Columbus Blue Jackets, as the bill came due for the gamble made in order to qualify for the playoffs in the Spring. The exodus of Sergei Bobrovsky, Matt Duchene, Ryan Dzingel, and Artemi Panarin were not matched by the additions of players such as Gustav Nyquist and Marko Dano.

The load that was carried in net by Bobrovsky now resides with Joonas Korpisalo after he has spent the last three full seasons as the clear backup to Bobrovsky. Another team that plays a very structured, defensive system under head coach John Tortorella, the Blue Jackets do still feature a very formidable blue line with Seth Jones, David Savard, and Zach Werenski helping to keep pucks and players from the front of the Columbus net.

In order to beat the Blue Jackets, forcing that blue line to have to consistently work pucks out from behind their net is required. If the Canes hope to be successful on what will be the back end of a back-to-back, they will need to force the Columbus attack to work 200 feet with the puck in order to create chances. transition turnovers and neutral zone work is the best way to create chances against the Blue Jackets.

While many are expecting a significant drop off from the Blue Jackets this season, there is still enough talent remaining on the roster to remain competitive, especially against intra-division foes who they are very familiar with. Expect another hard-fought, grinding game that should be the hallmark of several of the divisional matchups throughout the season.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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## About Last Night: Wash, Rinse, Repeat

Jacob Slavin's overtime winner completes another comeback as the Canes bottle up the Lightning.

By Alec\_Sawyer

For the second time ever, the Carolina Hurricanes have started a season 3-0-0. It's taken extra hockey in all three affairs, but the Canes find themselves in the NHL lead with six points following the season's first weekend.

Carolina once again had to come from behind to beat the Lightning Sunday, as a 3-1 first-period deficit was erased and became a 4-3 overtime win thanks to the game ender from Jacob Slavin. That's apparently the new normal for this Canes team though, one that seems to really enjoy that overtime rush. Whatever, we'll take as much hockey as we can get.

### Shoot Your Shot

The takeaway from Sunday's win that jumps off the page at you is the shot disparity, as the Hurricanes out-shot the Lightning by a staggering 44-13 margin. Tampa Bay fired on goal 11 times in the first period, before hanging a zero in the shot column for period two, the first time since 2004 that the Hurricanes have held an opponent without a shot in an entire period. The Lightning bounced back in the third, though, challenging Petr Mrazek in net a whopping two times.

On the other side of the ice, the Hurricanes peppered former teammate Curtis McElhinney with shots all night. McElhinney was mostly great in his return to PNC Arena, but the Canes still managed to get four goals past him thanks to some great energy on the offensive end.

Carolina looked dangerous in its attack all night, and if not for some highlight-reel saves from McElhinney, really could have put even more than four away. The Hurricanes have been known to tally up empty shots over the past couple of years, but on Sunday they found some quality with the quantity.

However, any successful hockey team is still going to benefit from some friendly bounces, and that's exactly what happened on the Canes first tally. Brett Pesce fired from the point and got his first goal of the season off a defenseman's skate, showing the good that can come from keeping the energy up and getting shots on the net.

The Canes did also show some more clinical finishes, as Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton both tallied on great fundamental hockey plays to get Carolina back into it. Jacob Slavin ended the game with a beautiful shot off an even better pass from Jordan Staal.

The Hurricanes played with the energy and fervor of a team that didn't look like it was coming off of a back-to-back, and it eventually wore the Lightning down.

### A Competent Power Play

Carolina seems to have been plagued by an under-performing power-play unit for as long as most Canes fans can remember, but so far this season that appears to be changing. Sunday night the Hurricanes went 2 for 5 on the

power play, with Haula and Hamilton tallying to get the Canes back into the game.

With the two power-play goals, the Hurricanes are now 4 for 12 on the year, good for a 33 percent conversion rate. Obviously, the Canes won't keep that pace up, but so far, Carolina has looked much more dangerous with a man advantage than it has in years past.

You have to go back to the 2014-15 season to find a year where the Hurricanes were in the top half of the league in power-play percentage, and even that year they finished in 15th with a conversion of 18.75 percent. Since then, the Canes' best league ranking came last year, when they finished 20th.

If Carolina can continue to play well on the power play, it will make the Hurricanes all that more dangerous as the season moves along. The unit of Hamilton, Andrei Svechnikov, Haula, Teuvo Teravainen and Ryan Dzingel was on the ice for both power-play goals, starting with this textbook net-front work from Haula.

That unit struck again to tie the game up, as Hamilton fired one from long range that whistled past McElhinney.

### The Cardiac Canes

Listen, this whole come-from-behind to win in overtime thing has been fun for Canes fans, but it may not be the most sustainable thing in the world. The Hurricanes once again entered the third period of a game needing a goal to get back into things, and they did just that.

However, you can't rely on a comeback every night, and the Canes are going to have to start getting off to better starts. The Hurricanes have been outscored 8-4 over the first two periods so far this year, and have twice now seen early 1-0 leads erased in a matter of minutes.

The Cardiac Canes are fun and exciting, but for a team with serious ambitions to compete this year, that method of winning games isn't entirely viable. We're just three games into the season, all of which the Hurricanes have won, so any criticism may be a slight overreaction. However, if there's one thing that Carolina needs to fix, it's not falling behind and needing an overtime comeback to get two points.

### Top Line Scoring

The Hurricanes are 3-0-0, and they've done it without a single goal from their top-two forward lines. Svechnikov, Staal, Brock McGinn, Nino Niederreiter, Sebastian Aho and Teravainen all sit without a goal, yet the Canes have six points and lead the entire NHL in that category.

That's a good sign for the depth and versatility of the Canes, who got three of their four goals from defensemen Sunday, but it is also maybe a bit concerning that the top players aren't producing quite yet.

Svechnikov and Teravainen are top of the class when it comes to assists for the Canes, with four and three, respectively, but apart from those apples there hasn't been a ton of production from any of Carolina's star forwards.



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There isn't much question that Aho, Teravainen and company will find their goals as the season progresses, but it isn't a great sign, even early, that all six guys on the top two lines haven't found the net. You can only count on so many goals from the blue liners, who stole the show Sunday, and Carolina's top guys are going to need to start finding the net if this team wants to keep winning games.

## Wrapping Up

Any real criticism of a 3-0-0 team feels nitpicky, because the Hurricanes are getting the job done after all. Haula has been a wonderful spark for the Canes through three games, as Rod Brind'Amour's squad seems to have not missed a beat at the start of this new season.

Already high preseason expectations for Carolina have to be even higher after a hot start for the Canes, who will now hit the road to take on the Florida Panthers Tuesday night.



## Weekly Report: Oct. 7, 2019

Written by Nicholas Niedzielski

The summer is over and the 2019-20 season is underway, as the Checkers kicked off the new year with a road split.

### Week in Review

#### Team Statistics

#### Overall record

1-1-0

#### Home record

0-0-0

#### Road record

1-1-0

#### Last week's record

1-1-0

#### Last 10 games

1-1-0

#### Division Standings

5th

#### Conference Standings

9th

#### League Standings

16th

Hartford 5, Checkers 3

Charlotte's title defense had a rough start as five straight Wolf Pack tallies sunk the Checkers in game one, despite a late push from the visitors. Full recap

### Checkers 4, Springfield 2

The Checkers righted the ship the next night, riding a strong start and snuffing out a rally attempt from the Thunderbirds en route to their first win of the new season. Full recap

### Three Stars Of The Week

#### 3rd Star

Anton Forsberg

1-0-0, 2.00 GAA, .943 SV%

#### 2nd Star

Julien Gauthier

2g, 0a

#### 1st Star

Roland McKeown

0g, 4a

### FIVE NOTABLES

#### 1) OPENING UP

With Saturday's loss to Hartford, Charlotte fell to 5-4-1 all time in season openers – all of which have come on the road. The Checkers were also the first Calder Cup champion since 2011 to lose their opener the following season.

#### 2) WELCOME BACK KUOKS





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After missing the back half of last season due to injury, Janne Kuokkanen suited up for his first game since March 2 on Saturday. Having recorded a point in seven of his last nine games last season, the Finn kept the ball rolling by lighting the lamp on Saturday and then adding an assist on Saturday.

### 3) NEW GUYS CHIP IN

Playing in their first games in a Checkers sweater, Dave Gust, Brian Gibbons, Hunter Shinkaruk and Chase Priskie all recorded a point on Saturday. Add in a goal by Anthony Louis on Sunday and five different skaters notched their first points as a Checker over the weekend.

### 4) CAPTAIN Q

Roland McKeown was named the sixth captain in Checkers history last week and then turned in a dominant two games to open the season. The blueliner tallied four assists over the weekend, including a career-high three in Sunday's win alone.

### 5) SPECIAL TEAMS SOAR

It's a small sample size, but Charlotte's special teams have looked strong through the first two games of the season. The Checkers have been on the power play six times thus far and lit the lamp on three of them, while also killing 10 of their own 11 penalties, including a perfect 7-for-7 showing on Sunday against a Springfield team that boasted the league's best power play last season.

### RANKS

Roland McKeown leads the AHL in assists (4) and is tied for the lead in points (4), powerplay assists (2) and power-play points (2)

Julien Gauthier is tied for second in the AHL in goals (2)

Anton Forsberg is tied for 10th in the AHL in goals-against average (2.00)

Jake Bean is tied for second among league defensemen in points (2) and assists (2)

### INJURIES

Stelio Mattheos - Missed two games starting 10/5

Spencer Smallman - Missed two games starting 10/5

Max McCormick - Missed two games starting 10/5

### Transactions

Incoming

None

Outgoing

None

Coming Up

Friday, Oct. 11 at 7 p.m. - Checkers vs. Bridgeport  
Opening Night and Championship Banner Raising  
Calder Cup mini banner giveaway

College Night presented by Hendrick Acura - get \$15 best available tickets with your valid college email address when purchasing online.

