



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

THE NEWS & OBSERVER

Blue Jackets hand Canes first loss of season

By Chip Alexander

For the first five games of the season, the Carolina Hurricanes knew nothing but winning and good times.

Now, the Canes must deal with their first loss.

The Columbus Blue Jackets, looking to jumpstart their season, rolled into PNC Arena, put in 60 minutes of hustle and hard work Saturday and left with a 3-2 victory over the Canes.

The Hurricanes' 5-0 start was the best in franchise history while the Blue Jackets had lost three of their first four games. But Columbus was the better team Saturday.

"We weren't ready," Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We didn't mentally prepare properly, I think, as a group for that kind of game and we got what we deserved, in my opinion.

"They played a great road game. They grinded us down and we didn't want to get to our game enough."

Pierre-Luc Dubois gave the Blue Jackets a 3-2 lead at 1:15 of the third period. After a turnover by the Canes' Brock McGinn near the Columbus blue line, Dubois first beat McGinn down the ice and then goalie James Reimer for the score.

Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton had goals for the Canes, continuing their early season scoring tears. It was 1-1 after the first period and 2-2 after two as defenseman Markus Nutivaara and forward Oliver Bjorkstrand scored for Columbus.

Blue Jackets goalie Joonas Korpisalo, starting in back-to-back games, got the job done in the third for a team that has gone through a makeover since last season. Korpisalo had 30 saves, 11 in the final period.

The Canes rallied for comeback victories in their first three games, tying the score in the third period each time and then winning in a shootout (Montreal) or overtime (Washington, Tampa Bay). But the Blue Jackets stymied the Canes by aggressively forechecking and cycling, winning chases to the puck and being stingy in the neutral zone.

"They were playing our game essentially, giving us no room and frustrating us," Canes captain Jordan Staal said. "Partly it was our own doing. We made it harder on ourselves than we needed to with our decisions with the puck, and made it easier for them.

"When you're a little bit tired you start making mental mistakes more than anything. I think our decisions with the puck and trying to be cute with the puck ... it just wasn't a game like that and made it harder for us to get some momentum and get the fans in it."

Brind'Amour said the only real positive from the game might have been the play of Reimer, who had 32 stops.

"They worked hard and they earned it," Reimer said. "They were a little better than us. We played hard and we battled but sometimes it does not go your way."

Brind'Amour was hoping for a repeat of Friday's game, a decisive 5-2 victory over the New York Islanders. The Canes were the faster, more aggressive team, completely shutting down the Islanders in the third period.

But the Blue Jackets, coming off a 2-1 loss to the Anaheim Ducks on Friday, were active, disruptive, preventing the Canes from getting a transition game going.

For the first two periods, it was punch, counter-punch.

In the first, Nutivaara's first goal of the season -- the defenseman all alone on the backdoor for a tap-in-- gave the Blue Jackets a 1-0 lead. That lasted 27 seconds.

The Canes' passing was at its best in a quick-strike sequence, the puck going from Hamilton to Martin Necas to Ryan Dzingel and finally to Haula, who was unchecked in the slot. Haula's goal was his fifth in six games and it was tied 1-1.

In the second, it was the Canes' turn to take the lead and lose it. In 17 seconds.

After Korpisalo lost his paddle, Hamilton unloaded a shot off a Jaccob Slavin pass that Korpisalo had no chance of stopping. It was Hamilton's fourth of the season.

But Bjorkstrand had the answer for the Blue Jackets, carrying the puck around the net and wheeling into the slot, turning and whipping a shot that Reimer couldn't track or stop.

"We were just lazy a little bit on our guy and you can't do that and we got burned," Brind'Amour said. "That's kind how the game went for me. We just were flat."

There was a scary moment involving the Canes' Haydn Fleury in the first period. The defenseman fell head-first into the boards after being hooked by the Blue Jackets' Alexandre Texier in the Carolina zone. Fleury was helped off the ice and to the locker room but soon returned.

The Canes announced before the game that defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk had been activated off non-roster injured reserve. Van Riemsdyk underwent shoulder surgery after being injured in the Stanley Cup playoffs last spring.

After the game, the Canes reassigned forward Julien Gauthier to the Charlotte Checkers of the AHL. The Canes leave Monday on a West Coast road trip and will play the next four games away from home.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019



Hurricanes stifled by Blue Jackets, handed first loss of season

Pierre-Luc Dubois' go-ahead goal in the third period allowed Columbus to play keep away and end Carolina's season-opening five-game winning streak

By Cory Lavalette

RALEIGH — Blue Jackets center Pierre-Luc Dubois turned a Carolina miscue into the game-winning goal just 75 seconds into the third period, handing the Hurricanes a 3-2 loss for their first defeat of the season in front of 16,224 Saturday at PNC Arena.

"It would have been nice to go to 82-0," Hurricanes goalie James Reimer said. "That would've been the dream, I guess."

Instead, Carolina saw its season-opening five-game wins streak sputter to a halt in the face of Columbus' slow-it-down style.

"They did exactly how we thought they were going to come and play us, to a T, and we weren't ready," Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We didn't mentally prepare properly, as a group, for that kind of game. And we got what we deserved, in my opinion."

The Blue Jackets capitalized on Carolina's mistakes, none bigger than Dubois' winner.

Hurricanes winger Brock McGinn's weak pass at the Columbus blue line was intercepted by Blue Jackets forward Gustav Nyquist, who poked the puck ahead to Dubois. Dubois used his bigger frame to shield McGinn on a race up ice and beat Reimer with a backhand to give Columbus a 3-2 lead.

From there, the Blue Jackets locked it down by stacking up in the neutral zone, limiting Carolina's speed and clogging passing lanes.

"When they got that lead, they were responsible with the puck and made smart decisions," said Reimer (32 saves). "We just couldn't quite get inside on them."

Still, the Hurricanes weren't ready to make excuses following their first blemish of the season.

"I thought we made it harder on ourselves than we needed to with our decisions with the puck and the way we wanted to play," Hurricanes captain Jordan Staal said. "Made it easier for them, and that was the result."

The first "easy" play for the Blue Jackets opened the scoring.

On a broken play in the Carolina end, Columbus defenseman Ryan Murray found fellow blueliner Markus Nutivaara all alone at the far side of the net. He tapped the puck into the vacant net at 10:17 of the first period for a 1-0 lead.

The Hurricanes quickly responded.

Defenseman Dougie Hamilton jumped into the play for a chance, then fed the puck below the goal line to Martin Necas. Necas quickly passed to Ryan Dzingel, who one-touched the puck to Erik Haula in the slot for a one-timer that beat Joonas Korpisalo to tie the game just 27 seconds after the Blue Jackets had first scored.

The Hurricanes jumped ahead when Korpisalo (30 saves), without his stick, couldn't stop a Hamilton slap shot to make it 2-1 Carolina 2:51 into the second period.

The Blue Jackets, like the Hurricanes in the first, quickly tied the game on the next shift.

Columbus' Oliver Bjorkstrand wheeled behind the Carolina net and beat Sebastian Aho to the slot, roofing a shot past Reimer to make things even just 17 seconds after the Hurricanes gained their only lead.

"They're both just giveaways — they're gimmes," Brind'Amour said of the first two Columbus goals. "You get beat out of the corner twice, and we're just lazy a little bit on our guy. You can't do that. Can't do it. So we got burned."

The Hurricanes (5-1-0) now hit the road for a four-game road trip over the next two weeks, including three games in four days in California, starting on Tuesday in Los Angeles. The trip ends with a rematch against the Blue Jackets in two Thursdays.

Notes: Hamilton now has four goals (first among NHL defensemen) and eight points (T-1st) through six games. ... Haula has scored in five of Carolina's six games. ... Both teams were 0-3 on the power play. ... Defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk was activated from the injured list prior to the game. ... Julien Gauthier, who played his second NHL game, was reassigned to Charlotte of the AHL following the game.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019



Recap: Columbus Snaps Canes' Winning Streak

Canes fall to Blue Jackets, 3-2

by Michael Smith

The Carolina Hurricanes saw their season-opening, five-game winning streak snapped in a 3-2 loss to the Columbus Blue Jackets.

Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton found the back of the net again, but the Canes could not erase an early third-period deficit to extend their franchise-best start.

Here are five takeaways from Saturday night at PNC Arena.

1. Streak Snapped

All good things must come to an end, and the Hurricanes are undefeated no more after dropping a one-goal decision to a divisional opponent.

"It would have been nice to go 82-0. It would have been the dream," James Reimer said. "Sometimes you just don't have it."

After a 5-0-0 start, that's the main takeaway from this one: The Hurricanes didn't have it - at least, not enough of it - and the Blue Jackets did. Columbus took an early lead in the third period and sat on it to secure the two points. There wasn't much else the Canes, who never quite got to their game, could do.

"We were flat," head coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "I give the other team credit. They played a great road game. They grinded us down, and we didn't want to get to our game enough. That's what happens."

81-1-0 is still very much alive, though.

2. Grinding Effort

Columbus played the exact type of game they needed to play in order to defeat the previously undefeated. They hung around with the Hurricanes for 40 minutes, trading quick goals in both the first and second periods. And, when they had an opportunity to strike and take the lead in the third period, they did just that.

"They did exactly how we thought they were going to come play us to a T. We weren't ready and didn't mentally prepare properly as a group for that kind of game," Brind'Amour said. "We got what we deserved, in my opinion."

A Canes turnover at the blue line sprung Pierre-Luc Dubois on a breakaway early in the third period, and he converted his backhand opportunity to put the Blue Jackets ahead, 3-2. From there, the visitors locked down their end of the ice.

"When they got that lead, they were responsible with the puck and made smart decisions. We just couldn't quite get inside

on them," Reimer said. "We worked hard and battled, but we probably just didn't quite have it.

3. Self-Infliction

A night ago, the Hurricanes overwhelmed the Islanders with their speed, persistence and skill.

They never quite got to that level against a Columbus team that had also played the night prior. Perhaps it was fatigue on the tail end of the team's second back-to-back of the season. Perhaps it was being lulled into the game the Blue Jackets wanted to play.

But for whatever reason, the Canes couldn't find that jam that lifted them to the top of the NHL standings in the first week of the season.

"We were making it hard on ourselves. When you're a little bit tired, you start making more mental mistakes than anything," Jordan Staal said. "I thought our decisions with the puck and trying to be cute in a game that just wasn't a game like that made it harder for us to sustain, roll them over and get some momentum."

"They were able to execute a little better than us, and it showed on the scoreboard," Reimer said.

4. Reimer Stands Tall

On the plus side of the Hurricanes' first loss of the season, James Reimer put forth another strong performance in net. He made 32 saves on 35 shots and owns a .933 save percentage across his three starts.

"For me, you wish you can make three more saves, but sometimes things don't go your way," he said. "That's just the way it is."

"If we'd have played one good period, we might have got something. [Reimer] has been good," Brind'Amour said. "That was the one positive sign for me tonight."

5. Haula, Hamilton Score Again

Another upside: Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton continue to find the back of the net.

Haula's team-leading fifth goal of the season capped what was a mesmerizing passing play from Hamilton to Martin Necas down below the goal line to Ryan Dzingel, who one-touched it to Haula for the one-timer. That goal answered Columbus' opening strike just 27 seconds later, tying the game at one in the first period.

In the second period, Hamilton let go of a bomb from downtown that beat Joonas Korpisalo, who was without a stick, on his blocker side. Hamilton has now scored a goal in four consecutive games, the longest such streak of his career.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

Up Next

The Hurricanes head west for a three-game trek through California, beginning with a Tuesday night tilt against the Los Angeles Kings.



Dubois, Blue Jackets hand Hurricanes first loss of season

Scores winner early in third; Carolina's Hamilton extends goal streak to four

by Kurt Dusterberg

RALEIGH, N.C. -- The Columbus Blue Jackets came from behind to hand the Carolina Hurricanes their first loss of the season, 3-2 at PNC Arena on Saturday.

Pierre-Luc Dubois put the Blue Jackets ahead 3-2 at 1:15 of the third period when he took a pass from Gustav Nyquist, got a step on Hurricanes forward Brock McGinn, and scored with a backhand past goalie James Reimer.

"You never know if [McGinn] is going to hold you or lift your stick," Dubois said. "My first instinct was to get him as far as possible behind me. I have a long reach, so get the puck in front of me. Once I got it, just make a quick move because I didn't really have time to react."

Markus Nutivaara and Oliver Bjorkstrand scored, and Ryan Murray and Alexander Wennberg each had two assists for Columbus (2-3-0). Joonas Korpisalo made 30 saves.

Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton scored for Carolina (5-1-0), and Reimer made 32 saves. The loss ended the longest season-opening winning streak in Hurricanes/Hartford Whalers history.

"They (played) exactly how we thought they were going to come and play us to a T, and we weren't ready," Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We didn't mentally prepare properly as a group for that kind of game. We got what we deserved."

Nutivaara, a defenseman, gave the Blue Jackets a 1-0 lead when Murray passed through the left face-off circle to him alone at the net for a tap-in at 10:17.

"I just came off the bench and saw an opportunity," Murray said. "I was really surprised it was [Nutivaara] putting it in on the backdoor. We had a good laugh about it."

Haula tied the game 1-1 27 seconds later when he scored his fifth goal in six games. Three quick passes led to Haula finishing a feed from Ryan Dzingel from the slot at 10:44.

Hamilton scored for the fourth straight game to give the Hurricanes a 2-1 lead at 2:51 of the second. With the puck on its edge, he sent a slap shot under the crossbar.

Jacob Slavin got the primary assist on Hamilton's goal to extend his point streak to five games (two goals, three assists).

Bjorkstrand tied it 2-2 17 seconds later. He skated the puck from behind the net to the high slot and scored unassisted on a wrist shot at 3:08.

"It happens fast, but it's kind of instincts," Bjorkstrand said. "You come from behind the net and see a little ice, and you try to go for it. That was a situation where I could take advantage of it, and I got the shot through."

Columbus limited Carolina's high-quality chances down the stretch, including the final 2:10 when Reimer was pulled for an extra attacker.

"Not just the last two minutes, the whole third period," Korpisalo said. "I didn't have to do any big saves or anything. I saw the puck, (we were) clearing rebounds. I think we played really, really well when we were leading 3-2."

They said it

"I feel a lot better about what we're going to get out of them with a win under their belt instead of being 1-4-0 early in the season and coming to [practice] on Monday. They should feel good about themselves. Everybody contributed, we had some grind to our game. I think that's been something that's been missing consistently in our game." -- Blue Jackets coach John Tortorella

"They were playing our game, essentially, giving us no room and frustrating us. Partly it was our own doing. I think we made it harder on ourselves than we need to with our decisions with the puck." -- Hurricanes captain Jordan Staal

Need to know

Korpisalo is 3-0-2 against the Hurricanes. ... Murray and Nutivaara each was plus-3. ... Haula is the third player in Carolina/Hartford history to score at least five goals in the first six games of a season (Jeff Skinner, five, 2017-18; Al Sims, six, 1980-81). ... Hurricanes forward Teuvo Teravainen had his point streak end at five games (two goals, four assists).

What's next

Blue Jackets: Host the Dallas Stars on Wednesday (7 p.m. ET; FS-O, FS-SW, NHL.TV)

Hurricanes: At the Los Angeles Kings on Tuesday (10:30 p.m. ET; FS-W, FS-CR, NHL.TV)



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019



Blue Jackets edge previously unbeaten Hurricanes 3-2

By Ken Tysiac

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — A focused defensive performance and balanced offense helped the Columbus Blue Jackets end the best start to a season in Carolina Hurricanes' franchise history.

Markus Nutivaara, Oliver Bjorkstrand and Pierre-Luc Dubois scored and Columbus beat the Hurricanes 3-2.

Carolina entered the game with a 5-0-0 record and had scored 11 goals in its last two games, but Joonas Korpisalo stopped 30 of 32 shots and the Blue Jackets used a disciplined defensive effort to win.

