



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • November 10, 2018



Preview: Red Wings vs. Hurricanes

Canes open season-long, six-game homestand

by Michael Smith

The Carolina Hurricanes open a season-long, six-game homestand on Saturday night when they host the Detroit Red Wings.

The Hurricanes will be looking to build upon a 4-3 victory in Chicago on Thursday, which snapped a five-game winless streak (0-4-1).

Fly the W

Winless in five straight and needing to salvage a four-game road trip with a win, the Hurricanes held on to defeat the Chicago Blackhawks, 4-3, on Thursday. The game-winning goal belonged to Calvin de Haan, who tallied his first as a Hurricane in the second period to give his team a commanding 4-0 lead at the time.

"It wasn't pretty at times, but it's also nice to play with a lead. To have that four-goal cushion is something we haven't really had all year," he said. "We grinded it out and ended up getting two points. That's all that matters, especially on the road."

Scott Darling made 35 saves on 38 shots against his former team to earn his first victory of the season.

"Right now, I just want wins," he said. "It's been a long 6-7 weeks with the injury, then two losses and sharing the net. It feels good to get the first one."

While the win didn't put the road trip over the top for the Hurricanes - they earned three of a possible eight points - it did at least give the team something to build off of as they head back home for six games over a 14-day stretch.

"The trip didn't go our way," Darling said. "Three out of eight points, but it's better than one out of eight."

Building Blocks

The Canes' longest home game of the season begins tonight and ends with a pair of games surrounding Thanksgiving. That's a quality opportunity for the team to make hay after slipping a bit in the last 10 games.

The Canes, who are 7-7-2 on the season, own a 3-3-1 record at home. Coming to town in the next two weeks include two divisional opponents, three Eastern Conference opponents and a familiar Blackhawks crew.

The Last Meeting

The Hurricanes dominated the last meeting between these two teams, which happened less than three weeks ago in Detroit. The 3-1 win was driven by the Canes' special teams, as the power play chipped in twice, and the penalty kill sealed the deal with an empty-netter in the game's final minute. Petr Mrazek made 20 saves on 21 shots against his former team.

The Opposition

The Canes catch the Red Wings on the second half of a back-to-back. On Friday night, Andreas Athanasiou tied the game late in the third period, and Dylan Larkin scored with six seconds left in overtime to lift the Wings over the Rangers, 3-2. The victory pushed the Wings to 5-1-0 in their last six games and 6-8-2 on the season.

AT THE RINK

Lots happening at PNC Arena, as the Canes open a six-game homestand. First, it's the Veterans Day celebration, in which the Canes will honor all veterans for their service and commitment to our country. The Stock the Pantry Food Drive presented by Harris Teeter also kicks off, and fans who donate two or more non-perishable food items will be entered to win an in-game experience or autographed prize. Finally, we're debuting a unique, new pregame dining experience with the All-Star Chef Series. North Carolina Chefs Dean Neff (PinPoint Restaurant) and Chris Coleman (Stoke Restaurant) will be cooking up some delicious food, and limited seats remain for what's sure to be a delectable evening.



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SB NATION
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About Last Night: A Couple Key Players in a Needed Win

What do Scott Darling and Lucas Wallmark have in common?
Helping the Canes get back on the winning side.

By Jake Crouse

So this is what it feels like, huh?

A win. One (1) victory, precisely. It happened in Chicago last night, 4-3, and despite that gut-shredding feeling of "oh god, they're really gonna come back, aren't they?" the Canes held on to shake the slump.

Finally, I don't have to sit here and try to tell you who should and shouldn't be on PP1, which lines lacked effort or execution and that there won't be Bo-Berry biscuits in the immediate future.

There were problem areas throughout the game (looking especially at you, defensive Canes), but instead of another negative post, let's look at a couple of individual performances that helped make the difference and then let's look forward.

Darling a difference-maker, despite a couple of miscues

Was it a great night in net for Scott Darling in his third start of the year? I think yes and no is the only proper answer here. However, for me, it was mainly yes, especially considering how many times he bailed out the defense in pretty much every period. He was a big part in not letting the team get behind in the first period, going 13-for-13 and stopping a couple good shots on odd-man rushes.

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He especially looked good from short range, not letting any poke-ins or sweep-ins get by, and showed good rebound control. But it wasn't a perfect night, and the third Blackhawks goal was a prime example. Up 4-2 with the Hawks holding the momentum, Darling let an undeflected shot from beyond the left faceoff circle by Nick Schmaltz beat him blockerside.

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He also got caught drifting a little to hard on the first goal, but it was also a two-on-one with arguably a missed tripping call to set it up at the other end.

Was he a key reason why the Canes won the game? Sure. It was a night in which the "elite" blue line switched things up, and some of the new pairings didn't hold up their end, so Darling had to hold up his.

But while it was a game in which the Canes' No. 1 helped get a desperately needed win, it's clear there's still work to be done. If the offense can click, the next question -- which pundits have had all offseason through now -- will be what about the goaltending?

Wallmark on the mark

The coaches trust Lucas Wallmark to find his groove at the NHL level, and Thursday was a reminder of the potential the young Swede has. In a game where the Hurricanes couldn't afford to play catch-up for the umpteenth time, Wallmark's crisp passes help his side to jump out to a 2-0 lead.

The first was what John Forslund might call a "dandy," but for offense instead of the goalie. Andrei Svechnikov forced a turnover that reached Wallmark, who skated as if he were going to carry it up the glass to the point, but turned his head slightly to set up a great pass to Jordan Martinook with a slick backhand move. With quite literally no one in front of him, Martinook was able to play a clean rebound off Corey Crawford's left pad that a crashing Svechnikov wrapped in.

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The second assist by Wallmark wasn't as flashy, but still well played. On the power play, Wallmark found Williams beside the crease with little pressure and fed him a perfect pass to set up a "hack and whack" play that Jacob Slavin netted. Had he been a few inches one way of the other, it would have been much harder for Williams to quickly and cleanly turn with the puck to create the scoring pressure.

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I get it: if this is Sebastian Aho we're talking about, these are routine plays. But a ton of Canes have been misplaying passes so that scoring chances are wasted and the puck cleared -- especially on the power play -- so it's reassuring to see one of the newer guys having early success in a road game with on-point passing.

(In case you were wondering, Aho's still got it.)

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Also, Wallmark won 7 of 11 faceoffs (Staal Jr. might I say) and racked up a couple hits. Way to make a statement, my man.

Keep it going

It was a much needed win, and thankfully, the next two games should be chances for Carolina to continue building confidence if they can hold stride.

The Canes open a six-game homestand with matchups against a struggling Detroit and the transitioning Blackhawks. These are two teams they've faced already this season, and if we're truly a playoff hopeful team, these are the games they need to find a way to win.

The days of laughing about our spot in the table are over. Carolina has to be in "win today" mode and not get caught looking ahead. They took care of business before heading back to Raleigh, and now it's time to hold down the fort.

No more excuses. As Justin Williams said in St. Louis, "excuses are for losers."



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THE ATHLETIC

Rod the Coach and Rod the Player teach Canes valuable lesson as they salvage road trip with a win

By Sara Civian

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Most of them, anyway.

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He was still on the ice, where he'd stay for about 20 more minutes. Then he emerged, gloves still on, panting through his interview.

He is only 16 games into his head coaching career, but you just read that story and thought 'classic Brind'Amour', didn't you?

Flashback to PNC Arena the week before. Hurricanes practice was long over, but I still heard sticks banging against the ice. It was Brind'Amour and two tiny human beings going as hard as Brind'Amour and two tiny human beings possibly could. He skated with them for what must've been an hour, only stopping when someone beckoned him off the ice to attend to Head Coach Things.

Who knows when the distinction between Rod the Player and Rod the Coach will start to creep into the collective psyche — who says it ever will?

The player who famously led by example is carrying that trait, among others, right into his coaching career.

"I learned a lot from Roddy," Hurricanes captain Justin Williams said of his teammate-turned-coach. "There's a lot of things you learn from experienced guys that you look up to. I sat next to him in the dressing room for five years, so I was able to learn firsthand. How to practice, how to play, how to be a professional, how to treat other people, how to talk to the media."

What about how to lose? All versions of Rod Brind'Amour hate losing.

Twenty seasons — six of them losing — in the league taught him the right way to do it, though. So when the Brind'Amour era Canes dipped below .500 for the first time in the 4-1 loss Tuesday to the Blues, Rod the Coach channeled Rod the Player.

"It's hard, that's why I know we can talk about it, you can say all the right things, but when you're living it it gets really tough," he told The Athletic amidst the five-game losing streak. "You have a game where maybe your line's created nine scoring chances, given up two and you're a minus-two? That gets really tough to handle because you're right there and it's not

good enough. We're at a point where we can't give up any chances."

As much as Rod the Player would've loved to find a pair of skates, hop in-between some fourth liners and will the team to a win, Rod the Coach isn't allowed to do that.

I mean, I'm not going to be the one to stop him. But that's gotta be an automatic forfeit at the very least.

Anyway, barring Brind'Amour's impromptu return, what's a team that can't give up any more chances to do? How could the Hurricanes next-best channel their coach's Grind and Grit mentality?

Don't get it twisted — Williams, visibly pissed off, wouldn't sugarcoat anything after that fifth consecutive loss.

He said it directly to the camera: "Excuses are for losers."

The Athletic's Justin Bourne recently pointed out how canceling a practice for something like a player's meeting can make way more sense in ~extreme~ circumstances. It certainly made sense for the Canes on Wednesday: They were on the tail-end of an unsuccessful road trip, making mistakes from the good-intentioned place of doing too much, the art of playing catch-up finally catching up to them.

"That's really where the mistakes have started coming in, after we're down and the guys press and try to do too much," Brind'Amour said. "That's the one thing I love about this group. It's not a lack of effort, it's actually trying to do too much."

As more than one of his former teammates have mentioned, there's only one Rod Brind'Amour. Everything you've heard about how intensely players want to win for him is true, but they'll never get there trying too hard to be him. Wednesday's regrouping and the 4-3 win Thursday over the Blackhawks were probably both important steps in this realization. If the 2018-19 Hurricanes are a video game, navigating the team identity while playing to individual strengths is the running sidequest.

The Carolina Hurricanes-est Thing Of The Game

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Carolina Hurricanes hockey: Where everything's made up and the stats don't matter. Really, though, it was a reflection of an uncharacteristically strong (4-0) start, and the luxury of not having to rally for three goals in 15 seconds sometime in the third period. Sloppy as things almost got when Carolina let up



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Speaking of uncharacteristic, Micheal Ferland was off his game through the first two periods and didn't play a shift in the third.

"He complained he was sick," Brind'Amour said. "There wasn't any point in throwing him out there. He wasn't having a great game, we just double shifted some guys. I think it's nothing serious."

Best of Scott Darling

Darling saved 35-of-38 shots for his first win of the season. For me the best of him wasn't the big save on Jonathan Toews, but how he didn't let the floodgates open when the Blackhawks were piling on late in the second.

Nothing that's going to give you a heart attack going on here, but he stayed solid when pressure was building. As he mentioned postgame, he "almost blew it, there."

But he didn't.

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When Slavin and Kane were on the ice at the same time at even strength, Kane's CF% dropped from 64.71% to 52.94%, along with most other metrics.

Corsi-o-Meter

Refreshingly out-Corsi'd.

Half Full

The Hurricanes responded to their first sub-.500 record with four goals in a row and an eventual win. They weren't going to stay undefeated all 82 games, and no one should overreact to road losses with less than 20 percent of the season played. But you got the sense if they couldn't pull off at least one regulation win on this trip you'd have to start worrying about trends. The way they won — strong start, spread out production, key player sick, outshot, power play production — is particularly encouraging. I'm still trying to figure out who the Half Full and Half Empty Canes players are, but Darling gave me some ... kind of ... half full perspective postgame.

"The trip didn't go our way," he said. "Three out of eight points, but it's better than one out of eight."

Math checks out.

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The trip most definitely did not go their way.

Did Andrei Svechnikov fist pump?

Sebastian Aho Point Streak watch

With an assist on Calvin de Haan's game-winner (and his first as a Cane), Aho's point streak is back on, folks. It's the little things.



Devils rally, hand Checkers first road loss of season

By Nicholas Niedzielski

The Checkers perfect run on the road finally came to an end Friday as they fell to the Binghamton Devils by a score of 4-3.

Charlotte's special teams came out of the gates strong, with Saku Maenalanen and Julien Gauthier each notching a power-play goal before the halfway mark of the opening period. A late tally would get the home side on the board heading into the first intermission, but a Janne Kuokkanen wrist shot pushed the Checkers on top 3-1 midway through regulation.

The Devils would take control from there, however. After answering Kuokkanen's strike just over a minute later, Josh

Jacobs found the back of the net to erase Charlotte's lead completely. The Checkers had a chance to respond with a man advantage early in the third but it was the Devils who would capitalize, converting a shorthanded odd-man rush that gave them their first lead of the night.

The visitors would push back with several chances down the stretch but couldn't put one behind former Carolina goalie Eddie Lack, and the Devils successfully handed Charlotte its second loss of the season and first away from home.

NOTES

Tonight ended a five-game winning streak for Charlotte overall, a seven-game road winning streak this season and a 15-game road points streak that dated back to last season ...



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The Checkers are now 58-41-13 all time in three-in-threes and 20-14-4 in the first games of those scenarios ... Janne Kuokkanen extended his points streak to five games, matching the longest by a Checker this season ... Saku Maenalanen extended his points streak to three games ... The Checkers scored multiple power-play goals for the seventh time this season ... By going five-for-five on the PK tonight, the Checkers have successfully killed off 16 of their last 17 power plays against ... Zack Stortini recorded his

2,500th pro penalty minute tonight ... Greg McKegg missed the game with an injury ... Cliff Pu and Dennis Robertson served as healthy extras

UP NEXT

The Checkers' first three-in-three continues tomorrow as they visit the Lehigh Valley Phantoms for a 7:05 puck drop.

TODAY'S LINKS

<https://www.nhl.com/hurricanes/news/gameday-preview-detroit-red-wings-carolina-hurricanes/c-301779602>
<https://www.canescountry.com/2018/11/9/18078372/about-last-night-a-couple-key-players-in-a-needed-win-scott-darling-lucas-wallmark-hurricanes>
<https://theathletic.com/644046/2018/11/09/rod-the-coach-and-rod-the-player-teach-canesc-valuable-lesson-as-they-salvage-road-trip-with-a-win/>
<http://gocheckers.com/game-recaps/devils-rally-hand-checkers-first-road-loss-of-season>

SportScan

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

1114708 Carolina Hurricanes

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SCHEDULE UPDATE: THE HURRICANES WILL NOT PRACTICE ON WEDNESDAY.

— HURRICANES PR (@CANESPR) NOVEMBER 7, 2018

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The Athletic LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114729 Detroit Red Wings

Detroit Red Wings' Dylan Larkin, Andreas Athanasiou are game changers

Helene St. James

Detroit Free Press

Published 12:18 a.m. ET Nov. 10, 2018

As the Detroit Red Wings seek to regain competitiveness, two of their key building blocks are earning reputations as game-changers.

Dylan Larkin and Andreas Athanasiou pack a unique skill set because of their speed. They are delivering big plays for the Wings on a regular basis this season, scoring clutch goals and leading the charge for the 25-and-under core.

"Just by using their speed alone, it can create havoc for other teams and create opportunities for us," Jimmy Howard said after Friday's 3-2 overtime victory over the New York Rangers at Little Caesars Arena. The game saw the Wings trail 2-0 in the third period. Athanasiou scored the tying goal with 2:02 to play in regulation, and then fed Larkin for the winner.

"Both of them want to be that difference-maker type player, and you have to make big plays at big moments," coach Jeff Blashill said. "I've said it lots — every night it seems like it's a one-goal game. Outside of the two blowouts in Boston and Montreal, take away the empty net goals, I think they've all been one-goal games basically. So it comes down to who makes a play at a big moment.

"Both of them want those moments and they want to be on the ice and when they can do that, that's a huge thing."

Larkin, 22, also scored the game-winning goal Tuesday against Vancouver.



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"The points right now for the team are most important," he said. "Those big goals are what hockey is all about and I've been pretty fortunate to be on the side of a couple good plays."

Larkin is averaging around 21 minutes per game, the only forward on the team to top 20 minutes (Gustav Nyquist was next highest at 17:21). He plays in all situations, and plays with high expectations.

"He wants to be the guy that everyone is counting on in this room and be an impact player night in and night out," Howard said. "I think he's done that for the majority of most games for us - he's probably been our best player."

Entering Saturday's game at Carolina, Larkin led the Wings with seven goals and 16 points in 16 games. He came into the season wanting to shoulder some of the responsibility in the aftermath of Henrik Zetterberg's decision to retire, and has come through on a consistent basis. That's not surprising given Larkin's drive to be the best.

"He wants that," Blashill said. "It's important to him. He wants to be a go-to guy, always has. He's got the great inner drive. I think the biggest thing with Dylan is he recognizes that you can't be a great player if you're not a great two-way player. When he starts to get loose on the one end, we can have a quick meeting and it's an easy fix because he understands that ultimately, you get your best offense from checking, and if you check great, you spend tons of time in the o-zone.

"I think he's really taken steps — if you look at the course of the last number of six, seven games, he's been real good."

So has Athanasiou, 24, and right from training camp. The inconsistency that has marred his performance in the past (last season Athanasiou went 15 games without scoring a goal and contributing only four assists; another time, 13 games without a goal) hasn't been a factor this season. His habits in practice have been good, and he's on the ice in key moments. He stood at five goals and three assists after Friday (which was his first game back after being injured for four games).

"I think anytime I get more opportunity there's a good chance I'm going to get more opportunities out there," Athanasiou said. "It's something I'm confident in, is that I know those chances are going to come, so it's just playing hard when I get out there and capitalizing on those chances.

"It definitely feels good, especially when it's a goal we need late in a game, that's something that I really enjoy doing, is trying to get the boys back in."

Athanasiou has trade value for the Wings, but he is veering into untouchable territory (where Larkin already is). The contract dispute that sullied the start of last season is growing ever distant. As much as Larkin is the central piece of the rebuild, Athanasiou's play is cementing his value to the cause.

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114730 Detroit Red Wings

Detroit Red Wings pull off another comeback, stun Rangers in OT, 3-2

Helene St. James

Detroit Free Press

Published 10:21 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018 | Updated 10:40 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018

For a second straight game the Detroit Red Wings pushed back on a two-goal deficit.

Their outing Friday at Little Caesars Arena against the New York Rangers featured, as it usually does, terrific goaltending from Jimmy Howard and Henrik Lundqvist.

The Wings didn't start well and a double minor in the second period was costly. But Justin Abdelkader and Andreas Athanasiou scored early and late, respectively, in the third period to force overtime.

Dylan Larkin won it, 3-2, with 5.1 seconds to play in OT when he finished a pass from Athanasiou.

Howard delivers again

Howard made a clutch save on Rangers forward Chris Kreider early in the first period as the Wings were outplayed by an opponent to start a game for the third straight time. While Darren Helm sat in the penalty box for a delay of game, Frans Nielsen and Abdelkader created a scoring chance at the other end. Howard didn't have to make any saves during that penalty, but back at even strength, he had to make quick work of a sudden shot from Jesper Fast after the Wings lost possession down low. Nielsen hit a goalpost off a rising shot from the circle. It wasn't until late in the first period the Wings finally established some decent offensive zone time, but they only managed six shots on net in the first period, compared to 11 by the Rangers.

40 seconds

The Wings looked better in the second period as they found ways to get into the Rangers zone and bore down on sending pucks at Lundqvist. Michael Rasmussen got the puck behind Lundqvist at 7:35, but the goal was immediately waved off because of a hand pass. Dennis Cholowski had a juicy chance in the slot but sent the puck over the net. During a Wings power play, Lundqvist snatched Mike Green's shot with a glove save. The Wings did have possession of the puck the entire two minutes.

Things soured for the Wings when Jacob de la Rose took a double high-sticking penalty on Kevin Hayes. Kevin Shattenkirk made it 1-0 on a wrist shot from the top of the left circle while Howard had two people in front of him. With the Rangers still on the power play, Neal Pionk scored 40 seconds later to put the Wings in a two-goal hole, with the puck deflecting off Helm.

Eyeing a rally

Abdelkader scored for a second straight game and for the third time in four games, halving the Rangers' lead 1:46 into the third period. The Wings were playing with a short bench, as de la Rose did not return for the third period because of an upper-body injury. The Wings had some good chances, but the Rangers used their speed to continually push into Detroit's zone and test Howard.

Athanasiou, in his first game back after missing four because of injury, tied the game with 2:02 to play in regulation, slashing to the net and stuffing a backhand on Lundqvist. Nielsen, who'd also missed four games, drew the primary assist. Larkin drew a penalty with 1:49 to play to put the Wings on a power play.

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114731 Detroit Red Wings

Game thread: Red Wings beat Rangers in OT, 3-2

Helene St. James

Detroit Free Press

Published 5:56 a.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018 | Updated 10:13 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • November 10, 2018

Detroit Red Wings (5-8-2, 12 points) vs. New York Rangers (7-7-1, 15 points)

When: 7:30 p.m. tonight.

Where: Little Caesars Arena.

TV: Fox Sports Detroit.

Radio: 97.1 FM (Red Wings radio affiliates).

Game notes

Home improvement: The Wings have won three of their past four home games and four of five overall. They've been scoring at a decent clip (18 goals over the past five games) and getting good performances out of their special teams.

They haven't started well the past two games, so look for that to be addressed.

Sizing up the opponent: After winning three times their first 11 games, the Rangers are on a four-game winning streak. They average 2.67 goals per game and allow an average of 3.13. Both special teams rank in the lower third of the NHL, with the power play at a mere 16.3 percent and the penalty kill clocking in at 77.3 percent. Mika Zibanejad leads the team with 13 points and Chris Kreider with seven goals. Henrik Lundqvist has a .922 save percentage in 12 appearances. Former Wings defenseman Brendan Smith has one goal, two assists, and a minus-4 rating.

Winged wheel WATCH: Andreas Athanasiou (leg) said he's ready to return. Frans Nielsen (head) has been practicing and needs to clear a concussion baseline test to clear his return. Coach Jeff Blashill said he anticipates both playing Friday. With forward reinforcements ready, Christoffer Ehn was returned to the minors. Defenseman Jonathan Ericsson (lower body) and forward Thomas Vanek (knee) remain out.

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114732 Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings rally, edge Rangers in overtime

Gregg Krupa

The Detroit News

Published 10:31 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018 | Updated 12:50 a.m. ET Nov. 10, 2018

Detroit — For long stretches against the Rangers Friday, the Red Wings faced their continuing challenge of difficulty just getting the puck out of their own end.

Eventually, though, with Jimmy Howard staving off defeat yet again, the Wings managed.

Then, their young guns started firing. And now, the Wings have won five of their last six.

The high-flying Andreas Athanasiou, returning from four games lost to injury, tied the game with 2:02 left in regulation.

And then, in overtime, Athanasiou deftly fed Dylan Larkin who sped into the Rangers' zone to beat Henrik Lundqvist for his seventh goal of the season.

Larkin's winning tally came with 5.1 seconds remaining in overtime at Little Caesars Arena.

Third-period goals by Justin Abdelkader and Athanasiou erased a 2-0 lead for the Rangers, who had power-play tallies from Kevin Shattenkirk and Neal Pionk.

"I just took a quick look at the puck and saw that it was kind of trickling down there," said Athanasiou of the start of three-on-three play in overtime. "And, I was kind of screaming to get the puck up. Greener did a good job of getting the puck up there."