Saturday, Oct. 12 at 6 p.m. - Checkers vs. Bridgeport

Oktoberfest - package including a discounted Gold Section ticket located near center ice, a 12 oz. Oktoberfest beer at the game, a Calder Cup Championship hat, and collectible boot beer cup now available online

### By the Numbers

| CATEGORY                 | RECORD | AHL RANK | LAST WEEK |
|--------------------------|--------|----------|-----------|
| Power play               | 50.0%  | 2nd      | N/A       |
| Penalty kill             | 90.9%  | 13th     | N/A       |
| Goals per game           | 3.50   | t-10th   | N/A       |
| Shots per game           | 34.50  | 7th      | N/A       |
| Goals allowed per game   | 3.50   | t-21st   | N/A       |
| Shots allowed per game   | 29.00  | t-14th   | N/A       |
| Penalty minutes per game | 12.00  | t-12th   | N/A       |

### LEADERS

| CATEGORY           | LEADER(S)   |
|--------------------|---|
| Points             | Roland McKeown (4), Five tied (2)                     |
| Goals              | Julien Gauthier (2), Five tied (1)                    |
| Assists            | Roland McKeown (4), Jake Bean, Brian Gibbons (2)      |
| Power play goals   | Julien Gauthier, Morgan Geekie, Dave Gust (1)         |
| Shorthanded goals  | None  |
| Game-winning goals | Anthony Louis (1)                                     |
| Shots on goal      | Julien Gauthier (8), Morgan Geekie (7), Four tied (5) |



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|                 |   |                       |                       |
|-----------------|---|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Penalty minutes | Gustav Forsling, Julien Gauthier, Brian Gibbons (4) | Goals-against average | Anton Forsberg (2.00) |
| Plus/minus      | Six tied (+1)                                       | Save percentage       | Anton Forsberg (.943) |
| Wins            | Anton Forsberg (1)                                  |                       |                       |



### Hurricanes seek to continue strong start versus Panthers

The Carolina Hurricanes are off to a 3-0 start for just the second time in franchise history and visit the Florida Panthers on Tuesday night looking for win No. 4.

Carolina has won two of its games in overtime and one in a shootout, overcoming third-period deficits in each contest. The Hurricanes are just the third team in NHL history to start 3-0-0 with each game requiring overtime.

"We've got a resilient group," said standout defenseman Jaccob Slavin, who scored an overtime goal on Sunday night in a 4-3 win over the Tampa Bay Lightning. "It's a confidence-builder for this group, and we hope to continue on this path."

Carolina outshot Tampa Bay 16-0 in Sunday's second period. It was the first time in NHL history that a reigning Presidents Trophy-winner was held without a shot on goal for an entire period.

Third-line center Erik Haula, acquired by Carolina from the Vegas Golden Knights in a 2019 draft-day trade, has scored in each game. He is the first Carolina newcomer ever to accomplish that feat.

He scored a career-high 29 goals in 2017-2018, helping Vegas reach the Stanley Cup Finals but played just 15 games last season due to a knee injury.

Now, the 28-year-old Haula has joined a hungry Carolina team that last season made a surprising run to the Eastern Conference finals.

"You find a way to win," Haula said after Carolina beat Tampa Bay. "It's a great start, but there's a lot of hockey left."

Last season, Carolina beat the Panthers all three times,

including just one that went to overtime. Two of those three games were road wins for Carolina.

The Panthers, however, have fourth-line center Noel Acciari, an agitator who was on the Boston Bruins team that swept Carolina in last season's Eastern Conference finals.

So far this season, Acciari has one goal in two games as the Panthers split a home-and-home matchup with Tampa Bay.

Florida's big hero so far has been winger Mike Hoffman, who has four goals in two games, including a hat trick in Saturday's 4-3 win. Hoffman, an unrestricted free agent at the end of this season, scored a career-high 36 goals in 2018-2019.

"Our power play was nice to get going," said Hoffman, who scored twice with the man advantage on Saturday night. "You lick your chops when you get those opportunities."

With Hoffman, star center Aleksander Barkov, goalie Sergei Bobrovsky and the rest of the Florida core, the Panthers are hoping to do this season what Carolina accomplished in 2018-2019, when it ended a nine-year playoff drought.

The Hurricanes caught fire in January and got branded by broadcaster Don Cherry as a "Bunch of Jerks," a derisive label that they used to their own advantage, bonding the Hurricanes.

Virtually the entire Hurricanes team from last season has returned, with the addition of Haula and third-line winger Ryan Dzingel, who was acquired as a free agent in July.

The Panthers, who have missed the playoffs in three straight seasons, made a much bigger splash this past summer, signing Bobrovsky as well as Acciari, former Washington



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Capitals winger Brett Connolly and ex-Lightning defenseman Anton Stralman.

But perhaps the biggest Panthers addition was coach Joel Quenneville, who gives Florida instant credibility due to the three Stanley Cup rings he won with the Chicago Blackhawks.

Quenneville is already hard at work attempting to redefine

Panthers' culture.

"We want to make sure we play well at home," Quenneville said. "It should be a tough two points for teams coming in here."

--Field Level Media

## TODAY'S LINKS

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/nhl/carolina-hurricanes/canes-now/article235875672.html>  
<https://theathletic.com/1272609/2019/10/07/dqb-weekend-power-rankings-its-way-too-early-but-were-doing-this-anyway/>  
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<http://gocheckers.com/articles/features/weekly-report-oct-7-2019>  
<https://abc11.com/sports/hurricanes-seek-to-continue-strong-start-versus-panthers/5600444/>

# SportScan

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

1156256 Carolina Hurricanes

It's three games into the season, but here's what the Hurricanes are all about so far

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

OCTOBER 07, 2019 03:04 PM

RALEIGH

The question was posed to Carolina Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour a few days before the season opener: would he have a good gauge on his team after the first three games?

It would be the Montreal Canadiens in the opener, with goalie Carey Price in net. Then a trip to Washington to face the Caps in their home opener, with all the emotion and baggage from last year's playoff series. Finally, back home against Tampa Bay, the Presidents' Trophy winner last season.

"Where are we at after three games? I think we'll have a pretty good idea," Brind'Amour said last week. "But I think it's going to take some time with this team to figure that out, what we're all about."

The three games have come and gone and the Canes are 3-0, rallying from behind each game, making "resiliency" the operative word. The Canes followed up a shootout win over the Canadiens with overtime victories over the Caps and Lightning, beating Tampa Bay 4-3 on Sunday at PNC Arena on Jacob Slavin's goal.

What are the Canes all about? Still hard to say. Remember, they started last season 4-0-1, then went 2-7-1 in their next 10. It's early. As Brind'Amour said, the season is an 82-game grind.

But there have been some early snapshots:

Dougie Hamilton had the only shootout goal in the opener against the Habs. Jake Gardiner had the overtime goal against the Caps. Then, Slavin on Sunday.

See a trend here? All from defensemen. Not to be overlooked: Slavin also scored against the Caps, Brett Pesce had the first goal Sunday and Hamilton's power-play blast tied the score in the third period in another Canes comeback.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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Brind'Amour wanted more offensive help from the blue line this season. He's getting it.

"It's defense first, defend, but when they get a chance they've got the green light," he said.

Said Slavin: "We've got a pretty skilled group of defensemen. All of us can skate and so we're trying to contribute any way we can."

As for the defensive work, Tampa Bay did not have a shot in the second period, two in the third and 13 for the game.

There were questions about Erik Haula from the time the Canes obtained the center in the June 27 trade with the Vegas Golden Knights. Was his knee OK? Could he replicate his scoring with the Golden Knights two years ago, when he had a career-high 29 goals?

Haula's answer has been a goal in each of his first three games. He has scored on the power play, done the dirty work in penalty killing and won 57 percent of his faceoffs, going 15-4 against the Lightning. He has put the bad knee injury from last season — and the long rehab it required — behind him.

What does he think of his start? "We've got a three-game winning streak, that's good," Haula said.

If Brind'Amour had a boondoggle in his first year as a head coach, it was the power play. It had its moments -- some good, some very bad.

But Brind'Amour might have found a unit that can click: Hamilton, Haula, Teuvo Teravainen, Andrei Svechnikov and Ryan Dzingel. It produced two power-play goals against Tampa Bay, Haula punching in the rebound of a Hamilton shot and then Hamilton — named the game's first star — ripping one from just inside the blue line. Haula also scored against the Caps off a Teravainen pass.

The Canes' other power-play unit has Gardiner, Sebastian Aho, Nino Niederreiter, Jordan Staal and Martin Necas. It hasn't been as threatening. For now, it's the second unit.

"We feel we have two equal groups," Brind'Amour said. "We'll definitely need both groups going, I know, and we'll probably tinker as we go along. But it's nice to see it working right now."

The Canes' penalty killing also has been on point. Against the Caps, the Canes were 6-for-6 on kills. Tampa Bay did get a power-play goal in the first period, but the Canes killed off a Hamilton tripping penalty early in the second with the Lightning leading 3-1 and later two other penalties.

"That might be the difference in the whole game right now," Brind'Amour said. "We're getting a special-teams goal here and there and that gets you back in the game. At the right time, special teams can be huge. We kill a penalty at the right time. They had a chance to go up 4-1 and we kill that penalty and it keeps you in the game and obviously getting the power-play goals gets you right back in the game."

Granted, one game is the smallest of sample sizes but Brind'Amour liked what he saw from goalie James Reimer in his first start.

Being sent out against the Caps on Saturday was a thankless task. The Caps had won two road games to start the season and wanted nothing more than to rip the Canes in their first home game at Capital One Arena.

A year ago, Washington raised its Stanley Cup championship banner and then blasted the Boston Bruins 7-0 in the home opener. The Caps probably had something like that in mind for Saturday after the disappointment of losing the first-round playoff series to the Canes last spring, blowing a lead in Game 7 and losing in double overtime.

But Reimer was up to the challenge. He gave up a couple of goals but made some high-quality saves among his 32 stops -- ask the

Caps' Alex Ovechkin -- to keep the Canes in the game, then picked up his 145th career victory.

The Canes had the right goaltending fit last season with Petr Mrazek and Curtis McElhinney. Will it be the same with Mrazek and Reimer?

It's a different kind of season for Sebastian Aho. His first three in the NHL have been about establishing himself, first as a rookie, then as a center and as a player worthy of being selected an NHL All-Star.

Then came the offer sheet from Montreal on July 1. When the Canes matched it, Aho had a contract that would pay him \$21 million in bonus money the first 12 months. His total salary for the 2019-20 season, according to CapFriendly.com, is \$12 million -- almost twice that of any other player on the Canes' roster -- although his cap hit is \$8.454 million.

Aho has 13 shots in the first three games, so he's getting his offensive looks, but does not have a point. Is he stressing a bit? Too soon to say, perhaps, but it bears watching.

News Observer LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156257 Carolina Hurricanes

The Hurricanes are 3-0-0 for the first time since 1995, and they've done it their way

By Sara Civian

Oct 7, 2019

Justin Williams returned to PNC Arena in street clothes and a suite instead of a sweater and skates, but of course he clapped along as the Hurricanes carried on his silly, little brainchild.

It was one of his many legacies on display through their first three games, and even if he would've preferred keeping his distance right now, he wouldn't miss youth hockey night. As he was shown play-fighting his daughter, Jade, then lifting her into his arms, a random conversation from months ago came to mind.

"He's one of the most incredible dads I've ever seen," said Nick Gismondi, longtime friend of Williams and rinkside reporter for the Blackhawks. "Like, he's an exceptional father. The way that he is, raising human beings. You can see him doing things like he does as a hockey player and keeping situations in perspective all the time."