"I thought we defended really well as a unit of five," Dubois said. "We have a good 'D' corps, but any good 'D' corps in this league, if left alone for 2-on-1s and 3-on-2s, it's hard. So we defended well. We reloaded well. Our centers and (defensemen) did a good job together. Our wingers did a good job limiting shots from the points."

Dubois overpowered Brock McGinn on a rush from the opposite blue line and lifted a backhander past James Reimer, snapping a 2-all tie 75 seconds into the third period. Columbus made the lead stand up.

Ryan Murray and Alexander Wennberg each added two assists for the Blue Jackets.

Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton scored for the Hurricanes, who didn't match the energy or discipline that Columbus displayed with both teams on the second night of a back-to-back.

"They (played) exactly how we thought they were going to play us, to a tee, and we weren't ready," Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We didn't prepare properly as a group for that kind of game and we got what we deserved in my opinion."

Columbus, meanwhile, had a total of just eight goals in its first four games while posting a 1-3 record. The Blue Jackets didn't exactly break out on offense as Reimer stopped 32 of 35 shots in a strong effort in goal, but their defense kept Carolina's speed in check.

The Blue Jackets had their second-best regular season in club history in 2018-19 with 98 points and a 47-31-4 record, and they are eager to bounce back from a slow start.

"It was huge for us to get back on track," Murray said. "You don't want to fall into that hole, because once you're in that hole it's tough to get out. So we want to keep rolling and get some momentum going."

Brind'Amour said the Blue Jackets have a great defense and made some nice plays to clear the puck while Carolina was "just flat." Columbus coach John Tortorella said the Blue Jackets limited the Hurricanes' speed in the neutral zone and just played hard.

The result gave the Blue Jackets optimism heading into three straight days without a game.

"They should feel good about themselves," Tortorella said of the team. "Everybody contributed. We had some grind to our game. I think that's something that's been missing consistently in our game. It was there most of the night."

NOTES: Haula has scored in five of Carolina's six games and leads the team with five goals. ... All three Columbus goals came at even strength. ... The Blue Jackets are 6-2-2 in their last 10 games against Carolina.

UP NEXT

Blue Jackets: Host Dallas on Wednesday.

Hurricanes: Open a four-game trip on Tuesday against the Kings in Los Angeles.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019



SB NATION
CANES COUNTRY

Recap: Canes streak ends with lackadaisical 3-2 loss to Blue Jackets

It was inevitable, but now the Hurricanes can get on with the business of starting a new streak in California next week.

By Brian LeBlanc

If, in a blind fit of misplaced optimism you decided to wager on the Carolina Hurricanes joining the 1972 Miami Dolphins and the 2003-04 "Invincibles" edition of Arsenal Football Club in the pantheon of professional sports' undefeated seasons, and your friends tried to talk you out of it but you pressed forward, the torpedoes be damned, you should probably listen to your friends more often. Because now you've both made your friends roll your eyes at you and you're out a bit of perfectly good money.

The Hurricanes' unbeaten run ended at five games Saturday night at PNC Arena, as the Columbus Blue Jackets dealt Carolina their first loss of the season, taking a 3-2 decision. Pierre-Luc Dubois scored the winning goal, breaking open a game that was tied for all but 44 seconds of the first two periods despite both teams scoring twice in that stretch.

From the start, the Hurricanes looked a tick off. They went down to five defensemen early when Haydn Fleury crashed into the boards awkwardly following a hook from Alexandre Texier, although Fleury later returned. Markus Nutivaara opened the scoring midway through the first period, scoring what might be one of the easiest goals he'll ever score. As the Jackets completed a line change, Ryan Murray came flying off the bench, and Jake Gardiner overcommitted, leaving Nutivaara completely untouched at the near post for an easy tap-in.

It took just 27 seconds for the Hurricanes to tie the game back through Erik Haula, who scored his team-leading fifth goal on a beautiful four-way tap passing play. Carolina then took the lead shortly after the start of the second period when future Norris Trophy winner Dougie Hamilton unloaded a cannon blast past Joonas Korpisalo, taking the league lead in goals by defensemen with his fourth of the season.

But that lead itself would last just 17 seconds, and the game returned to a stalemate when Oliver Bjorkstrand walked out from behind the net, created a bit of separation between him and Sebastian Aho, and wired a perfect shot over James Reimer's glove into the top corner. Reimer, so good in his first two starts, was far from at fault for tonight's result, but he was outdueled by Korpisalo, making his second start in as many nights.

Dubois then decided it early in the third period, taking advantage of a Brock McGinn turnover at the blue line and converting the partial breakaway. Unlike in their previous comebacks, when they skated teams into the ice in the third period, the Hurricanes couldn't find the extra gear, partly a result of the back-to-back games but more specifically

because of the zone-trapping scheme that John Tortorella's Jackets played to perfection late in the game.

The Hurricanes wore their new white jerseys for the first and only time at home this season, and unlike the black alternate uniforms which have been a lucky charm for the past year-plus, it seems unlikely that the whites will make another appearance at PNC Arena anytime soon. The Canes will take tomorrow off before practicing Monday ahead of a flight to Los Angeles, where they will begin a set of three games in four days against the Kings on Tuesday night.

Prior to the game, the Hurricanes activated Trevor van Riemsdyk from the non-roster injured list, another step in his recovery from offseason shoulder surgery. Van Riemsdyk did not play against Columbus but seems likely to make his season debut on the upcoming road trip, perhaps as early as Tuesday. Then, after the game, the team sent Julien Gauthier back to Charlotte, presumably to bank a bit of cap space before leaving for California. The releases from the team are below.

HURRICANES ACTIVATE VAN RIEMSDYK
Defenseman began season on non-roster injured reserve

Don Waddell, President and General Manager of the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes, today announced that the team has activated defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk from non-roster injured reserve.

Van Riemsdyk, 28, registered 14 points (3g, 11a) in 78 regular-season games with the Hurricanes in 2018-19 and skated in nine playoff games. The 6'3", 185-pound defenseman has tallied 61 points (14g, 47a) in 315 career NHL games with the Blackhawks and Hurricanes. The Middletown, N.J., native was selected by the Vegas Golden Knights in the 2017 Expansion Draft before being traded to Carolina on June 22, 2017, along with a seventh-round pick in the 2018 NHL Draft (traded to N.Y. Rangers) in exchange for a second-round pick in the 2017 NHL Draft (Jake Leschyshyn).

CANES REASSIGN GAUTHIER TO CHARLOTTE
Forward made NHL debut on Friday vs. NY Islanders

Don Waddell, President and General Manager of the National Hockey League's Carolina Hurricanes, today announced that the team has reassigned forward Julien Gauthier to the Charlotte Checkers of the American Hockey League (AHL).

Gauthier, 22, skated in two NHL games after being recalled on Oct. 9 and made his NHL debut on Oct. 11 vs. NY Islanders. The 6'4", 226-pound forward has scored a pair of goals in two AHL regular season games with the Checkers this season, after posting 41 points (27g, 14a) in 75 games with Charlotte in 2018-19. He added eight points (5g, 3a) in 17 AHL playoff games last season as the Checkers captured



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

their first-ever Calder Cup championship. Gauthier has registered 68 points (45g, 23a) in 142 career AHL games with Charlotte. The Pointe-aux-Trembles, Que., native represented his home country at the 2016 and 2017 IIHF

World Junior Championships, winning silver in 2017. Gauthier was drafted by the Hurricanes in the first round, 21st overall, of the 2016 NHL Draft.

About Last Night: So Much Winning

The Canes winning streak keeps rolling on. So what's the good, bad, and special behind all this winning?

By Jake Lerch

The Carolina Hurricanes are off to the best start in franchise history. Last night's 5-2 defeat of the New York Islanders improved the Canes' record to 5-0-0 (10 pts).

Traditionally, October has been a challenging month for the Canes. The arrival of the North Carolina State Fair usually means a road trip for the team. In past Octobers, these early-season travels did little to help the Canes get off on the right foot. For example, the 2016-17 team started with six straight on the road - they finished it 1-3-2 and went on to end the season in seventh place in the division.

This year, a more favorable schedule (3 home, 2 road games) has helped the Canes get off to a fantastic start. With one more home game left before this year's October road trip, let's take a look back at last night to see what went right, what went wrong, and what was special.

The Good - The Team Defense

Except for the game against the Florida Panthers - where the Canes jumped out to an early 4-0 lead - each of the Canes' games thus far have been back-and-forth affairs. Last night was no different.

Two separate one-goal leads were wiped away by the Isles on the power play (more on that later). Yet, as the second period wound down, the Canes found an extra gear. Goals by Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton gave the Canes a two-goal cushion that was never seriously challenged in the third.

Why not?

Well, the Islanders managed a grand total of two - count 'em, two - shots in the final frame. Bear in mind, the third period included an Islanders' power play and an empty-net scenario. It was the sequel to the bravura performance from last weekend, when the Canes held the Lightning to two shots in the final 45 minutes of the game.

Simply put, the Canes can play a style that flat-out denies chances to opposing teams. It's rarely seen in today's NHL, where speed and skill are so dominant, but the Canes' elite team defense is a thing of beauty.

The Bad - Special Teams

Well, it was bound to happen. The Canes gave up five power plays to an opponent, conceded two goals on the resultant penalty kills, and went 0-3 on their own powerplay.

And then they won the game 5-2?

Yes. Yes, they did.

The special teams were bound to come back down to earth after their blistering start. On Friday night, neither the penalty

kill or the power play looked particularly terrible, they just didn't have their best stuff.

On the first power play goal for the Isles, the coverage simply breaks down. Brett Pesce is knocked to the ice right off the face-off, and in the ensuing scramble, two Isles are left wide open in front of Petr Mrazek.

What about the power play, you ask? Well, the Hamilton-Svechnikov-Teravainen unit has made hay with the seam pass so far. Nevertheless, they can't force it when it's not there. Andrei Svechnikov, in particular, forced it a couple times last night. In today's NHL, teams scout the opposing powerplay. It was apparent the Islanders were ready for the seam pass from Svechnikov to Turbo, and they did an excellent job of breaking it up.

The key takeaway here is that the Canes special teams finally had "one of those nights," but the team still won the game -- and in comfortable fashion.

The mark of a great hockey team is one that can beat you in multiple ways. Last night was an example of the Canes overwhelming a team at 5-on-5, to such a degree that their special teams laying an egg didn't matter.

The Something Special - The Norris Candidate?

Ok, I get it - we're only five games into the season. That being said, the Canes have won all five of those, and Dougie Hamilton has been absolutely stellar thus far. If he can maintain his current level of play throughout the year, he certainly will get some consideration for the Norris Trophy.

Exhibit A is the first goal of the game last night. When you're a defenseman and you're making plays like this, you're going to turn some heads...

But before I make the case, let's start with what a Norris Trophy-winning defenseman does.

First, you need to have a positive plus/minus rating. No player has won the Norris with a negative plus/minus rating since Nicklas Lidstrom back in 2010-11. But that was Nick Lidstrom, and it was practically an NHL by-law that he be given the award for the better part of a decade.

Next, you need to score like a forward - a really good forward. The last five Norris Trophy winners have averaged 19.6 goals, 46.4 assists, and 66 points. So, roughly speaking, you need four points in every five games.

So how does Dougie stack up against that pace so far in the very young season? Well, he has seven points in five games with three goals and a plus-5 rating.

Just for giggles, Jaccob Slavin and Brett Pesce aren't that far off Dougie's pace...



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

Dougie	Hamilton...3g,	4a,	+5
Jacob	Slavin...2g,	2a,	+2
Brett Pesce...2g,	1a,	+4	

Realistically though, Hamilton is the only one with a legitimate shot at the Norris this year. You need significant power play production to compete, and neither Slavin nor Pesce are going to see time on the power play barring an injury to Hamilton or Jake Gardiner.

Nevertheless, it's great to see Slavin and Pesce jumping into the offense and converting some chances. As Pesce noted in his bench interview, the commitment to blueline scoring

extends all the way to the front office, who expect goals from everyone.

As for Dougie, he now ranks 2nd in NHL in terms of points (7) by a defenseman, one behind the leader, John Carlson. His three goals are the most by a defenseman (tied with Kevin Shattenkirk), and he's only one off the lead in terms of plus/minus rating by a blueliner.

Sure it's early, but Dougie Hamilton is making quite the case for himself.



Canes win streak ends at five

By Ryan Henkel

The Carolina Hurricanes' winning streak finally came to a close Saturday night as they fell to the Columbus Blue Jackets 4-2.

The Hurricanes (5-1-0) for the first time in a while didn't seem like the hardest-working team on the ice as the Blue Jackets (2-3-0) managed to outskate and outplay them in most facets. Skating faster, being stronger on the puck and clogging up the neutral zone and passing lanes with shut down defense, Columbus handed Carolina some of its own medicine.

"I think part of the reason was we were making it hard on ourselves," said captain Jordan Staal. "I think when you're a little bit tired you start making more mental mistakes. I thought our decisions with the puck and trying to be cute in a game that just wasn't like that made it hard for us to sustain and roll them over and get some momentum."

With both teams playing the second game of a back-to-back, Carolina went with James Reimer as the starter while Columbus decided to run with Joonas Korpisalo again despite him playing in a 2-1 loss to the Ducks the night before. The decision worked out for the Jackets as Korpisalo posted a 0.938 save percentage and stoned multiple Canes on what looked like sure-fire goals.

The game started with an early scare as defenseman Haydn Fleury took a hard fall head first into the boards after being hooked. He stayed on the ice for a while before then heading straight to the room. He luckily returned to the ice a few minutes later.

The Blue Jackets broke the ice first in the match due to blown coverage as Columbus blueliner Markus Nutivaara was left all alone on the backdoor for an easy tap-in goal.

However, the Hurricanes responded 27 seconds later with a beautiful display of passing to set up a tic-tac-toe goal. A series of one-touch passes led to Erik Haula banging the puck in from the slot. Four Carolina players touched the puck within five seconds of the puck hitting the back of the net.

Carolina got the go-ahead goal soon into the second period on a sequence where Korpisalo lost his stick while the Canes were controlling the puck in the offensive zone. Hamilton cycled to the point where he smashed a one-timer right past Korpisalo to give the Hurricanes a 2-1 lead.

Columbus showed that it could respond just as well as Oliver Bjorkstrand skated a lap from behind the net to the slot, where he ripped a wrist over the shoulder of James Reimer to tie the game only 17 seconds after Carolina's goal.

The Blue Jackets showed they were ready to go toe-for-toe against the Hurricanes forecheck and it really showed in their resilience. The shot chances for both teams ran equal throughout the game and Columbus was showing its ability to compete despite the many key departures in the offseason.

At the onset of the third period, a Brock McGinn turnover led to a Pierre-Luc Dubois breakaway where he made no mistake going to the backhand to beat Reimer.

The Blue Jackets then locked the game down, holding the Hurricanes off the scoresheet and preserving their one-goal lead.

"They did exactly how we thought they were going to come and play us and we weren't prepared," said head coach Rod Brind'Amour. "We didn't mentally prepare properly as a group to that kind of game. We got what we deserved in my opinion."

Carolina has been playing extremely good hockey the past two weeks and was due for a bit of a come down. While starting off the game hot, the obvious fatigue of the back-to-back and the high amount of games the team has played seemed to have taken their toll.

The next question is how they respond. With a long road trip coming up, the Canes will need to come out just as strong as they started and not sit back on their laurels if they hope to keep building momentum and not let the rest of the league catch up to them.

The Hurricanes set off on a four-game road trip that will see them take on the west coast California gauntlet and end with



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

a rematch in Columbus. The first game will be Oct. 15 against the LA Kings.

TriangleSportsNetwork

Hurricanes suffer first loss at hands of Blue Jackets

A 3-2 final ends Carolina's franchise-record win streak

By Peter Koutroumpis

RALEIGH, N.C. – It happened, so mark it down.