"Larks drove the net really hard, and fortunately the pass got through. He made a good play to put it in."

Jeff Blashill credits Athanasiou with being locked in and providing solid effort from the first day of training camp this season after contract talks delayed the start of his 2017-18 season.

"I think it's definitely a good feeling to be back playing hockey, again," Athanasiou said, of returning from a leg injury. "Obviously, it feels good to win. Anytime you can get a win, it is something to build on."

Larkin's heroics, including 24:04 time on ice, two shots on goal in five attempts, three takeaways and 17-7 on faceoffs, sealed the win.

He scored his second consecutive winning goal — both the result of the Wings overcoming deficits.

"The points, right now, for the team are most important," Larkin said. "We started out in a hole, and we weren't getting much of anything in the first seven or eight games of the season, and it was frustrating there."

"But, the way we played in the third period, it was fun hockey. And, we worked and worked and worked."

In the first two periods, the Wings nearly succumbed to penalty problems and their defensive corps' chronic failure to move the puck out of their zone.

In the first period, the Red Wings killed a tripping penalty to Mike Green at 25 seconds, yielding two shots.

After killing off another penalty — this one to Darren Helm for delay of game at 6:01 — they had considerable trouble in their own zone.

They had one of their worst possession periods of the season, giving away the puck 13 times in the first 20 minutes.

Their veteran defensemen were the most culpable, with Daley committing three giveaways while DeKeyser and Green each had two.

Howard worked to keep the Wings in the game, making huge saves on Chris Krieder, moving deftly across the entire crease to stop a shot with his blocker, and Jesper Fast, after the Rangers forward descended upon him at point-blank range.

The Rangers outshot the Red Wings 11-6 in the period.

"We couldn't get the puck out of the zone, number one," Blashill said. "And the second thing is, I thought we got outcompeted. They came to compete, and we weren't ready to compete."

"That can't happen. We've got to be better than that."

The second period started much the same. But, slowly, the Wings began to tilt the ice back towards the Rangers.

Just after the 7-minute mark, they nearly grabbed the lead.

Michael Rasmussen skate with power down the left wing in the Rangers zone, and while warding off a defender with his left arm and controlling the puck with his right, he made his way to the top of the crease and beat Lundqvist, passing by the goaltender.

But the referees immediately whistled the play down for a hand-pass.

Then, at 16:48 Jacob de la Rose took a four-minute penalty for high sticking.

The Rangers struck twice.



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Shattenkirk beat Howard high, with a 27-foot snap shot, at 17:53. And Pionk bounced a wrist shot from the blue line off a Wings' defender in front of Howard at 18:33.

Then, the Red Wings took over in the third, establishing some geographic superiority and outshooting New York 13-7.

Just over a minute-and-a-half into the period, they managed to victimize a former teammate, exposing one of his weaknesses.

As the Rangers defenseman Brendan Smith attempted to skate the puck out from behind his own net, he unaccountably failed to account for Gustav Nyquist.

On a hard forecheck, Nyquist met Smith face-to-face at the side of the net, to the left of Lundqvist.

Smith halted abruptly.

Nyquist swiped the puck, and transitioning in a blink to offense, he spotted Abdelkader attacking across the mouth and fed him the puck.

Abdelkader cut the lead in half with his fourth goal of the season, on Nyquist's 12th assist in 16 games played.

Then, the young guns road to the rescue.

"That's what guys who are difference-makers do," Blashill said of Athanasiou and Larkin's late-game performances. "I think both of them want to be that difference-maker type player.

"You've got to make big plays in big moments. I've said it lots sitting here nights after another one-goal game: It comes down to who makes a play in a big moment, and I think both of them want those moments and they want to be on the ice.

"And, if they can do that, that's a huge thing."

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1114733 Detroit Red Wings

NHL evaluates hits to head; Blashill says regulation difficult

Gregg Krupa

The Detroit News

Published 6:42 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018 | Updated 11:34 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018

Detroit — Going into play Friday, the last two suspensions in the NHL have been for checks to the head.

Evaluating the efficacy of each sanction continues, while general managers discuss changing the rule.

As sports continue to try to protect athletes amid mounting evidence that even casual, repeated contact can lead to dire long-term consequences for the brain, establishing proper rules and uniformly enforcing them has proven difficult.

"I think that whoever sits in the chair that George Parros sits in is going to be scrutinized and always has been since they created it, and will continue to," Jeff Blashill said Friday, referring to the head of NHL Department of Player Safety.

"I think there is a wide variety of opinions on how it probably should be called, from the people who are giving him direction."

During their annual offseasons meetings, some general managers supported amending Rule 48 to outlaw all hits to the head, including incidental contact.

The main portion of the rule currently states, "A hit resulting in contact with an opponent's head where the head was the main point of contact and such contact to the head was avoidable is not permitted."

Blashill said it would be difficult to retain body-checking and then tell players they could never contact the head.

"It's almost like we're wanting two different things," he said. "It's hard to say we're allowing hits and then not allow them to go anywhere near a certain part of the body. How do you do both?"

"Do you want to have physicality in the game or not is the biggest thing that everyone involved in those questions has to answer. If you want to have physicality it will be impossible to take out every time you get hit in the head."

Old friend returns

Some of the Red Wings said they were happy to see their former defenseman Brendan Smith in town Friday with the Rangers.

"Yeah, Smitty's a good buddy of mine," said Danny DeKeyser, flashing a big smile. "I still chat with him, every now and then. It's good to see him out there.

"But, you know, I'll be trying to score on him when he is out there."

Smith played in all 15 Rangers games.

Last season, after signing a four-year \$17.4 million deal, the Rangers placed Smith on waivers four months into the season and assigned him to the AHL.

"It looks like Brendan's playing pretty good hockey. So, that's great for him," Blashill said. "I like Brendan lots. I recruited him unsuccessfully to Miami.

"So, I hope he's having great success."

Fundraising event

The Red Wings Alumni are raising money Saturday for the Guardian Angels Medical Service Dogs, an organization that trains and donates medical service dogs to veterans and first responders suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder, brain injuries and other medical needs.

The Wings alumni will play Team Stahl at 12:30 p.m. Saturday at the St. Clair Shores Civic Arena, 20000 Stephens St.

Admission is \$10. Red Wings memorabilia will be available for purchase.

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1114734 Detroit Red Wings

Andreas Athanasiou, Frans Nielsen to return for Red Wings vs. Rangers

Gregg Krupa

The Detroit News

Published 1:16 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018 | Updated 1:17 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018

Detroit — Andreas Athanasiou and Frans Nielsen will return to the lineup for the Red Wings against the Rangers on Friday night, in a battle between two teams that heated up after slow starts to the season.



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"I plan on both of them, tonight," coach Jeff Blashill said Friday.

Athanasίου, 24, in his fourth NHL season, missed four games since Oct. 30 with a leg injury, and Nielsen, 34, in his 13th season, missed the same four games with a concussion.

Athanasίου has four goals and two assists in 11 games played, and Nielsen zero and six in 11.

After a 1-7-2 start, the Red Wings are 4-1 since Oct. 28.

After a 3-7-1 start, the Rangers are 4-0 since Oct. 30.

"I didn't think we've gotten out of our end very well the last two games, at all," said Blashill, when asked about areas in which the Wings require improvement.

"I don't think that's sustainable for success.

"If you don't get out of your own end. I think that's the biggest thing in this league, right now. Everyone pressures so hard and stays on top of you so well, you've got to do a job getting out of your end.

"So, it's something we've worked very hard on, specifically Wednesday, and we worked on it a little bit yesterday, as well. And, it's something that's going to be critical for us."

After idolizing the former Rangers goaltender Mike Richter as a child and wearing the No. 35 in his honor, the Red Wings starting goalie Jimmy Howard always has looked forward to playing The Blueshirts.

Some of his recent battles with the Rangers' Henrik Lundqvist, one of the premier goalies of his generation, have only sweetened the pot.

"It's been fun, every single night," said Howard, who was born in Syracuse and raised in upstate New York.

"It's no secret around here. Everyone, I think, knows around here the Rangers were my childhood team. I just really enjoy going out there and playing against the Rangers."

Howard is arguably the best Wings' player so far this season.

In 11 games played, he is 4-5-2 with a 2.93 save percentage and .917 goals against average, despite back-stopping and injury-riddle roster, which is in transition, for much of the year, so far.

"There's no room for error for either one of us," Howard said. "But, it makes it enjoyable.

"It makes for an intense matchup and for the game to be a lot of fun."

In his career, Howard is 7-3-3 with a 1.74 goals against average and .949 save percentage in 13 games against the Rangers.

Lundqvist is 7-4-4 in 15 games played against the Red Wings, with a .937 save percentage and 1.96 goals against average.

It is the 36-year-old, 14-year veteran's best career save percentage against an opponent, and tied with the Coyotes for his best goals against average.

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1114735 Detroit Red Wings

Dylan Larkin scores in overtime as Red Wings storm back

By Ansar Khan akhan1@mlive.com

DETROIT - Mistake-prone and on their heels for 40 minutes Friday, the Detroit Red Wings sprung to life in the third period.

They forechecked aggressively, pressured the New York Rangers' defense and scored twice to tie the game.

Dylan Larkin then scored with 5.1 seconds remaining in overtime to give the Red Wings a 3-2 victory at Little Caesars Arena in a spirited come-from-behind effort.

The Red Wings (6-8-2) capped a four-game homestand with their fifth win in the past six games. The Rangers (7-7-2) had their four-game winning streak snapped.

Larkin's goal was his seventh of the season, on a nice feed from Andreas Athanasίου.

Jimmy Howard was stellar early when his team needed him to be sharp and made 28 saves for his fourth consecutive victory.

Athanasίου tied it at 2-2 with 2:02 remaining in regulation. He used a burst of speed to get behind the defense and deposited a backhand shot past Henrik Lundqvist for his fifth goal. He had missed the previous four games with a leg injury.

The Red Wings had an opportunity to win it when Pavel Buchnevich was called for slashing Dylan Larkin with 1:49 remaining in the period but they couldn't convert on the power play.

Justin Abdelkader scored at 1:46 of the third period to cut the Rangers' lead to 2-1.

Gustav Nyquist stole the puck from former teammate Brendan Smith near the Rangers net and passed to an on-rushing Abdelkader, who buried it for his fourth goal. It was Nyquist's team-leading 12th assist.

A potential turning point in the game was a double-minor penalty to Jacob de la Rose for high-sticking Kevin Hayes at 16:48 of the second period.

The Rangers converted twice in a 40-second span to take a 2-0 lead.

Kevin Shattenkirk opened the scoring at 17:53 with a shot from the top of the faceoff circle. Neal Pionk converted at 18:33 after his long-range shot redirected off Darren Helm.

De la Rose left the game before the third period due to an upper-body injury.

A would-be goal by Michael Rasmussen earlier in the period was waived off because the officials blew the whistle, citing a hand pass in the offensive zone.

The Red Wings were fortunate to escape the first period scoreless. They committed far too many turnovers (charged with 13) and spent way too much time in their own zone. They needed to kill a pair of penalties early in the period.

Michigan Live LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114736 Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings' Athanasίου, Nielsen return to face rolling Rangers

By Ansar Khan akhan1@mlive.com

DETROIT - The Detroit Red Wings should receive an offensive boost tonight with the return of forwards Andreas Athanasίου and Frans Nielsen, when they face the New York Rangers at Little Caesars Arena (7:30, Fox Sports Detroit).

Each has missed the past four games, Athanasίου with a leg injury and Nielsen with a concussion.



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Athanasίου has scored four goals in his past six games.

"I think he's done a good job from day one of training camp playing at a consistent level and being engaged in the game at a consistent level, and when he's engaged and skating and stopping on pucks and competing he's a really good player," coach Jeff Blashill said. "I think he's done a really good job of that through the course of the first part of the year and then obviously got hurt and that's the way life goes. I hope he can come back and play at that level."

Nielsen hasn't been as effective, with no goals and six assists, along with a minus-7 rating, in 11 games.

The Red Wings (5-8-2) have won four of their past five. They wrap up a four-game homestand. The Rangers (7-7-1) have won four in a row.

Jimmy Howard will start in goal for Detroit. He is 3-0-0 in his past three starts, with a 2.59 goals-against average and .925 save percentage. He is 7-3-3 lifetime against the Rangers, with a 1.74 GAA and .949 save percentage.

Henrik Lundqvist will start in net for the Rangers. He is 7-4-4 lifetime vs. the Red Wings, with a 1.96 GAA, .937 save percentage and four shutouts.

Here are the Red Wings' anticipated line combinations:

Darren Helm-Dylan Larkin-Anthony Mantha

Gustav Nyquist-Frans Nielsen-Andreas Athanasίου

Justin Abdelkader-Luke Glendening-Tyler Bertuzzi

Michael Rasmussen-Jacob de la Rose-Martin Frk

On defense:

Trevor Daley-Mike Green

Niklas Kronwall-Dennis Cholowski

Danny DeKeyser-Nick Jensen

In goal:

Jimmy Howard (starting)

Jonathan Bernier

Power-play units:

Bertuzzi-Larkin-Mantha (net front), Frk-Green

Athanasίου-Nielsen-Rasmussen (net front), Nyquist-Cholowski

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1114709 Chicago Blackhawks

Blackhawks coach Jeremy Colliton happy to find extra playing time for Patrick Kane

Jimmy Greenfield

Blackhawks coach Jeremy Colliton had Patrick Kane on the ice so much in Thursday night's 4-3 loss to the Hurricanes, it seemed at first glance like a kid wearing out his new toy on Christmas morning.

Kane played 27 minutes, 43 seconds in Colliton's debut, the second-most ice time he has had in a regulation game in his career. He played on both power-play units and took 12 shifts for a total of 11:14 in the third period.

It wasn't a case of Colliton overusing Kane. With Marcus Kruger leaving in the second period because of a left leg injury and timeouts spacing out the shifts, Colliton found extra ice time for Kane. Not to mention the Hawks were trailing and simply needed him out there.

"The timeouts, they kind of came at the right time," Colliton said. "And he looked fresh. He had those rushes at the end of the game (where) he looked like it was the first period and he hadn't played yet. We'll monitor it for sure because we want to keep him at his highest level, but he was pretty good."

Weekend with the dads: It's the dads' turn this year to go on the Hawks' annual parent trip, and the timing couldn't be better for Colliton's father, Pat, who will make the two-game trip to Philadelphia and Carolina. Pat is a farmer and would put Jeremy to work as a kid growing up south of Calgary.

"I spent a lot of time with him when I was younger in the tractor, on the truck or the combine," Jeremy Colliton said. "He loves the game and played himself a little bit and so transferred his love of the game to me. That has worked out OK. It has been a big part of my life and he has been a big part of it. He is here, which is special that he could make that happen."

One-timers: Kruger is not traveling to Philadelphia for Saturday's game with the Flyers but has not been ruled out for Monday's game against the Hurricanes. ... The Hawks signed defenseman Nicolas Beaudin, their second first-round pick in this year's draft, to a three-year entry-level contract worth \$3.5 million. Beaudin, who is playing for Drummondville of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League, returned to action from a wrist injury on Friday.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114710 Chicago Blackhawks

4 Blackhawks who stand to benefit the most under Jeremy Colliton

Jimmy Greenfield

Hiring a new coach means everyone gets a fresh start. Some of the Blackhawks on this list need one and some don't, but all should benefit from Jeremy Colliton becoming the Hawks coach.

1. Dominik Kahun

Coach Joel Quenneville had no problem tinkering with lines to look for a combination he liked. The only line to go untouched during the first 14 games was the top one of Alex DeBrincat, Jonathan Toews and Kahun.

In the final game of Quenneville's Hawks career Saturday against the Flames, Kahun was dropped to the third line.

There is no link between Kahun moving to a new line and Quenneville getting fired, but Kahun was back on the top line in Colliton's debut and there's little doubt it's where he prefers to be.

Kahun played a season-low 9 minutes, 12 seconds against the Flames but was back up to a healthy 13:52 in Thursday night's loss to the Hurricanes.

2. Erik Gustafsson

Colliton and Gustafsson developed a strong relationship at Rockford during the first half of last season before the Hawks called up Gustafsson. He credits Colliton with helping to instill the confidence that has led to his playing the best hockey of his career this season.



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Gustafsson was on the ice for 24:15 against the Hurricanes, the most for any Hawks defenseman.

"Even if you're first line or fourth line, he brings everything out of a guy," Gustafsson said. "That's what he did for me. Right from the bat when I came down (to Rockford), he took me in and talked to me one on one ... about (doing) everything I can to help you get up. I felt like I was confident when he coached me and I could do my stuff on the ice."

3. Nick Schmaltz

Schmaltz was freshly out of Quenneville's doghouse after being a healthy scratch against the Oilers at the start of last week's trip.

The good news for Schmaltz is he played with more energy the last three games and scored his first even-strength goal of the season Thursday. The better news is he should benefit greatly from Colliton's open communication style.

Colliton could be seen leaning over the bench and talking to Schmaltz several times against the Hurricanes.

"We haven't had much time with any of these guys, so any opportunity we have to get them some feedback we're going to take," Colliton said. "That's how we're going to speed up this process of learning what we have to do to have success. I thought he got better as the game went on, like a lot of our guys did."

4. Dylan Sikura

This is just a guess based on Colliton coming directly from Rockford and Sikura getting off to a nice start leading the IceHogs with 10 points (four goals, six assists). He looks to be a strong call-up option if the Hawks try to find another scorer or start bringing up prospects.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114711 Chicago Blackhawks

Blackhawks' pathetic start to the Jeremy Colliton era makes you think Joel Quenneville wasn't the problem

Steve Rosenbloom

Maybe it's me, but after watching the Blackhawks' pathetic first period Thursday night, I'm thinking the fired head coach wasn't the problem.

By the time the Hurricanes made it 3-0 less than 16 minutes into Jeremy Colliton's debut in place of three-time Stanley Cup champion Joel Quenneville, I began to think maybe it was GM Stan Bowman's roster that team president John McDonough was so psyched about defending as something a new coach could get more out of.

Oops, eh?

I don't know what Colliton tried to change, but it wasn't the Hawks' refusal to muscle up on opponents in front of goalie Corey Crawford.

If Colliton tried to change the Hawks' defensive system from zone to man-to-man, it didn't take.

As for the suspect roster that cost Quenneville his job, Colliton failed to find combinations that looked capable of defending home ice instead of running the goal differential to a minus-11 that is second-worst in the Western Conference.

If Colliton had ideas about getting Patrick Kane's line to check — which would've been every line because he skated more than 22 minutes at five-on-five alone — then the new coach should've communicated it before those lines looked bad on a couple of Hurricanes goals.

And Jan Rutta is still bad. Colliton didn't change that either, as everybody watched the defenseman commit a bad turnover below his goal line and then fail to recover to check a Hurricane charging to the lip of the crease, only the most dangerous spot on the ice.

Hawks defenseman Eric Gustafsson gave away pucks on consecutive shifts early in the first period, which presented the rookie coach a chance to make a veteran move. But no. Colliton didn't bench the sloppy Gustafsson. He kept sending him out on the ice. And that coaching decision gave Gustafsson the chance to weakly lose a puck battle along the boards that led to another goal.

Like that, the Hawks were down 3-0 after the first period, one that was supposed to be powered by the urgency of an organ-I-zation that felt a coaching change was the answer to making the playoffs.

Oops, eh?

The second period wasn't two minutes old when the Hawks displayed some more retched defensive coverage as Alexandre Fortin lazily and/or ignorantly watched Canes defenseman Calvin de Haan blow down the slot to make it 4-0 and make Crawford shatter his stick in frustration.

Welcome to Throwback Thursday, an homage by Bowman's roster that recalled, oh, I don't know, last Saturday. Or last Thursday. Or a week ago Wednesday. Or ...

To think, this misery in the defensive zone spewed despite Colliton's making defenseman Brandon Manning, one of Bowman's big-deal offseason moves, a healthy scratch.

You wouldn't know it by the score in the first 22 minutes, but the Hawks owned a Corsi advantage. They were stymied by former teammate Scott Darling in net — when they weren't serving up pizzas to the Canes, that is.

The Hawks took away the play with speed and better puck management, sparked by a Kane goal, but again, only after falling behind 4-0. Some will laud the comeback that made it a 4-3 final, but again, people, they fell behind a bad team by four goals, a team that had lost five games in a row coming in.

Colliton, poised in his postgame presser, noted the Hawks aren't "happy, but we made some progress throughout the night." But of course, how could they not?

The new coach said the Hawks' defensive issues that created four Canes goals — it could've been 10 if not for Crawford — are things "we can fix quickly."

Yes. Well. Good luck with that, because it looks like the fixing still requires something above the coaching level.

Chicago Tribune LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114712 Chicago Blackhawks

Blackhawks' Brandon Saad hoping 'fresh start' helps him rediscover scoring touch

By Steve Greenberg

The verdict seems to have been in for a while now: The Blackhawks were fleeced by the Blue Jackets when they made the 2017 offseason trade that sent Artemi Panarin to Columbus and brought Brandon Saad back to Chicago.



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At least, that was a ready narrative as Panarin blossomed into one of the best players in the league while Saad seemed to leave former Hawks coach Joel Quenneville generally wanting more.

"People are going to assess whatever they want, but I know the type of player I am and I'm confident in my abilities," Saad said before the Hawks hit the road for a noon Saturday game against the Flyers. "[Panarin's] a hell of a player — you've got to give him that — but, at the same time, I'm very confident in what I bring to the table, too. As for who won [the trade], I don't really look at it like that. People can say what they may, but for me, it's just about having fun and playing hockey."

Saad has played well of late, even as the Hawks have spun out in the standings and made the coaching change heard 'round the hockey world. After going without a goal for eight games to start the season, Saad has four in the last eight. He is fourth on the team in that department and nearly had his fifth goal in Thursday's 4-3 loss to the Hurricanes, spinning on a defender, fighting his way into the crease and unleashing a screamer that nicked teammate David Kampf's stick on its way into the net.

Brandon Saad celebrates with Jonathan Toews after his first goal of the season. (AP/Matt Marton)

New coach Jeremy Colliton is sounding a brighter tune about Saad than Quenneville sometimes did.

"He's got a big engine, for sure," Colliton said. "He works really hard.

"With all these guys, I think we've got a lot of speed. We want them to use their speed to make it tough on the opposition — forechecking, pressure on the puck back, causing turnovers. He's one of those guys who can really do that."

Saad credits Quenneville with molding him into the player he is, but he wonders if what he called the "fresh start" that comes with a coaching change might turn him back down the path that led to a career-best 31-goal season in Columbus in 2015-16.

"I think the sky's the limit, really, with the type of players we have here and my ability," Saad said. "You've seen it in the past. Whether it's 20 goals or you've hit 30 before, I think I'm very capable. I don't want to set a goal, but at the same time, if I'm playing well every night, the sky's the limit whether it's points or helping the team win or contributing in those types of production aspects."

NOTES: The Hawks will be without Marcus Kruger for at least one game. The forward injured his left leg going hard to the net in the second period against the Hurricanes, drawing a penalty on the play. He missed the rest of the game and Friday's practice and did not travel with the team to Philadelphia.

- Friday was a maintenance day for Patrick Kane, Duncan Keith, Brent Seabrook and Jonathan Toews, each of whom sat out practice.
- The Hawks signed 2018 first-round draft pick Nicolas Beaudin to a three-year, \$3.5 million entry-level contract. The defenseman will remain in the QMJHL.

Chicago Sun Times LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114713 Chicago Blackhawks

Kane turns into Marathon Man in Colliton's first game as coach

John Dietz

If it seemed like Patrick Kane played nearly half of the game against Carolina at the United Center on Thursday, it's because he almost did.