The loss of that dad-like perspective was a huge concern for a Canes roster without Williams. So was his constant chip-on-the-shoulder attitude — he'd been drafted as an afterthought in juniors and acted like it ever since.

The Canes went and won three consecutive games in comeback, overtime fashion. They're 3-0-0 for the first time since relocation. That's No. 1 in the league with six points and a .942 PDO for the folks at home.

The post-Williams exhale is real, but as always it's about the way they're winning, not the fact that they're winning — and that's more of a stick tap to Williams than the Storm Surge revival.

Where the heck is that coming from on a team with so many new faces?

"I mean, it's early in the season, I don't even know. I'm not really sure. It's a tough question," Jake Gardiner told me after his game-





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winner in Washington. "But it's good to see our team can battle back from a deficit, obviously all positive."

How's one more time for good measure?

There was that Washington home opener and a locked-in Braden Holtby spoiled. There was a first period deficit to the Lightning met with no shots allowed in a period for the first time since 2004. There's the newly functioning power play, that Dougie Hamilton has dragged into one of those chambers where rich people preserve their organs and hope to come out alive in, like, 3019.

Somehow it's working.

You always think the good-on-paper additions are going to work, but you're not at ease 'till you see it — and the so-called "new guys" limped out of the preseason with more questions than answers.

Clearly none of the injuries sustained in exhibition ended up too serious, but the Canes still weren't able to get as good a look at Gardiner, Martin Necas, Ryan Dzingel and/or Erik Haula as they would've liked before the first meaningful puck drop.

That would have been less than optimal in any situation, and there Carolina was with Montreal, Washington and Tampa on tap.

"It does seem pretty tough," said Hurricanes head coach Rod Brind'Amour in the thick of it Saturday. "But every game's tough. I know you look and say wow, we're playing Washington then we gotta turn around and play Tampa. But every team is good in this league, and you gotta play them all at some point. That's just part of it."

Maybe Brind'Amour remembers how opponents underestimated the "Candy Canes" last season.

That did not bode well for said opponents.

Or maybe he's trying to avoid a mindset of complacency, one Lightning captain Steven Stamkos brought up after they blew a 3-1 lead to the Canes in overtime.

"We continue to be the free-wheeling team that thinks we can just come into games and win because we're skilled," he said, according to Caley Chelios.

Either way, the Hurricanes are off to their best start in franchise history and they're doing it their way — the hard way. Shooting four million pucks, finding a hero, overcoming a ton of crazy.

The new guys are fitting in just fine.

Trending up

Erik 'Bo Time' Haula

If there's ever a change in your Wikipedia page, you know you've either done something terrible or something amazing.

Erik 'Bo Time' Haula has done something amazing.

By simply having the guts to stand in front of the net on the power play and having the wherewithal to direct the puck inside of it, Haula has revived the North Carolina biscuit industry.

He's the first player in Hurricanes/Whalers history to score in each of his first three games with the franchise, with two of those three goals coming on the power play.

As for all the overtime?

"Ehhhh, I'm fine with that," he said. "Sure. It don't matter. That's a point in every game. Right now we're getting two. That adds up to a lot of points."

Can confirm.

The power play

"That might be the difference in the whole game right now. We're getting a special teams goal here and there, and that gets you back in the game," Brind'Amour said. "At the right time, special teams can be huge."

In this economy.

The Hurricanes are currently tied with the Habs at fifth in the league with a 33.3 power play percentage. It has had it's cringey moments, but the perimeter passing amongst Dougie Hamilton, Andrei Svechnikov and Teuvo Teravainen has forced the "second unit" into "first unit" conversation, and it's winning games.

Brind'Amour has finally started deploying it like so.

"I'd be stupid not to," he said. "We built it this way, where we feel like we have two equal groups. And we do. But when one's hot, you go with it. We'll definitely need both groups going, but it's good to see it working right now.

If you want me to explain this to you like you're 5 years old, basically Hamilton is a man possessed.

We'd talked about this earlier, and he agreed that Justin Faulk's absence is giving him more of an opportunity to unleash his obvious scoring talents. So far, he's racked up one goal and two primary assists on the power play in three games.

'Their game'

The most encouraging sign of all was the zero-shots-allowed second period of the Hurricanes' third game in four days against a top opponent.

That is "zero shots allowed" if I've ever seen it. While other defensemen — including Sunday's overtime hero Jaccob Slavin and Saturday's in Gardiner — have been helping upfront, Pesce has been holding it down in two of the best games he's ever played this back-to-back.

"He's been great, I didn't see any slip in his game," Brind'Amour said. "He played a ton of minutes last night and again tonight."

The Athletic LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156258 Carolina Hurricanes

Journeyman goalie Michael Leighton retires after 18 seasons, 21 pro teams

By Scott Powers

Oct 7, 2019

Michael Leighton hasn't saved all his jerseys. He'd have a warehouse full of them if he did.

Leighton donned his goalie gear for 21 total pro teams in the regular season and playoffs. And that's not counting his multiple go-arounds with the Chicago Blackhawks, Carolina Hurricanes and Philadelphia Flyers.

Leighton has been selective about the jerseys he's kept. He has about 25 of them in a closet in his home in LaSalle, Ontario. Now the hard part is figuring out which ones to frame in his basement.

So far, he's thinking he'll go with his OHL draft year, NHL draft year, first NHL game, 2010 Winter Classic, 2010 Stanley Cup final, AHL



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All-Star games and probably one from each of the NHL teams he played for throughout his career.

It's a collection Leighton is proud of. You don't set out to be a journeyman, but that's the reality for some players. You come to accept that. As much as every player would love to stay with one organization from start to finish, longevity is more important. Leighton accomplished that. He adapted with every change in goalie style and was able to stop pucks for a long time. There's a reason why his phone continued to ring late into his 30s.

"When you're growing up and you want to play in the NHL and even when you're in junior, you see all these guys with three- or four-year contracts and they're staying in a city for 10 years," Leighton said. "I guess you never look to think it's possible you'll be that guy that's got a suitcase in his hand his whole career. You want to be that guy who stays in the same organization and plays a thousand games with the same organization and has a house, family all established in one city. People don't realize it's only a handful of people on every team that get that opportunity to do that. It was still great to play pro hockey and to play in the NHL, but obviously the traveling and moving around was tough."

Now as Leighton chooses which jerseys to frame, the process is bittersweet. He's always wanted to do it, but he was putting it off until there wouldn't be any more jerseys to add to the display.

Today is that day. After 18 pro seasons, Leighton officially announced to The Athletic his retirement from professional hockey on Monday.

"This is a really hard thing for me to say, I'm done playing, because I've done this my whole life," Leighton said. "Since I was four or five years old, I've played hockey. It's been my life. For me to just say I'm done playing is a tough decision. It's just one that has to be made at this time.

"Since I was young, into high school, into pro hockey, marriage, kids, it's not only been my life, but my family's life, too. I have to say I'm very fortunate to play hockey for a living. It was always my dream. Obviously pretty proud and happy that I got to do that for a living. That's what everyone wants — to do something they love for the rest of their life, to make a career out of it. I was able to do that, so I feel very fortunate."

The decision wasn't easy. It was his choice in the end, but he certainly would have picked up the phone if another team had called. He did so for a few AHL teams last season and held more than his own at 37 years old.

Leighton knew the end was nearing last season. And now at 38, he understands that in absolute terms.

"I've been probably looking at this for the last year," said Leighton, who plans to stay in hockey and teach goaltending. "I knew it was going to come eventually. But it's just time. I'm 38 years old now. For me to play in the AHL last year, I was the oldest guy in the league. I know the teams are going a lot younger, getting harder to find jobs. I just know it's time. There's not many teams looking for a 38-year-old goalie. A lot of them want to stick to 25-28 years old and try to keep a guy for two to three years, rather a one-year deal for an older guy. I knew it was coming eventually.

"I kind of didn't train as hard this summer. The last two years, I've had a couple injuries here and there, but when I'm on the ice playing, I felt like I was performing well and felt good. Training-wise, even last year when I was waiting around until December, I was training really hard. I was in good shape. It has nothing to do with me saying I can't play anymore, because I still feel like I could play."

Leighton's career has been one of many twists and turns. He was traded five times within the NHL. He was claimed on waivers four times. He underwent seven surgeries. He went up to the NHL, down

to the AHL, played one season in the KHL and relocated his family often.

As he reflected on it all, there was one person he thought of more than anyone: his wife, Jennifer.

"I'm appreciative for my wife and the sacrifices she made through my 18 years," Leighton said. "I don't think anybody can possibly understand what she's been through with my career too. I want to thank her for all the sacrifices and support she's shown over my career. Without her my dream of playing professional hockey definitely wouldn't have gotten that far. Also, my kids, Ella, Annalise and Theodore, the sacrifices they made. I wasn't always home, moving around was tough on them when they were younger, leaving their friends, traveling around with me. Thanks to them for being patient and understanding that was my dream and that's what I had to do. Now I'm home and I get to spend a lot of time with them, skate with them, go to the ice and help out with their teams and activities."

Let's start with the saves.

In the NHL alone, Leighton recorded 3,052. In the AHL, the number is well over 10,000. He owns the AHL record with 50 career shutouts.

So, his favorites? That's difficult to say, but he tried to pinpoint a few.

"Probably the biggest ones I made were the Winter Classic saves," Leighton said of the 2010 game with the Flyers. "I made a splits save. There's a great picture of it online. It's dark in the background, it was a shot from the point and I'm making a splits glove save."

The saves he made to help the Flyers defeat the Montreal Canadiens in the Eastern Conference final will always stand out, too.

"In the semifinals, there's a save against P.K. Subban," Leighton said. "I don't know if it was a one-timer or slapper from the point through a screen, same thing, splits save. Not just the save, but the fact that after I saved it the crowd went nuts in Philly. They made a commercial about it. One of those 'History will be made' commercials. That's cool."

Leighton was nearly unbeatable throughout that series. Three of his four wins against the Canadiens were shutouts. The saves, the shutouts, the atmospheres — there's a lot about that series Leighton will never forget.

"I would say that was one of the better buildings to play in the playoffs," he said. "Going from Philadelphia to Montreal, those crowds were just electric, loud. I felt good. I know I got three shutouts, but as a goalie you get in a rhythm and you feel like nothing can beat you. That's how I felt that whole series, and the team was playing great in front of me too. Guys were sacrificing to help me with shutouts at the end of games. It was just an all-around great series for us as a team and obviously me personally."

There is one shot Leighton would like to see again in those playoffs. Patrick Kane beat him in overtime in Game 6 of the Stanley Cup final to clinch the series for the Blackhawks. He and Kane later briefly discussed that shot as teammates in Chicago.

To this day, Leighton and a lot of Flyers fans have mixed feelings about the ending of that season.