The Carolina Hurricanes lost their first game of the 2019-2020 season, a 3-2 shortfall at the hands of the Columbus Blue Jackets at PNC Arena on Saturday.

Goals from Eric Haula and Dougie Hamilton, along with a 32-save performance from James Reimer was not enough.

Narrowly outshot 35-32 by the Blue Jackets, the Hurricanes let one lapse make the difference as Pierre-Luc Dubois' forced turnover early in the third period resulted in the eventual game-winning goal.

According to coach Rod Brind'Amour, that and other lapses were the result of not being ready for what an equally talented and hard-working team would present.

"They did exactly what we thought how they would come to play us," he said.

"We weren't mentally prepared for that type of game. We got what we deserved in my opinion."

Looking in the mirror

While the Hurricanes faced formidable opposition during their recent five-game win streak, the Blue Jackets' up-tempo, gritty style of play with the ability to transition quickly from back to front presented the most significant challenge to date.

The play of goaltender Joonas Korpisalo, making 30 saves and keeping Sebastian Aho and Nino Niederreiter, among

others, off the score sheet was a significant contribution to handing Carolina its initial loss.

"They were playin' their game; they were playing our game essentially – giving us little room and frustrating us," captain Jordan Staal said.

"Partly it was our own doing; we made it harder on ourselves than we needed to with our decisions with the puck. We made it easier for them and that was the result."

Regroup and let it sting

Reimer pointed out that the second night of a back-to-back probably also presented a lack of sharpness.

"Sometimes you just don't have it," he said.

"Tonight, both teams worked hard. They had a few extra chances and squeaked out a win, so kudos them. They worked hard, they earned it. They were responsible with the puck and made smart decisions and we just couldn't quite get inside on them. We worked hard, we battled, but we probably just didn't have it. Sometimes it doesn't go your way. You regroup, let it sting and get back after it Monday."

Notables: Carolina finished 0-3 on the power play, 5-20 (25%) overall...On the PK, the Hurricanes went 3-3, 21-27 (77.8%) overall...Haula's team-leading fifth goal of the season puts him tied for fourth in the NHL in goals...Hamilton's goal extended his goal streak to the longest of his career. His previous career-long goal streak was three games...Jacob Slavin earned an assist tonight and extended his point streak to five games.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019



Canes assign Julien Gauthier to Charlotte

By Nicholas Niedzielski

Following their loss to Columbus Saturday night, the Hurricanes have assigned Julien Gauthier to Charlotte.

The 21st overall pick in 2016, Gauthier made his NHL debut in Friday's win over the New York Islanders and was again in the lineup Saturday.

Gauthier appeared in Charlotte's first two games this season, lighting the lamp in each contest. This comes after a sophomore campaign that saw him notch a career-high 27 goals.

Morgan Geekie's goals lead Checkers to first home victory

By Nicholas Niedzielski

After a tough loss in their opener, the Checkers bounced back nicely in front of their home crowd with a convincing 4-1 victory over Bridgeport.

Morgan Geekie drove the offense through the first 40 minutes of play, ripping a slap shot past Jared Coreau late in the first then knifing a wrister into the top corner in the middle frame to snag a lead for the home side.

New faces took over in the third as Brian Gibbons redirected a point shot on the power play to extend Charlotte's lead and Fredrik Claesson chipped in his second assist of the night on Eetu Luostarinen's game-sealing empty net tally.

In his first home start of the season Anton Forsberg turned in a strong performance between the pipes, denying 28 of Bridgeport's 29 shots and helping the Checkers to another perfect game on the penalty kill.

We came in as a new day today. I thought we played well last night and the bounces kind of didn't go our way. We had to clean some things up and tonight I thought we did that

Geekie on his hot start to the season

I had a little bit of success last year and I'm just trying to do the same things I did last time. I'm trying to earn some more trust and responsibility out there so I've just got to play the same game I did last year.

Geekie on the team coming together

It takes a couple of games to get going and I think it's kind of a feeling out process but I like what we've got here. I like our team and I like our line a lot. We're just going to go out and play our game and see what we can do.

Anton Forsberg on the game

First of all we've got to play a team game and I thought we did except for the last five minutes there where we kind of broke down a bit. At the end I thought we fought hard and we kept them on the outside most of the game, which made it a lot easier for me.

QUOTES

Anton Forsberg SCORE SHEET PHOTO GALLERY Coach Ryan Warsofsky on getting the split with Bridgeport

Good response to a tough loss. To bounce back showed some character in the dressing room there. There are some things to clean up on, but it's good to get a win.

Warsofsky on Morgan Geekie

He's taking control of games, really. He's driving our offense for the most part in all four games. He scores, he's got a great shot and he can make things happen in tight. A really good game by him tonight.

Warsofsky on Anton Forsberg

He's a rock back there. You can tell. He's a pro, he's confident and he's seeing the puck at a really high level right now. He made Grade A saves when we really needed them and that's important.

Morgan Geekie on the bounceback

NOTES

Geekie extended his point streak to four games (3g, 2a), making him the only Checker to record at least one point in each game. He finished the game as part of a seven-way tie for second in league scoring ... Gibbons (1g, 3a) and Roland McKeown (4a) are also on a point-per-game pace to start the season ... Luostarinen has goals in back-to-back games ... Forsberg is 2-0-0 with a 1.50 goals-against average and .953 save percentage ... The Checkers were a perfect 10-for-10 on the penalty kill in the two-game set against Bridgeport, including a 6-for-6 performance tonight ... Forwards Max McCormick and Spencer Smallman missed the game due to injury ... Forward Stelio Mattheos and defensemen Cavan Fitzgerald, Alex Lintuniemi and Kyle Wood were the other scratches.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

TODAY'S LINKS

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SportScan

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

1156780 Carolina Hurricanes

Blue Jackets hand Canes first loss of season

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

OCTOBER 12, 2019 09:41 PM

RALEIGH

For the first five games of the season, the Carolina Hurricanes knew nothing but winning and good times.

Now, the Canes must deal with their first loss.

The Columbus Blue Jackets, looking to jumpstart their season, rolled into PNC Arena, put in 60 minutes of hustle and hard work Saturday and left with a 3-2 victory over the Canes.

The Hurricanes' 5-0 start was the best in franchise history while the Blue Jackets had lost three of their first four games. But Columbus was the better team Saturday.

"We weren't ready," Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We didn't mentally prepare properly, I think, as a group for that kind of game and we got what we deserved, in my opinion.

"They played a great road game. They grinded us down and we didn't want to get to our game enough."

Pierre-Luc Dubois gave the Blue Jackets a 3-2 lead at 1:15 of the third period. After a turnover by the Canes' Brock McGinn near the Carolina blue line, Dubois first beat McGinn down the ice and then goalie James Reimer for the score.

Erik Haula and Dougie Hamilton had goals for the Canes, continuing their early season scoring tears. It was 1-1 after the first period and

2-2 after two as defenseman Markus Nutivaara and forward Oliver Bjorkstrand scored for Columbus.

Blue Jackets goalie Joonas Korpisalo, starting in back-to-back games, got the job done in the third for a team that has gone through a makeover since last season. Korisalo had 30 saves, 11 in the final period.

The Canes rallied for comeback victories in their first three games, tying the score in the third period each time and then winning in a shootout (Montreal) or overtime (Washington, Tampa Bay). But the Blue Jackets stymied the Canes by aggressively forechecking and cycling, winning chases to the puck and being stingy in the neutral zone.

"They were playing our game essentially, giving us no room and frustrating us," Canes captain Jordan Staal said. "Partly it was our own doing. We made it harder on ourselves than we needed to with our decisions with the puck, and made it easier for them.

"When you're a little bit tired you start making mental mistakes more than anything. I think our decisions with the puck and trying to be cute with the puck ... it just wasn't a game like that and made it harder for us to get some momentum and get the fans in it."

Brind'Amour said the only real positive from the game might have been the play of Reimer, who had 32 stops.

"They worked hard and they earned it," Reimer said. "They were a little better than us. We played hard and we battled but sometimes it does not go your way."

Brind'Amour was hoping for a repeat of Friday's game, a decisive 5-2 victory over the New York Islanders. The Canes were the faster, more aggressive team, completely shutting down the Islanders in the third period.

But the Blue Jackets, coming off a 2-1 loss to the Anaheim Ducks on Friday, were active, disruptive, preventing the Canes from getting a transition game going.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

For the first two periods, it was punch, counter-punch.

In the first, Nutivaara's first goal of the season -- the defenseman all alone on the backdoor for a tap-in-- gave the Blue Jackets a 1-0 lead. That lasted 27 seconds.

The Canes' passing was at its best in a quick-strike sequence, the puck going from Hamilton to Martin Necas to Ryan Dzingel and finally to Haula, who was unchecked in the slot. Haula's goal was his fifth in six games and it was tied 1-1.

In the second, it was the Canes' turn to take the lead and lose it. In 17 seconds.

After Korpisalo lost his paddle, Hamilton unloaded a shot off a Jaccob Slavin pass that Korpisalo had no chance of stopping. It was Hamilton's fourth of the season.

But Bkorkstrand had the answer for the Blue Jackets, carrying the puck around the net and wheeling into the slot, turning and whipping a shot that Reimer couldn't track or stop.

"We were just lazy a little bit on our guy and you can't do that and we got burned," Brind'Amour said. "That's kind how the game went for me. We just were flat."

There was scary moment involving the Canes' Haydn Fleury in the first period. The defenseman fell head-first into the boards after being hooked by the Blue Jackets' Alexandre Texier in the Carolina zone. Fleury was helped off the ice and to the locker room but soon returned.

The Canes announced before the game that defenseman Trevor van Riemsdyk had been activated off non-roster injured reserve. Van Riemsdyk underwent shoulder surgery after being injured in the Stanley Cup playoffs last spring.

After the game, the Canes reassigned forward Julien Gauthier to the Charlotte Checkers of the AHL. The Canes leave Monday on a West Coast road trip and will play the next four games away from home.

News Observer LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156830 Los Angeles Kings

Alex Iafallo's late goal lifts Kings to home-opening win over Predators

By JACK HARRISSTAFF WRITER

OCT. 12, 2019 8 PM

Todd McLellan called a timeout and tried to calm his team. For the second time in a week, the Kings let a three-goal lead slip away. A once-celebratory Staples Center crowd had been silenced, leaving only a nervous murmur to sweep through the stands. From behind the bench, McLellan posed his players a question.

"We talked about the identity," McLellan said after the game. "What do we want to be?"

With 59 seconds left in regulation, they answered.

After several minutes of sustained pressure, the Kings finally broke the tie in the final minute. Nashville Predators goalie Juuse Saros

saved a wide-angle shot from Kings winger Dustin Brown but let the rebound roll off his pad. Crashing the net near the back post, fellow winger Alex Iafallo buried the loose puck for the game-winning goal.

After winning only 17 times on home ice last year, the Kings added two empty-netters to claim their home opener this season 7-4. By the final horn, the party inside their cavernous venue was back on.

"The guys played well enough to win, we just gave it back," McLellan said. "My satisfaction is to see them happy, playing the music [in the locker room postgame], and understanding who we can become."

During the first 40 minutes, the chorus of Kings cheers hardly halted.

Before puck drop, fans hollered for faces old (including Brown, Anze Kopitar, Drew Doughty, Jonathan Quick) and new (namely, McLellan) as they were introduced on the video board. They joyously responded again and again thereafter, coming to life as the Kings rallied after an early Predators goal by scoring four of their own.

"We played on our toes, we played well within our system, we won faceoffs, we had good possession," McLellan said of the Kings' start. "Then, we were able to roll four lines."

Following a six-goal loss Wednesday night against the Vancouver Canucks, McLellan mixed up his bottom three lines Saturday. It paid immediate dividends. Less than four minutes after Mikael Granlund opened the scoring for the Predators, Kings center Michael Amadio — who was bumped up from the fourth to third line — collected a shot in front of the Nashville net and stickhandled around Saros to even the score.

Later in the first, Brown weaved through the neutral zone before sliding a backhand pass to Kopitar, who snapped a one-timer from the right-wing faceoff dot that beat Saros upstairs.

Early in the second period, Kyle Clifford deflected a point shot from defenseman Joakim Ryan to make it 3-1. Minutes before the second intermission, Amadio gobbled up a Predators turnover in the offensive zone and sent a saucer pass toward the back post for linemate Ilya Kovalchuk to bury.

But just like on Tuesday night in Calgary, when the Kings squandered a three-goal lead before finally defeating the Flames in overtime, they sat back in the third period again Saturday. Barely a minute into the frame, Predators forward Viktor Arvidsson trimmed the Kings' lead to two. Matt Duchene banked a puck off Doughty and into the net for a power-play tally just past the period's halfway point. Colton Sissons tipped a shot past Kings goalie Jack Campbell — who made 28 saves — 34 seconds later that tied the score.

That's when McLellan, in his first home game with the Kings, called a timeout and issued his challenge.

"We talked about reestablishing a forecheck, getting aggressive," McLellan said. "If we make mistakes, we'll live with them. But let's get going again, the way we can play, the way we want to play."

The Kings responded by collecting six of the final seven shots. In the closing minutes, Iafallo hit the post, a redirection from Brown at the top of the crease was denied, and Kopitar had a shot saved. Finally, Iafallo delivered the dagger.

"We had a tough stretch the first 10 minutes of the third, but then we had a lot of grade-A scoring chances before we got the goal that put us ahead," Brown said. "I think it's encouraging we're not down in the dumps after blowing a three-goal lead at home."

Asked whether the wins over the Flames and Predators, both division winners a season ago, is a sign the Kings could become a surprise competitor in the league, Brown smirked. After all the Kings'



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

losses last year, he didn't want to get ahead of himself. So far this season, both their wins have come the hard way.

"We're going to compete either way," he said. "There's a lot of work to be done in learning how to win again."

LA Times: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156831 Los Angeles Kings

The Kings are covering up Taylor Swift's 'eyesore' of a banner

By ARASH MARKAZICOLUMNIST

OCT. 12, 2019 5:27 PM

Taylor Swift's banner at Staples Center isn't coming down but it will no longer be seen during Kings home games.

Before their home opener against the Nashville Predators on Saturday, the Kings covered Swift's "most sold out performances" banner and will continue to do so.

Staples Center president Lee Zeidman said there are no plans to remove the banner and the decision to cover it during Kings games was made solely by the team.

The banner, which was raised Aug. 21, 2015, after her record 16th sold-out concert at Staples Center, has been an eyesore for many Kings fans. They don't think it's a coincidence that the Kings have failed to win a playoff series since the banner went up. The Kings won the Stanley Cup in 2012 and 2014 as well as advanced to the conference finals in 2013. They finished with the worst record in the Western Conference and second worst in the league last season.

"The connection to our fans is our highest priority and through our engagement they have made it clear that the banner shouldn't be part of their Kings game experience," said Michael Altieri, senior vice president of marketing, communications and content for the Kings and AEG Sports. "We didn't see an issue in covering it for our games and in fact see it as an opportunity to show our fans that we hear them."

The Clippers already cover Swift's banner, along with the Lakers' and Sparks' championship banners and retired jerseys, during their home games. They have hung oversized portraits of their players in that area of the arena since 2013. The Lakers currently have no plans to cover the banner, which was presented to Swift by Kobe Bryant, but they would have just as much reason as the Kings in trying to reverse the banner's possible curse. The Lakers haven't won a playoff series in seven years and have the worst winning percentage in the league over the past six seasons.

Swift has not performed a concert at Staples Center since her banner was raised but will be opening SoFi Stadium, the new \$5-billion home of the Rams and Chargers in Inglewood, on July 25-26, 2020.