Kane played a whopping 27 minutes, 43 seconds -- the second-highest total of his career, behind only the 28:48 he played in a 3-2 loss at Columbus two years ago.

New coach Jeremy Colliton kept sending Kane out for several reasons. Chief among them:

- The Hawks fell into a 4-0 hole in under 22 minutes.
- Marcus Kruger suffered a leg injury in the second period from which he did not return.
- Kane looked like he could handle it.

"I'm talking to him as the game went on," Colliton said after the Hawks lost 4-3. "Like, 'Hey, if you need a rest, I can slow you down through the rotation or something to give you a little breather.'"

"But the timeouts, they kind of came at the right time, and he looked fresh."

One of Kane's shifts lasted an incredible 3:09 -- including all two minutes of a power-play opportunity -- in the first period.

"He can do special things with the puck," Colliton said. "It's our job to put him in a position to get the most out of him. (Double shifting him on the power play is) an option for us, and we used it yesterday."

Kane then took 12 shifts in the third period, with the final three lasting 1:23, 1:04 and 1:48. He scored his 12th goal of the season in the second period and finished with 11 shot attempts (3 on goal).

"He had those rushes at the end of the game," Colliton said. "He looked like it was the first period and he hadn't played yet. We'll monitor it for sure because we want to keep him at his highest level, but he was pretty good."

Quiet, please:

Coach Jeremy Colliton's expression never changed as the Blackhawks fell behind 1-0, then 2-0 and 3-0 to Carolina on Thursday. He kept chewing his gum, shifted his weight from side to side and occasionally bent over to talk to his players.

"That's how I am," Colliton said after practice Friday. "I don't get too high or low. Certainly there's a time to ramp it up, but even then I'm not a screamer.

"I'm just going to be direct and try to tell the truth. And I think then they can take some feedback. You don't have to yell and scream to get your point across. That's how I try to be."

Slap shots:

Marcus Kruger (leg) did not practice Friday and did not travel for the Hawks' game at Philadelphia on Saturday. There is no timetable for his return. ... The Hawks came to terms with defenseman Nicolas Beaudin on a three-year, \$3.5 million entry-level contract. Beaudin, the 27th pick of the 2018 draft, will remain in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. He is currently out with a wrist injury. ... Jonathan Toews took 24 of the Blackhawks' 45 faceoffs against Carolina on Thursday. He won 16 of them. ... Alex DeBrincat, who scored seven times in the first seven games, has just 1 goal in the last nine.

Daily Herald Times LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114714 Chicago Blackhawks

Joel (Quenneville) and John (Dietz) ... shooting the breeze at the car wash

John Dietz



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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Moments after paying for my car to be washed Monday, I stood in the waiting area, looked outside and there he was.

The man and his mustache: Joel Quenneville.

Catching my eye, he came in, shook my hand and said with a smile: "Frankie always gives me a hard time that I don't get my car washed enough," referring to the Hawks' parking attendant.

Even though we live about a mile from each other, this was the first time I'd run into Quenneville in public -- and, incredibly, it happened 21 hours before he was fired as Blackhawks coach.

Like all reporters on the beat, our relationship was professional. We'd ask a question and he'd answer it, many times in what we'd call "Q speak."

Once in a blue moon we'd get a good one-liner, but they were few and far between.

My favorite came in my first full season on the beat, a day or two after Quenneville misspoke about the schedule during his postgame news conference. (I think he said Vancouver when he meant Calgary).

During the subsequent presser, Quenneville didn't answer right away after I asked a question about the Hawks' next opponent. When I clarified who they'd be playing, he broke out into a huge smile, winked at me and said, "I just wanted to see if you knew who it was."

It was a rare moment of levity.

For reasons that are his own, Quenneville didn't want to get close to the print and web reporters covering the team.

We have a job, he has a job and that's the way it is.

So although we've known each other for four years, this was about to be our first casual conversation.

We talked about his kids, a sandwich shop across the street that he loves to frequent ("They're huge Hawks fans!" he said proudly) and eventually the conversation turned to -- what else? -- hockey.

One question I wanted him to give some thought to revolves around a story I'm working on that should run in January. The topic: If you were NHL Commissioner for a day, what would you change about the league?

So I asked and told him just to think about it so he'd be ready when I posed it to him down the road.

But Joel didn't blink.

He answered right away.

"I'd add four more teams to the playoffs."

"Wow. Really?"

"Yep. It would add so much more excitement to the end of the season."

"One game? A three-game series?"

"One of those. Not sure."

Joel's reasoning was that during much of the time he played, 16 of 21 teams qualified for the playoffs. That's 76 percent of the league, compared to the 52 percent that qualify now.

Imagine how exciting those games would be -- and how hard teams in the fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth spots would be desperately trying to avoid the 7 through 10 seeds.

I told him Jonathan Toews' answer to the Commissioner for a Day story had to do with how to fix a brutal Hawks schedule. Quenneville -- never one to moan about that subject with us during news conferences -- was totally on board with his captain's ideas.

I can't remember the exact quote, but he definitely admitted the lack of long road trips last season took a toll on everyone.

At that point, my car was ready.

Tip in hand, I walked over to Joel, patted him once on his arm and said, "See you tomorrow."

As we know now, that never happened.

But it was nice to have this one final conversation with him while he was still coach of the Blackhawks.

Just two guys in a car wash talking family, restaurants and hockey.

So ordinary, as Joel says.

Yet at the same time, so utterly extraordinary.

Daily Herald Times LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114715 Chicago Blackhawks

Northwest Chargers hockey players share ice with Blackhawks

Daily Herald report

Posted 11/9/2018 6:00 AM

hello

It was a special moment for Connor Ray, 8, of Long Grove when he was chosen to stand on the blue line at the United Center with the Chicago Blackhawks during the singing of the national anthem at a recent game.

The player who participates in the "Future Star" ceremony is chosen by, and participates on behalf of, his team. Connor, who plays in the Rolling Meadows-based Northwest Chargers youth hockey league, is the son of Jacqui and Brad Ray.

Connor's team, which consists of 14 players ages 6-8, also participated in an intermission relay race between the first and second periods of the game.

"(The race) involved dividing our team into two racing teams of six players each," said Erika Antonucci, manager of the Northwest Junior Chargers Team 2, which is coached by Tony Kolozsy. "A total of 12 players from our organization got to participate. During the race, skaters jump over, slide under and weave through obstacles along the race path. The players' names are announced as they race."

According to Will Chukerman, media relations coordinator for the Chicago Blackhawks, at almost every home game the Blackhawks invite youth hockey teams to participate on the ice.

"The Future Star ceremony seems to be the most special, as the youth team typically votes on which teammate gets to participate," Chukerman said. "They also get the chance to be on the ice with the Blackhawks team in front of 22,000 people."

Virginia Coglianese, assistant coach for the Chargers team, said the players are more than deserving of the honor.

"I've personally observed not only individual growth for each of these young hockey players, but also the growth of a chemistry that is often not found in even adult level players," she said.

"From hobbling on the ice in hockey tots, to being the Mite D3 Champions last year, many of these young athletes have worked diligently to be the best hockey players and teammates they can be."



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"Even in an event like the relay, these kids are so excited for each other, even when it isn't them that 'wins.' Victory is shared joy. A goal is celebrated by each player as though it was their own."

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1114716 Chicago Blackhawks

Blackhawks lock up 2018 first-round pick Nicolas Beaudin

By Charlie Roumeliotis November 09, 2018 1:29 PM

The Blackhawks announced Friday that they have agreed to terms on a three-year, entry-level contract with defenseman Nicolas Beaudin that runs through the 2020-21 season. He will remain with the Drummondville Voltigeurs in the Quebec Major Hockey League.

The Blackhawks have now locked up both of their first-round picks from 2018 in Adam Boqvist (No. 8 overall) and Beaudin (No. 27 overall).

Beaudin, 19, has one goal and eight assists in nine games this season. He compiled a team-leading 69 points (12 goals, 57 assists) in 68 regular-season games in 2017-18 and was named to the QMJHL second All-Star team.

Given how successful 2017 first-round pick Henri Jokiharju has looked a year removed from his draft, it's not unreasonable to think Beaudin could compete for a full-time roster spot on the Blackhawks next season. But they can afford to be more patient with him, given the possibility of Boqvist making that jump to the NHL next season and avoiding the complication of breaking in their top young defensemen prospects all at once.

It might be more likely Beaudin starts next season with the Rockford IceHogs in the American Hockey League and start his professional development there.

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114717 Chicago Blackhawks

Can Jeremy Colliton unlock Nick Schmaltz's full potential?

By Charlie Roumeliotis November 09, 2018 11:10 AM

With a coaching change comes a fresh start for everyone. A clean slate.

Nick Schmaltz, in particular, is somebody the Blackhawks were counting on to take that next step in his development, especially in a contract year, and he has struggled to do so early on.

He entered Thursday with one goal, seven assists and 20 shots on goal in 14 games. He had three points in his past 11 games after having four points in his first three. Because of those inconsistencies, Schmaltz found himself sitting in the press box for one of the three games during their most recent road trip.

Schmaltz is a key piece to the Blackhawks puzzle this season, considering the majority of their scoring has come from three players: Patrick Kane (12 goals), Alex DeBrincat (8) and Jonathan Toews (8).

In his NHL head coaching debut against the Carolina Hurricanes, Jeremy Colliton was seen on the bench having several conversations with

Schmaltz and even put his arm around him during an in-game second period conversation, showing the personal relationship Colliton is hoping to develop with each of his players. By doing so, the Blackhawks are hoping to unlock Schmaltz's full potential.

"We haven't had much time with any of these guys, so any opportunity we have to get them some feedback, we're going to take," Colliton said. "That's how we're going to go to speed up this process of learning what we have to do to have success. I thought he got better as the game went on, like a lot of our guys did."

The message Colliton gave Schmaltz? Don't focus too much on the production and simplify it by playing the right way, which, in turn, will lead to the desired results.

"Overall, not thinking too much out there," Schmaltz said of what came out of those discussions. "When you think too much and try to be perfect and be in the right place, then you get thinking too much and you mess up even more. So he just said don't think out there, play hockey. We know how to play hockey and we'll teach as we go."

That includes the defensive side of things. He was on the ice for a defensive breakdown as he and the team looks to get acclimated on the fly to the different style Colliton wants to play in their own end.

"We wanted more of a man-on-man," Schmaltz explained. "It's an adjustment. We're used to the zone, but that's not an excuse. Just stick with your man, and then when there's a time when there's a loose puck you can create a battle, that's when you go swarm them and out-man them 2-on-1 or 3-on-2, whatever it may be."

Schmaltz noticeably had a shoot-first mentality after that, finishing the game with four shot attempts (two on goal) and one of them going into the net. It was his second goal of the season and first at even strength.

"Hopefully he can use it as a springboard," Colliton said. "I'm not so concerned about what his production is. I want him to work away from the puck, I want him to skate, I want him to be aggressive, on his toes, use his speed to pressure the opposition and create turnovers and him and his linemates will have more offensive opportunities."

Opportunities will lead to scoring chances, and the more Schmaltz helps generate those, the more he'll see results on the scoresheet.

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1114718 Chicago Blackhawks

Four takeaways: Blackhawks comeback falls short in Jeremy Colliton's NHL coaching debut

By Charlie Roumeliotis November 08, 2018 11:00 PM

Here are four takeaways from the Blackhawks' 4-3 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes in Jeremy Colliton's NHL head coaching debut on Thursday at the United Center:

1. First period puts Blackhawks in too big of a hole

The Blackhawks actually weren't terrible in the first period. They had 15 scoring chances at 5-on-5 to Carolina's six. But they looked a little bit lost in their own end and it was evident.

Defensive breakdowns and five giveaways in the first period put the Blackhawks in a 3-0 hole and it was ultimately too much to overcome. All of the goals against were self-inflicted wounds, which means they're correctable.



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"I still thought we had some good chances there in the first," Patrick Kane said. "We had some puck possession, just a couple mistakes and they end up in the back of our net. You can look at it every which way you want, the biggest thing is it just wasn't good enough as far as the start."

2. Momentum shifts in second period

After falling behind 3-0 in the first period, the Blackhawks allowed their fourth unanswered 1:20 into the second. It appeared the game was headed for a rout, with Corey Crawford snapping his stick over the goal post.

But the Blackhawks showed some fight, with goals from Kane and David Kampf 6:19 apart from each other.

"We had a push there mid-second period," Colliton said. "We started to really skate and pressure the puck and I thought we were a little bit better in our own end, which helped us to create a little more. We were skating and had some zone time and were able to generate some energy. Of course we scored, but it looked like we had some push back, which was nice to see and we carried that over into the third.

"We had our chances, we had our pressure, moments and we scored the third goal it looked like we were close to really turning the game. We had some really good chances. We just couldn't convert and maybe we would've liked to generate more at the end. But overall it was a good response."

3. Leaning on Kane

Colliton wasn't afraid to ride his top horses in his coaching debut. Kane logged 27:43 of ice time, which was the second-highest of his NHL career in a regular season game. His career high is 28:48 vs. Columbus on Oct. 21, 2016.

It's worth noting Kane was part of both power play units, something that we could continue to see going forward under Colliton.

Kane also had a goal, assist and 11 shot attempts (three on goal) in the loss. His 12 goals puts him back into a tie for first in the league.

4. Corey Crawford vs. Scott Darling

For the first time in their NHL careers, the Blackhawks' 2015 Stanley Cup-winning goalie tandem went head-to-head on opposite ends of the ice. Chicago needed both of them to capture its third championship in six years and certainly would not have gotten out of the first round against the Nashville Predators that spring without Darling's heroics in relief.

Darling's first game back in Chicago came on March 11 last season, but Crawford was battling a concussion and did not suit up for it.

Darling got the better of his counterpart in this matchup, stopping 35 of 38 shots for a save percentage of .921. Crawford turned aside 30 of 34 shots for a save percentage of .882.

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1114719 Chicago Blackhawks

Why Brandon Manning believes he's a better fit under Jeremy Colliton

By Scott Powers Nov 9, 2018

If you think Brandon Manning has looked lost at times this season, you're not wrong.

That's been exactly the case, Manning admitted on Friday.

The start of Manning's Blackhawks tenure hasn't gone as smoothly as he envisioned. When he signed a two-year contract in the offseason, his hope was to step into the lineup, provide a physical presence and help fix some of what ailed the Blackhawks defensively last season.

But reality has been far from that. Manning struggled to adapt from playing man-to-man coverage with the Philadelphia Flyers to playing zone coverage under Joel Quenneville, and that's led to plenty of mistakes in the defensive zone, opponents scoring at a high rate with him on the ice (his 4.78 goals against per 60 minutes is 11th worst in the league) and him ultimately becoming a healthy scratch.

"It's been a tough start," the 28-year-old Manning said. "When I saw myself coming in here, I saw an opportunity to come in and play my physical game, you know, strong defensively. I think it took a bit adjusting to the way they wanted (me to play). Q's system was a little bit different in the D zone.

"I think probably a little too much thinking for me early on and trying to figure it out. It's also tough when you're playing with a different partner every couple weeks. In camp, I was with Bokey (Adam Boqvist), then Joki (Henri Jokiharju), now Davey (Brandon Davidson) and (Jan) Rutta, couple games with Seabs (Brent Seabrook). You know, just try and bounce back. I've been in this position before. I'm just going to do what I do and stay with it."

That's where new Blackhawks coach Jeremy Colliton comes in. Manning certainly wasn't hoping Quenneville would be fired, but the coaching change could work out positively for Manning.

"In a sense, yeah, nothing against (Quenneville's staff)," Manning said. "I don't think it was a secret I was kind of struggling with the way things were. It's not on them. That's more on me and trying to figure out the system. In a way, for sure, kind of a fresh start, something I'm familiar with, a younger coach and everyone's kind of on the same page. You know I'm looking forward to it. You know it should be something good once we turn it around here."

Colliton arrived with an open mind about his roster and has given everyone a clean slate. More importantly for Manning, Colliton plans to play man-to-man coverage in the defensive zone, and that will allow Manning to revert to what he knows.

Manning broke down the differences between the two systems and how they impact him.

"I think for the guys who have been here and haven't played man-to-man, I think you're a lot more aggressive," Manning said. "You're jumping on loose pucks as soon as you can. Whereas in the zone defense, you're more sticking to your side, waiting for things to be sorted out. Whereas now if there's a loose puck, it doesn't matter if it's a D-man or the center or a winger coming down, you're jumping on it. If you're not jumping on the puck, you're being there to support the guy. I find it's a lot more aggressive. You kind of run around a little bit more. That's where communication comes in a lot more because if you do get a loose puck you only have a split second to make a play. If your center or D partner can talk to me, then you're out of trouble right away. Whereas zone, you kind of know where everybody's at all times, I guess."

In zone coverage, Manning struggled to know exactly where he should be, and that led to confusion for him and his teammates.

"That was the hard part for me with the zone was you're always lefty, righty, trying to stay on your side, trying to stay off your side of the net," Manning said. "Whereas before, you're kind of running off your instincts. If there's a loose puck, you can get there, you go. If you're on the right side and you're a left-handed defenseman, that's fine. I think that's where Seabs and Duncs and guys who have been here are going to adjust. For me, it was kind of the opposite. I came with Q's system trying to adjust to his, now they have to come back to what I'm more used to."

Colliton is hopeful his system will bring the best out of Manning.



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"I think it could benefit him," Colliton said. "I think he has a little bit of physical play, and we're looking to get some stops in the D zone. I think he can provide that for us. It's just a matter of him like everyone else getting comfortable with the reads and when we're going to go and when we're not going to go. Like I said, he'll get that chance to go in. I think he can be valuable for us."

Colliton decided to make Manning a healthy scratch, instead opting to play Davidson, in his first game Thursday. He explained his decision to Manning after Thursday's morning skate.

"Be ready when you get the chance," Colliton said of his message to Manning. "He's going to get the chance. We're starting over in some ways, and we want competition and he's part of that. It's up to him to show he can help us win. If he does, he'll be in."

Manning appreciates the communication. It wasn't always there with Quenneville.

"Early on it was tough because you didn't know where you're at, what you're doing wrong," Manning said. "Now with Jeremy, there's an opportunity to talk to him and build that relationship, bit of a fresh start for everyone. Hopefully you can just build on that."

"I think the way the game is now the kids are getting younger and younger, I think it's important to be on the same page as your coaching staff, know what they expect of you and what they don't. Yesterday's chat was nothing crazy, just kind of talking about a few things."

"I think anytime you're in and out of the lineup, it's nice to know what you're doing wrong, what you need to do better kind of thing. It's one thing he's made clear early on is that he's going to communicate. He doesn't want guys to not know where they're at, so that's huge, especially with the amount of guys we've had in and out of the lineup this year."

Manning remains confident he can assist the Blackhawks in the way he and the team envisioned when he signed. He doesn't expect for his two seasons to be this rocky.

"Obviously you sign a two-year deal in the summer, you don't want to come and get healthy-scratched or play 12 or 13 minutes a night," Manning said. "I've been in this position before. It's kind of the way my career has gone. You know I'm here for the long run, come in and do my work and try and get better and learn. I think everyone's kind of in a similar spot right now with a new head coach, a new staff around. You know you take the good from the bad and try to build off it."

Colliton didn't say definitively, but it's likely Manning will be in the Blackhawks' lineup Saturday, giving him a chance to play against his old team, the Flyers. The Blackhawks are also holding their dads' trip, so Manning's father will be on hand to watch him.

"I spent a lot of time with the organization," Manning said. "Played with pretty much every guy over there. It's always fun to go to a city like that. And to have my dad with me, that's kind of cool. It should be a fun game. ... Hopefully I get an opportunity to go in and prove myself in Philly."

The Athletic LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114724 Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets 2, Capitals 1 | Jackets make late lead stand

Brian Hedger

Posted Nov 9, 2018 at 11:10 PM Updated Nov 9, 2018 at 11:29 PM

WASHINGTON — The crowd buzzed with anticipation, with the Blue Jackets clinging to a one-goal lead late in the third period and the Washington Capitals starting a power play.

It felt like a Stanley Cup playoff game Friday night at the Capital One Arena, even though it was only Game No. 15 of 82 for the Jackets — whose 2017-18 season ended in a bitter first-round loss to the Capitals, in a series dotted with finishes like this.

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It might've been the regular season, in a new season, but the Blue Jackets' 2-1 victory against the defending Stanley Cup champions felt like it meant a little more than just two points in the standings.

"I don't think we've had a lot of the really close games like that, where it's 1-0 or 1-1 in the third, so to win that kind of game is big for us," said Boone Jenner, who laid his body on the ice in front of a hard slap shot with 31 seconds left, helping the Jackets kill off the final power play. "There were a lot of momentum swings, where we took it over and they kind of pushed back, and then we pushed back — which you see in the playoffs. It's a hard-fought win by us."

They have to quickly regroup with a game against the New York Rangers on Saturday night at Nationwide Arena, but the satisfaction of winning like this — in a pressure-packed game that required physical sacrifices — should lessen any lingering soreness.

"I thought we did a really good job on both special teams," coach John Tortorella said of the Jackets going 4 of 5 on penalty kills and 2 of 3 on power plays. "(Jenner) makes a huge block the end. Were we perfect? No. Did we lose momentum at certain times? Sure, we did. But we still found a way to win."

The Capitals, who dominated the first period by every measure but goals, swarmed the net early. They made Sergei Bobrovsky (33 saves) work hard to keep the game scoreless before Oliver Bjorkstrand scored on a Blue Jackets power play to make it 1-0 with 2:46 left.

Washington had more shots in the first, 15-9, took more than 70 percent of the even-strength shot attempts and nearly scored a few goals off Blue Jackets miscues. Instead, Bobrovsky was outstanding to shut the Capitals down.

The Jackets still led 1-0 starting the second, when things flipped around. They outshot the Capitals 10-2 in the first 6:15 of the period, couldn't extend their lead and then allowed a power-play goal by Washington's Matt Niskanen at 7:53.

Otherwise, the Blue Jackets owned most of the period with a 16-10 shot advantage. They also took 82 percent of the even-strength attempts and made Braden Holtby (34 saves) work as hard as Bobrovsky in the first.

Not to be outdone, Bobrovsky made a fantastic save with 3:02 left in the second, kicking out his left pad to stop a rocket by Alex Ovechkin, and continued his sharp play in the third — stopping all nine shots he faced.

"There are some good teams where you have to be focused, where you have to be double aware because it's a little mistake and you're gonna pay the price," Bobrovsky said, thinking of the Capitals. "They are one of these teams."

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1114725 Columbus Blue Jackets

Ryan Murray isn't celebrating hot start

Brian Hedger



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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Posted Nov 9, 2018 at 10:49 PM Updated Nov 9, 2018 at 10:49 PM

WASHINGTON — Ryan Murray's been here before, with a great start invoking thoughts of what he might be able to do with a full slate of 82 regular-season games.

Going into the Blue Jackets' game Friday night against the Washington Capitals, the 25-year-old defenseman had eight points on a goal and seven assists — the most he has had through the first 15 games in any of his six NHL seasons.

Murray, though, knows better than to start making projections.

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"Everything feels pretty good," he said before the game. "We're still early, so I just want to keep going and make sure that I'm staying focused and staying in it."

Nobody on the Blue Jackets knows what time of the year it is better than Murray, who's had multiple seasons interrupted by injury — some more significant than others. Just last season, Murray was off to another good start before suffering a nagging, frustrating back injury Nov. 27 at Montreal.