"There's obviously a lot of disappointment still that burns inside of me that wishes I could have won and brought the championship to Philadelphia," Leighton said. "But that whole playoff experience, that whole season, was definitely a positive for me. Got a lot of NHL games, playing in the semifinals, getting three shutouts against Montreal in a playoff series, just playing in the Stanley Cup finals. There's a lot of goalies who play 15, 20 years in the NHL and never make it to the Stanley Cup finals. That's still a great accomplishment for me personally. It obviously sucks we didn't win, but still a highlight of my career to play in the playoffs and have a chance to play for the Cup."



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Flyers fans have a reputation for being tough, and Leighton has heard his share of insults. But he's also received plenty of recognition too.

"I think there's kind of mixed reviews on that, mixed feelings," he said. "With the internet and social media, I still hear things here and there. I still hear it from many fans that they were appreciative of me, what I did for the team that year, just helping them get into the playoffs and getting them into the final. There's always fans who I meet who shake my hand and say, thank you. They even tell me that was the most exciting time they've ever had watching hockey. To hear that obviously feels great."

Most goalies have that one scorer they never want to see on the ice.

For Leighton, like many others, that was Alex Ovechkin.

"Every time he touched the puck or was shooting the puck, you had to be on your toes. ... Yeah, he scored a couple on me," Leighton said.

But he also stopped a few, including a memorable penalty shot in December 2008.

"I can always say I stopped him on a penalty shot," Leighton said.

Leighton remembers exactly how it went down.

"I had seen him do a penalty shot the night before, two nights before," Leighton said. "He had been in a shootout. I had seen the move he did and kind of almost knew he was doing the same move the way he was coming in. Sure enough, he did the same move and I stayed with him the whole time. Thank god for video. You see Ovechkin coming down, he's a shooter, right, so you think he's going to shoot and he kind of does a fake shot and tries to go around you. I kind of read it all the way and stayed with him."

Q&A with Michael Leighton

Who are some of your most memorable goalie partners?

For me, I had a lot of great goalie partners. I didn't have too many I didn't like. Jocelyn Thibault in Chicago, I think for me was the biggest for me personally because I was a young kid and he was in the NHL, an established All-Star goalie. I learned a lot from just watching him play. But off the ice, on the ice, he was just a great mentor for me. Even though I wasn't with him that long, he was just one guy who was very humble, great goalie, worked hard. At a young age, I looked at him and said that's how I want to be. He's quiet but confident, great guy around the community, family guy, works his butt off in practice, all his teammates like him. That's one guy who I really looked at early in my career. Even now I look back at him, that's what I wanted to be and tried to mold myself to be.

How did you change as a goalie over the years?

The game's definitely evolved over the 18 years of my career. I think a big part of my career was I was able to adjust to each new style that came in. I went from skate saves, two-pad slides when I was younger to butterfly to VH to RVH, so many styles I had to learn. I think that's why I was able to play so long. I was able to adapt to those, try to mold my game around all of them. I'd still do some of the skills that I learned 12, 15 years ago, trying to implement those in my game now and try to be an all-around goalie and not just a straight butterfly guy or this kind of style. I tried to glue all the pieces of my techniques all together and mold myself that way as a goalie.

What will you miss about hockey?

I'll definitely miss the competition. That's something I've always done. Everything I do, I compete. If I go bowling with my wife, I want to beat her. That's just the way I am. It's in my blood. I grew up with two brothers and we competed in everything we did and I'm a competitive guy. Just not being on the ice with your friends, going to battle on the ice, playing games, that kind of stuff, I'll miss.

What goalie coaches had an influence on you in your career?

When I was younger, Larry Lucas, he pretty much since I was 7 or 8 years old taught me the basics of goaltending. He kind of worked with me until I was 16 years old. I definitely feel like without him I wouldn't have gone as far as I did. He just taught me the pure basics. He just kind of molded me when I was younger, when I was really small. Obviously he was very patient with me being so young.

I would say Stephane Waite was a big influence on me my first couple years pro. He helped me when I was in Chicago and then I'd go to Quebec for his camp every summer and work with him. Jeff Reese was another goalie coach who helped me out in the NHL. Pretty much when I went to Philly, we talked, he helped tweak my game and I ended up having that season in 2010.

If there was one rule you could change for goalies in the NHL, what would it be?

I would like to see them get away from the trapezoid. That gives goalies who can play the puck better maybe an advantage. They can skate into the corner and play it. But also I think personally it can raise goal scoring because you'll have more goalies that will mess up with the puck and make mistakes, so you'll possibly have goals that way too. I think it lets the goalie be a little more creative, maybe put a line where he can go over the hash marks or something like that. But keep them in the corners. If a goalie wants to go play it and risk letting the net exposed, then go for it. There are some goalies that can really play the very well, and I feel like it's a hidden talent now.

How do you hope you're remembered as a player?

I hope I'm remembered for the good playoff run we had in Philly, that 2010 season. I would say just a guy who battled his whole career, worked hard and never gave up. Going up and down my whole career, I never packed it in and gave up on it. I just kept working hard and having fun with it.

Leighton was drafted by the Blackhawks in the sixth round in 1999 and played his final pro game on April 5, 2019. These were his thoughts on all his teams:

2001-2005

Norfolk Admirals (AHL), 159 games

"It was the first place I played pro. It was where I learned to be a pro. We had a great bunch of guys, great coaching staff. That's just kind of how I developed my first three or four years up and down with Chicago. Good spot to play."

Chicago Blackhawks (NHL), 43 games

Leighton made his NHL debut on Jan. 8, 2003, making 31 saves in a 0-0 tie against the Phoenix Coyotes at the United Center in Chicago. Coyotes goalie Zac Bierk made 40 saves.

"Getting told my first start in the NHL was pretty exciting," Leighton said. "To play in Chicago and in a 0-0 tie, it went by so fast. It was obviously a great experience. Pretty cool to be a 0-0 tie and get a shutout my first game. After the game Zac Bierk gave me the puck, which was very classy of him to do that. It was his first shutout too, but him knowing it was my first game, it was nice of him to do that."

2005-06 season

Buffalo Sabres (NHL), 0 games

Rochester Americans (AHL), 40 games

"I was traded to Buffalo. That was a disappointing trade. I went to a situation where they had three goalies in the NHL. I went pretty much playing in the NHL to the lockout season in Norfolk and then getting traded to a team that had three NHL goalies. We were split with Florida in Rochester in the affiliate. It was kind of a tough year



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for me there. I came off a stomach surgery. That was a great place to play in Rochester.”

2006-07

Portland Pirates (AHL), 16 games

Nashville Predators (NHL), 1 game

Philadelphia Flyers (NHL), 4 games

Philadelphia Phantoms (AHL), 5 games

Montreal Canadiens (NHL), 0 games

“I signed with Anaheim. Portland, I was there for a month or two and then was being called to Anaheim because they had a few injuries. They kind of mentioned to me that I could possibly be there the rest of the year. That was the year they won the Stanley Cup, so that sucks. I got picked up on waivers a couple times that year. It was just crazy being picked up by Nashville and then put on waivers again after six or eight weeks I played one period with Nashville. Then I got picked up by Philadelphia. I think I got in three or four games with Philly and then put on waivers again and picked up my Montreal.

“It was a tough year. I didn’t play very much. It was great to be in the NHL and see all those great cities — Nashville, Montreal, Philly — but it was obviously a tough year with the re-entry waivers kind of screwed me over that year.”

2007-2009

Albany River Rats (AHL), 65 games

Carolina Hurricanes (NHL), 29 games

“My rights were traded to Carolina at the draft. I had a really good season in Albany. I won the goalie of the year in the AHL that year. Then I signed a two-year deal with Carolina after that. It was good to get in that organization. I performed well and played well and things worked out from there on that.”

2009-2013

Philadelphia Flyers (NHL), 47 games

Adirondack Phantoms (AHL), 88 games

“Cam Ward got hurt in Carolina. They picked up Manny Legace and then I got put on waivers, cleared waivers and then Philadelphia had a few injuries. My agent called Philly and told them I’d play there, and they put me back on waivers and Philly picked me up. That was the best thing that ever happened to me. I got a chance to play, played well in Philly and a great season there and obviously made it to the Stanley Cup final.

“I was confident in my ability that I could still play in the NHL. When I went to Philly, we were out of a playoff spot and the team just seemed to kind of rally around me. I think I won my first eight or 10 games in a row. I was just playing well. The team playing was well. We got in a playoff spot. Everything was going great. I ended up getting a high ankle sprain which put me out of the last month of the season and first round of the playoffs. That obviously hurt a little bit, but besides that, did I think I was going to be playing in the Stanley Cup finals that year? No, definitely not after being put on waivers and not even getting picked up by a different team.”

2013

Columbus Blue Jackets (NHL), 0 games

“I got traded to Columbus at the trade deadline. I played one NHL game that (2012-13 season). That was a tough year for me with the lockout and then I played one game in Philly and I won in San Jose, and then I got traded to Columbus and they were right on the verge of a playoff spot and (Sergei) Bobrovsky was playing phenomenal, so they rode him all the way to the last game.”

2013-14

Donbass Donetsk (KHL), 50 games

“It was a tough year when you play one game all season. I still felt good. I still felt like I could play in the NHL. And then I went to free agency and there wasn’t much going on. I think just playing one game hurt me that season. That’s when I got a call to go to the Ukraine. The KHL was a different life, different hockey, definitely an experience.”

2014-16

Blackhawks (NHL), 1 game

Rockford IceHogs (AHL), 96 games

“I actually signed to play one more year in Sochi, but I got sick. I had viral meningitis. They cancelled my contract, which I was fine with. I couldn’t go. I was just too sick. I got a call from Mark Bernard and Al MacIsaac, asking me what I’m doing and what my plans are. I told them about me being sick and all that stuff. They brought me in for a physical, signed a deal for them. Definitely just a right place at the right time. They needed a goalie and I was looking for a job and it worked out perfect.

“I enjoyed my time there. It was good to go back to a great organization like Chicago. Rockford was a great place for me and my family. My family really liked it there. Definitely enjoyed my team there and getting a chance to go back to Chicago. It was tough for me; they had a couple good goalies in the organization with (Antti) Raanta and (Scott) Darling. I was kind of stuck to be that third or fourth guy in Rockford for a little while. It was still good. I got an opportunity to play and show that I could still play.”

2016-17

Charlotte Checkers (AHL), 24 games

Carolina Hurricanes (NHL), 4 games

“Very similar to Chicago. I got to play in a lot of games in Charlotte, and they had an injury and got up top again, got a chance to get my feet wet in the NHL again. Charlotte is a great city. Going back to another organization I was familiar with was nice. I thought I did all right, thought I can still play. Grateful for the opportunity to keep playing in the NHL.”