LA Times: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156832 Los Angeles Kings

Kings rally back to hold off Predators in dramatic home opener

By ANDREW KNOLL |

PUBLISHED: October 12, 2019 at 6:06 pm | UPDATED: October 12, 2019 at 8:56 PM

LOS ANGELES >> The Kings have made a habit of squandering leads, but Saturday afternoon at Staples Center that instability only added to the excitement of their dramatic 7-4 triumph over the Nashville Predators.

They built a 4-1 advantage and out-shot the Predators 29-12 through 40 minutes, only to fall into a tie during a 10-minute stretch of the third period. Three of their first four games had seen the Kings ahead late. They led Edmonton 5-4 in the third period only to fall 6-5, and held a 3-0 lead over Calgary, who drew even in the final minute before the Kings finished the job in overtime.

"You definitely don't want to keep testing yourself, but the team played great with a little adversity in the third," Goalie Jack Campbell said. "To get to that next level, you've got to make sure you shut the door."

Forwards Michael Amadio, Kyle Clifford, Anze Kopitar, Ilya Kovalchuk and Alex Iafallo scored goals for the Kings. Winger Dustin Brown, who dished out two assists, and defenseman Drew Doughty added empty-net goals. Kevin Walker added two assists; the young defenseman has four points in as many games. Between the pipes, it was a battle of backups with Jack Campbell stymieing 28 of 32 shots he faced while Nashville's Juse Saros made 31 of 37 saves.

Iafallo popped in the winner as a long shot from the left boards by Brown flummoxed Saros, leading to a rebound that Iafallo found at the front of the net.

The Predators tied the game at four with 8:30 remaining when left wing Colton Sissons tapped home a rebound, forcing the Kings to use their timeout in the midst of a 3-0 run by the visiting Preds.

"We talked about identity, 'what do we want to be?'" Kings coach Todd McLellan said. "I think that when you're in the batter's box, you should be swinging ... we weren't even thinking of that in the first 10 or 15 minutes of that period."

Center Matt Duchene reduced the Kings' advantage to one with a power play goal when he banked defenseman Ryan Ellis's rebound off of Doughty's skate and into the net.

Right wing Viktor Arvidsson tallied for Nashville 77 seconds into the third period off a broken play where his shot from the side of the net crossed the goalline as he fell to the ice, cutting the L.A. lead to 4-2.

Amadio forced a turnover and slid the puck across the goal crease to Kovalchuk for a one-timer that cushioned the Kings lead at 4-1.

"We didn't really have the energy to fight back when they were in our zone," Saros said.

Defenseman Joakim Ryan, playing in his first game as a King, fired a shot on net that was deflected in by left winger Kyle Clifford to extend the Kings' edge to 3-1.

The Kings played an aggressive first period, controlling possession and pace to the tune of a 13-4 advantage in shots on goal. A failed poke check by Roman Josi allowed Brown to flick the puck to Kopitar. Kopitar's one-timer gave the Kings a 2-1 edge and extended



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

his point streak to four games. Amadio had scored off a rebound to draw the Kings even at 1-1.

Mikael Granlund opened the scoring for Nashville on its first shot, a short-side, sharp-angle laser that got behind an off-angle Campbell and darted into the top corner of the net.

"The first period was like our first period in Calgary. That's given us a lot of opportunity to work on playing with the lead, which we need more work on," Brown said.

McLellan was among many who lauded the Kings' forecheck and said it had a domino effect. It created possession time, turnovers that caught the Predators off-guard, kept Nashville's defensemen from jumping into the offense, allowed the Kings to control line changes and also limited the ability of Saros to handle the puck with well-placed dump-ins to the offensive zone.

McLellan also praised his club's resilience, rebounding from a blown lead.

"The guys played well enough to win, they just gave it back," McLellan said. "My satisfaction is to see them happy, playing the music and beginning to understand who we can become."

Orange County Register: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156833 Los Angeles Kings

FINAL – TUCSON 8, ONTARIO 2

ZACH DOOLEY OCTOBER 12, 2019

ONTARIO REIGN POSTGAME NOTES POSTGAME QUOTES

The Ontario Reign suffered their first regulation defeat of the season, in lopsided fashion, as they fell 8-2 against the Tucson Roadrunners on Saturday evening, to close out the weekend on home ice.

Defensemen Mikey Anderson and Kale Clague scored for Ontario, while forward Sheldon Rempal collected a pair of assists in defeat. For Anderson, the first-year defenseman extended his scoring streak to four games with the power-play goal in the third period. Anderson leads all rookie defensemen with four points through the first two weekends of the season, and earned praise from his head coach, despite the lopsided result.

There's no sugar-coating it – It wasn't pretty for the Reign tonight, who were second best in all aspects of the game against the visiting Roadrunners. Ontario racked up 79 minutes in penalties, 71 of which in the third period, as things got chippy and then ugly down the stretch, with five Ontario players finishing the evening in double figures for PIM's.

The Reign have a long week of practice to regroup in advance of their only game of the week, a Saturday afternoon matinee against the San Jose Barracuda, on the road. There's a lot of high-character guys in that Reign locker room, and there's plenty of time to right the ship.

Mike Stothers on generating more energy and chances on the second half of a back-to-back

Well, I placed a call to Dave Andrews and Mike Murray with the league and told them it's not fair that they scheduled a back-to-back

game for the Reign. I mean, after all, we are playing 68 grueling games a year, the rest of the teams are playing 76, the rest of the teams play three-in-three. But it's not fair to the Reign to play back-to-back. Especially with the travel we had. Oh that's right, they were both home games.

On what he can take away from that kind of game

We've got a lot of work to do. A lot. You need more than just skill. You need a pair, play with some grit. It still is a contract sport. When did we score our goals? After we started picking up the physicality.

On what he was looking for after last night's game

It certainly wasn't that.

On Mikey Anderson's play

It would be pretty easy to single him out tonight, because he was probably the only guy that was any good, but he's consistently up there every game and he hates to lose. You've got a pretty competitive athlete there, and he doesn't shy away from anything. He's a skill guy, but he plays hard, blocks shots, does what he can. Does whatever he can to help the team win, he's a winner.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156834 Los Angeles Kings

OCTOBER 12 RAPID REACTION: KINGS 7, PREDATORS 4

JON ROSE OCTOBER 12, 2019

Postgame Quotes

Todd McLellan, on the team's heavy push through the first 40 minutes:

Well, it's cliché time, but we played on our toes and we played well within our system. We won faceoffs, we had pretty good possession right there, and then we were able to roll four lines. A lot of the times we stayed ahead of them in line changes and we were fresh. So, we played towards the identity we're trying to develop. I thought in the third we reverted back to something we don't want to be, and that's being really passive and standoffish. There were a number of times where we were in a standoff type of forecheck, and that's not the type of team we want to be.

McLellan, on using Predators video clips to teach the Kings and instill systems during training camp:

Nashville's been an aggressive team for a long time. They've been very successful with the type of game they play. 'R and D' is 'rob and do' for us, and we're looking at what successful teams do, how we can implement it. We use some of their clips for some teaching, but we're trying to develop our own style, and right now we're six, seven exhibition games, four or five into the regular season, we have enough video now where we can concentrate on our group. They can see themselves doing it right, and sometimes they can see themselves not having success because they're wandering off doing things they shouldn't be doing, and it's a great contrast, a great teaching tool.

McLellan, on the message when Nashville had tied the game at four:



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

We were calm. We wanted them to breathe a little bit. We talked about the identity. What do we want to be? I think when you're in the batter's box you should be swinging. If there's a pitch that's close, swing at it, and we weren't even thinking about that in the first 10 or 15 minutes of that period. We talked about reestablishing a forecheck, getting aggressive, if we make mistakes, we'll live with them, but let's get going again the way we can play and the way we want to play. [Reporter: When you say 'standoff' and 'passive,' where do you see that? Is it just in them getting rid of the puck too quickly getting through the neutral zone?] Let me explain it this way: I don't think once we ever stood off and let them manage their breakout from behind their net in the first two periods. In the third, there were probably five or six times in a row where we're standing off, they're getting what they want, they get fresh players on the ice, they get to play long, we didn't make it difficult on them. That is not what we want to be. We want to be what we saw for the first two periods. We're accomplishing things as a team. We're starting to develop our identity. We slipped back a little bit every now and then. That's why there's so much inconsistency in our game. Once we get it and everybody buys in for a full 60, we'll be fine.

McLellan, on the impetus to move the lines around:

We thought that Kopi's line gave us a pretty good rate of offense and defense for the first three games. In fact, Clifly, Lewis and [Amadio], they were playing really well too, but we needed to distribute players from the Kempe line. I didn't think they were really effective and they were getting scored on a lot. So, we had to dismantle lines. I liked what we saw tonight. Can they maintain it? Can they keep it going? I sure hope so.

McLellan, on whether Michael Amadio can step into a second-line center role:

Depends what night and who we're playing. I think Michael's a tremendous player. I didn't realize how talented and how bright a player he is. He's got a very good hockey mind, he's got a little bit of – don't take this and don't put the pressure on Mods – but a little bit like Pavelski. He's not the quickest guy, but he's pretty smart and he moves around the rink well. For him, I'd like to see how he responds tomorrow because sometimes in the back-to-back games it slows him down a little bit. But I think we can get him there.

McLellan, on the forecheck as a "domino effect" generating possession and line change advantages:

All of those. More importantly, they get a lot of offense from the blue line – jumping into the rush, leading the rush, creating off the shot as we saw in the third period. When you're forechecking the way you are, they don't have the energy or the will to get up-ice all the time and it keeps them from being effective. We needed to do that, and we did for 45 minutes of the night. It's the other 15 that got away on us.

McLellan, on what Sean Walker has done to take advantage of his opportunity:

He can skate. Today's game, it's one thing to be able to do the job, but you've got to get there to do it, and Walks can get there. And then when he gets there, he's been getting the job done. There are other D-men on our team or in the league that have a little bit of trouble getting there sometimes, so the job's that much harder. But Walks gets there. He's getting rewarded offensively and defensively.

McLellan, on earning a win in his first home opener as Kings coach:

Personally, I'm happy for the group. I thought if we had left tonight without a point or even losing that game, it would've been a maintenance day as far as digging in again tomorrow and

massaging minds and the mental part of it because the guys played well enough to win. We just gave it back. My satisfaction is to see them happy, playing the music and beginning to understand who we can become. You see it in flashes, so that's what we're working towards.

McLellan, on the top line off putting the game away and the importance of getting off to good starts:

It's your top line. I think you kind of answered the question with the question. It's your top line. They've got to give you nights like that and they've got to score big goals. They played important minutes against big players, and that's what your top line does. There are going to be other nights where they need somebody pulling the rope for them, and that's where everybody else comes in to play. I thought today we had a four-line game. I really did.

Dustin Brown, on whether the team can consistently "compete" over an 82-game season:

I think – it's not just 'I think.' We're going to compete away. I think there's a lot of work to be done in learning how to win again, and what I mean by that is for whatever reason we've kind of sat back on our leads, even in preseason. Maybe it's just a quirk of our team that we have to figure out and address, but I think if we can start the way we did tonight, which is maybe something that you guys aren't used to us starting that way – we've kind of been a slower starting team. It puts the team on their heels and can build a pad, and we've got to learn how to protect a lead – it's actually not even about 'protect a lead.' It's about going after it when we have the lead still. I think we maybe took our foot off the gas, and then our forecheck doesn't work and our neutral zone doesn't work and then we're playing D-zone.

Brown, on whether the time out was used as a strategic tool or to calm players down:

Probably to calm the guys down. They scored two quick ones to tie the game. Settled the guys and realized we still have five minutes to win a game. Now we have to get another one. Regroup after a couple breakdowns.

Joakim Ryan, on setting up Kyle Clifford's goal:

We kind of worked the puck from low-to-high there, and once I got it, I saw I kind of had some time and space, so just try to drag it to the middle and get it towards the net, and Clifly had a great tip on it and obviously it went in.

Ryan, on the team's immediate response to surrendering the lead:

Todd kind of just said 'settle down.' He wanted us to keep playing our game, not stray for it. They got a goal on the power play there, kind of a tough bounce. Obviously like you said, they're a good team so they're going to push back, too. But he just said not to get away from our game and keep doing what had made us successful for the first two periods. I think after that it kind of settled us down a little bit and we got back to it.

Ryan, on the consistent push for the first 40 minutes:

Yeah, obviously the first two periods I thought we played very solid hockey. We were executing our systems the way we wanted to, and I think, what did they have after two periods, like, 12, 13 shots? So, when you're holding a team to 13 shots, you're going to be successful most nights. It was just about sticking about the way we've played the whole game, and obviously it maybe got away a little bit there when they had that push back, but for the most part I thought we executed our game plan.

Sean Walker, on his quick-up to set the game-winning goal in motion:



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

They were changing, and I know Marty was going back to the blue line, so I got a quick up to him and he made a great play at the blue line to Brownie, and he put it to the net and obviously finished it.

Walker, on the team's early offensive success:

I think when we get hemmed in, everybody's kind of buzzing right now. Everybody's putting pucks to the net, and on top of that, we're getting the puck back and we're getting secondary chances and stuff. I think if we can keep going that way, we're going to keep scoring a lot of goals.

Walker, on what to apply structurally for the remainder of the home stand:

I think you saw they weren't really getting many chances. I think it was kind of the same thing with the Calgary game. We kind of had our lapse in judgement there with a couple plays and the ended up putting it to us a bit there, but I think if we stick to our structure like we did the first two periods, then they're not going to have too many chances and if we carry that onto the rest of the games, we should be OK.

Walker, on his wide on-ice shots-for and shots-against discrepancy:

I think I've been fortunate to be out there for some really good shifts we put together. I know I had the mindset we're putting pucks to the net – that's what Todd's preaching – so everybody's buying in on that and getting pucks to the net and I think it's working pretty well.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156835 Los Angeles Kings

GAME 4: LOS ANGELES VS NASHVILLE

JON ROSENOCTOBER 12, 2019

GAME THREADS

Los Angeles Kings 7, Nashville Predators 4

Final

Preview

Box Score

Ice Tracker

Fox Sports Live Stream (requires subscription)

SOG: LAK – 38; NSH – 32

PP: LAK – 0/2; NSH – 1/4

First Period

1) NSH – Mikael Granlund (2) (Ryan Ellis, Filip Forsberg), 4:55

2) LAK – Michael Amadio (2) (Sean Walker, Trevor Lewis), 8:47

3) LAK – Anze Kopitar (2) (Dustin Brown, Sean Walker), 11:14

Second Period

4) LAK – Kyle Clifford (1) (Joakim Ryan), 6:53

5) LAK – Ilya Kovalchuk (2) (Michael Amadio), 18:12

Third Period

6) NSH – Viktor Arvidsson (3) (Ryan Johansen), 1:17

7) NSH PPG – Matt Duchene (2) (Roman Josi), 1 0:56

8) NSH – Colton Sissons (1) (Ryan Ellis, Mattias Ekholm), 11:30

9) LAK – Alex Iafallo (1) (Dustin Brown, Alec Martinez), 19:01

10) LAK ENG – Dustin Brown (2) (unassisted), 19:24

11) LAK ENG – Drew Doughty (3) (unassisted), 19:31

Los Angeles Kings (1-2-0) at Nashville Predators (3-1-0)

Saturday, October 5, 2019, 3:00 p.m. PT

Staples Center, Los Angeles, CA

Referees: #36 Dean Morton, #14 Trevor Hanson

Linesmen: #84 Tony Sericolo, #63 Trent Knorr

Fox Sports West, FOX Sports GO, LA Kings Audio Network

LAK starters: G Jack Campbell, D Ben Hutton, D Drew Doughty, LW Alex Iafallo, C Anze Kopitar, RW Dustin Brown

LAK scratches: D Tobias Bjornfot, F Carl Grundstrom, D Kurtis MacDermid

NSH starters: G Juuse Saros, D Roman Josi, D Ryan Ellis, LW Filip Forsberg, C Matt Duchene, RW Mikael Granlund,

NSH scratches: F Rocco Grimaldi, D Matt Irwin

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156836 Los Angeles Kings

PREVIEW – ONTARIO VS. TUCSON, 10/12

ZACH DOOLEYOCTOBER 12, 2019

WHO: Ontario Reign (2-0-1-0) vs. Tucson Roadrunners (1-1-0-0)

WHAT: AHL REGULAR-SEASON GAME

WHEN: Saturday, October 12, 2019 – 6:00 PM

WHERE: Toyota Arena – Ontario, CA

HOW TO FOLLOW: Video: AHLTV – AUDIO – Ontario Reign Radio Network – TWITTER: @ontarioreign & @reigninsider

TONIGHT'S MATCHUP: The Ontario Reign conclude their back-to-back set this weekend as they host the Tucson Roadrunners for the first time this season. The Reign enter tonight's action off of last night's 4-3 overtime defeat against Colorado, their first loss of the season.