Before the injury, he had a goal, four assists and a plus-seven rating through 24 games and earned a role on the power play. The injury kept Murray out the next 34 games.

He returned Feb. 20 and finished strong, including a good individual series against the Capitals in the playoffs. This time, though, Murray isn't ready to look too far ahead — even after being paired with Seth Jones on the top defensive pairing in a win Tuesday against Dallas.

"I'm happy the way things have gone, but at the same time it's still so early," he said. "There's still so much season left."

Atkinson out

Cam Atkinson made the trip to Washington but didn't play. He became ill before the game.

Oliver Bjorkstrand, who appeared headed for his second straight game as a healthy scratch, got back into the lineup in Atkinson's spot at right wing on the first line.

Harrington back in

After sitting out against the Stars, defenseman Scott Harrington got back into the lineup on the third pairing. Harrington played with Zach Werenski, who was moved off the top pairing Tuesday.

"I think you make adjustments on the fly and the players need to deal with it," coach John Tortorella said. "(Harrington's) champing at the bit to get back in. He doesn't care where he plays. He just wants to play."

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1114787 NHL

60 Years After Integrating the N.H.L., Willie O'Ree Heads to the Hall of Fame

Andrew Knoll

Nov. 9, 2018

Willie O'Ree once had to wait for two police officers to escort him off the ice in Chicago after a benches-clearing brawl, which began when his front teeth were purposely knocked out by the butt end of an opponent's stick.

Another time, he had to be pulled away from a mob of hostile fans at Madison Square Garden who tried to yank him into the stands.

O'Ree, the first black player in the N.H.L., endured a lot over his 24 seasons in professional hockey, most of them in the minor leagues. But he loved the game so dearly that after a puck hit him in the face at age 19, permanently blinding his right eye, he stayed quiet about the disability so that no doctor would rule him unfit to play.

For his contributions to the sport, O'Ree, 83, will be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame on Monday in the builder category. He is being honored not just for the historical significance of his N.H.L. career, but also for his decades of working with young players all over North America through various youth hockey and outreach programs.

"If you look at what he's done, he kind of opened the door for the rest of us to step in and play," said the former goalie Grant Fuhr, the first of two black players to precede O'Ree into the Hall of Fame (the other is Angela James). "In my world, that's the perfect description: as a builder of the game."

At least 30 black players have dressed to play in the N.H.L. since the 2016-17 season, when a record four black players were named All-Stars. Approximately 90 black players have dressed for at least one game in the league. No longer confined by stereotypes that once narrowly defined their roles, black players are now explosive scorers, shutdown defenders, goalies and everything else in between.

"There are more black players to relate with in the N.H.L. than when I was younger," said Jarome Iginla, who in 2001-2 became the N.H.L.'s first black scoring champion.

Still, there have been only two black captains in league history — Iginla with the Calgary Flames and Chicago's Dirk Graham. Graham, who spent 59 games behind the Blackhawks' bench in 1998-99, remains the N.H.L.'s only black head coach.

"The numbers are pitiful," said Patrice Carnegie, the daughter of Herb Carnegie, a top black player in the 1940s who never reached the N.H.L. "We had many, many, many years to make a difference."

O'Ree, one of 13 siblings, broke the color barrier in 1958, during a two-game stint with the Boston Bruins that went largely unnoticed. In the 1960-61 season, he competed in 43 games and notched 16 points, arousing greater curiosity, fanfare and, sadly, hatred. Along the way, he would surmount resistance, both tacit and vile, and also defend himself on the ice.

"I heard that N-word so many times that I just let it go in one ear and out the other," O'Ree said. "I never fought because of racial slurs or remarks. I fought because guys speared me, butt-ended me, crosschecked me and things of that nature. Otherwise I would have spent every game in the penalty box."

O'Ree initially played left wing, a challenging position for someone with his limited vision since nearly every pass he received came from his right. A switch to right wing would be a factor in his success in the Western Hockey League, where he won two scoring titles during the 1960s.

"You can do anything you set your mind to if you feel strongly in your heart," O'Ree said. "When the doctor told me I'd never play hockey again, I just said, 'I can't accept that.' He didn't know the goals and dreams that I had set for myself, and he didn't know the burning fire that was within me."

A native of Fredericton, New Brunswick, O'Ree had been named to the Order of Canada, the highest honor bestowed on a citizen of the country.



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He was also a baseball star, though exposure to bigotry during a minor league tryout in Georgia helped steer him toward hockey. He twice met Jackie Robinson, who broke Major League Baseball's color barrier 11 years before O'Ree entered the N.H.L. The first time, when O'Ree was a teenager, a wide-eyed Robinson said that O'Ree was the first black hockey player he had met. The second time, O'Ree was in his 20s, attending an N.A.A.C.P. luncheon, where Robinson surprised him by remembering their first encounter.

Unlike baseball, the N.H.L. was not formally segregated, though Canada did have an all-black league at the turn of the 20th century. Known as the Coloured Hockey League of the Maritimes, its players are often credited with innovations like the slap shot and early iterations of the butterfly goaltending style.

Yet while Robinson was quickly joined in the majors by another black player, Larry Doby, 16 years would pass between O'Ree's debut and that of Mike Marson, the second black player in the N.H.L. Two more would go by before Bill Riley became the third.

"You look at Willie O'Ree and Herb Carnegie, they kind of set the path for those guys, then those guys followed and then I was lucky enough to follow those guys," said Fuhr, who backstopped the Edmonton Oilers' dynasty in the 1980s. "I guess it's kind of like a trail where Willie and Herb were the first ones to go through it, and obviously the sooner you went through it, the harder it was."

In Carnegie, there are echoes of Josh Gibson, the prodigious slugger of baseball's Negro leagues. An electrifying forward, Carnegie joined his brother Aussie and their linemate, Manny McIntyre, to form the first known all-black line in an integrated hockey league. But the closest he ever came to hockey's highest level was when the Rangers offered him minor league contracts; the two sides could never come to terms.

"To know where you're going, you've got to know where you came from, and it starts with Mr. O'Ree and Mr. Carnegie," Simmonds said.

Based in San Diego, O'Ree travels constantly. This month he has been in South Carolina, New York and Massachusetts, where a street hockey rink was named in his honor.

"He goes all around North America like crazy," Simmonds said, "but every time I see him he's got the biggest smile in the world and it's infectious. You can't be in a bad mood when you're around him."

While ground has been gained since O'Ree's day, black players still face ugliness from fans. Simmonds was struck with a banana during a 2011 exhibition game in Canada. Last season, fans in Chicago taunted Washington Capitals forward Devante Smith-Pelly as he sat in the penalty box, chanting, "basketball, basketball," to indicate they thought he was in the wrong sport. Simmonds and Smith-Pelly, who are black Canadians, said they have endured other racial taunts in their careers.

"I've gone through my fair share of incidents," Simmonds said, "and I would have thought, 'Well, Mr. O'Ree probably thought the same thing, that he'd be the one enduring all the garbage to make it better for the younger kids that were coming up under him.'"

O'Ree said he was only vaguely aware of his status as a pioneer in 1958, and Fuhr, shielded slightly by spending much of his career in Canada, said he did not consider it fully until he retired. This generation of black players has embraced their roles beyond hockey and formed a tight-knit group that emphasizes the importance of past sacrifices and a vision of a fairer future.

"I want to be remembered as one of the best players that has ever played the game," said P.K. Subban, the first black winner of the Norris Trophy for the league's best defenseman. "But I also recognize who I am, where I come from, what I stand for and the responsibility that I have within the game of hockey."

At last season's All-Star weekend, Subban held court with the news media longer than any other player during the tournament. O'Ree

approached him, and the two exchanged warm smiles. They later strolled off together, sharing an almost familial moment.

"It seems like Willie's in his 40s. When you talk to him, he's got so much energy," Subban said, adding: "He's just a great man. He continues, even today, to put the game of hockey and people ahead of himself, which I think is his biggest credit."

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The Athletic / 20 Questions with Don Cherry: On Letterkenny, cannabis and pressing for another team in Quebec City

By Sean Fitz-Gerald Nov 9, 2018

It was 8:30 a.m., and Don Cherry was settling into a boardroom chair at Sportsnet headquarters with his son, Tim, and their publicist seated nearby. They were promoting a new book, and it was neither their first nor their last interview of the day.

Cherry had already written several books. He has lent his name to dozens of hockey videos — the Rock 'em, Sock 'em franchise — and to a chain of Canadian restaurants. His life has been recreated in a CBC miniseries and he continues to thunder from his weekly pulpit on Hockey Night in Canada.

At 84, he remains a force of promotional nature.

"Good," he cheerily told an interviewer as everyone settled in. "Ready to go."

In Don Cherry's Hockey Greats & More (Doubleday Canada), Cherry revisits a lifetime spent in the game, and explores the relationships he forged along the way. The stories — whether about Scotty Bowman, or his late wife, Rose — often read as though they were recited on Coach's Corner. Part of that was by design, with Cherry dictating the stories and his son then turning them into prose.

Before moving onto his next appointment, Cherry (DC) fielded 20 Questions from The Athletic, talking about Letterkenny, cannabis and the push to get an NHL franchise back into Quebec City:

1. Who was Madagascar?

DC: You know, it's a funny thing. Not many people ask me that. Eddie Shore, he said he'd like to send me to Madagascar island. Him and I didn't get along. Or, I guess, for some reason, he didn't like me. It was a funny story. One of the reasons he didn't like me is because of the way I skated. My good friend Brian Kilrea — he was Junior A coach — he asked him, 'what is it you had against Cherry?' And he said, 'he had that look in his face.' My grandfather was the same: It was insolence.

2. Jared Keeso, the actor who played you in the CBC miniseries based on your life, has become the star of another Canadian show: So how long until we see you on Letterkenny?

DC: (smiles) I never thought of that. Eh, Tim? That would be good. Beer and fighting and the whole deal. He is a great fella. He did an interview, and the guy was giving me a hard time in the interview. And he said, 'Don Cherry's a friend of mine.' And he's a friend of mine, too. He did a great job.

3. Keeso's brother, Alan, will run for the Conservatives in the federal election next year ...

DC: (cuts in) I'd hope it's Conservative, anyhow. (chuckles)

4. What was the closest you ever came to running for office?



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DC: I never ran for office. I'm right wing. Maybe I'm too extreme right wing, whatever it is. No, I never thought of running for office. I'm too good-lookin'.

5. In 1990, you told The Fifth Estate that both the Liberals and Conservatives approached you about a potential campaign. The Liberals reached out to you?

DC: I don't remember the Liberals ever approaching me. I know the Conservatives did. (smiles) They always mentioned that. I would be great, though. I would be fantastic. But I think I'm a little too right wing, and I have to admire the CBC for leaving me on. And I think that's one of my appeals: I appeal to hockey people.

6. Would Donald S. Cherry vote for Donald J. Trump?

DC: Oh, absolutely. I'm one of those guys that worked in the steel mills. I'm one of those guys that worked in the mines. The unemployment is the lowest it's ever been in the United States. I think it's three-something percent. And the economy is as high as it's ever been. Yes. You're asking me the question: Of course I would.

7. You cornered NHL commissioner Gary Bettman last spring about the possibility of another team in Quebec City: Were you satisfied with the answer he gave?

DC: No. I want one. And Gary, he can dive. He's pretty smart at that. And I knew that Seattle was going to get the thing. But I really believe Quebec should get it. A lot of people say there's not enough corporate, but there's corporate there. I think they did sell out in 10 seconds. It wouldn't be half-empty, and the rivalry between Quebec and Montreal would be fantastic.

8. Does Gary belong in the Hockey Hall of Fame?

DC: Well, listen, I'm a player. I forget, I think there was 14 teams, or something like that, when he got in. There's 31 now. So he's given more than 200-to-300 jobs. I always admire guys who give me jobs, as you see with Donald Trump. I believe he should be in now.

9. Do you belong in the hall?

DC: Oh, absolutely, I belong in the Hall of Fame. I was coach of the year everywhere I went, in the American league. I coached Team Canada and the whole deal. Of course I deserve to be in.

10. You are being inducted into the AHL hall of fame in January: What kind of suit will you wear?

DC: I don't know. I'm very proud of my American league career. I don't think it was for my playing. I was sort of a plugger/tough guy. I think they did it because of the great job I did in bringing back the Rochester Americans. They were going to fold. They're a good team going now. I think that's why I got in. I don't know what I'm going to wear. I might wear this one. This is pretty good. Plaid. It's a nice one.

11. What is the best way to keep your beer cold during long trips on an old bus?

DC: I am noted in the American Hockey League, not for coach of the year and that. It was in Providence. I said, 'gee, I hate drinking warm beer — how are we ever going to keep it cold.' And I said, 'well, we can't keep it underneath, because (the coach would) see us getting it.' So I thought, 'I got it.' I put it (in the pillowcase), ice cold beer coming in. And after a while, the bus is going down, and everyone had their pillowcases out the window, doing it. And it's ice cold when it comes in.

12. Given the changing legal landscape, do you think postgame beers will ever be replaced with postgame cannabis?

DC: What was that question, again?

13. Do you think they'll switch to cannabis from beer?

DC: I didn't know what you were talking about. If you had have said marijuana, I would have. But cannabis? I thought it was another type of beer. No, I don't think they'll ever. There's still something out there about

the smoking. If they want to smoke, it doesn't bother me, as long as it doesn't cost me any money.

14. How long until an NHL team breaks through and hires a woman as head coach?

DC: I really don't know. It's going to be a long time, I'm afraid, because there's a lot of guys waiting for jobs right now. (chuckles) But a head coach? I don't know. I never thought there would be trainers, women. So eventually, it will happen.

15. Your interview with Hayley Wickenheiser after the gold medal game in 2002 was perhaps the most famous at those Winter Games: Do you really think the Americans were walking on the Canadian flag?

DC: Well, she thought. I could see her coming, and I could tell she was steaming. I really don't know. I can't believe they'd ever do that. But they thought it, and it was the motivating factor. Remember, we killed off those eight penalties in a row. I don't know if I could have done that. I would have gone nuts. I was so proud when they won.

16. How should Hockey Night celebrate Bob Cole's retirement?

DC: Gee, I don't know. They did a pretty good job the other night — I think it was two Saturdays ago — when they had the players salute him. I don't think you can do much better than that.

17. Who have you heard, over the years, do the best Bob Cole impression?

DC: I have never really heard anybody really imitate him. I don't think they'd do it in front of me, because it would sound like they're making fun of him. I know everybody says, 'way to go baby,' and 'they're goin' home,' and stuff like that. But there's only one Bob Cole, as far as I'm concerned.

18. What goes through your mind when you watch your life replayed on screen in that CBC miniseries?

DC: I never forgot that the girl who played Rose looked exactly like her. Believe it or not, she even phoned Pennsylvania to get the accent. I know this is hard to believe, but she thought, 'I'll phone the Italian club,' and one of (Rose's) nephews answered the phone. John answered the phone. And the girl, Sarah, she did a great job. She phoned and got the accent. She had the hair. I'll tell ya, boy it was tough going. I'd come from the playoffs, and I was pretty tired. And the first time I saw her acting ... it was tough watching. Because of all the people in that movie — and they all did a great job — but Sarah had Rose down perfect.

19. There was a great scene, when you drove all night to propose to her ...

DC: (chuckles) Drove 11 hours. I think the part I liked the best was when she was doing the scrapbook — not that there were many scrapbooks in the American league — and I threw the letter and said, 'there's another one you can put in, too.' And it was me getting fired, or something like that. When I think of the movie, I think of Sarah.

20. Complete the following sentence: "By the time I'm done ..."

DC: By the time I'm done, I think I've touched everything. I've done movies. I've done commercials. I've done books. And I think when I'm done, I'll say, 'well, I did as best I could.' As my dad said, he always liked, 'dust yourself off and pick yourself up again.'

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The Athletic / By the number: Who's next for the Hockey Hall of Fame?



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By Dom Luszczyzyn Nov 9, 2018

The Hockey Hall of Fame honours its esteemed class of 2018 this weekend and we've got you covered with profiles on every inductee:

Gary Bettman, Martin Brodeur, Jayna Hefford, Willie O'Ree, Martin St. Louis, Aleksander Yakushev.

It's a very strong class highlighted by the winningest goalie in league history; a two-time Art Ross, one-time Hart, and three-time Lady Byng winner; and, of course, the man to break the colour barrier in the NHL.

Things might hit a lull going forward though with few obvious first-ballot candidates on the docket, and that could mean a better opportunity for players currently on the short list who have been waiting patiently since retiring.

Here's a look at some marquee former NHLers who will be eligible for the Hall of Fame in the next few years and where they likely stand in the pecking order.

Our ranking system:

Hall of Fame: First ballot, no questions asked.

Hall of Very Good: May get in one day, but more likely to stay outside.

Hall of Wishful Thinking: Won't get in, but worth mentioning.

Class of 2019

Hall of Fame

None

Hall of Very Good

Patrik Elias – 1,240 GP; 408-617-1,025

Career Points Shares: 124.7 (0.101 per game)

Two Stanley Cups in 20 years with the Devils is the pinnacle of Elias' legacy, a man who immediately springs to mind when you think Devils, even if he isn't the first face. He spent his entire career with the franchise and was a large part of the team springing to relevancy in the mid-90s. Elias was a consistently excellent two-way force, eventually earning 1,000 points for his career and is a player you wish possession stats were available for. He was a dominant player in that regard well into his 30s and you have to figure his numbers might've been even more sparkling in his prime.

But while Elias had a great career, it's not one that stands out considering he only has one first team all-star berth and only three point-per-game seasons. That's what likely keeps him away from the Hall, but he has a stronger case than most despite the lack of individual accolades. His point shares per game is right on par with Jarome Iginla's, a surefire first balloter.

Vincent Lecavalier – 1,212 GP; 421-528-949

Career Points Shares: 102.4 (0.085 per game)

Brad Richards – 1,126 GP; 298-634-932

Career Points Shares: 92.8 (0.082 per game)

Dan Boyle – 1,093 GP; 163-442-605

Career Points Shares: 107.1 (0.098 per game)

In the 1990s, the NHL expanded and re-located rapidly into non-traditional markets, ready to introduce themselves to a legion of new fans. Anaheim, Dallas, Miami, Nashville, Phoenix, Raleigh, Tampa Bay – these were not cities most would immediately think of as hockey-towns, but a number of them have become a massive success and that all starts with a Stanley Cup victory in Tampa Bay in 2004.

That championship came about from the performances of three men eligible for the Hall in 2019, as well as one, Martin St. Louis, who's being inducted this year: Vincent Lecavalier, Brad Richards and Dan Boyle. They're champions of the sunshine state, two of whom had an impressive 900-plus points and another who is one of 36 defenders in NHL history to score 600 points.

Lecavalier, Richards and Boyle were all integral pieces to that Cup victory, no doubt, but their individual legacies likely aren't at a high enough level to be seriously considered for induction. Lecavalier has a Rocket Richard trophy and second team all-star berth from a tremendous 2006-07 season, but he lacked consistency throughout his career and never matched that peak output. Richards was the Conn Smythe winner from that Cup-winning season, but you'd be hard-pressed to consider the rest of his career worthy amongst the game's greats. Boyle might be closest as a player who got into the Norris conversation in a few years during his best stretch, but there were always questions about his defensive game.

Those three had great careers that were crucial to the development of hockey in the south, but individually it's unlikely they make the cut.

Hall of Wishful Thinking

Lubomir Visnovsky – 883 GP; 128-367-495

Career Points Shares: 87.0 (0.099 per game)

Okay, so of course there's no way Visnovsky makes the Hall, but he is a great example of a player whose play went under-appreciated in a different era, largely due to the poor quality of team surrounding him. His point-shares per game were on par with Boyle's for his career, as was his WAR/82 which ranked second to Boyle according to Corsica. By Evolving Hockey's WAR he was top 10. That's largely thanks to his ability to drive play throughout his career where his relative shot rates were among the best of his era. Visnovsky was one of the best defenders of his generation and he rarely got the credit for his play with a fourth-place Norris vote in 2010-11 being all he had to show for it.

Class of 2020

Hall of Fame

Jarome Iginla – 1,554 GP; 625-675-1,300

Career Points Shares: 157.9 (0.102 per game)

Hardware: Pearson, Art Ross, Rocket Richard (x2), First Team All-Star (x3), Second Team All-Star, Clancy

Iggy!

He's one of the biggest marquee names up for the Hall over the next few seasons and it's hard to imagine him not making it in his first season of eligibility. Iginla commanded respect throughout his career on his way to earning 625 goals (16th all time), 675 assists (62nd all time) and 1,300 points on the dot, good for 34th all time. He's one of just 17 players to earn both 600 goals and 600 assists.

He was arguably one of the most dominant players in the league during this millennium's first decade, earning the second most points from 2000-01 to 2010-11 behind just Joe Thornton. It was the peak of his career, an era where practically no other winger could touch him and it earned him a couple of Rocket Richards and two second-place finishes for the Hart. At his best, Iginla was right there in the conversation for best in the world. In 2001-02, his peers certainly thought so, giving him the nod for the Pearson award for league's most outstanding player.

He had a high peak and he had the longevity necessary for consideration and there's no doubt he'll be recognized for his achievements as a result. Iginla's play defined an era, and while he was never able to reach the pinnacle of team success in the NHL, that shouldn't diminish everything he accomplished during his tenure.

Hall of Very Good



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None

Hall of Wishful Thinking

Brian Campbell – 1,082 GP; 87-417-504

Career Points Shares: 89.7 (0.083 per game)

Similar to Visnovsky in that he rarely got the respect he deserved, but he played a vital role on every team he was on and made each of them better. He was a key cog in breaking Chicago's 49-year Stanley Cup drought, the missing piece on the backend (despite his exorbitant salary at the time, one that painted a negative outlook on his otherwise sterling play). Through his career, he was always on the right side of the puck possession-wise, all the way into his very last season, and put up some relatively big scoring numbers at his peak. He wasn't the best defenseman of his era, far from it, but he deserves some recognition for a very underrated career.

Shane Doan –1,540 GP; 402-570-972

Career Points Shares: 96.3 (0.630 per game)

A long and fruitful career has a lot of sway, especially when it comes with one franchise – a franchise that has been in near-constant turmoil due to its non-traditional locale. Shane Doan deserves a lot of credit for any hockey success in Arizona, but Hall of Fame calibre he is not. His 1,540 games is 15th all time, but he didn't even manage to hit 1,000 points for his career (an important Hall benchmark) despite all those games. His career high is 78 points, and his average season translates to a 52-point year. Even "Hall of Very Good" is pushing it for Doan.

Class of 2021

Hall of Fame

Jaromir Jagr – 1,733 GP; 766-1,155-1,921

Career Points Shares: 217.1 (0.125 per game)

Hardware: Stanley Cup (x2), Hart, Pearson (x3), Art Ross (x5), First Team All-Star (x7), Second Team All-Star, Masterton

Small caveat: the 46-year-old (!) is still trying to play hockey for his hometown club HC Kladno in the Czech second league, but hasn't suited up for a game yet this season due to injury. If he doesn't and finally calls it quits, that would leave him eligible for the class of 2021, and he would no doubt be the highlight. The hardware speaks for itself and few players in NHL history have been as dominant as Jagr was during his peak.

From 1997-98, Jagr won four straight Art Ross trophies, scoring 446 points in 302 games in the beginning of the Dead Puck Era, a full 88 points more than the next best player, Joe Sakic. The difference between Jagr and second was the difference between second and 20th. He also has seven seasons above 100 points when adjusted for era, behind only Wayne Gretzky and Mario Lemieux.