2017-18

Syracuse Crunch (AHL), 9 games

Chicago Wolves (AHL), 5 games

Wilkes-Barre/Scranton Penguins (AHL), 6 games

“That was a tough year. Definitely wasn’t one of my better years. I think I struggled for half of the season for sure. Once I went to Wilkes-Barre later in the year, I found my game back. Going from Syracuse to Arizona, I went to Tucson for two or three days, sitting at home waiting for a trade. That was a tough season all around until I went to Wilkes-Barre, got an opportunity to play again and played well. Kind of had to get my game back.”

2018-19

Ontario Reign (AHL), 3 games

Utica Comets (AHL), 19 games

“I went to Ontario, I thought I did Ok. Just not going to training camp, not skating a ton, was tough to get into the game situations. When I went to Utica, they gave me a full week of practice to get into it. I think I won my first five or six games in a row in Utica. Again, I still felt good. I still felt like I could play. I always enjoyed playing. There was never a time I looked in the mirror and said I don’t want to do that anymore, I can’t do this anymore.”





# CAROLINA HURRICANES

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The Athletic LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156317 NHL

What will NHL Seattle's fan base look like? Recent gathering may give us some clues

By Geoff Baker

Inside the NHL

There was nothing surprising about it being standing room only at the city's preeminent hockey bar last week as the new NHL season launched.

NHL Seattle got things rolling at The Angry Beaver in Greenwood with a watch party timed with afternoon games. But once the evening games began, the joint was packed with hockey regulars who don't need a staged event to show up.

Again, hockey fans flocking in droves to a hockey bar for the launch of the first full season since Seattle landed an NHL franchise isn't that noteworthy. What's interesting is how many were relative newcomers to this city.

In fact, moving about the crowd, it was difficult to find original Seattle residents. Not that local birthright matters to this Montreal-born, longtime Canadiens fan, but our changing demographics have long been suspected of fueling NHL Seattle's 32,000 season-ticket deposit list.

Seat selection for deposit holders is to begin within another week or so. And whether you find it good, bad or irrelevant that so many of those depositors might not have spent formative years here, there will be ramifications from the demographics.

First off, my interviews at a lone bar do not constitute a scientific survey. It could be The Angry Beaver's patrons prove an outlier to the depositor pool — especially as it trended toward a younger crowd that might not be capable of affording NHL season tickets.

Not yet, anyway.

That said, the sheer volume of the 32,000 depositors was the first sign something different was likely happening. Hockey had long been treated as a fringe sport in this city — the Seattle Thunderbirds went to the Memorial Cup a few years ago and the local media barely noticed — before NHL Seattle landed so many depositors so quickly.

Suddenly, the deposits suggested far more hockey fans exist here than previously depicted — that Seattle's team might not automatically begin at No. 4 or No. 5 popularity-wise in the city's heart.

Maybe in "old" Seattle's heart. But it's questionable whether born-and-bred locals will be paying the hockey freight.

NHL Seattle has never revealed detailed depositor information but has hinted strongly about a large core being from downtown — which is usually code for Amazon and other workers imported from elsewhere. Indeed, a sizable portion of the late Angry Beaver crowd wore San Jose Sharks jerseys — suggesting many were Bay Area transplants. One of those, Kelly Ros, 27, an electrical engineer at Boeing, moved here from San Jose last year.

"Even though they have the Sharks, the bars there tend to be more for basketball," Ros said. "So, finding this place has been pretty cool. I don't think there's anything back there that quite compares."

His co-worker, Chris Lindgren, 29, from Newport Beach, Calif., was sporting an Anaheim Ducks jersey. Lindgren said he'll keep his Ducks allegiance even after NHL Seattle begins play, as Ros plans for his Sharks.

"Maybe if the Seattle team is really good and the Ducks get really, really bad something will change," Lindgren said, smiling. "But I don't know."

Which has implications for NHL Seattle. Hockey fans are among the most loyal in sports — especially those of "Original Six" teams from Chicago, Boston, Detroit, Montreal, Toronto and the New York Rangers. Getting them to switch allegiances is akin to telling local "12s" they should cheer for Tom Brady and Bill Belichick.

Don't believe me? Watch NHL games in long-established Canadian markets such as Vancouver, Edmonton and Calgary and see the stands fill with Toronto and Montreal fans whenever the Maple Leafs and "Habs" visit, mostly based off family loyalties from 50 years ago before those newer franchises existed.

And Edmonton and Calgary have won Stanley Cups, while Vancouver reached three finals. Doesn't matter. And it won't matter here for brand-new NHL Seattle, which will contend with competing loyalties regardless of how many restrictions it places on ticket resale.

Not that it's a bad thing. Money is money in professional sports, and visiting loyalties do fuel a large amount of ticket revenue, regardless of whether home teams admit it.

But that aside, NHL Seattle certainly won't want to spend 41 home games feeling like the Mariners whenever Blue Jays, Red Sox or Yankees supporters hit town.

So, there will be battles waged for hearts and minds. Maybe not for "Original Six" fans — likely already a lost cause — but certainly bandwagon supporters of less-established clubs, or relative newcomers to hockey.

Fans such as recent College Station, Texas, transplant Ben Carter, 23, sporting a Dallas Stars jersey as he stood at The Angry Beaver with roommate Nick Gorman, 24, a Maple Leafs fan originally from Calgary. Carter admitted he's relatively new to hockey bars — there being none in football-mad College Station — and only recently "jumped on the bandwagon" with the Stars before relocating here a few months ago.

On switching allegiances to NHL Seattle, he said he'd be open to it.

East Side resident Yevgeny Ternovsky, 32, a Maple Leafs supporter who moved here a decade ago from Toronto, actually enjoys "so much diversity" of fans of different teams watching games at the same bar. But the excitement level doesn't compare to what he experienced in Toronto, largely because of those split loyalties.

"I still think it will be nicer when you've got a (Seattle) team here and everybody will be cheering for the same team."

Something NHL Seattle is no doubt working on.

Seattle Times LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156289 Florida Panthers

Noel Acciari gives Florida Panthers a new look on a tenacious fourth line

By George Richards Oct 7, 2019



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

**NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 8, 2019**

CORAL SPRINGS, Fla. — There was a debate Monday on when the Florida Panthers got their first goal from their fourth-line center last season.

One thing that was not in question was it took a long time.

"It certainly did not come in Game 2," Colton Sceviour said with a grin.

Sceviour was the first guy centering Florida's fourth forward line to put the puck in the net, doing so in a game against Colorado on Dec. 6 — the 27th game of the season for those keeping track.

Florida went through several centers on its fourth line last season either because of injury or just trying to find something that worked.

The Panthers think they fixed that problem in the offseason with the signing of Noel Acciari.

It did not take long for Acciari to get his line on the scoresheet.

Saturday night with the Panthers leading the Lightning 2-0 in the second period, Acciari tracked down Tampa Bay defenseman Kevin Shattenkirk going for a puck and plastered him up against the back wall.

Acciari then took off toward the front of the net where Sceviour zipped him a pass from the sideboards. Acciari corralled the puck, turned and backhanded a shot top shelf past Andrei Vasilevskiy for a 3-0 lead.

"I saw he had a step on his D-man and it was more I was trying to get it to the net, where he was going," Sceviour said. "The fact that it went exactly tape-to-tape may have been a little bit lucky, but I knew he had the guy beat in the corner after the big hit so I wanted to get it to him. He did the rest, obviously."

Said Acciari: "I threw the first hit and (Dryden) Hunt was quick on the puck and chipped it, Sceviour was waiting for it and got it back to the net. I came back hoping there would be something and the puck came right to me. I probably had too much time to think about what I needed to do, but it all worked out in the end."

The fourth line is there primarily for their defensive tenacity but with Acciari, Sceviour and Hunt on the ice, the Panthers may get a little offense out of those guys as well.

Of all the Panthers' offseason moves, signing Acciari might have been overlooked.

Florida, after all, added goalie Sergei Bobrovsky (seven years, \$70 million), defenseman Anton Stralman (three years, \$16.5 million) and forward Brett Connolly (four years, \$14 million).

Acciari, an undrafted forward from Rhode Island who played at Providence, made a name for himself with the Boston Bruins for his tough style of play.

In the playoffs last spring, Acciari was hit so hard in Game 4 of the Eastern Conference semifinals against Columbus, he fractured his sternum.

Acciari missed five games with the injury. He missed the end of the series against the Blue Jackets and the first three against the Hurricanes before returning for Game 4 of the conference finals. He played all seven games of the Stanley Cup finals despite the pain.

"I just put my shoulder pads on and went back out there. I figured I would deal with it after the playoffs," said Acciari, who adds he still feels the effects of the injury.

"It was painful, but you never know when you'll be back in the Stanley Cup playoffs or be in the finals so you put it all in the back of your mind. ... I was just itching to get back out there and didn't want to mess it up. It was a painful injury and I still feel it a bit. Sleeping is difficult sometimes. But it's another hockey season so you try to maintain and make sure it's getting stronger, keep an eye on it."

Panthers center Noel Acciari and Lightning center Steven Stamkos face off during the first period Saturday night. (Sam Navarro / USA Today)

For Florida, which signed him to a three-year deal worth \$5 million, Acciari represented a chance to stabilize a position which was a rotating door of centers last season.

Derek MacKenzie started the season centering the fourth line, but he injured his shoulder two shifts into the opener at Tampa Bay and needed what would be career-ending surgery.

Rookie Juho Lammikko was quickly recalled from the minors, and he played 40 games — recording six points but scoring no goals.

When Lammikko was sent back to Springfield upon Vincent Trocheck's return from injury, a number of guys centered the fourth line, including Sceviour, Riley Sheahan and Henrik Borgstrom.

By signing Acciari, Sceviour went back to wing while Sheahan was not re-signed and Lammikko left to play in his native Finland.

"Give them credit, they play well and they play with a purpose," coach Joel Quenneville said of the fourth line on Monday.

"I think they work well with one another ... they keep the puck, they protect it and they put it in good areas. They took away some quality (looks) from a dangerous line in dangerous situations. They didn't give up much there."

The new fourth line was on display a lot in the first two games of the season, charged with the huge task of taking on Tampa Bay's top players.

On Saturday, Acciari, Sceviour and Hunt spent much of the final shifts on the ice as they successfully (with two big saves from Bobrovsky) held off a late charge from the Lightning as the Panthers emerged with a 4-3 win.

"I think our line takes pride in being able to shut down their top line and be put in those situations," Acciari said. "I think we want to thrive on that, continue having that assignment and chip in when we can while playing a hard-nosed game."

With the Tampa Bay net empty for the final 90 seconds, the Florida fourth line — as well as defensemen Aaron Ekblad and Mike Matheson — were stuck out there for the duration as they iced the puck three times and were pinned deep in the Florida zone.

Hunt and Sceviour both iced the puck aiming for the empty net with long, desperation shots.