WHAT TO WATCH FOR: A small group skated this morning for Ontario. Forwards Drake Rymsha, Jacob Doty and Brad Morrison were on late for extra work, which still leaves one roster spot up for grabs tonight. Markups Phillips was on the ice, as were Johan Sodergran and Boko Imama, but none stayed on late. Expect Cal Petersen to go again tonight for Ontario, with Villalta on the ice this morning and Petersen not skating.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

LIKE MIKEY: Ontario forward Mikey Eyssimont collected his first points of the season last night with a multi-point effort (1-1-2). Eyssimont scored his first of the season in the third period, whacking home his own rebound after a wraparound attempt. The multi-point game was the fifth of Eyssimont's professional career, after he scored two points four times during the 2018-19 season.

ALSO LIKE MIKEY: Reign defenseman Mikey Anderson scored the first goal of his professional career last night, with his second period tally putting Ontario on top for the first time. Anderson has collected a point in each of the Reign's first three games this season and leads all Ontario buleliners with three points (1-2-3). The Minnesota Duluth product leads all rookie defensemen in the AHL in points through three games, and is tied for second overall among first-year skaters.

THREE LETTERS, THREE GOALS: Ontario forward Martin Frk continued his hot start to the season, as he found the back of the net for the third time in three games. Frk joins Anderson as the only Ontario player with a point in all three games and is now tied with Mario Kempe for the team lead with three tallies. Across the AHL, the Reign pair are tied for second in goals scored, two of seven players with three-or-more goals.

FIVE FOR FIGHTING: Reign forward Rasmus Kupari found his way onto the scoresheet for the third straight game, but not in the way you might think. Kupari received his first AHL fighting major in the third period, standing up for himself after a few unnecessary whacks, following his own skill play. Kupari now has the season-long "Gordie Howe Hat Trick" with a goal in Game 1, an assist in Game 2 and now a fight in Game 3.

FAMILIAR WITH THE FOE: Ontario forward Mario Kempe spent a chunk of the previous two seasons as a member of tonight's opponent, the Tucson Roadrunners. Kempe appeared in 57 games with the Roadrunners from 2017 – 2019 and amassed 48 points (23-25-48) in his time there. Kempe also appeared in 70 games with Tucson's NHL affiliate, the Arizona Coyotes, and tallied a total of 13 points (6-7-13).

INJURY UPDATES: The Reign will again be without defenseman Sean Durzi, who misses this weekend's action with an upper-body injury, suffered on Opening Night against San Jose. The Reign will also miss defenseman Daniel Brickley, who is out tonight with an upper-body injury. Forward Drake Rymsha also remains sidelined with an injury suffered in preseason, though he has resumed skating.

SCOUTING THE ROADRUNNERS: Tucson earned a split during its opening weekend, with a 2-0 win in Texas on Opening Night, followed by a 5-2 loss to San Antonio two days later. The Roadrunners got a shutout from rehabbing goaltender Antti Raanta, who made 19-saves in the win. No Tucson player has collected multiple points on the season through two games, but the team added a key piece in defenseman Kyle Capobianco, who was assigned by the Coyotes in advance of tonight's game.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156893 San Jose Sharks

Unraveling the return of Mr. Shark: Can Marleau be a solution to this mess?

By GARRETT WROBLEWSKI/GUEST COLUMNIST

PUBLISHED: October 12, 2019 at 10:06 am | UPDATED: October 12, 2019 at 5:11 PM

The few remaining Bay Area hockey fans willing to vocalize their displeasure over the return of Mr. Shark died a quick and ignominious death after the incredulous fairytale ending Patrick Marleau helped engineer in Chicago on Thursday night.

The 40-year old prodigal power forward of George Gund and Dean Lombardi willed his new team to its first victory of the season with his energetic performance, in particular on the backcheck. Marleau admitted enjoying the luxury of skipping official training camp due to his contract situation, showed the young whippersnappers how it was done with a two-goal, six-shot, five-hit performance.

If Old Man Marleau can put forth that kind of effort, why can't Johnny Brodzinski? But, unlike San Jose's other quadragenarian Joe Thornton, Patrick's wheels are still a threat. Not the threat he was in 2009, but Marleau's size and speed and ability to protect the puck with his aging-yet-still-sizeable frame is a definite asset when cycling between players in the offensive zone to create outnumbered chances in front of the net.

Doug Wilson's rather vocal proclamation before training camp that the young talent in the organization was deserving of a chance before any veteran (*hint* Patrick Marleau) got a shot at the roster quickly wore thin after the Sharks young forwards played in extended roles ill-suited to them. This immediately exposed the shaky, inexperienced makeup of the rookie forwards who played tenuously without the steadying presence of Captain Joe Pavelski manning a top role.

That is not meant as a critique of new and deserving Captain Logan Couture; if anything, quite the opposite. Adversity is the quickest way to grow on the job and Couture has the ear of two former captains to lean on if he chooses to seek their counsel.

It will be interesting to see if No. 39's modus operandi is to become more vocal in the dressing room. Not at all shy with the media, Couture's forthright and oftentimes harsh critique of teammates and himself in rough, losing postgame interviews over the years suggests he will not be a Mary Poppins NHL Captain, where a spoonfull of sugar helps the medicine go down.

Difference-maker Evander Kane's primary contribution to the team the first three games was zero after his dopey three-game suspension for abuse of an official. The Sharks need his fiery play desperately, but enhancing his pouty reputation among NHL officials in a meaningless pre-season game is a selfish act.

Kane's role and paycheck on the team dictates, if not a role model, he should be setting the tone for the younger guys to follow a veteran's lead as to where the line is regarding physical play. Kane needs to remember during scrums that whether the target on his back is deserved, or simply a crooked witch hunt by referees out to get him, the target is certainly there to stay. Just ask former Shark Raffi Torres.

It didn't help that the positives have been few and far between. In particular, two of the Sharks young big-gun forwards contract-wise (Tomas Hertl and Timo Meier) were barely visible on the scoring sheet. This is hardly a roster that, on paper, screams Stanley Cup Contender.

Watching the Cup-contending Golden Knights dismantle the Sharks before losing, in a similarly uninspiring fashion, to whatever just-promoted San Diego Seagulls currently make up the Ducks roster



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

was not the start to the season Sharks fans or management were expecting.

The shockingly non-competitive 0-4 start, in addition to abruptly slapping Marleau to a contract so soon after Wilson vocalized making a big deal out of his dedication to the youth movement, is a definite sign that management realizes it has radically overvalued the abilities of many of the players in the Sharks draft pipeline to contribute immediately, or perhaps ever, to the parent club.

Pavelski's 13 years of Sharks leadership was sadly missed as a calming influence and the youngsters on the team looked especially skittish over their first three games. Even with a friendly hometown discount, Wilson deemed it impossible to even make a competitive offer to the 35-year-old.

It was obvious from the evening Thornton picked Erik Karlsson up from the airport that Wilson coveted the perennial Norris Trophy candidate at nearly any and all costs. For better or worse, he has bet nearly 15 percent of Hasso Platner's Sharks equity portfolio on the generational talent free-agent (but size-deficient and injury-prone) defenseman.

Last season by the elimination game of the Sharks-Blues series, Karlsson had finally been put on injured reserve. Those who observed the obvious grimace on Karlsson's face during what was normally an effortless stride could tell that the Blues legal pounding of the Mustached Maestro had taken its toll and decimated his effectiveness in the series.

Many nationally considered Karlsson's leverage diminished, but Wilson appreciated him gutting out painful injuries during the playoffs and much of the regular season. Karlsson was a full participant in the All-Star festivities while rehabbing a day-to-day injury which he easily could have begged off, primarily to endear himself to Sharks fans.

Wilson did end up paying top-dollar for the services of the Swedish defenseman, making a rather sizable exception to his unstated rule that players try to be willing to take a bit less than they would on the open market to accommodate the Sharks' salary cap.

An NHL-quality forward, cheap, preferably one capable of a top-six role was needed. One with the experience to calm a team that no longer had the benefit of Pavelski.

Enter Marleau, an NHL-quality forward capable of a top-six role. If anyone has the experience to calm a young team, it is him, a man who has seen everything in his 20 years with the Sharks, but is now making \$700,000 annually for San Jose.

After three regular-season games (not to mention that loss to ferocious Nashville, post-Marleau signing, to solidify the 0-4 start) it became obvious the current crop of Sharks rookies are the hockey equivalent of the Not Ready For Prime Time Players.

Veterans were just as culpable, the Sharks having spent three-and-a-half of their first four games (the lone exception being their shot-heavy second period versus Nashville) tentative and/or sloppy with the puck, seemingly unsure of where teammates would and should be.

The presser Wilson gave announcing the return of Mr. Shark was a touch abrupt, especially considering the whiplash quick turnaround from the franchise's initial dismissal of Marleau's desire to return.

The Sharks GM plays his cards so close to the vest during public interviews that acquiring any sort of nugget of real information can prove both vexing and difficult. At one point when answering a Marleau question, however, Wilson mentioned off-the-cuff that

Patrick "understands how we play and is very accepting of the role that Pete De Boer, our head coach, may need on different nights."

While probably unintentional, this mild pre-rebuke warning may be Wilson signaling that another mid-season trade request (or poutiness in general) will not be acceptable during his second tour of duty. When the superstar feuded with his coach during the 2015 season, was it ever fully resolved?

With Thornton fully accepting a reduced role and salary with aplomb, there seems to be no reason why the mostly affable Marleau would cause any locker room wave due to past friction as he bucks the odds yet again and is granted a Sharks Farewell Tour most 40-year old players could only dream of. Playing once again in the city he became an icon, a city his family loves and still calls home.

The Sharks have finally deciphered the answer to what must have seemed to be a sphynxlike puzzle, achieving their first victory and earning their initial two points of the season. It was also the first game where most viewers felt like they were watching the San Jose Sharks, and not a collection of strangers in similar-looking teal laundry pretending like they've practiced together before.

Will this be the start of an ascent to the top of the standings in the Pacific Division? Or perhaps an inconvenient number of overtime losses will gum up the statistical works and make the standings near-indecipherable to the casual hockey fan after less than a month? We'll know more after another five games, approximately 12 percent of the way into the regular season.

San Jose Mercury News: LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156894 San Jose Sharks

How Aaron Dell's win could boost fellow goalie Martin Jones, Sharks' defense

By Chelena Goldman

October 12, 2019 6:13 PM

SAN JOSE -- After Aaron Dell tended twine in the Sharks' first regular-season win Thursday in Chicago, many believe he might start a second consecutive game.

From the looks of things at Saturday's morning skate, however, de facto starter Martin Jones will get the call instead Sunday night when the Sharks host the Calgary Flames.

But the decision to start Dell against the Blackhawks wasn't about sending a message to Jones after four straight losses, Sharks coach Peter DeBoer said Saturday. That decision was about giving his backup goalie more starts.

In the long run, this is something that could greatly benefit the Sharks' goaltending situation.

"It isn't any kind of indictment on Martin Jones," DeBoer insisted when asked about choosing to start Dell in Chicago. "I kind of decided over the summer that I wanted to play Deller more."

While Jones and Dell both faced downturns in performance through their 2018-19 campaigns and ended the regular season with goals-



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

against averages under .900. Dell was the goalie who spent most of the time sitting on the bench. So DeBoer gave his backup some offseason homework ahead of this season so that, hopefully, wouldn't happen again.

Dell then showed off that hard work in his start, making huge saves that kept the Blackhawks from running up the scoreboard early in the contest. In the final minute of play, Dell's insane saves allowed San Jose to hang on for their first win.

"I wanted to play him more last year, but he didn't allow me that opportunity to," DeBoer admitted. "So I told him over the summer that, 'I want to get you in more games than I did last year. I'm going to give you the opportunity early to play some more, but you have to help me and play well when you get in there.' And I think he did that."

Getting better performances out of Dell ultimately can help Jones, too. Jones plays some of his best hockey when the stakes are higher, and he easily could get a boost from his backup having a more reputable season. And since the two netminders have built a solid working relationship, the whole team can benefit.

"We've had a good relationship over the last few years, so it's been good for our team," Jones said. "We're on the same team here. We all want the same thing. We all want to win."

Now, if the defense in front of both Jones and Dell can tighten up, the Sharks really will be in good shape.

"We've started to help our goaltenders, but our game in front of those guys isn't where it needs to be yet either," DeBoer said. "I think slowly we've gotten a little bit better every game."

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156895 San Jose Sharks

Why Sharks' Patrick Marleau expects nerves before SAP Center return

By Chelena Goldman

October 12, 2019 12:51 PM

SAN JOSE -- Sure, even a seasoned veteran like Patrick Marleau had some jitters before he took the ice for his first game back with the Sharks on Thursday night in Chicago.

But that's nothing compared to how he's going to feel on Sunday when he takes the ice at SAP Center.

While meeting with the media on Saturday morning following practice, Marleau admitted that the nerves ahead of his first game back home as a Shark will be on another level.

"I expect it to be a lot the same [nerves as the first game on the road], maybe a little bit more with coming back in front of the fan base," Marleau said. "That adrenaline will be going again and they're going to help me out. Just as long as I keep my legs moving and go to the right spots, hopefully it will be fine."

Those pre-homecoming jitters haven't taken away from how happy the 40-year-old winger is to be playing hockey again. Even with one

game back in teal under his belt, the delight of once again being in the fold hasn't worn off.

"The smile hasn't come off my face," he said. "To be able to come back here and walk into this locker room and see my name, it feels good to have somewhere to go and have somewhere to play. And to especially be back here."

It isn't just Marleau's teammates who are happy he's back in a Sharks jersey. No. 12 said he's also heard from former teammates who are happy he's found a home after missing the start of the season.

"The amount of text messages and phone calls I got, it was very humbling and overwhelming," he said. "I really appreciate all of the support that I've been getting. Now the work really starts and I'm really looking forward to it."

Marleau has already had a positive impact on the Sharks ahead of his return to the South Bay, registering two goals in San Jose's 5-4 victory over the Blackhawks. But the team will also be looking to him off the ice as a crop of rookie players gets more acclimated to playing in the NHL.

"Just happy to have another solid pro on the ice and in the room," head coach Peter DeBoer said. "He's going to be a great mentor to our young guys. Just the game he played the other night. How he created offense, he did it the right way."

All that's left now is for Marleau to take the SAP Center ice in his first game back with the Sharks.

Speaking of taking the ice -- Marleau traditionally was the last player to skate out of the sharks' head during his previous tenure with the team, a role that was taken over by Marc-Edouard Vlasic after Marleau left for the Toronto Maple Leafs. Will No. 12 take back the honor of being the last Sharks player out on the ice?

"We had a little talk about it," Marleau said with a laugh. "He let me go out last last game, it was very nice of him."

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 10.13.2019

1156896 San Jose Sharks

Expect to see Aaron Dell in net more this season for the Sharks, if he can handle it

By Kevin Kurz

Oct 12, 2019

In hindsight, it turned out to be the correct decision. But last April, more than a few eyebrows were raised when coach Pete DeBoer returned to Martin Jones in Game 5 against Vegas in the first round. Jones had played miserably for three consecutive playoff games, helping to leave the Sharks on the brink of elimination. Jones' regular-season and playoff performance to that point didn't leave much hope that he was suddenly going to get it together.