He was a cheat code and remained that way during his very lengthy career where he managed to earn the third most goals, the fifth most assists, and the second most points in NHL history. He's very arguably a top 10 NHLer of all time. Now imagine if he didn't leave for the KHL for three seasons.

Daniel Sedin – 1,306 GP; 393-648-1,041

Career Points Shares: 123.1 (0.094 per game)

Hardware: Pearson, Art Ross, First Team All-Star, Second Team All-Star, Clancy

Henrik Sedin – 1,330 GP 240-830-1,070

Career Points Shares: 108.6 (0.082 per game)

Hardware: Hart, Art Ross, First Team All-Star (x2), Clancy (x2)

The Sedins are one-of-a-kind in sport, a pair of twins who got to play together for their entire career, showing off their telepathic chemistry on a

nightly basis at an elite level. They were two of the greatest from their era, but the uniqueness of their story adds a little something extra.

Hockey and the NHL were lucky to see the show, especially from 2006 to 2011 where the duo were top 10 scorers, culminating in the pair earning back-to-back Art Ross trophies between them in 2009-10 (Henrik) and 2010-11 (Daniel). Remarkably apt and in sync, as much of their career was. It's those seasons that likely cement the duo as first-ballot Hall of Famers as they showed they were the best players in hockey, or close to it.

You can make the case they were even better than their scoring numbers too as the duo controlled the game like few others at their peak, earning the highest relative Corsi marks from 2007 to 2011 with Daniel at plus-7.3 percent and Henrik at plus-six percent. With the Sedins on the ice, the Canucks were an unstoppable juggernaut that earned about 55 percent of the shot attempts and 60 percent of the goals scored at 5-on-5, meaning the Canucks were at 48 and 50 percent without them.

What's important to remember about the Sedins is that they didn't really get a fair chance to prove themselves until after the cancelled season. In the first four seasons of their career, the duo were playing under 14 minutes per night, suppressing their eventual point totals. Post 2005-06, Henrik earned 924 points in 1012 games while Daniel earned 890 in 991, both 70-plus point paces for over a decade.

Hall of Very Good

Henrik Zetterberg – 1,082 GP; 337-623-960

Career Points Shares: 109.3 (0.101)

This was a very tough one, but at the end of the day, I'm not convinced he has the longevity or the hardware to be a bonafide first ballot Hall of Famer. His 2007-08 season was magnificent where he scored 92 points in 75 games on his way to a second-team all star nod, a Selke trophy nomination and eventually the Conn Smythe trophy to go with a Stanley Cup, but that peak wasn't high enough and his consistent elite play may not have been long enough.

It is worth noting though that from 2007 to 2018 he was a top 20 WAR player (via Corsica and Evolving Hockey) and top 10 by average Game Score – higher than both Sedins. At his peak, he was a sensational player when it came to influencing shot rates at both ends of the ice. With a decade of advanced stats to work from, Zetterberg might be one of the first cases of a player earning his place among the greats thanks in part to more sophisticated evaluation methods.

Zetterberg should make the Hall one day, deservedly so as a big part of the Red Wings dynasty that came to define the puck possession era, but likely not on his first try.

Hall of Wishful Thinking

None

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1114868 Websites

The Athletic / The last of the franchise goalies and how that burden can weigh on Carey Price and Henrik Lundqvist

By Arpon Basu Nov 9, 2018

Carey Price stood up and wanted to get it over with.

Normally, win or lose, Price removes his equipment following a game and leaves the dressing room, only to return later to face the media.



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This time, he wanted to do it right away, rip off the band-aid and deal with the pain quickly. It's hard to know why exactly, but judging by Price's answers to the questions following a 6-5 overtime loss to the Buffalo Sabres, it's not that hard to make an educated guess.

Price was bad, he knew it, and it's eating him up inside.

He was given numerous opportunities to deflect the blame for the loss, that it was a wide open game that was difficult on both goaltenders, that the play in front of him has deteriorated, that essentially every game on the NHL schedule that night had a lot of goals and this is the new normal, even that the changes to the goaltending equipment are playing a part in how he is performing.

Price would have none of it.

"Let's just cut to the chase really," he said, "I just didn't play very good tonight."

Price's pain was obvious as he spoke in short, curt sentences. He knows what he represents to the Canadiens; he knows he is their franchise player, their superstar, and that the team's success rests largely on his shoulders. He knows he is the highest paid player in franchise history, the highest paid goalie and one of the highest paid players in the league and the expectations that come with that.

When he doesn't meet those expectations, it couldn't be more obvious because his shortcomings turn into goals and ultimately, losses. Other franchise players can have off nights without the same consequences. Sidney Crosby or Connor McDavid or Auston Matthews can have a poor performance and it doesn't necessarily mean their team will lose. Price doesn't have that luxury, he can't rely on a teammate to pick up the slack when he's not sharp. Only one guy can go in nets.

"Unfortunately that position is one that you can really pinpoint because we've got players that can play really bad one night, but because they're surrounded by other players around them it doesn't show as much," Claude Julien said after the loss to Buffalo. "That's the sad part of a goaltender's position, as you can see we're looking more at him when the rest of our team wasn't any better."

Except Price isn't like the rest of the team. He is the franchise player and the standard he must meet is considerably higher than the bar for, let's say, Jordie Benn.

This is the burden of the franchise goalie, a position that is slowly dying out in the NHL. Tuesday night in New York we had a matchup of arguably the only two true franchise goalies left in the league when Price went head to head with Henrik Lundqvist and came out on the losing end of a Rangers comeback because, as was the case against the Sabres, Price didn't play all that well over the second half of the game.

Price and Lundqvist are unique, centrepieces of two Original Six franchises with the success of those franchises weighing heavily on their shoulders. Though they couldn't really be more different as goaltenders or personalities, it is their commonalities that stand out and link them in the current landscape of hockey as two of a dying breed, an endangered species of sorts, potentially the last of the franchise goalies.

Lundqvist has consistently met the standard of that role. Price can only hope to do the same.

Watching them in the crease, they couldn't be more different.

One is a vision of calm, meticulously cutting down angles and, when he's at his best, making difficult saves look easy because his fluid movement and anticipation of the play has made it so he is already in position when the shot arrives. The other sits deep in his crease and dares shooters to beat him by showing them tons of net and then relying on his freakish athleticism and reflexes to do everything in his power to make spectacular saves, even if that means using his head.

One is 6-foot-3, 215 pounds, the other is 6-foot-1, 180 soaking wet. One wears No. 31, the other No. 30.

No, Price and Lundqvist look nothing alike in goal. But they have so much more in common, most notably that they may very well be the last of their kind.

They are perhaps the only two goalies in the league that carry the distinction of being a team's franchise player to its fullest extent, and they are playing that role for teams that are in varying stages of a rebuild or a retool or whatever they are calling it these days.

Price and Lundqvist represent the foundation of what the Canadiens and Rangers are trying to do by incorporating young players while still trying to win.

"We're fortunate to have one of those goaltenders, the Rangers are fortunate to have their goaltender too, especially with a young team," Julien said prior to facing the Rangers at Madison Square Garden on Tuesday. "I think those are the kinds of guys you need to help the growth of your hockey club to be growing in a positive atmosphere. I think both these teams have that look and they're advantages."

There are no other goalies in the NHL that share Price and Lundqvist's status as the best and highest-paid player on their respective teams.

Pekka Rinne is revered in Nashville and was once the face of the franchise, but is he the Predators' best player? Even coming off a Vezina Trophy, having recently been signed to a contract extension and off to a terrific start again this season, no one could objectively say Rinne is the best player on the Predators.

None of the other top veteran goalies can say they hold a place of importance on their team similar to that of Price and Lundqvist either, not Sergei Bobrovsky, Tuukka Rask, Roberto Luongo, Jonathan Quick or even Marc-André Fleury, though he might come the closest.

Among the younger generation, John Gibson appears to be growing into a similar role with the Anaheim Ducks and might be the one best placed to take over for Price and Lundqvist as a franchise goalie one day. But that's about it; neither of Andrei Vasilevskiy or Connor Hellebuyck, two of the best young goalies in the league, are likely to be the best player on their respective teams any time soon.

There was a time not that long ago when having a goalie as your best player was relatively commonplace. Patrick Roy held that title, both in Montreal and with the Colorado Avalanche. Dominik Hasek did the same in Buffalo, Martin Brodeur in New Jersey, Ed Belfour in Chicago, Ryan Miller in Buffalo, Olaf Kolzig in Washington, Ron Hextall in Philadelphia. The Vancouver Canucks went so far as to name Luongo their unofficial captain in 2008, an experiment that lasted only two years, but one that reflected his importance to that franchise at that moment.

But we might be witnessing the last two to hold that role for quite some time; with the game moving toward speed and youth and offence, the NHL's hierarchy of star power is moving the same way. There are good – even great – young goalies in the game today, but their resonance pales in comparison to the young offensive stars that dominate the NHL landscape right now.

Both the Canadiens and Rangers feel fortunate to have goaltenders they can lean on as leaders, backbones of a rebuilding process. But the matchup between them at Madison Square Garden on Tuesday didn't really reflect that; Lundqvist wasn't very strong early, Price was leaky late and the Rangers came back to win the game. But perhaps that was appropriate, because there are downsides to building a team around a goalie, namely that goalies are volatile and prone to having seasons where they are less than the best versions of themselves. Price had one last season, posting the worst save percentage of his career. Lundqvist has been remarkably consistent in comparison; his worst career save percentage was a .910 in 2016-17, his age 34 season, and aside from a .912 in his third season in the NHL, Lundqvist has been between .915 and .930 in his 11 other seasons in New York.

That 2016-17 season is also the only time Price and Lundqvist have gone head to head for an entire series in the playoffs – Chris Kreider's collision with Price in Game 1 of the 2014 Eastern Conference final put a



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premature end to their first playoff confrontation, resulting in Lundqvist's only career appearance in the Stanley Cup final.

That is one more appearance in the finals than Price, and of all the ways their careers mirror each other, this is the one that stands out. Neither of them has ever won the big prize and now they find themselves in what could be a long road back to Cup contention.

Price's thoughts on that were made clear at the Canadiens' season-opening golf tournament in September when he said he feels he can be a player that elevates a bubble team into a contending one. When he is at his best, Price definitely has that ability because he's done it before and has been looked upon to do that for the majority of his NHL career.

"It's what I've been doing," Price said that day. "But on the other hand, it's nice to be that guy that everybody relies on."

Lundqvist will be 37 in March and with two years left on his contract after this one, the clock is ticking on reaching his ultimate goal of winning a Cup. Like Price, he is now part of a rebuilding process. Also like Price, Lundqvist is fully on board with what his team is doing to get the Rangers back to being contenders and giving him a chance to reach that goal.

The reason is because Lundqvist loves the Rangers and loves New York. If there is one commonality between him and Price that stands higher than all the rest, it is that. They both want to win badly, but they want to do it with the teams they have spent their entire careers playing for and with no one else.

"I think after being here for so many years and the commitment I've made to this organization, and the other way around, they've made a commitment to me, I feel so great about being here, competing here," Lundqvist said after Rangers practice Monday. "The goal is one day to win, but it's still about the journey. It's not always about that last game of the season, it's also about the journey getting there, and this is part of it. Is it a challenge? Absolutely. But there's no other place I want to be; I want to be here and try to be part of a turnaround to get back to where we need to be."

Lundqvist and Price were both asked by The Athletic if they saw the similarities in their careers, in their roles of prominence playing for marquee NHL teams, in their continuing quest to win a Stanley Cup for those franchises.

Price immediately saw it. Lundqvist had to think about it for a few seconds.

"Umm, I don't know," he eventually said after that pause for thought. "Of course as a goalie you can kind of relate to what he's going through with his role in Montreal. He's been there for a long time and he's been doing a really good job for a lot of years. We know playing Montreal, beating Price is obviously a big part of it."

But when asked to compare what it's like for Price to be the man in Montreal compared to what he has to manage in New York, Lundqvist suddenly saw what the two of them had in common.

"I see similarities," he said. "Obviously in Montreal, hockey's everything. In New York there's so many other things going on. But at the same time, people here, they're honest. If you're not doing your job or you're not doing the things that you're supposed to do, they'll let you know. And I think there's also a similarity to Montreal in that they have a passion and love for their team. They're going to support you but they're also going to be pretty honest with you about what they feel and how they feel. It can be challenging at times, for sure."

Price saw that honesty first hand Thursday night when he received mock cheers for making the most routine of saves. It was far from the first time it has happened to Price in Montreal, but it doesn't mean he has grown immune to it or it doesn't hurt when it happens.

"Of course it is," he said, cutting off the question, when asked if it is tough to hear that from Canadiens fans in his own building.

What can make that challenge greater is their contracts, because that impacts the expectations Price and Lundqvist have to live up to. Price, 31, is in the first year of an eight-year, \$84-million contract, an annual average value of \$10.5-million. That represents 14 percent of the \$75-million NHL salary cap. When Lundqvist's seven-year, \$59.5-million contract kicked in at the start of the 2014-15 season, he was 32 and his \$8.5-million AAV was 12.3 percent of the \$69-million salary cap in place at the time. So pretty similar in terms of importance and also in terms of expectations.

Lundqvist, when told of that contractual similarity with Price, had much the same view as his Montreal counterpart on the inherent pressure that comes with that kind of a contract. Being relied on by your team is something to be embraced rather than being a burden.

"Well, with that role there's pressures and responsibilities and all that," Lundqvist said. "You've just got to see the possibilities. I think you can look at things in different ways. If you want to add more pressure, yeah, you can do that. But I think when you see the possibilities, you see it as a positive thing that people believe in you and you have an opportunity to play a lot of hockey for an organization that you love."

Being a team's best and highest-paid player means you are expected to lead, and both Price and Lundqvist do that for the Canadiens and Rangers largely through their work ethic.

Price holds himself to such a high standard that he will break his stick over the crossbar if he is unsatisfied with his performance. Not during a game. In practice.

"I think you see it in practice; he works hard," Canadiens centre Phillip Danault said. "Usually you're a little scared to shoot on a goalie like that, you don't want to hurt him in practice. But he can't get enough shots. He eats them up. He works on his rebounds, he's working, he's happy to be there. That says a lot."

At one point in Rangers practice Monday, new coach David Quinn split his skaters in two and had them do 2-on-1 drills with two forwards and a defenceman starting with one skate on the blue line and breaking in on goal at the same time. They were keeping score, so they were competing.

Lundqvist didn't give up many goals, but at one point Mika Zibanejad set up Mats Zuccarello, one of Lundqvist's closest friends on the team, for a shot that he zinged past his goalie's ear, off the crossbar and in. Zibanejad and Zuccarello celebrated and Lundqvist stared his good buddy down. He wasn't happy, and it had nothing to do with the shot that screamed past his ear. It was the goal.

"He's so competitive, even in practice as well, so it's kind of fun to score against him," Zibanejad said. "He gets mad. That tells you a lot about how he is and why he's here and why he's gotten to the point where he's at. Every little rebound, every puck matters to him in practice. It makes me more of a competitor as well."

Though Price immediately recognized the big picture similarities he had with Lundqvist, he couldn't accept the comparison on face value. That's because he and Lundqvist couldn't really be more different as goalies.

"Yeah, I guess we share some similarities," Price said. "But I don't know if I would compare myself to him."

Price's style is more modern than Lundqvist's, heavily based on a flawless technique that other goaltenders marvel at. When Price is fully on top of his game, it is his ability to move fluidly around his crease and put himself in position to make difficult saves look routine that is the envy of the goaltending fraternity. Lundqvist plays deep in his crease and relies on his ridiculous athleticism and reflexes to react to shots as they come. There are no odds or percentages in his game. It is mano a mano, a goaltender versus a shooter and may the best man win.

"He's just sound," Price said. "He's got a very unique style, just his set up, everything about him. You could take the uniform off, take all the logos off the equipment, everything, and you would know right away that



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it's him. He's a very good puck tracker; there's a reason why he's been so good for so long. But my vocabulary isn't good enough to describe it, other than to say it's unique."

There was a degree of reverence in Price's words as he spoke. He could never play the position the way Lundqvist does because of just how uncommon that style is. But during the game against the Rangers, Price made a save on Lias Andersson that looked like he was trying to imitate Lundqvist, staying up on his skates and kicking out his right pad to steer the shot aside.

Asked about the save Thursday morning, Price immediately knew which save it was.

"Yup," he said with a grin, "second period."

While Lundqvist might not necessarily be reverential when talking about Price, the respect for his game comes through quite clearly.

"First of all he's very efficient, I think he has a very good technique," Lundqvist said. "He's a big guy too, uses his size well, and for a big guy he's pretty fast. So if you start adding all these things together, you're going to have success. But his efficiency and technique itself is obviously very strong.

"I think guys are more aggressive now. I stay back, I wait for the puck, I try to read shots and rely on reacting more than blocking. But I think there's a lot of different styles in the league right now and a lot of different guys have success with different styles. You just need to commit to your style. That's what I'm trying to do this year."

That's also what Price is trying to do. But it's not working right now.

How the Canadiens deal with Price's struggles is not straight forward. Franchise players are not held to the same standard as everyone else, but they also benefit from more leash, because teams don't usually have more than one franchise player. The very nature of the relationship means teams have to make the best of the situation when a franchise player loses his way, as Price clearly feels he has right now.

"No, it's all upstairs," Price said after the Sabres game. "I've got to figure it out."

Julien, for his part, has to deal with the reality that the Canadiens' success as a team, and by extension his own success as a coach, is intricately tied to Price's performance. It's a perfectly normal thing for a coach to rely on his franchise player, for a team as well, because teams lock up these players long term for big money, and they are stuck with them, for better or for worse.

If Price doesn't figure out what is going on upstairs, the Canadiens have to deal with that for seven more seasons after this one at a \$10.5-million clip. All of their plans for building toward the future would be sunk. That's why Julien has to weigh his comments accordingly.

Julien went to great lengths to explain to what extent the way the Canadiens are playing in front of Price has been a problem, going through the goals the Sabres scored that were due to defensive breakdowns one by one. But he only covered two of the six goals the Sabres scored. And that's the problem, that's what makes this complicated. Yes, the Canadiens defence that everyone knew would be problematic has turned out to be just that. But the goalie behind that problematic defence being problematic was less expected.

"I think if anything he needs to feel that we've got his back, and we do," Julien said. "He needs to know that his coach and his coaching staff are behind him and believe in him and there's no reason not to, with what he's accomplished."

What Price has already accomplished is what has made him the Canadiens franchise goalie, just like the Rangers decided that Lundqvist's body of work merited a commitment from them to give him that same status. But it is what Price will do in the future that is of the utmost importance now.

Lundqvist rewarded that trust by largely maintaining the level of play that got him that commitment from his team.

Price must now do the same thing.

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The Athletic / LeBrun: Despite obstacles to overcome, the groundwork has been laid for NHL expansion in Europe

By Pierre LeBrun Nov 9, 2018

It's a subject I have ruminated over many times, written columns about and debated over many beers: NHL expansion to Europe.

And since I am on the side that is in favor, the reaction I receive is usually the same, a rolling of the eyes.

Except it's not a crazy notion and NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly added fuel to the fire on Thursday.

During an appearance on TSN 1050's Leafs Lunch with Dave Feschuk and host Andi Petrillo, I asked Daly about the potential of having an NHL division in Europe one day. It was a question that had been raised by European media to both Daly and Gary Bettman during the recent Jets-Panthers games in Finland.

"Do I see it happening some day? Yes. Do I see it happening in the short term? Probably not," Daly said on the radio. "There's a lot of factors associated with that. I don't think you can expand by just one or two teams in Europe. I think you have to have some medium number of teams that can play each other and make travel and schedule far more efficient than it would be with one or two teams.

"The number of our players who are born and trained in Europe and add to the talent level of the National Hockey League, the interest in the sport, in a number of countries in Europe, make it almost inevitable that at some point the National Hockey League will have teams in Europe."

Hold on, did he just say "inevitable?"

That is as strong of a response that I've heard on the matter, even with the caveat of Daly stressing that we are years and years away from it happening.

Consider for a moment a new NHL division in Europe with teams in Stockholm, Helsinki, Prague, Moscow, Zurich, Berlin and/or London.

Dare to dream, people.

"Think big global game: teams in London, Paris, Stockholm, Prague, Moscow, Helsinki — good chance for a big TV deal?" said an Eastern Conference GM via text message Thursday night.

There is that. TV money from Europe. Ask the IIHF how much money they get from TV every year for the men's world championship. Tons.

With the exception of London, those other locations have a natural love for the game and produce a healthy dose of NHLers.

Now, the obstacles for this dream to become reality are lengthy:

Travel. The most obvious stumbling block.

The European sports fan generally isn't used to spending the kind of dollars on games that we're used to here in North America. That's a big hurdle.



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There's a long history and tradition of professional hockey teams in Europe and Russia that would most likely not be welcoming to any of this, not to mention some excellent leagues in Russia, Sweden, Switzerland and others, who would also not be fans.

Where would the IIHF stand on all of this? Would it back the NHL or oppose it?

Can a 32-team NHL (Seattle included) expand by another division of teams and not suffer from too much dilution of talent?

All good points to make, of course. But consider that the players themselves, particularly from Europe, would be a powerful voice in favour of it, and I think even a healthy dose of Canadian and American players would get on board.

After all, if this is done right, there is money to be made here which means more revenue to share.

NHL Players' Association executive director Donald Fehr has been on the record many times — including with me — stating his belief that the future of hockey includes expanding its international footprint. Would this fit into that?

Again, travel would be the No. 1 issue. As one NHL GM joked with me over a text message: "Maybe if they bring back the Concorde."

Yes, going to Europe would be a long-ass trip, especially for teams on the west coast. But as Daly alluded to, European expansion would not be one or two team endeavor. If you're the Anaheim Ducks, playing five games against five different teams over 12-14 days doesn't seem like a waste of time. And maybe each team has two of these trips each year.

Obviously for the European NHL teams it's much more of a chore in terms of the number of games they'd have to play in North America, but I would suggest they'd be the last to complain, given the chance to be part of the world's top hockey league.

There are all kinds of ways to work around the travel/schedule issues.

The Panthers, Jets, Oilers and Devils just played a pair of regular-season games in Europe and this is not a new initiative for the NHL. We know that it's doable.

Two years ago the Toronto Wolfpack rugby team began play in England-based Rugby League (home games in Toronto and road games overseas, mostly in England) and you wonder if it's going to serve as an example to other North American pro sports leagues as to how to overcome the travel aspect for overseas play.

It certainly wouldn't shock anyone at this point if the NFL had a team in London at some point in the next several years.

So why not the NHL expanding to Europe, I ask?

"Not in the short term," Edmonton Oilers CEO Bob Nicholson, the former head of Hockey Canada with oodles of international hockey experience said.

"But," Nicholson added in a text, "the world is opening up in the future."

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The Athletic / DGB Grab Bag: When Uber rides go bad, early-season stat overload and revisiting the Brodeur/Avery incident

By Sean McIndoe Nov 9, 2018

Three stars of comedy

The third star: Jerry Lawler – It's only marginally funny, but I'm including it because it's just nice to see a King get a win these days.

SO A FORMER BLUE, A KING AND A MINNESOTA WILD FAN WALK INTO A HOCKEY RINK... #STLBLUES #WWENIGHT
PIC.TWITTER.COM/Y2RDPT60XN

&MDASH; ST. LOUIS BLUES (@STLOUISBLUES) NOVEMBER 4, 2018

The second star: Zdeno Chara and Rocco Grimaldi – We've seen the "big guy/small guy" photo done before, sometimes with props. But for some reason this one cracks me up. I think it's a combination of the always semi-crazy look on Chara's face, and the fact that he's pointing at Grimaldi just in case you failed to notice that there's another person in the picture.