In the final seconds, the puck rattled off the backboard with Bobrovsky holding the post and laying out to make what could have been the game-winning save.

All five Florida defenders (Ekblad was in the cage) dived into the fray with several Tampa Bay players joining them.

It looked like a championship-winning dogpile on top of Bobrovsky, only he had the puck, and with less than a second remaining after the officials cleared things up, the Panthers were all but assured of their first victory over the Lightning in two years.

"We were doing anything we could to keep that puck out," Acciari said. "Bob was sprawled out — I don't know how he gets in some of the positions he does — but we're going to do everything we can to help him and I know he's doing everything he can help us."

In years past, the Panthers likely would have succumbed to the late push by the Lightning as all of their big weapons were on the ice fighting to put it into the net with the extra skater.

Fixing the bottom six was a priority of the Panthers this offseason, and Acciari was a player they targeted.



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Acciari came into camp as the center of the fourth line, but who he would play with was in question. Sceviour was an obvious choice to play on one wing and when things were solidified, it was Hunt playing on the other.

All three players have shown they can score, but in this role, their main objective is to keep the opposition off the scoreboard.

It is definitely an adjustment, a buy-in to a style of play some cannot make.

Hunt, who scored 58 goals in his final year of junior and had 46 goals the past two seasons in the AHL, says he will do whatever the Panthers ask and seems to be enjoying his new role.

"I was super-tired but it was great to have the opportunity to be out there and help close out a game like that," Hunt said. "Our top-six does a great job of scoring and providing what we need but if the fourth line can chip in, that's great. We're a heavy line. We want to cycle the puck, get to the net, create stuff and give some energy, which helps the team and takes some of the pressure off of those top guys.

"This is a bit of a challenge for me, but it's a fun challenge to go out there every night and play against a team's top lines and try and shut them down. You get 10-12 minutes and you want to take advantage, bury your chances when they come. I'm accepting of this challenge and it has been fun. (Acciari and Sceviour) have done it for a while, and I'm just trying to learn everything I can from them."

Pysyk back in the lineup

Defenseman Mark Pysyk is not used to being scratched from the lineup, but he was the odd man out in the first two games this season.

Pysyk will be back on the ice Tuesday with Josh Brown out against Carolina. Pysyk will be with Keith Yandle on Florida's third pairing.

"We would like to get everyone involved and we have a group of seven back there right now," Quenneville said. "You can argue not starting him ... was he deserving? He was always in consideration. He has some experience, gives us some versatility on the back end and can play both sides. We're definitely looking at him being a part of it and getting involved."

Now in his eighth NHL season, Pysyk said while "it's never fun not playing in the games," he got some good work in with assistant coach Mike Kitchen and is ready to make a difference when it counts.

"No one likes to go through a bag skate and watch the games, so it will be good to see some real action again," Pysyk said after Monday's workout at the IceDen.

"I don't think there is much time for me to feel things out, I kind of have to hit the ground running and do my best to not be in this spot again. ... It's never fun to be out of the lineup no matter what the situation is. It sucks and it makes you really not take anything for granted and enjoy it when you are in there."

Because of his salary — and the Panthers being so close to the cap ceiling — Pysyk has been the subject of trade rumors for some time.

He counts for \$2.7 million against the cap and makes \$3.5 million in real salary based on how his contract was drawn up. Pysyk has heard the rumors and if it is up to him, he hopes nothing happens. Pysyk is in the final year of his contract and can be a free agent after this season.

"I think this is an awesome time to be here right now," said Pysyk, who is in his fourth season with Florida after coming from Buffalo at the 2016 draft in a trade for Dmitry Kulikov.

"With the new coach, the way he interacts with everyone and the excitement level we all have here, there's a different attitude. It's a

good time to be a Panther. I like it here. Whatever happens is out of my control, but right now, it's good to be here. This is not how I drew things up coming out of the summer, but those two games are behind me and I am ready to move on."

• Bobrovsky will make his third consecutive start to begin the season on Tuesday against the Hurricanes.

With the Panthers playing three road games in four days this weekend at Buffalo and against the Islanders and Devils, backup Sam Montembeault should see his first start soon.

— Florida opened its season with two games against the Lightning (who finished last season atop the NHL standings), and the schedule does not get much easier.

Carolina comes to Sunrise on Tuesday after beating the Lightning in overtime on Sunday, and went to the conference finals last spring. Of Florida's next eight games, six are against teams which made the postseason last year.

"The whole division got off to a great start, so that's where it is at," said Quenneville, whose team split its first two against Tampa Bay.

"We anticipate that will be the case all year, so you have to take care of your own business knowing every team in the division feels it can be a playoff team and the ones that were playoff teams are doing pretty darned good as well."

The Athletic LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156306 New York Islanders

Thomas Greiss makes 35 saves to lead Islanders past the Winnipeg Jets

By ALLAN KREDA ASSOCIATED PRESS | OCT 07, 2019 | 1:28 AM

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — The New York Islanders relied heavily on Thomas Greiss last season, and their invariably calm netminder picked up right where he left off.

Greiss made 35 saves and Josh Bailey, Brock Nelson and Anders Lee scored second-period goals to lead the Islanders past the Winnipeg Jets 4-1 Sunday night.

It was the first win of the season for the Islanders, who lost their home opener 2-1 to Washington on Friday.

"It's always good to get the first win out of the way," said the 33-year-old Greiss, who won 23 games last season with a career-best 2.27 goals against average while splitting time with Robin Lehner. "The guys did their part and I did mine."

The Jets lost for the second time in three games in the New York area to start their season. Winnipeg lost 6-4 to the Rangers in their season opener Thursday, and beat the New Jersey Devils 5-4 in a shootout Friday. The Jets are opening the season on a four-game trip that wraps up Tuesday in Pittsburgh.

After a scoreless first period, Bailey put the Islanders on the board, tipping in a power-play goal at 1:51 of the second. Anthony Beauvillier and Devon Toews picked up assists.

It was the third straight game the Jets had allowed the opening goal.

Nelson made it 2-0 at 4:38, sending a shot past goaltender Laurent Brossoit, who started his second straight game and finished with 29 saves. Bailey and defenseman Ryan Pullock assisted on the goal.

Lee stretched the Islanders' lead to 3-0 at 15:55 with his first goal of the season, assisted by Scott Mayfield and Jordan Eberle.



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"It was a good rebound game for us," said Lee, the team captain who signed a new seven-year \$49 million contract in July. "We were more crisp and Greiss played a great game for us."

The game before a crowd of 9,923 was originally scheduled to be played at Barclays Center in Brooklyn, but was moved to Nassau Coliseum last month. It was the first time in the building's history — which dates to 1972 — the Islanders played a Sunday night home game at the Coliseum. They only twice had played Sunday afternoon games on Long Island.

Patrik Laine put the Jets on the board at 17:06 of the second, snapping a shot past Greiss for his first goal of the season. The Islanders were one of two teams the 21-year-old Laine hadn't scored against. Columbus remains the other.

Blake Wheeler and defenseman Anthony Bitetto, a Long Island native, were credited with assists on Laine's goal.

Beauvillier scored for the Islanders at 1:25 of the third, with assists going to Leo Komarov and Derrick Brassard, his first point as a member of the Islanders.

The Jets outshot the Islanders 15-9 in the opening period. The Islanders dominated the second period with a 19-9 advantage in shots.

"They've got a lot of guys who can shoot. They are a good team," Islanders coach Barry Trotz said of the Jets. "Greiss was really solid."

Brossoit played well despite the loss. His best early save came when he stopped Komarov on a short-handed breakaway at 13:10 of the first. Brossoit also made two short-handed saves on Nelson in the same sequence midway through the second.

"He was fantastic. When you play as well as he played, you deserve a better number," Jets coach Paul Maurice said. "He's been like that all through camp. He made some great saves and gave us a chance to hang around."

The Islanders started Greiss in goal after newcomer Semyon Varlamov played in the opening loss to Washington on Friday.

Greiss shared the William M. Jennings Trophy with Lehner last season when the Islanders allowed the fewest goals in the league.

"We didn't give them too much room," added Greiss, who stopped all 12 shots he faced in the third period to cement the victory. "We played hard."

### NOTES

The Islanders scratched forwards Tom Kuhnhackl and Ross Johnston and rookie defenseman Noah Dobson, who has yet to make his NHL debut. ... The teams meet again Oct. 17 in Winnipeg. ... Winnipeg scratched forwards Bryan Little and David Gustafsson and defenseman Josh Morrissey, who sustained an upper body injury during warmups. ... Islanders coach Barry Trotz passed Hall of Famer Al Arbour on the all-time games-coached list with 1,608, third-most in league history.

New York Daily News LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156307 New York Islanders

Islanders giving Derick Brassard badly needed fresh start

By Brett Cyrgalis October 7, 2019 | 7:01PM

There are few players in the NHL who follow the league as a whole as closely as Derick Brassard. He was always the first one who wanted to chat about the trade deadline — who was going where, what the rumors were, which team got ripped off.

Turns out eventually the meat grinder of the business sucked him in, as well. Now on the other side of it, having signed a one-year, \$1.2 million deal with the Islanders this summer, the 32-year-old Brassard can reflect on what has been a hellacious 10 months, if not a totally whirlwind three-plus years since the Rangers traded him in the summer of 2016.

"You can see it, sometimes [after] the trade deadline, it's hard getting to a team and playing right away," Brassard told The Post after Monday's practice, as his team prepared to wrap up its three-game season-opening homestand with a Coliseum match against the Oilers on Tuesday night, having split their first two.

Brassard has now been traded several times, and his game has suffered for it. It started when the Blue Jackets' first-round pick (No. 6 overall) in 2006 was traded to the Rangers in 2013 as part of the big Marian Gaborik deal. He spent four-plus years with the Blueshirts, going to one Stanley Cup final and another conference final, never missing the playoffs, earning the moniker of Big Game Brass.

But the Blueshirts wanted to get younger, and wanted to shed the \$5 million salary-cap hit he carried as part of the five-year, \$25 million deal they gave him in 2014. So they shipped Brassard and a seventh-round pick to his hometown Senators in exchange for Mika Zibanejad and a second-round pick. Even Brassard knew it was a steal for the Rangers, as Zibanejad has since emerged into a legit star.

But it began a sequence for Brassard where he could hardly call any city home. The discombobulated Senators traded him to the Penguins during the 2017-18 season, but he wasn't that final piece the Penguins were looking for to give them a third straight Stanley Cup.

Derick Brassard with the Rangers in 2016 Anthony J. Causi

"This summer I was looking for a team to get back to my game, getting a role, because I was kind of getting lost in Pittsburgh with that," Brassard said. "You start doubting yourself and stuff like that."