But the decision was also a reflection on backup Aaron Dell. Just like Jones, Dell's regular-season performance — 10-8-4, 3.17 goals-against average and .886 save percentage — left much to be



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

desired. DeBoer appeared to lose confidence in his backup fairly quickly last season, as Dell started just eight regular-season games for the Sharks after the turn of the new year.

The coach hopes Dell, who backstopped the Sharks to their first win of the season on Thursday in Chicago, shows him that he's reliable enough to get in more often this season. That was the message DeBoer relayed to the goaltender in the offseason.

"I kind of decided in the summer that I wanted to play Deller more," DeBoer said Saturday. "I wanted to play Deller more last year, but he didn't allow me that opportunity to. I told him over the summer, 'I want to get you in more games than I got you in last year. I'm going to give you the opportunity early to play some more, but you have to help me and play well when you go in there.' I thought he did that (against Chicago)."

DeBoer added that starting Dell in two of the Sharks' first five games "isn't an indictment on Martin Jones," and it will be Jones who returns to the net Sunday against Calgary at SAP Center.

More action means Dell has more of a chance to push Jones, and perhaps even overtake him as the goalie who gets more starts. Jones was the only Sharks player who actually showed up in the miserable season opener in Vegas on Oct. 2, a 4-1 loss that could have been much worse. But his play since has resembled how he looked last season, when he posted a 36-19-5 record with a 2.94 GAA and .896 SP — the lowest save percentage among the 20 NHL goalies who appeared in at least 47 games.

Yes, the team has hung him out to dry on many occasions, but No. 1 NHL goalies are expected to make momentum-changing saves from time to time. Kyle Turris' goal that snuck under Jones' left arm in Nashville is one example. Had Jones made that save at that important time with the Sharks trailing 2-1, perhaps they get the tying goal later in the final frame and it changes the outcome.

Asked to evaluate Jones before the Sharks played the Blackhawks, DeBoer said, "I think Martin has been a product of our team play, no doubt. I don't think we've helped him. At the same time, I think you've got to be part of the solution, too, on a nightly basis."

Jones and Dell have each appeared in three games. It's a small sample, but Dell's numbers (3.17 GAA, .886 SP) are better than Jones' (4.55 GAA, .854 SP).

Dell stuck around the San Jose area this summer to work with the Sharks' training staff, apparently taking DeBoer's offseason message to heart.

"It was great," he said. "If you're off at home and things like that, you just kind of check-in, but I was able to work directly with (Sharks trainer Mike Potenza) all summer. I think that made a big difference for me.

"I did the same things, but I think I was more controlled on things. I watched what I ate a little bit closer, and I was more disciplined in workouts, and things like that."

Did it make a difference?

"Definitely," Dell said.

Thursday's win in Chicago was hardly a 60-minute blueprint for how the Sharks would like to play. Until Brent Burns' fortunate goal off Connor Murphy's glove that tied the score at 3-3 midway through the second period, the scoring chances were heavily in favor of the Blackhawks.

Dell, though, did his job well for the most part. He managed to make some difficult saves, including breakaway stops on Brandon Saad

and Alex DeBrincat in the first and second periods, respectively. He kept his teammates in the game long enough for them to erase four deficits and finally pull out a 5-4 win.

"That's what we need out of him. Made some key saves at key times," DeBoer said after the game. "I thought both teams were a little bit loose, and he made one more save than the other guy (Corey Crawford). That's sometimes all you need."

The third period was also the Sharks' best of the season. In a 4-4 game after two periods at United Center, they played with much more control and patience than they had in the first 14 periods of the season. The result was a game-winning goal by Barclay Goodrow on a nice setup by Joe Thornton, and no high-danger scoring chances allowed.

That kind of play will help any goalie's numbers, and the Sharks hope to build off it for Sunday's meeting with the Flames.

"We haven't helped our goaltenders out this year. We didn't help them out much last year. It's disappointing (and we're) upset about that," Logan Couture said after Thursday's game. "We need to defend a lot harder, and we talked about that between the second and third (periods). Take some pride in playing defense. I thought we did a good job in helping him out in the third. When we had those breakdowns, he made some big-time saves for us, and that's what you need when you're struggling defensively. You need your goalie to bail you out a few times, and he did tonight, for sure."

Even though it's Jones on Sunday, it's likely that Dell will get back in the net soon, perhaps Wednesday against Carolina or Saturday against the Sabres as the Sharks' enjoy their first homestand. After that, a difficult swing through eastern Canada awaits, including a back-to-back in Montreal and Toronto on Oct. 24-25. There's also a home back-to-back on Nov. 1-2 against the Jets and Canucks.

Or maybe Jones continues to struggle, and Dell plays much more regularly. Regardless, the plan is to mirror what so many NHL teams are doing nowadays in playing their No. 2 goalies much more often than was typically seen a decade ago. The days of a goalie starting 70 games in a season are pretty much extinct.

Jones indicated he would be fine with that setup.

"Any time you can have two guys that are a little fresher and a little sharper, that's a good thing for your team," he said. "We're on the same team here, we all want the same things, we all want to win. Me and Deller have had a good relationship the last few years, so it's been good for our team."

DeBoer said: "I think the strength of our goaltending a couple years ago was when we put Deller in there he gave us a boost of energy and gave us a solid game. He found a way to win games for us in those situations. I thought last year that didn't happen enough. Those were the conversations I had with him over the summer, and that's his job."

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1156755 Anaheim Ducks

Ducks' stingy defense and opportunistic offense fueling hot start

By Eric Stephens



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

Oct 12, 2019

COLUMBUS, Ohio — Eleven goals in five games. For the Ducks, the prospect that they're not lighting up the scoreboard after having the fewest goals in the NHL last season could present an early concern. And the meager ability to put pucks in the net isn't being ignored.

But is that really a concern when you're giving up one each night? Well, Pittsburgh managed to scratch across two against them. The other four opponents have left the ice with just a single goal celebration.

"Well, if you're only going to score two, you better give up one," Ducks coach Dallas Eakins said underneath the stands at Nationwide Arena, his work bag already resting on his left shoulder as he itched to get out to the team bus. "If that's the way it's got to be, then that's the way it's got to be."

Whatever works, right? The Ducks have played nothing but tight contests in their five games, but they've come out on the right side in four. Darryl Sutter, the former Kings boss that's now part of Anaheim's coaching collaborative, famously called the NHL "a 3-2 league" but it's not even that for the Ducks thus far. The scores so far: 2-1 (win), 3-1 (win), 3-1 (win), 2-1 (loss), 2-1 (win).

The last one came Friday night in Columbus where the Ducks took full advantage of a fortunate bounce and a game that suddenly opened up for a few minutes in the second period. Oh, and they got their usual stellar goaltending.

Except it wasn't John Gibson this time. Ryan Miller stepped in to give Gibson a breather on the second game of a back-to-back situation and delivered 26 saves in his first start. Miller's effort only strengthened the narrative that, with apologies to the fans in Dallas, Boston and Long Island (last season now that Robin Lehner is in Chicago), the best goaltending tandem in the NHL may reside in Anaheim. At very least the best goalie so far this season and the one with the third-most active wins surely does.

It is an unbelievable luxury. Especially for a team still trying to find some consistency within its expected offensive lines. Players have been talking about their goaltending almost daily. Jakob Silfverberg knows how much it means. To have one that's arguably the very best and to have another who was once that over his long career.

"I think it's good for those two guys, too," Silfverberg said. "They keep some competition between them too as well. The way we're playing right now, obviously we're not scoring a ton. So having that behind us is obviously a great confidence boost. Hopefully, they keep doing that, and we'll get better along the way here scoring goals."

All they needed Friday was one from Silfverberg and the other from Cam Fowler. Silfverberg followed up Rickard Rakell's initial shot after the two went in on a 2-on-1 shorthanded break after a successful zone clear struck a linesman and gave Rakell the bounce he needed. Fowler gave the Ducks a two-goal lead when he beat Blue Jackets goalie Joonas Korpisalo with a wrist shot under his arm after he got a drop pass from Ondrej Kase on a 3-on-1 rush.

Silfverberg and Fowler share the team goal scoring lead with two. Heck, Edmonton's James Neal already has seven and he has played in one fewer game. Not that this matters. The six the Ducks have allowed is the fewest over the first five games in franchise history. Only Arizona, Philadelphia and the New York Rangers have given up fewer goals, but they've also played only twice (Flyers, Rangers) or three times (Coyotes). New Jersey, Columbus, Toronto

and Los Angeles have already given up seven or more within a single 60 minutes.

No doubt, it's been the goaltending for the Ducks. And there have been a few shots that have hit posts and crossbars, as the Jackets' Oliver Bjorkstrand did Friday. But they're also playing some disciplined defense in their end.

Last season, the Ducks had already allowed 40 or more shots on goal twice within their first five games. (One was that 51-SOG disaster in Dallas, another game had 39 against). So far, the "shot clock" has soared as high as 36 permitted to San Jose. Columbus took 57 attempts, but only 27 actually got to Miller.

The Ducks talk about protecting the "home plate" area, the space in and around the goal crease and the low slot between the circles. They're about getting as many bodies in there as possible.

"I think what we're trying to do is eliminate second chances," defenseman Josh Manson said. "The shots that we want to give up are the ones outside the house at the point. Far out. Get our boxouts. Eliminate the second chances on those rebounds. For the most part, our goalies, if they can see it, they're going to stop it. Eliminate the chances in tight in the house as we call it. Carry the second pucks out."

It could be defenders so far doing an excellent job of using their sticks to tie up their opponent's before they can get a clean whack at a free puck. But Manson said it is more about winning positional battles in front of the net.

"You got to be in the right spots to make that play," he added. "Otherwise, guys will have tap-ins. If you're not in the right spot to start off with, you're going to lose the battle."

When general manager Bob Murray went behind the bench after firing Randy Carlyle, the first notable change he made was having the Ducks defend in zones in their end. Eakins has kept it, while wisely re-teaming Manson and Hampus Lindholm as his primary shutdown duo.

"It's a lot of layers there," Eakins said. "We're not a team that plays man-to-man. A lot of teams have gone to that. It's very effective, too. But we've chosen to have lots of layers. So if you do beat one guy, there's another guy there waiting for you."

"If you go look to where all the goals are scored in the NHL, they're right there in front of that net. And we're just trying to clog that up with as many sticks, feet, shin pads. Whatever we can get in there to clog it. The one thing our D and our low forwards have done an excellent job of is getting inside. So that when Gibby or Millsy make a save, they're on the inside to clear those rebounds off to the side of the net."

Where Korpisalo couldn't make the save he needed to make on Fowler's shot that doubled a Ducks lead less than three minutes after Rakell's goal, Miller made the defining stop that a goalie will usually have to make in a decisive performance.

Decisive is the word when it came to how Miller was going to play Seth Jones. The star Columbus defenseman got sent in with a pass from Nick Foligno as the Jackets had an odd-man rush near the midpoint of the third period.

Coming down the right side, Jones went to his backhand as Miller made a push to his left. Losing his positioning as he was sliding, Miller stuck his paddle out with his right hand and knocked the puck away with an excellent poke check. The save kept the Jackets from tying the game.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

"I rotated and saw his body direction," Miller said. "And I was out of luck. If I kept going, he's just sliding it in. So as I went, I just ... I mean, he could have probably put it anywhere. The only thing I had there was my stick. It was just an all-or-nothing kind of play.

"When I saw where his body was going, he'd have to lose control. I had to adjust course. It worked out tonight. You can smile about it."

As Miller saw it, he had only two options. He made the correct one and it became his 379th career win.

"It's either I'm going to the post or I got to do that," he said. "I had to get really quickly back to my post or he's going to cut. Where I put myself was kind of setting up for that backside play. It just worked out.

"I didn't think about it the whole time coming down the ice. It was just something (where) when you play enough hockey games, you just kind of like, 'He's not going that way. I'm going to be in trouble if I don't do something.' I got really lucky that he's (right) handed and my stick is right there."

Eakins went back and forth in his mind on how the club's alternate captains would be designated. Would there be two permanent alternates? Three? Would there be more? And if so, would they rotate between players? Could two wear the "A" for home games and two others do it on the road?

Ultimately, Silfverberg and Manson were selected as the two permanent alternate captains to Ryan Getzlaf. Players who wear letters often talk about how a player doesn't need to wear one to be a leader on his team. Teams know which players in the dressing room are their compass. They talk of leadership being vocal and non-verbal, with a player's work ethic and demeanor setting the example.

But those players that receive a letter don't deny the meaning it carries to them. Silfverberg and Manson didn't try to downplay the impact of that gesture.

"It means a lot," Silfverberg said. "I'm definitely proud of it. I hope guys on the team stand behind me in this position, too. I feel like I have their support. Other than that, we have a great group of guys. Our leadership group — you can almost pick any of those guys as a great leader. We kind of help each other out. But obviously having that confidence and that trust from Dallas, it's obviously boosting my confidence as well.

"(I) try not to change too much. I try to be myself and hopefully guys like what they see."

Leadership runs in the Manson family. As a junior, he was captain of his Northeastern team. And his father, Dave, was an alternate for Edmonton and Winnipeg among the teams he played for. The son called his ascension to an alternate "a huge honor."

"For them to see me in that light that they'd want me to wear it, I'm honored," said Manson, who's now in his sixth season. "I don't take it for granted at all. At the end the day, it's a letter. I'm going to keep doing the same things that I've always been doing.

"But with this team, we're very fortunate. We're a leadership-by-committee group. We have a lot of guys that are good leaders. Great leaders. I think it's pretty easy to be an assistant captain on this team. You've got four other guys, five other guys backing you up."

Before the Ducks took on Pittsburgh, Kase expressed optimism that his first goal of the year was not far away. There was reason to feel that way. He had 11 shots on goal in the first two games to lead the team. And goal scorers tend to have that attitude anyway. Ask Teemu Selanne.

"The first two games, I had a couple good chances," Kase said. "(At Detroit) wasn't too much. But every game is different a little bit."

After scoring just five times in 53 games over his rookie season, Kase had 31 goals over 96 games in the two following seasons. With a goal scored for virtually every three played, you figured he was due.

Sure enough, the ball of energy that is the Ducks' winger took Nick Ritchie's fine backhand pass from behind the net and quickly snuck a shot through Penguins goalie Matt Murray. It would be the only tally for Anaheim in their lone loss.

Prior to the game, Kase first emphasized that he was most happy with the six points his team gained over their three wins to start the year. But he is encouraged about the Ducks playing a system that could lead to more offensive opportunities. He has points in three of their five games.

"We try to play fast on the offensive side," Kase said. "It's the perfect style. I like it. You can make the plays. You want to play with the puck. It's perfect."

Bring up the name Scott Niedermayer around Fowler and he recalls warm memories of when he was an 18-year-old rookie living at Niedermayer's home during that first season with Anaheim after Fowler came straight out of junior hockey.

It also comes with some trepidation. He is now in his 10th season and has moved up the franchise's record books for a defenseman. His 625 games played is more than any other Ducks blueliner. And he is now on the verge of scoring the most goals by a team defenseman after his tally Friday against the Blue Jackets gave him 60, tying him with the Hall of Famer Niedermayer.

Now Niedermayer needed half as long and just 371 games to get his 60 in an Anaheim sweater. But it is still a mark that Fowler will top with his next goal.

"It's pretty cool," Fowler said. "Scotty's one of the greatest to ever play. By no means is it a comparison to him. It's nice to be mentioned in the same breath as him. I'm happy with that. Most of all, the team got the win.

"I think it's just a product of me being around for a little bit. It is special. I'm not trying to take anything away from it. Not trying to compare myself to Scotty either."