5'6" VS 6'9" 🇨🇦#NHL #PREDS #NASHVILLE #BRUINS #BOSTON
PIC.TWITTER.COM/IWSQHWY8Z4

&MDASH; ROCCO GRIMALDI (@RGRIMALDI23) NOVEMBER 4, 2018

The first star: This unfortunate ad during a Senators game – In the marketing business I think this is called synergy.

A BANNER ADVERTISEMENT INSIDE OTTAWA'S CANADIAN TIRE CENTRE:

"UBER: YOU BRING THE NOISE" PIC.TWITTER.COM/UGBBFA19HY

&MDASH; CHRIS RYAN (@CHRISRYAN_NJ) NOVEMBER 6, 2018

Oh hey, speaking of which...

Outrage of the week

The issue: Several Senators players were captured making critical comments about the team and its coaching staff in a video that was later uploaded to social media by their Uber driver.

This is one of those stories that's managed to generate multiple levels of outrage, so let's break them down one by one.

The outrage: It is a bad thing that the comments got out publicly, especially given all the other controversies the Senators have dealt with in recent months.

Is it justified: Sure. No argument here. This was pretty much the last thing the Senators needed. From that perspective, it's kind of awful. But that's only the start of the story.

The outrage: The players should never have said those things.

Is it justified: Well, hold on. Sure, you could make the case that ripping on a boss or co-worker behind their back is bad. But literally everyone does it as some point. If we're being honest, the Senators' criticism was probably pretty tame compared to some of what most of us have said under similar circumstances. Maybe we're all wrong to do it, but it seems odd to rip on the Senators just because they got caught.

The outrage: But the players were dumb to talk about this stuff publicly; in an age where there are cameras everywhere, they should have known that their words would wind up on social media.

Is it justified: See, this is the argument I don't buy. It's one thing to expect celebrities to be careful in public. But is the backseat of an Uber really public? And are hockey players from Ottawa really celebrities when they're in Phoenix? Maybe you'd answer yes to both questions, but it's not like Chris Wideman was standing in front of the Parliament buildings yelling into a megaphone about Marty Raymond. Those players had at least some expectation of privacy. Maybe not in a legal sense – that part is a little murky. But just from a general "this is how life works" perspective, I don't think it was unreasonable for them to think they could vent a little about work without having it show up on YouTube.

The outrage: That Uber driver is the real villain here.



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Is it justified: It sure sounds like it. We don't know exactly why he shared the video, but it's hard to imagine a scenario where the driver doesn't come out of this looking awful. And even he seems to agree.

The outrage: Wait, "boomeranged my twiggy into the glass?" Hockey players actually talk like that?

Is it justified: Look, we said the story was awful.

The outrage: The media should have never reported the video's existence, or run it as part of the story.

Is it justified: Nonsense. The story was broken by the Ottawa Citizen, whose job is to report on newsworthy stories. This was one. I'd be willing to bet that if a Citizen reporter happened to overhear a few players mumbling complaints about the coaches, it's a non-story. But when video of them doing it is already circulating on social media? It's news. Even if it's the kind that team wishes hadn't seen the light of day.

The outrage: The Senators handled the fallout badly.

Is it justified: We're told that they knew about the video a day before the story broke, and they had a statement and apology ready to release within hours. But they didn't make any of the players available after the next morning skate, which just seemed to give the story extra legs.

On top of that, their subsequent attempts to get the Citizen to take the video down were just silly. If we know one thing about the internet, it's that the best way to make sure something is widely shared is to try to delete it.

The outrage: Matt Duchene doesn't look great in all of this.

Is it justified: No he sure doesn't, and if anything about this story lingers for more than a few weeks, that's the angle. You almost feel like the whole thing would have been a minor story and not much more if it weren't for the moment when Duchene utters the infamous "I haven't paid attention in three weeks" line. It's a car full of rookie and new acquisitions – exactly the sort of new blood the Senators need to turn the page on the last year – and here's the one veteran star saying that. It's a bad look, and you wonder if it has any impact on Duchene's future with the team. Remember, he's an unrestricted free agent at the end of the year.

Is all of that fair? Again, not really – even Duchene's comment wasn't that bad. But when a team has gone through what the Senators have, perception might matter more than reality.

The outrage: Is there a secret second video that's even worse?

Is it justified: Maybe? According to TVA's Renaud Lavoie, there might be, but we haven't seen it yet. So let's hold off any final judgment — if we find out there's a clip of one of the guys saying that Beaver Tails are overrated garbage or Pierre Dorion admitting to being the playoff Spartan guy, all bets are off.

The outrage: How do you feel about Uber stealing your "my spies recorded the top-secret conversation of these hockey players" bit?

Is it justified: My lawyers will be in touch.

Obscure former player of the week

The first month of the NHL season has had its share of good news. Scoring is up slightly, and young stars around the league are on the way to breakout seasons. And there's another positive from that extra offense – it's leading to more overtime goals. According to the NHL, we entered this week with 72 percent of overtime games ending with a real goal instead of a shootout, which would be the highest percentage ever for a full season.

That's good news, because all decent people are tired of shootouts these days. So today, let's stick with the theme by reaching way back for an obscure player who knew a thing or two about scoring in overtime: 1930s forward Ken Doraty.

Doraty actually made his NHL debut during the 1926-27 season as a 20-year-old, playing 18 games for the Blackhawks without recording a point. He wouldn't be back for six years, when he resurfaced in 1932 as a member of the Maple Leafs. He appeared in 83 games over the course of three seasons, recording 15 goals and 40 points despite being listed at 5-foot-7 and just 133 pounds.

It was during his run with the Maple Leafs that Doraty set a pair of overtime records, one of which has since been broken and one of which never will be. In a 1933 playoff game, Doraty scored the only goal of the game after 104:46 of overtime to give the Leafs a win over the Boston Bruins. It remains the second longest game in NHL history, having been surpassed only by a game in the 1936 Stanley Cup final.

But maybe even more impressive is Doraty's feat from Jan. 16, 1934, when he recorded his only NHL hat trick against the Senators. Hat tricks were rare in that low-scoring era, but what makes Doraty's night memorable was when the goals came: Overtime. Yes, all three of them. Back then, overtime wasn't sudden death, but rather a full ten-minute period. Doraty scored in the second, third and final minute of the extra frame, making him the only NHL player to score three goals in the same overtime.

It's safe to say that nobody's matching that mark.

Doraty spent a few more years in the minors before a brief comeback with the 1937-38 Red Wings that lasted two games. He retired for good in 1939, having played 103 regular season NHL games, plus 15 more in the playoffs – one of which was almost the equivalent to three full games, until Mr. Overtime ended it.

Be It Resolved

I love stats. Always have. The more obscure the better. You find a weird but interesting number somewhere, send it my way and I'm a happy guy.

So it takes a lot for me to say this, but ... we're getting a little out of control with the early-season stats, right?

It seems like you can't make it through three minutes of an NHL broadcast or scroll through 10 tweets without hitting some sort of stat about players or teams who've done X things in the first Y games. Sometimes they're the first to ever do it. Sometimes they join a list of a bunch of others, including guys you've never heard of. But these stats are everywhere these days.

At first it was just players getting this treatment, but now they're doing it for teams too. Did you know that the Lightning are trying to break the 1991-92 Capitals' record for most wins against conference opponents to start a season? Did you care? I'm not sure that I do, which is weird considering this sort of stuff is usually all I care about. But here we are. Even I've kind of had enough.

We can pinpoint where this is coming from, and like most problems in life it can be blamed on the Toronto Maple Leafs. They got off to a really good start this year, leading to all sorts of stats about how Auston Matthews was the new Mario Lemieux and Morgan Rielly was better than Bobby Orr. Then everyone realized how silly that all sounded, and overcorrected by doing it for everyone else in the league, too.

Look, I like Kyle Palmieri and Sebastian Aho and whoever else as much as the next guy, but I think we're kind of done here. The season is officially into its second month now, so be it resolved that we can ease off on the season-opening stats. It was fun while it lasted, but it's time to turn the page.

(At least until the Leafs get hot again.)

Classic YouTube clip breakdown

Martin Brodeur will be inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame on Monday, as part of an elaborate ceremony that you already know all about. His selection was an absolute no-brainer, quite possibly the biggest sure thing in the last decade. We're talking about a guy who holds the all-time record for wins and shutouts, not to mention three Cup rings.



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So today, it should go without saying, we have to look back at the most memorable moment of his career.

It's April 13, 2008, and the Rangers are hosting the Devils in Game 3 of the opening round. New York has won the first two games of the series on the road, so they have all the momentum. Here's hoping nobody does anything goofy to screw that up.

We're tied 1-1 in the second period, but the Rangers have just gone on a 5-on-3 powerplay. Can they break the tie? Let's all watch! Uh, except not you, Marty.

The Rangers send out a loaded line of five forwards that includes future Hall of Famers Jaromir Jagr and Brendan Shanahan, as well as Scott Gomez and Chris Drury. There's probably somebody else out there too but I'm sure it's not important.

The best part of this clip is how the play-by-play guy doesn't realize what's happening because he's following the puck. You know that clip where you're supposed to watch the basketball so you don't notice that a gorilla walks by in the background? This play was that, but for hockey fans.

So yes, this is of course the infamous play where Sean Avery decides to screen Brodeur by waving his arms and stick around and generally being a dink. At the 20 second mark, you can actually see the referee go over and tell him to knock it off, followed quickly by Drury. Avery stops his bad behavior for two seconds, then goes right back to doing what he was just told not to, proving that he is my 8-year-old son.

Shanahan can't keep the puck in, which sends the Rangers back into their own zone and sets up what happens next. I have to say, this isn't doing much to disprove my "Brendan Shanahan was in the middle of everything bad that ever happened in hockey and might secretly be a super-villain" theory.

As the Rangers regroup, our color guy makes his first attempt to explain what just happened. He's so disgusted he can barely get the words out. But don't worry, karma is real and I'm sure the hockey gods will serve up some just deserts any moment now!

Huh. Or not.

Seriously, everyone remembers the screening attempt, but I feel like we've generally forgotten that Avery scored literally seconds later. And we shouldn't, because that makes it so much worse. I just wrote a book about the entire history of the NHL, which includes arenas burning down, franchises folding, multiple riots and Cooperalls, and I think this goal might be the worst thing that's ever happened in hockey.

Nice celly, though.

We get a few closeup replays of Avery's screen, which at one point gets him a glove in the face from Brodeur. Somebody needs to write an alternate history of the NHL where Avery tries this move on Patrick Roy instead, and to this day doctors are still trying to surgically remove the blocker from his throat.

Of course, the end result of all this was what's become known as The Avery Rule, which was passed the next day. Yes, that's right – the same league that needs to form an exploratory committee to spend three years thinking about maybe moving a faceoff circle half a millimeter changed its rules the next day because Sean Avery was being a cretin. Maybe he's the one who should be in the Hall of Fame.

The epilogue here is that the Devils came back to win the game, but the Rangers ultimately won the series. Afterwards, Brodeur refused to shake Avery's hand, leading to Avery calling him "fatso", because again, he is 8 years old. But also it's kind of hilarious.

In case you're wondering if they ever made up ... nope. The feud reignited in 2014 when Brodeur made fun of Avery for losing on Dancing With The Stars, which is a real sentence these two just made me type. For his part, Avery called Brodeur a "dirtbag" in his recent memoir. That brings us to today, and look, I'm not saying Brodeur needs to spend his

entire induction speech just ripping on Avery until security drags him away from the podium. But I'm definitely not saying it.

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The Athletic / Aleksander the Great: Yakushev finally takes his rightful place in the Hall of Fame

By Craig Custance Nov 9, 2018

This is the sixth in a series of stories profiling the 2018 Hockey Hall of Fame induction class.

Gary Bettman | Jayna Hefford | Martin Brodeur | Martin St. Louis | Willie O'Ree

In September 1972, an 11-year-old Igor Larionov sat down in front of a television to watch the Russians play. Black-and-white images of Aleksander Yakushev and his teammates flickered across the screen. The streets outside his home in Voskresensk, Russia, were completely empty. Everyone was busy doing exactly what he was. All entranced by the talent and tension playing out between two countries.

In Burnaby, British Columbia, a 12-year-old Glenn Anderson was just as captivated. Like nearly everyone in Canada and Russia watching the '72 Summit Series, he was captured by the drama, but in his case, inspired specifically by the play of that 6-foot-3 Russian left winger, Yakushev. The grace. The patience. The blend of size and skill. He immediately became Anderson's favorite player, someone he'd reference in his acceptance speech into the Hockey Hall of Fame a lifetime later.

Behind the podium, dressed in his tuxedo, accepting an honor for his own excellence in hockey, Anderson spoke in a voice that dripped emotion when the subject turned to the Russian players he saw as a kid, especially Yakushev.

"Watching him and his peers gave me tremendous inspiration," he said that night.

Decades later, that same big Russian winger is on the screen of a laptop. It's the night before a KHL game for Chelyabinsk Traktor. Valeri Belousov, their coach during this 2011-12 season, calls his young star forward Evgeny Kuznetsov up to his hotel room. He has clips he wants Kuznetsov to see. Some are from the Olympics. But it's the ones from Yakushev and the '72 Summit Series that blow Kuznetsov away.

Ten minutes go by, and both the coach and his young prodigy are leaning in closer to the screen to watch the highlights. The Russians are circling with an elegant beauty, passing the puck with patience while waiting for the advantage to open. The Canadians, with their brute force and physicality, are doing everything they can to disrupt it. Kuznetsov imagines himself in that series for a moment.

"If I was there, I would probably just fall on the ice and call the ambulance," Kuznetsov jokes, years later.

For Vladimir Tarasenko, the Russian tank of a star in St. Louis, the images of Yakushev had to come from the imagination. He'd borrow books from his grandfather's collection about the games or just listen to his grandfather's voice describe the action, the heroics of a big Russian winger who nearly lifted a country to glory in one eight-game series. He can close his eyes and almost see it.

"I have some imagination (of) what was there," Tarasenko said.

For those who played against Aleksander Yakushev, imagination isn't necessary.



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They lived it.

The scouting reports for the Russian players heading into the 1972 Summit Series were, at best, vague. At worst, completely erroneous.

But when Yakushev first took the ice in Montreal, the Canadians had no idea what they were up against. They suspected the goalie, Vladislav Tretiak, was awful. That's what the scouting report suggested, perhaps the strongest case for sample size in hockey scouting history. Canada's scouts caught one game of the legendary goalie and it came after a night of partying. Tretiak allowed eight goals with the scouts in attendance and the opinion was cemented. An opinion that would change quickly.

But Yakushev? There wasn't much on him.

"I don't recall them singling out Yakushev," Team Canada coach Harry Sinden said.

If they had, and it was accurate, it would have sounded something like this: Huge player with a soft touch. Emotionless. Impossible to frustrate. Great puck control. Uses his body effectively to protect the puck. Not a physical player but unafraid to go where it's necessary to score. Big, strong, defensively sound. Great passer. Great shot.

"He didn't make mistakes," Hall of Famer Bobby Clarke said. "Maybe over-passed the puck but was always in position. Big and strong and had the courage to go in the bad areas to get the puck."

"From the top of the circle in, he was one of the best I've ever seen," said defenseman Brad Park.

"He was very controlled, he was very under control for a big man," Sinden said. "He always knew exactly where the play was and where the goal was, had an accurate shot. I don't remember any weaknesses about him."

"He could shoot like a bastard and skate like a bastard," said Phil Esposito, star of that Canadian team.

They learned it all soon enough. To a man, the Canadians will tell you, they knew nothing about this big winger when the puck was dropped for Game 1 of the '72 Summit Series. Or really, anyone. They didn't know names. They didn't know skill sets. They didn't know tendencies. They didn't even realize the magnitude of the games in which they were competing, pitched more as an exhibition rather than the battle for country and identity it turned out to be.

"I thought it was going to be like playing in the All-Star Game now, just screw around," Esposito said.

Perhaps the moment it became clear that wasn't going to be the case came during the final minutes of Game 1 when Yakushev received a pass near the goal line and patiently glided his way past Canadian goalie Ken Dryden, waiting him. Dryden dove and Yakushev flipped a backhand into the net at just the right moment. A picture of patience and skill.

"When he cut across the net and held the puck to score, it showed so much poise," Park said. "We got our asses handed to us."

It would be the seventh and final goal of the game for the Russians, a blowout that announced this would be more than an exhibition. This series was officially on.

Mark Mulvoy was a 31-year-old reporter covering the series for Sports Illustrated. Talking to him now, the memories of the great Russian players come rushing back one by one.

"Boris Mikhailov. The cranky-faced Mikhailov. He looked like a spy," Mulvoy says over the phone. "He skated funny, really upright. (Vladimir Petrov was a much nicer skater, more elegant, bent over a little. They had a lot of talent. They also drank a lot of, of course. The NHL guys drank beer. Those guys drank white vodka."

Later, as he got to know them better in covering other exhibitions, Mulvoy would take the Russian players to Korvettes department store on 34th Street in New York City and buy them jeans. Stacks of jeans, in blues

and dark reds. And chewing gum, they always wanted chewing gum. It all went on the SI expense report.

For two weeks before Thanksgiving in 1975, Mulvoy went to Russia to help set up the Super Series in 1976. It was there that he got to know Yakushev even better, the stoic player from '72 slowly transforming into multiple dimensions. There, he took in a game in Yakushev's hometown between Spartak and the Russian Army Club and watched as Yakushev took over the game, scoring a goal with defenders draped on his back while beating the legendary Tretiak to give his team a late one-goal lead.

Kids in Spartak could go watch Yakushev play for 10 to 50 kopecks, the equivalent of 15 to 75 cents in American currency. In filing his dispatch from Russia for the January 5, 1976 issue of SI, Mulvoy shared a glimpse of what life was like in Russia for Yakushev, one of the best hockey players of his generation:

In time Yakushev showed particular skill in hockey, having honed his abilities during endless games in the courtyard of his family's apartment complex, and at the age of 12 he was invited to play for the union's Hammer and Sickle team in the Moscow city championship. Although Yakushev was three years younger than most of the other skaters, he was named the most valuable player in the tournament and, consequently, became a red-chip prospect for the recruiters.

"I joined Spartak when I was 15," Yakushev said. "The main reason, I guess, was that Spartak also was the home club of my hockey heroes—the Mayorov brothers, Boris and Evgeny, and Vyacheslav Starshinov. Besides, Spartak is more liberal, more democratic than, say, the Central Army Club, which has a very stern regimen that I don't like."

"What's your salary?" he was asked.

"Three hundred rubles [approximately \$400] a month, paid by the Hockey-Federation," he said.

Decades later, Kuznetsov played in an All-Star game in Chelyabinsk. Yakushev played an old-timers game the same day as part of the festivities. They had dinner together afterward and Kuznetsov heard some of the same stories Mulvoy told from Russia. It was an impressive career that Yakushev could draw from — Olympic gold medals in '72 and '76, seven World Championship golds; plus, he was trained by the great Anatoly Tarasov. In all, Yakushev represented his country 144 times. He scored 338 goals for Spartak in 568 games. He added another 108 goals in 109 games playing in Austria.

In chatting with Kuznetsov, Yakushev also shared the realities of life as a Russian athlete at the time — the cramped apartments and endless quest for a pair of Levi's jeans.

"They won everything. They end up — they've got nothing," Kuznetsov said. "As soon as we win something, they give us whatever we want. There's so many opportunities right now for players like (us). Back to their age, when they played like that — it's nothing."

"He lived in a one-bedroom apartment in Moscow," Mulvoy said. "I said, if you lived in the States, you'd be living in the Ritz."

And still ...

"Yakushev is always positive. He's smiling," Kuznetsov said. "He makes the jokes."

There's a dignity there, a relentless class. It added up to a comparison made multiple times from the Canadians, perhaps the highest compliment a player of that era can bestow.

"He was Jean Beliveau to me," said Peter Mahovlich. "What a gentleman."

Every bit as good on the ice, too. Yakushev kept scoring as that '72 Summit went on, four games in Canada, then another four in Russia. He scored two goals in Game 7. He scored another two in Game 8. Nobody scored more goals than Yakushev's seven. It took a miraculous



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performance by Esposito and Paul Henderson to beat him and the Russians, which the Canadians finally did.

By the end, they knew his name.

"The best player for me in that eight-game series was Yakushev," Clarke said.

Red Berenson flew to Moscow last September, time freed up in retirement after 33 seasons as the hockey coach at the University of Michigan. He was part of a group of former Canadian players who competed in the '72 series, invited back to Russia as part of a 45-year anniversary celebration.

He arrived in Moscow and a woman was holding a card with his name on it. She also had a change in plans.

"Mr. Berenson, you're going to Sochi," she said.

"Sochi? Where's Sochi?"

"It's 1,000 miles south."

She explained. Russian President Vladimir Putin invited the players to see a hockey game in Sochi and tour where the 2014 Winter Olympics were held. They'd also have dinner, some entertainment. The plane was leaving in a couple of hours.

"He sent the Soviet version of Air Force One to pick up the two teams," Berenson said. "There were five of us who made it from the Canadian teams. There were about 10 Soviet players. We had this huge plane to ourselves."

They flew to Sochi and first took in some hockey. Yakushev was there. So was Tretiak.

At the Sochi rink, a group of young Russian hockey players, still sweating from their game on the ice, came over to meet Putin, Yakushev and the other hockey dignitaries. They crowded around Putin, leaning on their sticks and listening as he shared what the '72 series meant to the two countries. In a blue blazer and white dress shirt, Yakushev listened in the back.

"Canadian and Russian teams played an outstanding hockey series in 1972, which gave a great lift to the development of hockey all across the world," Putin told the kids.

The party moved to a banquet hall nearby with every food imaginable. Because Sochi is on the Black Sea, there was seafood for days. Caviar. Dried fish. Endless meat carved right on to the plate. If you didn't put your hand over your glass, your wine or beer was filled right back to the top after one sip.

There were singers and dancers, entertainment for hours.

Occasionally, Putin would raise his beer and make a toast to the players. A toast to changing the game. To the deep bond formed between the players. A bond that is now very real.

It took a genuine hatred for the series to have the impact it had but that hatred abated as the years passed. A thaw happened during the 15-year anniversary when the two teams played a three-game series in Hamilton, Montreal and Ottawa. At the conclusion, the Canadian players took the Russians over to Hull, Quebec for some partying. On the bus ride over, Dennis Hull joked with the Russians. "When you do well in hockey here, they name towns after you."

There was a 30th-anniversary celebration. And a 40th. The groups continued to get closer.

Esposito has been back to Russia more often than he can count. He's skated in Red Square. He's played with the president of Kazakhstan. He's still such a big star in Russia because of his performance in '72 that his picture is on the side of taxi cabs. In 2012, he was suitemates with Yakushev during a trip over and the two had a bender that nearly resulted in missing a flight the next day.

Yakushev's English isn't great, but that hasn't stopped the two from becoming close friends.

"Let me put it this way. He doesn't speak English very well, I don't speak Russian very well," Esposito explained. "It seems to me, the more we drank vodka, the more we understood each other. I don't know why that matters. That's the truth."

Every time Esposito goes to Russia, he sees Yakushev. Every time.

During his first visit, he knew little about him. After the Summit Series, he hated him. That hatred evolved into a healthy respect. Then a brotherhood. Now, Yakushev is joining these Canadian greats in the Hall of Fame. Decades after it should have happened, but a necessary honor nonetheless.

"It's a long time come," Mahovlich said. "He deserved to be in the Hall of Fame a long time before this."