So last season, the Penguins traded Brassard to the Panthers a few weeks before the deadline, a deal in which it was clear Florida was going to flip him again. The Panthers moved him to the Avalanche, the sixth team of his career and the fourth in three seasons.

"Last year, there's not a lot of things I could control," Brassard said. "Maybe it was a down year, but it was really hard to get going."

So Brassard wanted a fresh start, and he met with Islanders team president Lou Lamoriello and coach Barry Trotz, both with reputations that preceded them. He knew the team could use a veteran center after Valterri Filppula left, not to mention the earlier departure of John Tavares.

And he knew he liked playing hockey in the New York area, even if living on Long Island and the club's facilities have both surprised him in a good way.

"When you go from different cities — stay at a hotel, go from another hotel, to another hotel, to another hotel — it wasn't the greatest situation," Brassard said. "It's behind me, and I'm looking forward."

Trotz made it clear to Brassard that he thought he was still a good player, and that all the movement was just a matter of circumstance.

"I was saying to him when he first got here — there's a business aspect, and sometimes where you are, salary-wise, to make things fit, you end up being that roaming piece," Trotz said. "I think, as much as anything, that's how he became of a product of playing on





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three different teams last year. It wasn't directed at anything as a player. It was just the business side, the financial side."

Now Trotz said that Brassard is "playing with confidence," and has helped young fellow French-Canadian winger Anthony Beauvillier on his wing, with another vet,

Leo Komarov, on the right. With one assist through the first two games, Brassard is hoping he can get something rolling — really get his career back on track.

"I thought it was a good opportunity for me to come here," Brassard said, "and just get back to where I was."

New York Post LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156308 New York Islanders

Anthony Beauvillier finding comfort in hot start to Islanders' season

By Brian Heyman

Anthony Beauvillier set up the first goal of the game with a perfect power-play pass and delivered the last one with a backhanded finish. He posted the two points in the Islanders' 4-1 win over Winnipeg Sunday night at NYCB Live's Nassau Coliseum to score the honor of first star.

He's their leading point producer with three in the 1-1 start, contributing the goal and two assists.

Yes, it's a very small sample size. But it took Beauvillier eight games to score his first goal and 20 games to secure his second assist last season. The fast-moving 22-year-old left wing is in his fourth season and could be ready to take another step forward. His comfort level has risen in this second season under Barry Trotz.

"Everyone was learning, I think, last year with a new system," Beauvillier said after practice Monday for Tuesday night's homestand-closing game against Edmonton. "I just feel a lot more comfortable this year, and I'm pretty sure all the other guys feel the same way."

His goal count dropped from 21 in 2017-18 to 18 last season and his assists dipped from 15 to 10.

"I'm just in a better place in my head, I would say," Beauvillier said. "Put less pressure on myself and just go out there and play and have fun . . . It's going to be my mentality for the rest of the year."

Trotz liked what he saw from Beauvillier in the postseason and is enjoying the current view, too.

"Beau looks like a different player this year," Trotz said. "A lot of that has to do with the type of playoff he had last year . . . When it's the most important time of the year and you're able to elevate your game, it sort of carries over. I think there's a lot of confidence in that and who he's playing with, and they're having success."

Now he's playing on the third line with a veteran newcomer, center Derick Brassard. They lived together for a month in Garden City, spending time during the summer talking about the coming season. The chemistry has been good.

"I know he's got some great potential," Brassard said. "He's still a young guy. He's trying to improve every day. That's the one thing that I noticed. He competes hard, and he's got a really good shot. He's got all the tools to become a really solid player."

Beauvillier isn't shooting for a certain amount of points.

"But I'm just looking to feel good about myself, feel good about the team, and get wins," he said. "I think that's the key to have success."

Notes & quotes: Casey Cizikas (lower body) didn't practice. He played in both games after getting hurt in the preseason finale, but Trotz said, "He's still a little bit banged up," and added that sitting out practice is a part of a "maintenance" process that will continue "until it's fully healed." . . . Josh Bailey will be playing in his 800th NHL game.

Newsday LOADED: LOADED: 10.08.2019

1156309 New York Islanders

8 thoughts on Islanders opening weekend: Offense coming from unlikely sources so far

By Arthur Staple Oct 7, 2019

UNIONDALE, N.Y. — We have a slew of observations, notes and analysis on the Islanders' 1-1 opening weekend, after they dropped the opener to Washington 2-1 and rebounded Sunday with a 4-1 win over Winnipeg.

Let's get to it.

Middle six to the rescue

Barry Trotz was rightly concerned with his second and third lines coming out of training camp, with the top line (Anders Lee-Mat Barzal-Jordan Eberle) and the fourth line (Matt Martin-Casey Cizikas-Cal Clutterbuck) set from Day One.

Michael Dal Colle didn't stand out much in camp, but he got the second line assignment with Brock Nelson and Josh Bailey. The third line just seemed like a hodgepodge, with Derick Brassard between the somewhat skilled Anthony Beauvillier and the china-shop bull Leo Komarov. Friday against the Caps was a slog for everyone, with decent play in the forward two zones backed up by lousy execution. But it was that third line that "generated" the lone goal, with Devon Toews' shot deflecting off of four Capitals skates and in.

On Sunday against the undermanned Jets, Beauvillier was the driving force. He set up Josh Bailey's redirection power-play goal and scored one of his own, a good net-front effort to shed Winnipeg rookie Ville Heinola, roof a backhand and provide a three-goal edge.

The Brassard line wasn't terribly effective over the two games — Komarov was actually the most consistent of the three — but if, like last season, it can chip in a goal on occasion, that goes a long way.

Dal Colle holds his own

There was no easing Dal Colle into his 2RW assignment these first two games — Trotz flipped Bailey and Dal Colle on the wings and said it's the long-term plan "for a number of reasons" that he did not elaborate on. But rather than go exclusively with the Cizikas line against Alex Ovechkin-Nick Backstrom-Tom Wilson on Friday and Blake Wheeler-Mark Scheifele-Patrik Laine on Sunday, Trotz split the duties between Cizikas and Nelson, with Nelson's line getting the bulk of the work against the top lines.

So, Dal Colle saw 10:31 of Scheifele and 9:46 of Wheeler on Sunday and 9:25 of Ovechkin on Friday. His lone blemish came on Laine's goal, which more involved a hiccup by Bailey covering for Adam Pelech in the neutral zone.





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"Two pretty big tests off the start here — not just skill guys but big guys," Dal Colle said. "I thought our line did a pretty good job both games."

Dal Colle had some good moments on the forecheck in both games, as well. Trotz still feels that spot is up for grabs — 2RW might just scream Oliver Wahlstrom's name at some point this season, which may play a role in getting Bailey acquainted with the left side — but Dal Colle is working hard out of the gate.

"Right now he's going through some systematic issues we've got to correct," Trotz said. "I moved him over to the right side, so he's getting lost in some systematic things. Michael had a slow start in camp and he kept building and building. That's a spot we're going to try a number of people in this year. If he wants to grab it, it can be his."

Top line was better, but...

Barzal was flying through the Isles' dominating second period and into the third on Sunday, leading the Isles in every metric. He had five high-danger chances of his own on Sunday, but he's still looking for his first point.

"Can't score," he called out as he breezed by the postgame locker room. His line was just as out of sync as the rest of the Isles through all of Friday's loss. On Sunday, it was much closer to what it needs to be, with Lee deflecting home a Scott Mayfield point shot off a good dump-in and retrieval by Eberle to start the play.

"What I liked about Barzy, he was engaged," Trotz said. "He had a lot of detail in his game. He kept getting the puck. And he creates offense. I really like where his head is at. That line, game one, wasn't as good as it could be, and that's a group of three. Today they were dangerous all the time."

A little offense from defense

Toews' season-opening goal on Friday was pure luck, of course, but it still was a good starting point. The Islanders got one goal from a defenseman through the first eight games of last season, and their 30 total goals from the D were in the bottom half of the league.

Toews actually struggled in his own end both games and fumbled a few pucks you didn't see him lose last season, when he came up in December and hit the ice flying. But he had an assist on Bailey's power-play goal on Sunday and Mayfield got his shot through for Lee's deflection for 3-0. Only Beauvillier's goal didn't have a contribution from a defenseman, so the Islanders are getting what they need from the defense so far.

Dobson sits and Boychuk's metrics are meh

Johnny Boychuk isn't going to drive play and his shot share over the two games was pretty underwater (35.3 percent Corsi-for percentage, per Natural Stat Trick). But he got the nod over Noah Dobson both nights. Trotz said there's a plan for Dobson, of course, and he's not sharing it; with the speedy Oilers coming in on Tuesday, that might be the spot to get Dobson's feet wet.

The Nick Leddy-Boychuk pair didn't get the puck moving out of the defensive zone much on Friday, though neither did the other D pairs. Pelech and Ryan Pulock were very good on Sunday and Leddy improved quite a bit; Boychuk is Boychuk, there just isn't much nuance to his game. So Trotz will decide whether he should stick or whether Dobson makes his debut.

Hard to gauge special teams just yet

The power-play goal on Sunday was crucial, but one PP per night isn't going to be much help and makes it hard to assess assistant coach Jim Hiller's influence. Trotz said he wanted to see more "greasy" power-play goals, but Bailey's high tip from the slot off a Beauvillier pass was kind of pretty, actually.

As for the penalty kill, it went 3-for-4 against some skilled guys over two games, allowing only T.J. Oshie's shovel backhand over Semyon Varlamov for the eventual winner on Friday. The PK, with Lane Lambert still in charge and almost everyone back from last season, looked well-oiled.

Greiss gets the nod in net

Both Varlamov and Thomas Greiss were sharp, perhaps sharper than their teammates through much of their games Friday and Sunday, but it was Greiss who made no mistakes. Varlamov whiffed a bit on Jakub Vrana's opening goal on Friday; Greiss made 35 saves, including some more open chances than Trotz liked, to either keep it tied through the first or keep the lead at multiple goals in the third.

If Trotz is true to form, Greiss will get the call against the Oilers on Tuesday. Whoever plays best will play, goes the coach's mantra, so we will see if that happens.

Beauvillier isn't left out

The 22-year-old played much of last season on a line with veteran Finns Komarov and Valterri Filppula, so he was left to wonder what they were talking about half the time. Now, with fellow French-Canadian Brassard in Filppula's spot, Beauvillier could turn the tables on Uncle Leo and speak French, but the kid is just too nice for that.

"I'm giving it to Leo a little bit about not speaking English with Val last year," he said. "It's no fun when you're left alone and the other guys are maybe chirping you in a different language, so we go with English now."

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1156270 Columbus Blue Jackets

Being patient

Brian Hedger The Columbus Dispatch @BrianHedger

Oct 7, 2019 at 10:49 PM

They were swept in back-to-back games to open the season, and the Blue Jackets felt that two words were mostly to blame.