Friday's game was also noteworthy for Getzlaf. The career-long Ducks center suited up in his 989th contest of the regular season, which allowed him to pass his longtime teammate Corey Perry and sit at the top of the list for the most games played in franchise history.

Perry, of course, never got to play in 1,000 with Anaheim after the team bought him out this summer. The winger would sign with Dallas, where he is recovering from a foot fracture as he prepares to make his debut with the Stars. Barring injury, Getzlaf will hit that milestone at home on Nov. 3 against Chicago.

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Sportsnet.ca / Maple Leafs' supporting cast steals the spotlight against Red Wings



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

Luke Fox | October 12, 2019, 10:09 PM

DETROIT – Saturdays were built for hockey's marquee stars, but every once in a while the supporting cast steals the spotlight.

For the Toronto Maple Leafs, this was certainly one of those nights.

In the giddy aftermath of their 5-2, three-game-skid-snuffing victory over the Detroit Red Wings, there was Frederik Gauthier conducting a national TV interview, his first-ever Hockey Night in Canada towel draped over his broad shoulders and a spotless 7-for-7 faceoff performance stamped on the game sheet.

There was fifth-rounder Dmytro Timashov happily describing his two primary assists and point-per-game NHL career after finally squeaking onto a big-league roster after three years in the farm system.

There was the undrafted Trevor Moore trying to make sense of how he needed 25 games in 2018-19 to score two goals and only six games to find the net thrice.

There was fourth-line journeyman Nick Shore downplaying his first NHL goal in more than 18 months, striving to make the most of his limited ice time after a winter abroad, clinging to his professional hockey career in Magnitogorsk.

And there — trembling and smiling as he struggled to explain his first love in a second language — was the Maple Leafs' new fan favourite, courted and imported jewel Ilya Mikheyev, telling what it meant to make an impact in a hockey town known for its Russian icons.

"I see portraits in here, Russian Five and Pavel Datsyuk. They're very great. Big history, I know," Mikheyev said, holding court in the Little Caesars visitors' room.

"I just work because this my first NHL season. Other country has other mentality and new system for me, and I excited every time. I very happy every day when I came in practice rink or Scotiabank rink. I just very happy."

Ditto, Mike Babcock.

Head coaches dream of bottom-six performances like the one he witnessed Saturday, when he trusted a bunch of names not splashed on the backs of the travelling Leafs Nation to not only stiffle one of the sport's hottest lines (Tyler Bertuzzi, Dylan Larkin and Anthony Mantha) but ended up leaning on them to produce hearty spoonfuls of offence when his \$40 million worth of showtime ran dry.

It was the theatre of the bizarre. Neither John Tavares nor William Nylander registered a shot on goal. Auston Matthews, Mitchell Marner, Andreas Johnson and Nylander were all minus players.

Yet the Leafs' bottom-six of Timashov, Shore, Gauthier, Moore, Mikheyev and Alexander Kerfoot combined for a whopping eight points, despite getting tasked with critical defensive-zone starts.

"You don't know what's going to happen, but if the guys can do it, obviously it's a huge deal for you. It makes you a way better hockey club and way deeper, and then you can play [Tavares] and [Matthews] out in the offensive zone all the time, which is easier on them," said Babcock, crediting Gauthier and Shore's face-off prowess.

"Shoresy is a right-hand faceoff guy, and we didn't have that [last season]. They're just not in the same situation we were in a year

ago. I thought Timo had a heck of a game. He was fast, he was strong, he was physical. The goals and that stuff were bonus."

Toronto's sluggish starts are officially a habit, as the Maple Leafs surrendered the night's first goal for the fifth time in six games.

Fourth-liner Jacob De La Rose eluded his rookie check, Rasmus Sandin, in the slot and whacked in a sweeping backhanded rebound past Frederik Andersen, a goaltender out for redemption after surrendering a touchdown to Tampa Bay on Thursday.

Toronto's own fourth line evened the contest when some nifty forecheck work by Timashov helped the rookie set up Shore in the slot. Shore's patient move to his backhand foiled Jimmy Howard, giving Shore his first NHL goal since April 2018.

"That's all you can do," Shore said. "You work hard when you're not in, and when the opportunity is given, you try to make the most of it."

The Maple Leafs seized a lead with a mere 30 seconds remaining in a back-and-forth second period thanks to the deceptive speed of Mikheyev.

From deep in his own corner, Kasper Kapanen lobbed an airborne pass inside the Red Wings' zone for the soup lover to go chase down.

"I saw that Kappy did a flip pass, and I just moving and see puck before me," Mikheyev explained. "I think goal is 50/50. I have shot and I did."

Mikheyev, who broke out for 23 goals with hometown Omsk Avangard last season, blew past defender Madison Bowey and beat a charging Howard for the loose puck, then smoothly deposited it in the vacated net for his second since moving to North America.

The Leafs' third-line centre, Kerfoot, and Detroit winger Darren Helm continued the theme of bottom-six stars by exchanging goals in the third period.

Timashov registered his second primary assist of the game when he fed a beautiful cross-seam pass to a pinching Jake Muzzin, who snapped it clean for the insurance.

Moore potted an empty-netter, giving each member of the Leafs' third line a goal in the same game.

The patchwork fringes of the lineup shone bright.

"It's kudos to everyone involved, the players and everyone finding the guys," said Muzzin. "We have lots of lots of depth here. We have smart hockey players, and guys are working hard and hungry, so that's a great combination to have."

Yes, the expensive all-stars in the penthouse of the Maple Leafs' lineup are being paid and pressured to deliver.

But it's the personnel throughout the trenches that need to do their share if this squad can equal its lofty expectations.

"Everyone contributes," Tavares says. "There's no doubt we need everyone, whether your role is small or big, the impact is huge."

It may never be as huge as it was on Saturday.

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CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

Sportsnet.ca / Strong start to season has Canadiens' Drouin brimming with confidence

Eric Engels October 13, 2019, 12:19 AM

MONTREAL— Jonathan Drouin stood in the middle of the Montreal Canadiens' dressing room with team-awarded, Conan-the-Barbarian sword in-hand, and with a smile as wide as it could stretch across his face.

He was five minutes removed from an interview with TVA Sports' Renaud Lavoie at centre ice—in which he was serenaded by the fans at the Bell Centre for the role he played in his team putting the boots to the reigning Stanley Cup champion St. Louis Blues—and he was justifiably satisfied.

With a goal and an assist in Saturday's 6-3 win, Drouin extended his point streak to five games, which is as many as the Canadiens have played this year.

He's brimming with confidence, skating as well as he ever has, and yeah, he's definitely smiling a lot more right now than he did a couple of weeks ago—when his sleepy pre-season play garnered a lot of negative attention (and not just from this small corner of the hockey world).

"I feel good right now," Drouin said.

How could he not? By now it's an old story that's been repeated ad nauseam, but it must be revisited to reinforce the point that Drouin is playing the way the Tampa Bay Lightning expected him to play when they drafted him third overall in 2013, and the way the Canadiens expected he'd play when they traded for him in the summer of 2017 and instantly made him their highest-paid forward: He finished last season with one goal in his last 26 games and was short-shifted on a regular basis as Montreal battled tooth-and-nail to earn the Eastern Conference's last playoff spot. They failed, and so did he.

Drouin was publicly eviscerated for it. And despite his initiative in pouring over video with Canadiens' assistant coach Dominique Ducharme over the summer months, he did little in September to convince people that he was in for a course correction.

But October began with Drouin shining in a hard-fought 4-3 shootout loss for the Canadiens in Carolina, and it's rolled along with him standing out as the best Montreal forward in all their games.

He's been their hardest worker, he's had the biggest impact, and he's tied for the team-lead in points (two goals, four assists).

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"I think that, at the moment, Jonathan is probably playing his best hockey since he's been with us," said Canadiens coach Claude Julien after Saturday's win. "He's playing with a lot of confidence and a lot of energy, and at the same time, he's showing what kind of impact he can have on other players as well. It's not the others that are making him better; it's him who's making them better. It's a good sign for us and he deserves a lot of credit for it."

Absolutely. The Ste. Agathe, Que., native has earned it.

If Joel Armia (who had 13 goals in 57 games last season) has found the net three times this week, it has much to do with the work Drouin

has been doing to his left. If centre Jesperi Kotkaniemi has been a more reliable option in the early going of his second NHL season, it's at least in part due to the energy and finesse Drouin is providing. And with all three playing as confidently and as well as they are, it allows for the Canadiens' biggest strength—their depth—to shine through.

On this night, nine of their players hit the scoresheet. The line of Tomas Tatar, Phillip Danault and Brendan Gallagher dominated its matchup against Ryan O'Reilly, Sammy Blais and David Perron—with all three players scoring a goal apiece and combining for six points, 13 shots on net, and a Corsi-for rating of 64 per cent. Behind them, Max Domi's line, with Jordan Weal and Artturi Lehkonen produced the game-winning goal and an empty-net deal-sealer while controlling 71 per cent of the shot attempts.

With Nate Thompson, Nick Suzuki and Paul Byron skating well as a fourth line for the Canadiens, and Drouin's line at the height of its abilities, it was too much for St. Louis to handle.

"They played better and harder than us," said Blues coach Craig Berube. "That's what it boils down to."

It was a big departure from where the Canadiens last left off—with goaltender Carey Price saying they just needed to find a way to play better after losing their second game in as many nights (4-2 to the Detroit Red Wings after a 5-4 overtime loss to the Buffalo Sabres).

They skipped practice Friday, opted for a video session instead, and they got back to the habits that earned them 96 points in the standings last season.

Limiting the Blues to just 29 shots on net was a big improvement for the Canadiens after allowing 38.3 shots on average through their first four games. Their transition game was infinitely better, too, with Brett Kulak drawing back into the lineup and on a pairing with Jeff Petry—and with Ben Chiarot skating 17:37 next to Christian Folin after playing more than 21 minutes in each of Montreal's first four games.

The 6-foot-3, 225-pound defenceman made a perfect pass to Drouin in the 19th minute of the first period, and it would have been the nicest play of the game had Drouin not collected that pass on his backhand and dribbled it at lightning speed before releasing it into the top corner of Jordan Binnington's net to give Montreal a 2-1 lead.

The 24-year-old celebrated with a vigorous fist pump and smiled his way through the high-five gauntlet at the bench, just like he smiled in his interview with Lavoie and smiled in his post-game scrums.

Drouin and the Canadiens will be smiling lots if he keeps playing this way.

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1156937 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Flames stage Vegas-worthy disappearing act against Golden Knights

Eric Francis | October 13, 2019, 1:46 AM

LAS VEGAS – Mere metres from a strip where the likes of Criss Angel, David Copperfield and Penn & Teller have performed endless illusions, the Calgary Flames staged one of their own Saturday.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

In the midst of their fifth appearance ever at T-Mobile Arena, the visitors did well to make it look like they were actually in the game for a time.

It was a façade.

Two goals in 33 seconds to open the second period gave the Flames a 2-1 lead in a game in which they had no business pretending to be front-runners.

Alas, the Golden Knights' dominance over the Flames resumed soon thereafter when a Mark Stone goal minutes later kicked off a five-goal spree from a host team that has still never lost to Calgary at T-Mobile Arena.

Flames coach Bill Peters was unable to disguise his frustration over the effort of his team.

"We didn't play hard enough," said Peters of his club's 6-2 beat down.

"Until we start to play hard — and play hard for 60 minutes — it's going to be up in the air all night long, or you're going to get blown out. We've got to develop a little bit of a work ethic here."

A harsh assessment indeed, but one his players shared.

"I think we started to play the right way there for a couple minutes and we got rewarded for it," said Milan Lucic, whose club erased a 1-0 deficit early in the second thanks to a Rasmus Andersson goal and another credited to Johnny Gaudreau that was actually tipped in by William Karlsson.

"Then we went back to cheating for offence and once we started turning pucks over and not covering up we gave up some odd man rushes and the puck wound up in the back of the net.

"It's one of those games we can learn a lot from early on and that's what we need to do with a quick turnaround playing (Sunday) night."

In an outing that saw plenty of bad bounces end up behind him, David Rittich finished with 24 saves.

He thwarted an admirable number of the 18 scoring chances the Knights generated, but twice saw pucks squeeze through his pads, thanks to shots from Paul Stastny and Ryan Reaves.

"I thought we carried most of the game," said Reaves.

"They caught up in shots at the end of the game obviously (the Flames outshot Vegas 35-30), but I thought for 50 or 55 minutes we carried the game."

Reaves' goal made it 5-2 early in the third on a play in which Andersson turned the puck over after Mark Jankowski and Sam Bennett collided at the blue line. Reaves then walked around Andersson and beat Rittich to put the game out of reach.

It marked the fifth-straight start for Rittich, who has faced 30 or more shots every outing, en route to a 2-2-1 record.

It had been predetermined he'd give way to Cam Talbot on Sunday in San Jose where the assignment doesn't get any easier for a team that has yet to hit its stride this season.

For the third time this year the Flames were outskated the first 20 minutes, but bailed out by Rittich once again.

This wasn't on him.

"We've got to be ready to play," said Andersson, who played on the top defensive pairing with Mark Giordano.

"The first period was not good. I've said it (before), we haven't played good for 60 minutes yet. That's what we're looking to do here. We started off the second period really well. We got two quick ones there. If you make mistakes against a team like this, they're going to punish you and that's what they did.

"We're disappointed the way we've played. We haven't played hard enough. We're well aware we haven't played hard enough and we haven't played hard enough on a consistent basis."

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1156938 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Oilers' Jesse Puljujarvi open to staying all year in Europe

Sportsnet Staff | October 12, 2019, 11:40 PM

While the Edmonton Oilers are enjoying a 5-0-0 start to the season, there is still one situation that will require some attention down the road regarding restricted free agent Jesse Puljujarvi.

The Oilers' fourth overall pick from the 2016 draft continues to play with Oulun Kärpät of the Finnish Elite League and doesn't look to be in any rush to make a return to the NHL.

"I'm hearing he's comfortable staying all year in Finland," said Sportsnet's Chris Johnston during the Headlines segment on Hockey Night in Canada. "Obviously the Oilers might have a decision to make for what's best for them, as they get closer to the Dec. 1 deadline where he has to be traded and signed if he's gonna play in the NHL this year."

Puljujarvi requested a trade out of Edmonton back in June and did not sign his qualifying offer so that he could sign a contract in Finland. The Oilers still hold his NHL rights and will have to decide whether they will sign him or trade him before Dec. 1.

The 21-year-old seems to have found his confidence back home with Kärpät as he's leading the team with five goals and 11 points in 11 games. He also had two goals and four points in four Champions Hockey League games.

"I get the feeling that's a comfortable situation for the player. He's trying to get his confidence back, trying to get his game back and he might be the best player right now in the Finnish Elite League."

Before signing in Finland, Puljujarvi had 17 goals and 20 assists in 139 career games.

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1156939 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Devils to be patient with Taylor Hall after team's slow start

Sportsnet Staff | October 12, 2019, 9:37 PM



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

The New Jersey Devils' start to the new season has not gone to plan.

They have yet to record a victory through five games following their latest defeat to the Boston Bruins on Saturday. While it is still early, the Devils' slow start is slightly magnified considering Taylor Hall has yet to sign a contract extension.

"I think a lot of people are starting to wonder how patient are the Devils going to be with Taylor Hall who is, of course, the big fish in the free agent pond at the end of the year," said Sportsnet's Elliotte Friedman during the Headlines segment on Hockey Night in Canada. "I think the answer is this is way too soon to start asking.

"I do think teams might start calling saying 'what are your plans? What are you thinking out here if you can't get him signed?' ... I just don't think we're at a point yet where New Jersey is really looking to say, even though [Devils GM] Ray Shero is a pretty unafraid guy, that we're putting him out there."

Hall, 27, has one year remaining on his current deal with New Jersey, but both sides agreeing to an extension is still a possibility.