A few weeks ago, Park, the defenseman who was tasked with trying to slow down Yakushev, was in Florida. He made a call to the Hall of Fame.

"During that series, I played head-to-head against him shift in and shift out," Park said. "He was a left winger, I was a right defenseman. I saw a lot of him."

If anybody in the world knows what kind of player Yakushev was, whether or not he deserves to be in the Hall, it's Park. He saw him up close. He saw him at his peak.

While in Florida, Park asked the Hall of Fame for Yakushev's address. He sat down and wrote him a letter. He wanted to express what it all meant to him. He wanted to congratulate him.

Being inducted to the Hall of Fame was long overdue, Park wrote. He shared the respect he had for Yakushev — the player and the man. The competitor he grew to respect. Park expressed his hope that Yakushev gets to enjoy the induction as much as he and his family did in 1988 when he was inducted. It's an honor to him, Park said, to have Yakushev join all the greats in the Hall.

He sealed it and off the words went, sent to Russia. To the big winger who helped change everything.

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The Athletic / Willie O'Ree's legacy of resilience and forgiveness continues, even as he enters the Hall of Fame

By Scott Burnside Nov 9, 2018

COLUMBIA, S.C. – Willie O'Ree is leafing through archival materials unearthed by the staff at the South Carolina Department of Archives and History at the behest of a documentary crew producing a film that will be titled simply "Willie." The materials seem to confirm that O'Ree, the first black man to play in the NHL, is a direct descendant of a slave who escaped from a plantation in South Carolina and made his way northeast, where he joined the British Army in exchange for freedom and land during the Revolutionary War.

"It's amazing," O'Ree said after closing the ornate cover on an imposing book that records the value of possessions of wealthy plantation owners in the South, possessions that included O'Ree's ancestors.

As far as he can recall, O'Ree is making his first trip to South Carolina. But it isn't his first trip to the southern United States.



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Before he became a groundbreaking hockey player, O'Ree was also a fine baseball player. So fine, in fact, that the Milwaukee Braves invited him to their training camp in Waycross, Georgia, in 1956.

O'Ree, the youngest of 13 children born to strict but loving parents in Fredericton, New Brunswick, recalled that his father, Harry, did not want him to go.

This was the South of racial violence, intolerance and segregation. It was a South that was very much foreign to O'Ree. The South that required him to room with other black players in separate dorms and spewed racial taunts at the players on the field.

When he decided he'd had enough and returned to New Brunswick, he began his trip by being forced to sit at the back of the bus.

But by the time the bus pulled into Bangor, Maine, a short distance from the Canadian border, O'Ree was sitting in the front.

It was a journey, both real and emotional, that left an indelible impression on the youthful athlete who then focused his efforts on hockey and, less than a full season later, got the call from the Boston Bruins that would make history.

(Courtesy of the NHL)

When a young Willie was growing up in mostly white Fredericton, the O'Ree house seemed like a magnet for good times, an almost idyllic gathering place. His parents were respected in the community and set high standards for their children.

It was a welcoming home where friends were always around and a card game – usually a game called 45 – was ready to break out at a moment's notice.

O'Ree began skating at age 3 and started playing on local teams at age 5. His parents demanded that their son keep up good grades, and they followed through, taking his skates away when his grades suffered at one point so he could not play in an event at the new indoor rink. O'Ree went anyway and borrowed skates that were so big he needed to put extra socks in the toes to make them fit. When his parents found out?

"Whew. They were so mad," O'Ree recalled. "I never let my grades fall again."

It was his older brother, Richard, who was critical to helping him deal with the racial taunts he would face, teaching him that those words were only meaningful if he let them be — advice that O'Ree continues to give to young people some 70 years later.

O'Ree played one season in Kitchener, Ont., and then went to Quebec City, where he played two seasons with the Quebec Aces. He lived in a hotel with the other players and made \$60 a week, \$20 of which he kept and the rest he sent home to his parents.

John "Junior" Doherty spent virtually every weekend during the offseason with O'Ree and a group of pals hiking into the woods outside Fredericton to fish. Sometimes they'd carry some heavy-duty plastic to string from trees to shelter them from rain. Invariably, they'd complain about the arduous trek to the fishing spot and vow to stop going as they made their way home.

Then, by the middle of the week, the friends would be phoning to make plans for the next trip.

When O'Ree left to play in Quebec City, Doherty would regularly fill up his car with friends and members of O'Ree's family and drive to Quebec for the weekend to watch O'Ree play.

Doherty still remembers getting the call that O'Ree was going to play his first game in the NHL.

"His mother actually called me," Doherty said. "We were so excited. I can't even tell you. That day, it was just unbelievable for us."

O'Ree's first NHL game was a Saturday night, Jan. 18, 1958, in Montreal. He and his Boston teammates then took a train to Boston for a return engagement against the powerful Canadiens the next day.

(Courtesy of the NHL)

O'Ree overcame the barriers, both physical and societal, to become an NHL player at a time when there were but six NHL teams, and he did so having lost his sight in one eye courtesy of a deflected puck in the mid-1950s. He also had to face the kind of prejudice that has sadly driven many boys and girls from the sport over the years.

There were cotton balls thrown on the ice. Black cats. There were catcalls that he should have been playing basketball or football instead of hockey.

It happened in the minor professional leagues, and it happened in the NHL.

One night in Chicago, O'Ree was taunted by a larger Blackhawks player who used racial slurs in trying to intimidate his opponent. The player slashed O'Ree on the lower leg during warmups. During the game, O'Ree and the player were engaged in a battle and O'Ree was butt-ended in the face, dislodging his two front teeth. O'Ree responded by clubbing the player in the head with his stick.

Ejected, O'Ree wanted to come back to the bench area, but team officials told him it might not be safe given the emotions in the stands. So he sat in the Boston locker room and turned out the lights.

It was, he recalled, as close as he came to quitting.

If this was how it was going to be in the NHL, the taunts, the violence, the hatred, maybe he wasn't cut out for it, he thought.

But by the end of the game, he had a different mindset. He was determined that if he was going to walk away from his dream of playing pro hockey it would be because he didn't have the talent, not because he was a different color.

He ran into this same player at All-Star weekend in Chicago in 1991. He was at the bar getting his wife a glass of wine and turned to find this same player at his shoulder.

The feelings of anger rushed back over him and O'Ree said he was ready to go at it with the player. But the player said his hellos and moved away.

"I was, OK, let's get it on right here," O'Ree said with a laugh. "I was ready to go after 30 years."

After his 45-game NHL career came to a close after the 1960-61 season, O'Ree went on to play mostly in California in the old Western Hockey League until 1979. Eleven times he scored 20 or more goals.

In his final season, at 43 years old, O'Ree collected 21 goals and 46 points in 53 games for the San Diego Hawks of the Pacific Hockey League. He would have liked to play a few more years, but it didn't happen.

(Courtesy of the NHL)

For the next 16 years, he sank beneath the surface of the hockey horizon.

He worked at a car dealership and in construction. He managed a couple of fast-food restaurants and for a long time was in the security business, at one point carrying a sidearm on the job.

Along the way he met and ended up posing for pictures with Michael Jordan and Muhammad Ali, both of whom he met working security. Those pictures adorn the walls of his office along with the Order of Canada and a framed certificate for being an exemplary employee with the historic Hotel del Coronado in California. A hodgepodge of memorable moments all treated with equal importance by the humble O'Ree.



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It was at the Hotel del Coronado where Bryant McBride found him.

Or rather, as McBride tells it, where the FBI helped McBride find O'Ree.

McBride grew up dreaming of being the first black player in the NHL, but when he realized that was out of the question, he settled for helping the NHL's first black player sow the seeds of inclusiveness and openness to multiple generations of young fans.

McBride joined the NHL in the early 1990s and was tasked with helping grow the game. It was a broad if somewhat nebulous mandate. The search was on for someone to help become the face of the NHL's diversity task force, someone who could be a conduit to communities where hockey was not a given.

O'Ree wasn't the first player McBride talked to, but he turned out to be the best.

McBride told then new commissioner Gary Bettman that he thought he'd found the right guy for this pivotal role and that the commissioner should check out O'Ree in action. At a Hockey in Harlem event, it didn't take long before the commissioner raised his eyebrows in approval.

"He was shaking every hand, looking everyone in the eye," McBride recalled of O'Ree. "He's doing what Willie does. Gary turns to me in the middle of this event and says, 'This guy's incredible.' I said, 'Yeah, he is, he's that special.'"

And so O'Ree, 16 years removed from his last playing days, joined the NHL again at 60 years old.

"There's nobody better. It's genuine, it's authentic," McBride said.

O'Ree always wanted to get back in the game, and when McBride proposed that O'Ree work with the league and USA Hockey visiting girls and boys at rinks, schools and even correctional facilities around the country, talking about his journey and the game, O'Ree thought that might be a good fit.

Little did he know that this wouldn't be just a job but also a labor of love. The 83-year-old has spent the equivalent of more than six years on the road during the past two decades, spreading his gospel of hockey and perseverance.

Submission to the Hall of Fame in support of O'Ree's induction.

Brenda and Dave Sansom were first introduced to O'Ree almost a quarter of a century ago as part of a coffee club in Fredericton where O'Ree spent time during the offseason.

Forming a close friendship, O'Ree helped teach Brenda the importance of forgiveness. She admitted she was a grudge holder, a keeper of slights. And yet when she met O'Ree, here was a guy who had suffered cruel slights and never once held a grudge.

"That stayed with me," she said. "It still does."

So when someone asked if Brenda and her husband Dave would write a letter in support of O'Ree's inclusion in the Hall of Fame, it was a natural evolution that they would end up leading the grassroots campaign.

The submission included 76 letters. More than 50 notes were left in a book at City Hall in Fredericton, as well as 130 names on a petition. There were also other letters with a list of names attached.

On the day he received the call that he was going to the Hall of Fame, O'Ree was surrounded by his wife, son-in-law (and electronically by his daughter), and McBride in his home in San Diego.

Footage shows O'Ree lining up all the phones at his disposal so he doesn't miss the call should it come.

The anxiety as time passes and it appears perhaps there will be no call is palpable even via video.

Across the continent, Sansom and a group of friends and reporters and another camera crew were in the Sansom house sharing a similar kind of anxiety.

Finally, the phone rings in Fredericton, and O'Ree drags out the news in excruciating fashion – what are friends for, right? – finally revealing that he is going into the Hall of Fame, prompting a joyous celebration dance from Sansom.

"What was my emotional response to the phone call from Willie?" Sansom wrote in an email. "RELIEF ... I realize that I had been carrying the collective happiness of Willie and our community of supporters on my shoulders. Once the call came in I knew their happiness was guaranteed and that was an enormous relief. I never had that responsibility before."

When Bettman got the call last June that he, too, was being inducted into the Hall of Fame, the commissioner thought it was someone calling to tell him that O'Ree had gotten in. Even after the reason for the call was explained, the commissioner ended his call by ensuring that O'Ree, too, had received a call.

"By the way, Willie getting into the Hall of Fame. Does he get in for breaking the color barrier? Maybe. Maybe not," Bettman noted. "But it's the 120,000 children whose lives he touched in the last 20 years that makes him a builder as much as anything he's done."

"The fact that Willie is who he is and is so genuine and has given back, I think we've changed the last 20 years of his life, but he's changed the last 20 years of the arc of the game because of all the young people he's touched. He (is) truly a one of a kind. He's a gem. He's our gem."

O'Ree's longtime friend Doherty was just as joyous about his pal going into the Hall of Fame as he was when the call came that O'Ree would play that first game for the Bruins.

"It took a long time," said Doherty, who would often accompany O'Ree on early trips when O'Ree started working for the NHL. "Everything's come back to Willie, all the hard work he put in."

The standing joke between the two friends is that Doherty is taking the Hall of Fame ceremony seriously: he's bought a new suit and he's planning on taking a bath.

"He's never in one day in his life ever acted like that," Doherty said. "Even now he never acts with anybody as if he's anything special in the world. Just another individual. He's never changed his personae at all."

Even during his playing days, O'Ree was always the last one on the team bus, always taking time for one more picture, one more autograph, one last bit of conversation with fans young and old.

"Every team he played for they had to send someone in to get Willie because he was always the last one," Doherty said.

O'Ree is a father of three — two sons and a daughter — and he has four grandchildren. But if it's not too much of a stretch, it could be suggested that O'Ree's "grandchildren" number in the thousands.

He regularly gets calls from people he met just once at a school or a rink, sometimes years after the fact.

"There's no amount of money you can place on calls like that," O'Ree said.

One of the themes that O'Ree revisits in his meetings with young people is that we are three people: the person we think we are, the person others think we are and the person we really are.

Finding the real you is key.

"I think most of the kids take it to heart," O'Ree said. "You have to believe in yourself, like yourself, and believe in yourself."

Sometimes that's hard if people are telling you that you can't do something because of your gender or the color of your skin, which is why



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O'Ree often reaches out to kids he finds out have suffered some sort of prejudice or unfair treatment.

"I tell them the same things about how I dealt with it," he said. "Names can't hurt you unless you let them. But it is hard. I know a lot of those kids they take it to heart."

Ayodele Adeniye began playing hockey thanks to the NHL's Hockey Is For Everyone program in Columbus, Ohio. When he was around 7 years old, he went to a tournament in Detroit and O'Ree rode on the bus with the kids to the rink. O'Ree was talking to the kids and Adeniye was sitting right behind him.

"He's looking at him so intently," his mother, Lisa Ramos, recalled with a laugh. "The way he interacts with the kids is just amazing to me."

Whenever O'Ree would come to town, Ramos would end up helping ferry him from event to hotel to lunch to event. The pictures of her son with O'Ree have become treasures, showing her son grow from a wide-eyed boy, elbow-high to O'Ree into a 6-foot-5 young man preparing to play NCAA hockey at the University of Alabama-Huntsville next year. But the look of excitement, adoration even, remains.

"Willie is huge because Willie has done it," Ramos said. "I just think he's incredible."

Willie O'Ree with Ayodele Adeniye (Courtesy of Lisa Ramos)

The shoot in South Carolina is among the final ones the documentary crew is scheduled to do. There's the actual ceremony in Toronto and possibly a visit with Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who is apparently a big fan. And then it will be into the editing suite for finishing touches.

The film, which was financially backed by Chase Bank and has drawn widespread interest from those within the game and beyond, is expected to be released at some point during Black History Month in February.

While the exact amount of funding wasn't revealed, McBride said the bulk of the money — which includes involvement from Washington Capitals owner Ted Leonsis, who has a long history with documentary film projects — was raised in about three hours.

But lest anyone think any of this represents any kind of finale to the O'Ree story, well, they don't know O'Ree.

O'Ree would like to see more coaches of color, more executives, scouts, the gamut. And beyond the rink, one needs to look no further than the flags flying at half-mast outside the archives and history building in Columbus in honor of those slain at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh to understand that the work of tolerance and overcoming hatred has perhaps never been more important and never been more needed than it is now.

And there's something more than a little comforting in knowing that O'Ree isn't going anywhere but to his next stop as he makes his way past those flags and back to a car that will take him to an airport and to another meeting with young people eager to hear his story.

The Athletic LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114873 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Maple Leafs dismantle Devils for first back-to-back home win

Luke Fox November 9, 2018, 10:19 PM

TORONTO — The way things all fell apart last spring — in blame and anger and misery amidst three blown leads in a Game 7 — you wouldn't blame the Toronto Maple Leafs Friday if their mind was preoccupied with a revenge plot for Saturday at Boston's TD Garden and a return to the scene of the crime.

The Bruins are a staunch division rival and architect of the two most agonizing Leafs collapses for a generation of fans. Despite a minor goaltending controversy, Boston is right back to its winning ways (8-5-2) and should be jockeying with Toronto for one of the Atlantic's two home-ice playoff spots yet again.

Coming into Friday night's affair, a scant two points separated the Maple Leafs from the Bruins in the divisional standings, while a recent funk has slunk the New Jersey Devils to the Metropolitan basement.

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Any temptation to glance past New Jersey, however, was resisted, both in coach Mike Babcock's chosen starter — the dialed-in Frederik Andersen — and the execution of the 18 skaters in front of him.

The result? A 6-1 dismantling of the Devils, as witnessed by Martin Brodeur and the rest of the honoured 2018 Hockey Hall of Fame Class, and back-to-back victories on home ice for the first time this season.

"As soon as you look past someone, what happens to you? They come in and they just thump you. You don't touch the puck. I think we've got that lesson a couple of times this year already," Babcock said.

"The other thing about it is, I feel like we've pressed more at home. We haven't been as loose. Last game, we found a way to win the game [versus Vegas].

"We want to build off that and get some momentum going at home."

No better way for Babcock's bunch to do that than to get contributions up and down the lineup and turn in their soundest performance in this building since it was renamed the Scotiabank Arena. (Of course, a lightweight opponent helps).

John Tavares opened the scoring midway through the first period on a gift of a feed from Ron Hainsey, and a team that struggled mightily to get on the board early has now scored first in three straight games and improves to 6-0-0 when drawing first blood.

Toronto poured it on in the second frame, funneling pucks past New Jersey backup-turned-starter Keith Kinkaid in bunches.

Entering the contest, the Leafs' third line of Andreas Johnsson, Par Lindholm and Connor Brown had just three goals combined, and one of those was shoveled into an empty net.

That trio has shown flashes of life since Auston Matthews went down with his shoulder injury on Oct. 27, and needed a mini explosion like the one they delivered against Jersey.

"I feel like the hardest part is you have to be good every day, or you're gonna get run over," Johnsson said. "We can't rely on [the top six] every game. We've got to step up and score a couple goals."

After Nazem Kadri knocked down an airborne Patrick Marleau pass and beat Kinkaid high, Brown scored his second in two nights off a pretty Lindholm feed.

"Brownie — any time you feel you're a scorer and you don't score, I think it probably eats you up a little bit. I thought the last two games their line has been real good," Babcock said. "It's important those guys get going."

Some grunt work by Blake Coleman led to a Travis Zajac rebound goal, giving the Devils' third-line centre a quietly solid 11 points on the year — but that's where Jersey's pushback started and ended.



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Andersen, consistent as ever, stoned MVP Taylor Hall on a breakaway and flashed the leather on a Sami Vatanen slapper en route to a 38-save performance that felt so routine, he commented on the lack of action at his end through the first 20 minutes.

Andersen's save percentage over his past five starts is a sparkling .962, and his nine wins tie him for the league lead.

Cue the "Fred-die!" chants.

Morgan Rielly added to his own lead atop the Rocket Richard race (Defencemen's Division), by floating a muffin from the point that Kinkaid never saw fly past his shoulder. Rielly, who's never hit double digits in the goal column, already has seven before Remembrance Day.

"Morgan's goal was a little bit telling of how the night went for us," Andersen said.

Attention, Cory Schneider: Feel free to come back and play like your healthy best self any time soon.

The most critical name on the score sheet belonged to Johnsson, who recently copped to waning confidence and declining happiness.

"It's hard mentally," Johnsson said. "Too often it's not there."

Johnsson bolted to the crease and was rewarded with his first of the year off a Jake Gardiner pass, and the relief that washed over the young Swede's face was detectable from the nose-bleeders.

"When you get one like that, it helps the confidence quite a bit, so good for him for playing a great game and flying around and getting a goal," Rielly said. "It's not like he hasn't been playing well; the puck just hasn't been going in, so I'd expect that to change."

Then, just for giggles, Tyler Ennis scored unassisted in garbage time, and a goal-spoiled crowd booed when a presumed Marleau goal was wiped off the Jumbotron on account of a high stick.

Toronto had no issue with the touchdown but just missed on the conversion.

"The more we spread out the scoring, the better," Marleau said.

For the first time all season, the Maple Leafs received tangible contributions from each of its four lines — a jolt of positivity that should serve them well on Friday's late-night charter to Boston.

"Everyone got to play, everyone had some puck touches and, so, in the end, you feel good," said Babcock, now free to turn his sights on Saturday's date with revenge.

"Plus, we didn't put too much stress on our team playing back-to-back. Now it gives us a better opportunity."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 11.10.2018

1114874 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Truth By Numbers: Is Elias Pettersson already a superstar?

Andrew Berkshire November 9, 2018, 11:04 AM

Elias Pettersson is off to an historically great start to his NHL career, but with a high shooting percentage how sustainable is his performance? What is William Nylander worth against the cap, and in trade?

That, and more, in this week's column.

SPOTLIGHT PERFORMANCE

We're a little over a month into the 2018-19 season, and frankly I'm a little surprised at myself for not writing about Elias Pettersson yet. I've talked about him on Sportsnet 650, but you can only get into so much detail over the radio, and you definitely can't start rattling off numbers before anyone changes the station.

The Playbook

Based on his play in Sweden, Pettersson was considered the best prospect not currently in the NHL heading into this season, but even with those lofty expectations I doubt anyone believed he would be just the fifth player in the past 100 years to score 10 goals in his first 10 games. The fact he's done so with a concussion in the middle of it, while putting up five more points than the next highest-scoring Canuck in three fewer games than Brock Boeser and six fewer than Bo Horvat, is astonishing.

The combination of scintillating skill and things breaking nicely for him early in his career has made Pettersson a household name in what would be a cup of coffee for most 19-year-old players.

While his shooting percentage is crazy high at 34.5 per cent, it's actually gone down since he returned from injury — a six-game stretch where he's scored five goals and nine points. Obviously, he isn't going to continue to score on more than a third of his shots on goal, but how sustainable is his scoring? Let's look at his 5-on-5 shooting to see what we can expect.

When you watch Pettersson it's obvious he's extremely dynamic, and not just as a shooter. Putting it all down numerically it's clear how little interest he has in shooting from areas that aren't dangerous.

At 5-on-5 Pettersson has put 23 shots on net and scored eight times. That's a conversion rate of 30.43 per cent, which is extremely high, but maybe not as bound to regression as it looks on the surface. No player in the NHL this year with at least 10 shots on goal is getting a higher percentage of their chances from the slot.

In fact, a league average shooter, not even just forwards, would be expected to score on 15.1 per cent of the shots Pettersson has taken based on location alone. Then you need to factor in that 47.4 per cent of Pettersson's chances on net have come off the rush, a monstrous total of the most dangerous type of chance. As for the rest of his chances, 50 per cent are either preceded by a cycle pass or a rebound.

So for the sake of argument, let's say Pettersson's scoring chance rate and the type of chances he gets produces something around a shooting percentage of 20 for an average player. That's a feat in and of itself, but how far above average of a shooter is Pettersson?

It's a stretch to say he's better than say, Patrik Laine, who is more than double the NHL average's expected scoring rate on his shots. But let's say Pettersson is a star-quality shooter, which is about 33 per cent better than average. That would mean Pettersson's expected shooting percentage at 5-on-5 is 26.7 per cent so far, which is flat out remarkable.

So sure, he's overperforming to start his career, but even after accounting for a "normal" shooting percentage on the shots he's taken he would be on pace for a 43-goal season instead of the 76 goals he's currently on track for. That's nothing to sneeze at. Also noteworthy: he scored on 21.2 per cent of his shots in Sweden last year.

Oh and he's also driving possession five per cent better than his teammates and draws calls at a ridiculous rate. This kid is a game-changer for the Canucks.

THE QUESTION

Steve Dangle couldn't go two weeks without forcing me to talk about the Maple Leafs, so he asks...

What is William Nylander worth against the cap, and what would the Leafs have to get in a trade for it to be worth moving him?

This is a tough one because I'm no cap guru, though if you're interested in comparables, go check out Matt Cane's work on contract predictions.



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The best way I can figure to ballpark Nylander's actual, intrinsic market value would be to lean on the work I did over the summer on the positional ranking project for Sportsnet.