Patience was one. Composure was the other.

So, as they prepared to face the Buffalo Sabres on Monday at Nationwide Arena — a team that won its first two games with surprising ease — the Jackets aimed to regroup by using those words rather than shunning them like they did in a 7-2 drubbing Saturday in Pittsburgh.

"The biggest thing is the patience in our game," coach John Tortorella said, prior to watching his team display a bunch of it in a 4-3 overtime victory against Buffalo. "This has to be a patient hockey club. No matter if we are winning or losing, we have to have patience, away from the puck especially."

There was ample opportunity to show it against the Sabres, who overcame deficits of 2-0, 2-1 and 3-2 to force OT — including a game-tying goal by rookie Victor Olofsson to make it 3-3 with 1:14 left in regulation.

Boone Jenner, one of the Jackets' top penalty-killers, was sitting in the penalty box for that one, stewing about his ill-timed face-off violation. Rather than melting down, teammates picked him up in the 3-on-3 overtime that followed.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

## NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 8, 2019

The Blue Jackets, playing without injured forward Josh Anderson, won the game on a goal at 2:08 by rookie Alexandre Texier, whose wrist shot beat goalie Linus Ullmark after captain Nick Foligno picked Jack Eichel's pocket and sent over a pass.

"I think today was a self-inflicted test," said Foligno, who also put the Jackets up 3-2 at 6:46 of the third period with his first goal of the season to cap a power play. "You're always playing great teams in this league, but for us it was testing our mind. It's not the easiest thing sometimes. Guys are going to have to give up a little bit to get that perfect opportunity sometimes. The team that can stay patient the longest usually wins."

This time, that team was the Blue Jackets, who outshot Buffalo by a whopping 44-18 margin and still needed OT to win. The entire game was one big opportunity for the Jackets to press too hard once again and leaving goalie Joonas Korpisalo (15 saves) in bad situations.

Instead, their patience paid off.

Oliver Bjorkstrand opened the scoring with 1:51 left in the first, backhanding in his first goal of the season for a 1-0 lead, and Cam Atkinson followed it 56 seconds later to make it 2-0 on his second goal — and second power-play goal — of the season.

Buffalo tied it 2-2 in the second on goals by Marcus Johansson (power play) and Jeff Skinner — despite being outshot 15-7 — but the Blue Jackets wouldn't topple.

"After the second period they tied it, but I knew we were on top of it," Korpisalo said. "If we played patient, I knew it was going to come."

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1156271 Columbus Blue Jackets

Sonny Milano gets another shot to crack Blue Jackets' lineup

Henry Palattella The Columbus Dispatch @hellapalattella  
Oct 7, 2019 at 9:52 PM

It was a season debut 349 days in the making.

Monday night, for the first time since Oct. 23, 2018, Sonny Milano played for the Blue Jackets.

"I'm ready to go," Milano said Monday morning. "I'm here with something to prove. I just need to play my best and then see what happens."

Milano stepped in for the injured Josh Anderson and played on the Jackets' fourth line with Riley Nash and Jakob Lilja against the Sabres. Coach John Tortorella announced Monday morning that Anderson was "day-to-day" with an upper body injury.

Milano got 7:39 of ice time against the Sabres and recorded a hit.

Monday's debut officially starts the most important season for Milano, who was the 16th pick in the 2014 NHL draft.

After posting 22 points in 55 games in the 2017-18 season, Milano played in only eight games in October last season for the Jackets before being sent to the Cleveland Monsters of the AHL. Milano had 24 points (11 goals, 13 assists) in 27 games last year for Cleveland. He scored one goal last year for the Blue Jackets.

Milano, who was a healthy scratch in the Jackets' first two games, said he switched trainers over the summer, something that he thinks will help him this season.

"I feel more explosive," Milano said. "I think I'm a little more mature, as well. I understand what needs to be done."

Milano's debut wasn't the only lineup shuffling the Blue Jackets did Monday, as defenseman Markus Nutivaara was inserted back into the lineup in place of Dean Kukan. Nutivaara was a healthy scratch Saturday at Pittsburgh.

Practicing patience

In a 25-minute stretch between the second and third periods Saturday, the Penguins scored five straight goals to put the Blue Jackets away.

"The key where we lost ourselves in Pittsburgh is our composure," Tortorella said. "The next three shifts after (the Penguins' third goal) we gave up odd-man rushes because we were just doing way too much to try to get back into it when we still had half the game left."

Tortorella said his team has to play a certain way to be successful.

"The biggest thing is the patience in our game," he said. "This has to be a patient hockey club, no matter if we're winning or losing."

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1156272 Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets face gut check against Buffalo Sabres in game 3

Brian Hedger The Columbus Dispatch @BrianHedger  
Oct 7, 2019 at 1:15 PM

It has been a rocky start to the season, to say the least, but the Blue Jackets are looking more at their response to it Monday against the Buffalo Sabres than the result.

Winning or gaining a standings point is what they want, of course, but this game is going to be measured by how they play after dropping their first two games to the Toronto Maple Leafs and Pittsburgh Penguins by an 11-3 overall margin.

"We just have to go out there and play our game," said defenseman Zach Werenski, who scored one of two goals for the Blue Jackets in a 7-2 loss Saturday in Pittsburgh. "You might not win every time (by) playing your game, but if you go out there and play hard, you stay above the puck, you do all the things we talk about ... it's a good recipe for success."

The Jackets, who will be without forward Josh Anderson because of an undisclosed upper-body injury, were able to do it for stretches against the Maple Leafs and Penguins. Costly penalties and defensive breakdowns caused them to unravel in each game, but especially in Pittsburgh — where the Penguins scored five goals in the second period.

"The key for us, where we lost ourselves in Pittsburgh, is just our composure," coach John Tortorella said. "Thirty minutes of that game, we were right there."

Werenski's goal cut the Penguins' lead to 2-1 just 6:45 into the second, but Jared McCann scored two minutes later for a 3-1 lead — his first of two goals in that period — and that prompted the meltdown.



# CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 8, 2019

"We looked at some clips where the next three shifts after that third goal we give up odd-man rushes because we're just trying to do way too much to try and get back into it," Tortorella said. "And we still have half the game (left). Up until that third goal, we were playing really good hockey, then we lost our composure. Then, in the third period, it just totally got away from us."

The Blue Jackets cannot afford to repeat that mistake against the Sabres, who are 2-0 and have dominated the Penguins and New Jersey Devils by a 10-3 margin.

Carter Hutton started those games in net, but Linus Ullmark will make his season debut Monday for the Sabres, who also have the league's top power play with four goals in six man-advantage situations.

"We want to try to keep it rolling," said forward Jeff Skinner, who has a goal, assist and two points. "There's been sort of a lot of reasons for (our start). There's been contributions throughout the lineup, our goalie (has) played well and we want to try and keep that good feeling going."

Goaltender Joonas Korpisalo, who took the loss Friday against Toronto, will get his second start for the Blue Jackets.

Forward Sonny Milano will make his season debut in place of Anderson, who is day-to-day.

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1156273 Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets | 'Real stuff' is tough on Jackets' young goalies

Brian Hedger The Columbus Dispatch @BrianHedger

Oct 7, 2019 at 6:45 AM

A day before the season started, John Tortorella was asked if the Blue Jackets' preseason had answered any concerns about going with two inexperienced goaltenders.

The veteran coach, who has guided the Jackets to the playoffs the past three years, didn't limit his answer to goalies Joonas Korpisalo and rookie Elvis Merzlikins.

"Oh, they're going to be answered now," he said, alluding to a daunting home/road back-to-back this past weekend against the Toronto Maple Leafs and Pittsburgh Penguins. "When you start playing the real stuff, that's when you find out, not only about your goaltending, but everybody ... you really don't find out about the people until everything starts going for the real stuff."

Well, the real stuff is here now.

It arrived this past weekend with a heavy 1-2 combination that dropped the Blue Jackets to the mat, not to mention the bottom of the standings in the Metropolitan Division and Eastern Conference.

They outplayed Toronto for much of Friday's game, but the Maple Leafs capitalized on two of five power plays and won 4-1 with a few elite plays made by elite players.

"I was encouraged with a lot of what we did, away from the puck offensively," Tortorella said Saturday, before facing the Penguins at PPG Paints Arena. "We really lost chances to gain momentum, especially in the second period, which I thought was probably our best period. So, I was encouraged. It's not a 4-1 game to me. We

can't be in the box as much as we were. That just can't happen. So, get ready to play our next one."

The next one started out OK, with Merzlikins going 10 for 10 on saves in the first period of his NHL debut, but it quickly spiraled out of control.

The Penguins lit the rookie up for five goals in the second period, taking a 5-1 lead, and tacked on two more in the third for a 7-2 rout.

Afterward, the Blue Jackets were an interesting case study.

Captain Nick Foligno did his best to put a positive spin on an ugly drubbing. Pierre-Luc Dubois, who had a tough game and even fought Penguins captain Sidney Crosby, spoke through gritted teeth — fed up with perceived doubts about his team in the wake of losing free agents Artemi Panarin, Sergei Bobrovsky and Matt Duchene.

"Every day, we talk about losing Bob, losing Bread," he said of Bobrovsky and Panarin. "We're a (expletive) good team. We've just got to believe in it, you know? I think it's enough talking about who we lost. It happened. Who cares? We're a team here. We have good players. I mean, we lose some guys ... everybody loses some guys at some point. We've just got to believe in our team, you know?"

This is the real stuff.

These are the bumps, and it's up to the Blue Jackets to come up with a strong response after being outscored by a combined 11-3 in their first two games.

They will get no help from the schedule, either.

The Buffalo Sabres (2-0-0) are coming in Monday to Nationwide Arena, fresh off their impressive 7-2 waxing of the New Jersey Devils on Saturday night in Buffalo. It will be the Jackets' third game in four days, but also another chance to get their engine started.

"When we're going through, maybe, some tough lessons or a bump in the road, I think you've got to be really careful as a coach — and I'm very cognizant of that this year," Tortorella said last week. "I need to be really careful to teach the proper way and allow them still to be themselves and to play with confidence. So, you're always aware of that. I'm especially aware of that this year."

It's a good thing, too.

The real stuff has arrived, in full force, and things for the Blue Jackets have gotten real, really quickly.

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1156274 Columbus Blue Jackets

John Christie, business leader who helped bring Blue Jackets to town, has died

Mark Ferenchik The Columbus Dispatch @MarkFerenchik

Oct 6, 2019 at 4:03 PM

John S. Christie, the former president and chief financial officer of Worthington Industries who once led the Columbus Area Chamber of Commerce and chaired the Franklin County Convention Facilities Authority, has died. He was 69.

Christie was found at his Upper Arlington home, said Cathy Lyttle, senior vice president and chief human resources officer for Worthington Industries.