"Privately, not much talk between the agent Darren Ferris for Taylor Hall or the Devils and that suggests to me that there is an ongoing process here," Sportsnet's Chris Johnston added. "I do think we can't rule out the possibility of an extension depending on how things turn out."

The former Hart Trophy winner has recorded three assists in New Jersey's opening five games so far this season.

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1156940 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Oilers' patient play propelling Edmonton to unexpected, record-setting start

Mark Spector | October 12, 2019, 6:24 PM

NEW YORK — The Edmonton Oilers boarded their plane on a Newark tarmac Saturday afternoon in first place in the National League. A perfect 5-0 record was packed underneath, the NHL's two leading point-getters and its leading goal scorer sitting pretty up top.

Yep, that's the Oilers we're talking about, tearing through New York like the Joker while Batman's on vacation.

Edmonton set a National Hockey League record by becoming the first team to go 5-0 to start off the season after trailing in every single game. Meanwhile James Neal — who leads the NHL with seven goals and was robbed of his eighth by the great Henrik Lundqvist's glove on Saturday — notched a new team record with his hot start, no easy feat on a franchise that used to score 400 goals in a season, stocking the Hockey Hall of Fame with eight players in all.

It marks the first time in team history that Edmonton ran the table on a three-game trip through New York and New Jersey, beating the Islanders, Devils and in a high-paced Saturday matinee, the Rangers by a convincing 4-1 score.

It's crazy, that this team is setting these records. Particularly if you've watched them bumble through these last couple seasons,

when two of these three games would have surely gotten away from them.

"Absolutely," said Connor McDavid, who logged another two-point night for a league-leading 4-8-12. "We were talking about that Jersey game (a 4-3 shootout win), especially. We usually found a way to lose that game by two or three, just because we open it up.

"We have to stick with games. Play the full 60 minutes. I know it sounds cliché, but it's true."

If you'd have looked at the NHL schedule on October 1 and put \$20 down on which of the 31 teams would go 5-0, tell us, would the Oilers have even been in your Top 20? With this goaltending, a bunch of brand new players, a new coach and a completely new system?

"It's definitely fun," smiled McDavid. "I said it (Friday): Everyone was always kind of waiting for the bad stuff to happen for our group."

Leon Draisaitl had another two goals and an assist, and was an absolute horse on this trip. Like the Devils and Islanders before them, the Rangers just couldn't handle the big German, who had another four shots on goal and an empty netter — his first in two seasons. He didn't have a single one in his 50-goal campaign of a year ago.

But the theme here is of a team that has figured out that if it hangs around long enough, McDavid and Draisaitl are likely enough to find a game-tying goal. Or someone else, like Oscar Klefbom, who has seven points in his first five games, scoring the 1-1 goal Saturday.

"One thing I've figured out quickly with this team — especially with some of the talented players that we have — is that there's more incentive to keep the game close," said goalie Mike Smith, who allowed the game's first goal but was not beaten again on just 21 Rangers shots. "You have guys on this team that can change the game in the blink of an eye ... one goal is nothing. Guys are starting to figure that out."

And those players are learning to be more patient in waiting for their chances. It has become a deadly mix.

"Guys are recognizing what we have to do to win," said head coach Dave Tippett. "Just because you're up 3-1 doesn't mean you have to make it 5-1. You make sure the 3-1 stays in place. It's about winning games. The two points are more important than how many goals you score."

The Oilers won their first seven in 1983-84 in the franchise's first Stanley Cup season, and two years later had a 5-0 start. On this day they killed a 40-second five-on-three in the opening eight minutes of the game, as Smith robbed Mika Zibanejad and Brendan Lemieux on what seemed like certain goals.

Zibanejad came into the game with eight points in the Rangers first two games. The only number he posted on Saturday was a minus-3, however.

On the day the hockey world learned of the death of beloved former Oilers coach Ted Green, the Oilers played a defensive, detail-oriented game that Teddy would have been proud of.

Now, they'll take their show to Chicago for a Monday nighter that closes out a four-game road trip, six points already in the bank.

It's insane what's happening here. Truly it is.

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NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

1156941 Websites

TSN.CA / Ottawa Senators tap into greatest basketball coach in Canadian history by hiring Dave Smart

Ian Mendes

For the past several years, the Ottawa Senators have brought in Dave Smart to speak to their prospects during the club's rookie training camp in the summer.

As the winningest coach in Canadian university basketball history, Smart's ability to connect with young players has been an element the Senators wanted to tap into for themselves.

But this past July, there was a new member of the Senators coaching staff who was absolutely astounded by Smart's ability to connect with young athletes.

And after D.J. Smith heard the basketball coaching legend address his prospects, he knew he would have to find a way to bring Smart into the fold on a more regular basis.

"I listened to him talk to our young guys at rookie camp and I thought it was exceptional. Just his view on how you put winning teams together and it's very similar to what I believe in," Smith said on Saturday. "I just said that's a guy that I could use."

And to that end, the Senators have now brought Smart into the fold on a fairly regular basis as a consultant. Smart – who stepped aside as the Ravens head basketball coach in the spring to become the university's director of basketball operations – has daily contact with Smith and is often seen observing practice from the stands at Canadian Tire Centre.

Smart – who boasted a ludicrous career winning percentage of .925 against USports competition – has the reputation of being a tightly-wound perfectionist who demands the most out of his players and staff. Smith – in his first full-season as an NHL head coach – is known as one of the most gregarious personalities behind the bench – extremely loud and equally demanding.

"I'm not sure who people think is crazier," Smart told TSN.ca with a laugh. "We hit off right away. I'm a basketball guy, not a hockey guy. But we see things the same way."

For many years, the Senators have been widely panned for not being open-minded when it came to such things as analytics and progressive concepts within the game. But bringing Smart into the fold as a consultant gives a window into the innovative culture Smith is trying to foster around the team.

"The reason he's on board is he's the winningest coach in college basketball here. Whether it's hockey, basketball, baseball, football whatever, it's still coaching and you're dealing with people," Smith explained. "He's here to kind of help me in a senior role to see 'Are we pushing the guys enough?' 'Are we pushing them too hard?' And give us his perspective from the outside."

Smart is very direct when asked how his college basketball success could potentially translate into success for a re-building NHL team.

"Winning is winning. Culture is culture. It translates from sport to sport," Smart says flatly.

Smart points out that he has daily conversations with Carleton Ravens hockey coach Shaun Van Allen and football coach Steve

Sumarah and often times the lessons carry over from sport-to-sport. So the idea of him helping out an NHL team isn't a totally foreign concept.

"It doesn't have anything to do with hockey, it just has to do with people," adds Smith. "And I think it's going to help me."

One of Smart's key roles this season is to essentially serve as a fly-on-the-wall when Smith and his coaching staff are addressing the players in a group setting. Smith considers Smart to be an expert on body language – and he relies on the long-time basketball coach's ability to read the room from afar.

"It's not like I'm spying on anybody. I'm just observing," Smart explains. "If I see a player is struggling with a concept, I'll bring that forward. DJ just wants the players to feel comfortable."

Smart says one of the reassuring elements of his newly-formed relationship with Smith is that neither person feels the need to sugar coat any of their messaging to each other.

"He's not sensitive. He's open to me saying things the way I see them," Smart added.

Smith says that Smart's role could expand during the season to include individual meetings with Senators players, but for now, he's appreciative of the feedback he's receiving on how group meetings are transpiring.

"Sometimes you think you're doing a great job in a meeting, but you need someone to tell you the truth. Are the players getting what I'm saying? Is it too long is it too short?" Smith asks aloud. "He's really good at reading body language and guys during meetings. He'll give me feedback saying, maybe I should talk to this guy or maybe I should talk to that guy."

When he was an assistant coach with the Maple Leafs, Smith said he really appreciated the ability to tap into the mind of Jacques Lemaire, who served as an outside consultant for the coaching staff in his first year in Toronto.

"Sometimes, when you're not in the battle and you're a little bit outside, you see it differently. And it's a great perspective," says Smith.

With Lemaire, Smith was able to confer with one of the greatest defensive coaching minds of his generation. In a way, he has the same luxury with Smart – whose air-tight defensive system was the backbone of winning 14 national championships under his watch. The Senators biggest issue over the past couple of seasons has been in their own zone, where they have constantly been hemmed into their own zone.

But does Smith believe that the concepts of defensive basketball – where Smart would constantly force his players to play as a five-man unit – can translate directly into hockey?

"One hundred per cent in can," Smith said staunchly. "One of my beliefs is that you have to keep the puck out of the net to win hockey games. It is a five-man mentality. Once your team truly believes how you have to play to win the game, you can start to win a lot more hockey games. And I think he can help us with that."

Smart, however, is quick to point out that he will not be handling anything from a systems standpoint.

"I don't get into the technical stuff. It's not like I'm saying 'I don't like your forecheck'," says Smart.

He will watch most Senators home games from the 400-level suite occupied by general manager Pierre Dorion and other members of



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

the staff. But Smart is quick to point out that he tries to keep his distance from that group – to give them the space they need to scout the game. When he's watching from above, Smart is looking for positive or negative body language from the players and staff – something he can detect from the upper deck of Canadian Tire Centre.

"He's not watching anything systems-wise. He's watching personalities," says Smith.

Smart will not be in attendance for Saturday's game against the Tampa Bay Lightning at Canadian Tire Centre, because he was watching his son play hockey. Smart also serves as an assistant coach for his two boys – aged 7 and 10 – who play at the highest competitive level.

And he does admit to stealing some of the concepts and plays from the Senators meetings to use for his own kids teams.

"The things I hear in the meetings with the Sens, I take it back to the kids' coaches," Smart says.

Smart is now regularly on the ice with his sons' teams – after a 20-year hiatus from playing hockey. He says he played Triple-A hockey up to the age of 15 – until basketball completely took over his life.

Smart's personal life now appears to be the perfect intersection of basketball and hockey, though it seems doubtful that he would be lacing up the skates to join the Senators for a practice any time soon.

"My skating is getting a lot better," he says with a laugh. "At least now my wife isn't panicked I'm going to end up in the hospital."

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1156942 Websites

TSN.CA / Toronto Maple Leafs Frederik Andersen's confidence not shaken after uneven start

Mark Masters

Frederik Andersen has posted an .876 save percentage through four games this season, but the soft-spoken Dane insists his confidence has not been shaken.

"I'd say I spend less time thinking about it than you guys have," he said with a grin. "I think that's all you guys want to talk about, but, yeah, you just got to keep going."

Andersen allowed seven goals on 28 shots before being pulled in the third period Thursday against the Tampa Bay Lightning. It was only the second time in 369 NHL games (regular season and playoffs) that Andersen has been torched for seven goals. He's not dwelling on it.

"You can't save a goal (after) you let it in on Thursday," Andersen said, "you can't save it in practice the next day, but you prepare for the following game instead of looking back."

Andersen struggled in his first two Octobers as the Leafs starter, but appeared to put that storyline to bed with a .919 save percentage in the opening month last year. However, those previous October issues are clearly on the mind of Mike Babcock.

"He hasn't been known for the start of the year," the Leafs coach said. "The way I look at it, we're all in it together so we got to pick each other up. So, we have to be sound defensively and over a period of time he usually gets himself dialed in and ready to go and feeling better. I don't know why the pattern's like it is, it is and so let's battle."

Babcock pointed out yesterday that his team has improved in a number of defensive categories so far this season.

Andersen on uneven start: 'I spend less time thinking about it than you guys'

Frederik Andersen admits that Thursday's game against the Lightning wasn't their best, but he's already put it behind him and believes the media is more worried about it than the Maple Leafs.

Andersen, meanwhile, is actually content with where his game's at, in general.

"I felt great," he said of his season, "but it's just sometimes you don't have it and sometimes the other team comes in and plays a little bit better and embarrasses you like that but then, like I said, you have to move on."

The Leafs have a number of new faces on defence with Tyson Barrie, Cody Ceci and rookie Rasmus Sandin all still getting settled with their new team and their new goalie.

"It's a growing process, of course," said Andersen, whose errant pass led to the Lightning's seventh goal on Thursday. "I think, it won't happen from Day 1, but we'll get comfortable with each other more and more and we just have to let that process play out."

Both times Andersen allowed seven goals in a game it came against the Lightning and his overall numbers against Tampa Bay aren't great (3-10-1, .871 save percentage). Tonight's match-up is more favourable as Andersen is 7-0-1 with a .918 save percentage in his career against the Red Wings.

Mitch Marner has yet to register a point in five-on-five play this season and admits his chemistry with John Tavares isn't where it was a season ago.

"We haven't clicked as well as we want to yet," Marner said. "We've got to get back to basics, make sure we're staying above people, doing things right, not making mistakes and, on the offensive side of it, when we're getting our shots trying to get pucks back and get to the net."

Any theory as to why the connection is off?

"No, no, not really," the 22-year-old said. "I just think the puck's been bouncing, haven't been going our way, stuff like that happens."

Is he feeling off at all?

"No," he said. "It's going to come so I'm not worried about it."

Both Marner and Tavares have been minus players in each of the last three games, all losses.

Marner, Tavares not clicking yet, focused on getting 'back to basics'

Mitch Marner and John Tavares still haven't found their groove yet with new winger Kasperii Kapanen, but they're not worried and are looking to get back to basics tonight in Detroit.

After getting torched by Steven Stamkos, Brayden Point and Nikita Kucherov on Thursday, the Leafs have done their homework on the Wings' big line. Anthony Mantha, Dylan Larkin and Tyler Bertuzzi have combined for 10 of Detroit's 14 goals this season.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • October 13, 2019

"They bring kind of every aspect, offensively, defensively," observed Marner. "They've got speed on their line, but a lot of grit as well. They aren't afraid to get down low and get in front of your net and bounce those dirty ones in, but all of them can shoot very well. On the defensive side of it, they all have their guys and they all box out hard and it's going to be a good challenge tonight for us."

Mantha is leading the way for the Wings with six goals.

"He's definitely got some deceptive speed," said Andersen, "and a pretty good shot so (I've) got to be ready for him."

Mantha has been on Babcock's radar since he scored 57 goals in 57 regular-season games in his final QMJHL season (2013-14) and then added 24 goals in 24 playoff games with Val d'Or.

"It's taken him some time, but he can flat-out score," Babcock noted. "And then Bert's at the net and plays hard so they've got a good line there."

Mantha and Auston Matthews are tied for second in goals this season as only the Edmonton Oilers' James Neal has more entering Saturday's action.

Matthews has dominated the Wings in his career with 10 goals in 11 games. The only opponents he's scored on more are the Ottawa Senators (12 goals in 13 games) and Montreal Canadiens (12 goals in 12 games).

The Leafs and Wings split their four-game series last season with three of the games going to overtime.

The Red Wings top line of Anthony Mantha, Dylan Larkin and Tyler Bertuzzi has combined for 20 points over their first four games and the Maple Leafs say their speed and grit make them difficult to contain at both ends of the ice.

Babcock's depth rotation continues up front tonight with Nick Shore and Dmytro Timashov drawing back in and Jason Spezza and Nic Petan sitting. But on defence, Justin Holl will play a third straight game with Martin Marincin stuck in the press box. It will be Holl's fourth game out of six this year after he played in just 11 of 82 last season.

"He's been off to a pretty good start for us," said Babcock. "I thought he was tentative at the start of last game, but I thought he played well in the game ... good for him. This is what he wanted. He's getting an opportunity right now, you've got to seize it."

Holl played 15:28 on Thursday picking up an assist and finishing +2 in the 7-3 loss to Tampa Bay.

Projected Leafs lines for tonight's game:

Johnsson-Matthews-Nylander

Kapanen-Tavares-Marner

Mikheyev-Kerfoot-Moore

Timashov-Shore-Gauthier

Rielly-Ceci

Muzzin-Barrie

Sandin-Holl

Andersen starts

Hutchinson

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