Nylander debuted there this year as the ninth-ranked right winger in the NHL, just a hair behind his teammate Mitch Marner. But the question of how much he's worth has to start with the best player at his position. Luckily that player is Nikita Kucherov, who just signed an extension with the Tampa Bay Lightning, so we can compare Nylander to him directly.

Overall, Nylander impacted the game over the past three seasons at about 82.3 per cent of what Nikita Kucherov did, which is a lot better than I had expected going into this. So if Nylander were an unrestricted free agent, I would expect fair market value for his talents to ring up a cap hit of \$7.82 million. But, of course, Nylander is not an unrestricted free agent.

Whether it's fair or not, restricted free agents get paid less. An example of this is David Pastrnak, who was the sixth-ranked right winger this year and is making an annual average value of just \$6.66 million on his current contract.

The cap has gone up since he signed, and Nylander hasn't been as good as Pastrnak so far in his career, so anywhere from \$6.5 million to \$7 million sounds about right for the Maple Leaf. What's interesting is that even if he were an unrestricted free agent, Nylander's reported ask of \$8 million is a little high.

As for what he's worth in trade, a top-20 winger in the NHL probably isn't worth a top-20 defenceman, but considering Nylander has the potential to play centre in the NHL, an opportunity he won't get with the Maple Leafs now that they've signed John Tavares, let's say he's worth a defenceman in the 20-35 range. That's essentially the lower end of No. 1 defencemen in the league. And we'd want one who has a similar age.

That leaves us with a list of Colton Parayko, Jaccob Slavin, Dougie Hamilton, Shayne Gostisbehere, Ivan Provorov, Brett Pesce, and Oscar Klefbom. There are some interesting names on that list, but remember the Leafs need right-shot defencemen only, unless they want to do a bigger shakeup of their defence core. That rules out everyone but Parayko, Hamilton, and Pesce as potential one-for-one deals.

The scenario I find interesting is if the Leafs want to shake up their defence more deeply, acquiring Klefbom would seemingly be a good fit for both teams. Edmonton desperately needs help on the wing and Klefbom has great potential that has languished in Edmonton.

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

BUY OR SELL

- Phil Kessel is off to yet another ridiculous start (16 points in 14 games), and this season he's not just doing it on the power play. So far he's creating chances for teammates and getting his own chances at 5-on-5 at top-30 rates among forwards. He's still Phil the Thrill.
- What's happened in Chicago deserves a deeper dive, but one thing I'm interested to see is how much of their playing style is due to the roster, and how much was due to coaching. In each of the past four years, the Blackhawks lead the league in per cent of zone entries that were controlled, averaging 61.4 per cent overall, where the league average is 48.5 per cent. No other team has had a single season in that time above 57 per cent controlled entries.
- Nico Hischier is clipping along at nearly a point per game, and the crazy thing is he's been unlucky as a shooter. He boasts the only rate even close to Pettersson in the percentage of his shots that come from the slot at 80 per cent. He's already great and he's going to score a lot more.
- Dougie Hamilton is third in the NHL in shots on goal, and second in shot attempts per minute at 5-on-5 — not just among defencemen, but among all players. They're not all from the perimeter either. He's currently putting up as many 5-on-5 scoring chances per minute as Nazem Kadri,

Jonathan Drouin, and Jonathan Huberdeau. He's going to score a lot playing this way.

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Sportsnet.ca / Canadiens' Pacioretty-Tatar deal proof we should expect the unexpected

Eric Engels November 9, 2018, 11:08 AM

When we thought about this day two months ago, we imagined Max Pacioretty would be all smiles and good vibes as he got set to make his early-season return to the city he spent 10 years playing in.

We figured he'd have gotten off to the type of start that would put him on pace to get back to his 30-goal scoring ways. The type of start that would allow him to quickly place his acrimonious summer split from the Montreal Canadiens in the rear-view mirror and enjoy playing on a Vegas Golden Knights team that would be making a statement of their own off the bat — that last year's run to the Stanley Cup Final wasn't some fluke.

And it wouldn't have shocked us if one of the players Pacioretty was traded for on Sept. 10 — Tomas Tatar — would struggle at first to re-establish himself as the reliable scorer he was over six seasons with the Detroit Red Wings, before a trade at last year's deadline sent him to Vegas (where he only managed six points in 20 regular-season games and was benched for nine of 19 playoff games).

We thought Tatar could be one of many players falling short of making the grade on a young Canadiens team that was embarking on Year 1 of a reset. One that wasn't expected to be anywhere near the playoff picture a little more than a month into the season.

Well, reality has put a dent in all of that.

Not that we're beating ourselves up for not being able to foresee the drastic reversal of fortune that's taken place for both teams and both players since Pacioretty was sent to the desert for Tatar (and prospect Nick Suzuki and a 2019 second-round pick). Even the world's most renowned psychics would probably not have staked their reputations on a prediction that things would play out as they have so far.

In truth, the sheer shock of it all has entertained us thoroughly.

We do, however, suspect Pacioretty's not enjoying it quite as much as we are, with things playing out so differently than he initially anticipated.

"I couldn't think of a better situation to be in, coming off a down year for myself personally," Pacioretty said when offering his first remarks from Vegas, just months removed from his disappointing 17 goals in 64 games with the Canadiens. "I feel I have the opportunity right now to take out my brain and go play hockey — get back to what I loved doing as a kid."

If you had told him on that day that he'd be returning to the Bell Centre under the less-than-ideal circumstances — owning a two-goal, zero-assist and minus-4 stat line to show for his efforts through his first 12 games — he might have looked at you as like you were crazy.

This would have shocked Pacioretty, too: The Golden Knights, who were relatively healthy outside of their goal crease and were wire-to-wire Pacific Division leaders last season, have suffered serious injuries already and struggled mightily to scrape together wins out of the gate.

Pacioretty missed four games himself with a suspected concussion after taking a hit to the face from Tampa Bay Lightning defenceman Brayden Coburn back on Oct. 26, while linemates Paul Stastny and Erik Haula are



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both out indefinitely with knee injuries and the team has stumbled out to the NHL's 24th-best start.

A win in Ottawa Thursday brought them to 7-8-1 while an overtime loss to the Buffalo Sabres moved the Canadiens into 9th place overall.

Montreal is 8-5-3 and Tatar has scored six goals, added eight assists and gone plus-3 while serving as the most productive player on a line centred by Phillip Danault and completed by Brendan Gallagher.

We're not sure where it all goes from here, but it's probably safest to expect the unexpected.

It's not like what's happened with Pacioretty, Tatar and their teams are the only surprises we've seen in the first 36 days of the NHL season.

Raise your hand if you had the New York Islanders, in their first post-John Tavares days, leading the reigning Stanley Cup Champion Washington Capitals in the Metropolitan Division. Raise it again if you had the young Vancouver Canucks at 10-6-1 and leading the Pacific Division without Daniel and Henrik Sedin on one of their top lines for the first time in 17 years. Or if you had six teams that missed the post-season last year locking down spots as of this moment while teams like the mighty Pittsburgh Penguins and deep St. Louis Blues are respectively three and four points out of the picture.

We certainly didn't see it shaking out that way, just as we didn't expect a radical culture shift to take hold as quickly as it has for a Canadiens team that spiralled to a 28th-place finish in the standings last season.

And, as far as Vegas is concerned, coach Gerard Gallant and forward Ryan Reaves put things in perspective after the Knights lost on Tuesday to the Toronto Maple Leafs.

"Last year, we got all the breaks," said Gallant, moments after Reaves said, "[This year] it seems we're having bad luck and creating more bad luck, and it's just snowballing."

Maybe things will change in a hurry. Maybe Pacioretty will face down all the tough questions about his rocky start over the coming hours and turn the page on it with a stellar performance against his old team later on Saturday. And maybe the Canadiens will fall back down to Earth soon — if they haven't already begun to after dropping three of their last four games and two in succession for the first time all season.

We're not making the mistake of striking any of that as a possibility. Just as we're not discounting the possibility that things remain relatively unchanged for the foreseeable future.

After all, that would be the most unexpected outcome.

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Sportsnet.ca / Where will Joel Quenneville coach in the NHL next? Analyzing seven teams

Rory Boylen November 9, 2018, 11:33 AM

With the second-winningest coach in NHL history now out of work, and no indication he's done, you have to wonder how many teams out there are considering their options right now.

There were one or two hot seats prior to the Quenneville news on Tuesday, namely Mike Yeo with the St. Louis Blues, but the speculation about Quenneville's future has expanded to include teams whose coaches may otherwise have been safe (or at least, safe-ish) prior to

Chicago's decision to let Quenneville go. Why? The guys on Hockey Central at Noon described it best:

Because... Joel Quenneville.

With one season after this left on his contract, at a cost of \$6 million, a team will have to pay top dollar to bring Quenneville aboard and likely have to give him some good tenure for job security, too. It's not unprecedented for a team sitting high in the standings to let go of its coach in order to pounce on a recently dismissed one that they see as a perfect fit for the organization.

In February of 2017 the Boston Bruins fired Claude Julien. One week later the Habs fired Michel Therrien and hired Julien as his replacement despite sitting atop the Atlantic Division with a 31-19-8 record. Granted they were there on the strength of a 13-1-1 start that cooled considerably, but had it not been Julien specifically who was available, it's easy to see Montreal continuing on with Therrien at that time.

So if a team wants Quenneville, who was completely unattainable just four days ago, they may feel emboldened to do something unconventional.

Here is a look at some potential landing spots for Quenneville, with a quick breakdown of why they may, and may not, make the move.

DETROIT RED WINGS

Why it makes sense: It may be a while before the Red Wings contend for the Stanley Cup again — but they're well on their way to contending for the first overall pick. It wouldn't hurt having the guy who led a very young Hawks team to its first Stanley Cup since the 1960s just three years after drafting Patrick Kane first overall leading the charge behind the bench. The players love Quenneville and he's been successful at every stop — he never missed the playoffs in seven full seasons with the Blues and he made it past the first round of the playoffs in two of three seasons with Colorado. New building, new core, new coach — new era in Detroit?

Why it doesn't make sense: "They got a new building, but also have Dan Bylsma already on the bench and the suspicion is if they're going to make a move with Blashill it's going to go right to Bylsma," Jeff Marek said on Hockey Central at Noon.

COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS

Why it makes sense: "If a team like Columbus, who could be looking at losing Panarin and Bobrovsky this year, start to fall, thinking they're going to go for it this year and keep these two guys, do they make a move even though everyone there has already been re-upped?" Marek asked. It's true that this could be an all-in scenario for Columbus and if that means spending big to bring in Quenneville, it may be worth considering. Plus, he has a relationship with Panarin, whom he coached one year in Chicago and didn't want to trade away, so maybe he can help keep the superstar around?

Why it doesn't make sense: Head coach John Tortorella just signed a two-year extension on Sept. 12 so not only would the Blue Jackets have to pay top dollar for their new hire, they'd also have to pay Tortorella a pretty penny through the 2020-21 season. That may not be something this small market team wishes to do and it's not as though they're playing poorly: despite another slow October from Bobrovsky, the Jackets are 8-6-1 and sit third in the Metro Division — though neither of their special teams units have performed well.

ST. LOUIS BLUES

Why it makes sense: Speaking of all-in, the Blues made a big trade in the summer to bring in Ryan O'Reilly and signed Tyler Bozak with the idea they'd return in 2018-19 with a solid 1-2-3 down the middle and be able to challenge coming out of the tough Central. It hasn't quite worked out that way as the Blues have coughed up leads on the regular and are just two points out of the West's basement. GM Doug Armstrong has already made one coaching change and has been with the Blues since 2010, over which time they've won four playoff rounds in six appearances. Is he



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under the gun to show progress? Head coach Mike Yeo was already on the hot seat prior to the Quenneville news.

"Anybody in that management team, Doug Armstrong, ownership, how are you not having that discussion right now?" asked Kypreos.

Why it doesn't make sense: There aren't a ton of reasons why this wouldn't make sense, though Yeo was first brought to the Blues as an assistant under Ken Hitchcock with the commitment that he'd take over when Hitchcock moved on. This is just Yeo's second full season behind the bench, so it would mean a rapid gear shift. Quenneville has already coached eight years with the Blues, would he go back?

ANAHEIM DUCKS

Why it makes sense: The only reason the Ducks aren't easily the worst team in the NHL right now is John Gibson's stellar play. They average allowing 36.5 shots against per game, and their average -11 shot differential per game is the worst mark in the league. They are lapped at 5-on-5 nightly and it's far too easy to get the puck into the middle of the ice against them. Randy Carlyle is in the final year of his contract and GM Bob Murray spoke last summer about the need for his team to play quicker. It hasn't happened yet. Murray has also fired Carlyle in-season once before, cutting him loose after a 7-13-4 start in 2011-12.

Why it doesn't make sense: Sure, the Ducks' numbers have been terrible so far, but they've faced a ton of injuries. Ryan Getzlaf has been in and out, Patrick Eaves just returned for the first time in a year, Ondrej Kase has been out all season with a concussion, Corey Perry won't be back for a while, Nick Ritchie held out the start of the season for a new contract and immediately got hurt after signing one, Josh Manson is out and Max Comtois, after a superb start to his NHL career, is now sidelined himself. You could argue that Carlyle hasn't been given a fair shake this season.

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

SEATTLE

Why it makes sense: Think about it — Quenneville will be getting paid through next season anyway and by the time the paychecks stop coming from the Blackhawks, the new Seattle team would likely be ready to hit the ice. They will already be under pressure and face unrealistic expectations to do something that rivals Vegas' first year in the league, so hiring the best coach on the market today is a good place to start.

Why it doesn't make sense: "The only thing though you have to keep in mind is Dave Tippett is a consultant there and Dave Tippett and Joel Quenneville are best friends. My understanding is Dave Tippett loves coaching and wants to continue loving coaching," Kypreos said.

PHILADELPHIA FLYERS

Why it makes sense: Would you believe Dave Hakstol is the fourth-longest tenured coach in the NHL right now? Hired on May 18, 2015 Hakstol is only exceeded by the coaches in Tampa Bay, Nashville and Winnipeg in how long he's been on the job, but he hasn't had the same regular- or post-season success. The Flyers have made the playoffs in two of Hakstol's three seasons, but have a 4-8 record. They are 8-7-1 so far this season, which puts them on the outside of the playoffs looking at the moment. Just a couple weeks ago GM Ron Hextall said he wanted to be patient with his team, but after they went on to win just one of their next five games the tone changed.

"You look at our team on paper, and we've got a pretty good team," Hextall said towards the end of October. "But paper doesn't mean a whole lot. We need to play better."

Why it doesn't make sense: The Flyers responded to Hextall's comments by winning three of four games on their Western road trip and getting a point via overtime loss in the other. So now especially would be a strange time for the patient GM (how weird is that to say about Hextall) to let go of the coach he targeted hiring in the first place. The Flyers have a favourable schedule ahead, too, with five home games in a row — four of

which come against teams currently outside of a playoff spot. They started off the stretch with a 5-4 win over Arizona on Thursday.

BUFFALO SABRES

Why it makes sense: When Mike Babcock became available from Detroit a few years ago the Sabres were one of the teams making a hard push for him. At one point, in fact, they were viewed as a favourite to land him. The Pegulas have spent a lot of money over their years as owners of the team so it's reasonable to think they might take another big, expensive cut to hire a respected coach at a crucial juncture in the team's development.

Why it doesn't make sense: Phil Housley is a Hall of Fame player and celebrated former Sabre who is in just his second season behind the bench. And the team is showing signs of progress this season, with an 8-6-2 record. The Sabres had the worst offence last season and are the only team that hasn't scored 200 goals in any of the past five years — so far in 2018-19 their offence ranks 20th. That's not great, but it is an improvement. The defence has also moderately improved, allowing 1.5 fewer shots per game than last season as the rest of the league's average has risen.

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Sportsnet.ca / Truth By Numbers: Is Elias Pettersson already a superstar?

Andrew Berkshire November 9, 2018, 11:04 AM

Elias Pettersson is off to an historically great start to his NHL career, but with a high shooting percentage how sustainable is his performance? What is William Nylander worth against the cap, and in trade?

That, and more, in this week's column.

SPOTLIGHT PERFORMANCE

We're a little over a month into the 2018-19 season, and frankly I'm a little surprised at myself for not writing about Elias Pettersson yet. I've talked about him on Sportsnet 650, but you can only get into so much detail over the radio, and you definitely can't start rattling off numbers before anyone changes the station.

Based on his play in Sweden, Pettersson was considered the best prospect not currently in the NHL heading into this season, but even with those lofty expectations I doubt anyone believed he would be just the fifth player in the past 100 years to score 10 goals in his first 10 games. The fact he's done so with a concussion in the middle of it, while putting up five more points than the next highest-scoring Canuck in three fewer games than Brock Boeser and six fewer than Bo Horvat, is astonishing.

The combination of scintillating skill and things breaking nicely for him early in his career has made Pettersson a household name in what would be a cup of coffee for most 19-year-old players.

While his shooting percentage is crazy high at 34.5 per cent, it's actually gone down since he returned from injury — a six-game stretch where he's scored five goals and nine points. Obviously, he isn't going to continue to score on more than a third of his shots on goal, but how sustainable is his scoring? Let's look at his 5-on-5 shooting to see what we can expect.

When you watch Pettersson it's obvious he's extremely dynamic, and not just as a shooter. Putting it all down numerically it's clear how little interest he has in shooting from areas that aren't dangerous.



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At 5-on-5 Pettersson has put 23 shots on net and scored eight times. That's a conversion rate of 30.43 per cent, which is extremely high, but maybe not as bound to regression as it looks on the surface. No player in the NHL this year with at least 10 shots on goal is getting a higher percentage of their chances from the slot.

In fact, a league average shooter, not even just forwards, would be expected to score on 15.1 per cent of the shots Pettersson has taken based on location alone. Then you need to factor in that 47.4 per cent of Pettersson's chances on net have come off the rush, a monstrous total of the most dangerous type of chance. As for the rest of his chances, 50 per cent are either preceded by a cycle pass or a rebound.

So for the sake of argument, let's say Pettersson's scoring chance rate and the type of chances he gets produces something around a shooting percentage of 20 for an average player. That's a feat in and of itself, but how far above average of a shooter is Pettersson?

It's a stretch to say he's better than say, Patrik Laine, who is more than double the NHL average's expected scoring rate on his shots. But let's say Pettersson is a star-quality shooter, which is about 33 per cent better than average. That would mean Pettersson's expected shooting percentage at 5-on-5 is 26.7 per cent so far, which is flat out remarkable.

So sure, he's overperforming to start his career, but even after accounting for a "normal" shooting percentage on the shots he's taken he would be on pace for a 43-goal season instead of the 76 goals he's currently on track for. That's nothing to sneeze at. Also noteworthy: he scored on 21.2 per cent of his shots in Sweden last year.

Oh and he's also driving possession five per cent better than his teammates and draws calls at a ridiculous rate. This kid is a game-changer for the Canucks.

THE QUESTION

Steve Dangle couldn't go two weeks without forcing me to talk about the Maple Leafs, so he asks...

What is William Nylander worth against the cap, and what would the Leafs have to get in a trade for it to be worth moving him?

This is a tough one because I'm no cap guru, though if you're interested in comparables, go check out Matt Cane's work on contract predictions.

The best way I can figure to ballpark Nylander's actual, intrinsic market value would be to lean on the work I did over the summer on the positional ranking project for Sportsnet.

Nylander debuted there this year as the ninth-ranked right winger in the NHL, just a hair behind his teammate Mitch Marner. But the question of how much he's worth has to start with the best player at his position. Luckily that player is Nikita Kucherov, who just signed an extension with the Tampa Bay Lightning, so we can compare Nylander to him directly.

Overall, Nylander impacted the game over the past three seasons at about 82.3 per cent of what Nikita Kucherov did, which is a lot better than I had expected going into this. So if Nylander were an unrestricted free agent, I would expect fair market value for his talents to ring up a cap hit of \$7.82 million. But, of course, Nylander is not an unrestricted free agent.

Whether it's fair or not, restricted free agents get paid less. An example of this is David Pastrnak, who was the sixth-ranked right winger this year and is making an annual average value of just \$6.66 million on his current contract.

The cap has gone up since he signed, and Nylander hasn't been as good as Pastrnak so far in his career, so anywhere from \$6.5 million to \$7 million sounds about right for the Maple Leaf. What's interesting is that even if he were an unrestricted free agent, Nylander's reported ask of \$8 million is a little high.

As for what he's worth in trade, a top-20 winger in the NHL probably isn't worth a top-20 defenceman, but considering Nylander has the potential

to play centre in the NHL, an opportunity he won't get with the Maple Leafs now that they've signed John Tavares, let's say he's worth a defenceman in the 20-35 range. That's essentially the lower end of No. 1 defencemen in the league. And we'd want one who has a similar age.

That leaves us with a list of Colton Parayko, Jaccob Slavin, Dougie Hamilton, Shayne Gostisbehere, Ivan Provorov, Brett Pesce, and Oscar Klefbom. There are some interesting names on that list, but remember the Leafs need right-shot defencemen only, unless they want to do a bigger shakeup of their defence core. That rules out everyone but Parayko, Hamilton, and Pesce as potential one-for-one deals.

The scenario I find interesting is if the Leafs want to shake up their defence more deeply, acquiring Klefbom would seemingly be a good fit for both teams. Edmonton desperately needs help on the wing and Klefbom has great potential that has languished in Edmonton.

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

BUY OR SELL

- Phil Kessel is off to yet another ridiculous start (16 points in 14 games), and this season he's not just doing it on the power play. So far he's creating chances for teammates and getting his own chances at 5-on-5 at top-30 rates among forwards. He's still Phil the Thrill.

- What's happened in Chicago deserves a deeper dive, but one thing I'm interested to see is how much of their playing style is due to the roster, and how much was due to coaching. In each of the past four years, the Blackhawks lead the league in per cent of zone entries that were controlled, averaging 61.4 per cent overall, where the league average is 48.5 per cent. No other team has had a single season in that time above 57 per cent controlled entries.

- Nico Hischier is clipping along at nearly a point per game, and the crazy thing is he's been unlucky as a shooter. He boasts the only rate even close to Pettersson in the percentage of his shots that come from the slot at 80 per cent. He's already great and he's going to score a lot more.

- Dougie Hamilton is third in the NHL in shots on goal, and second in shot attempts per minute at 5-on-5 — not just among defencemen, but among all players. They're not all from the perimeter either. He's currently putting up as many 5-on-5 scoring chances per minute as Nazem Kadri, Jonathan Drouin, and Jonathan Huberdeau. He's going to score a lot playing this way.

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Sportsnet.ca / 16 active NHL players who are locks for the Hockey Hall of Fame

Josh Beneteau | November 9, 2018, 12:15 PM

There's no template for a Hall of Fame player. Some are great scorers, while others are reliable leaders or defenders. Some have bookshelves full of individual awards, some have multiple championships. Most fit into more than one of those categories.

With the Hockey Hall of Fame inducting the class of 2018 on Monday, we thought it would be fun to explore which active NHLers are locks to get in themselves. That is, if their careers ended today, who has done enough to earn eternal enshrinement in hockey's greatest hall?

The list is shorter than you'd think.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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In all, we settled on 16 players worthy of induction. There are certainly more than 16 active players who will one day get into the Hall, so some honourable mentions are included for players who likely will get in once they've played out their full careers.

But this group of 16 has shown enough already to earn recognition. Here they are, in alphabetical order.

Note: The stats below are as of Nov. 8.

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FORWARDS

Nicklas Backstrom, C, Washington Capitals

Games Played: 829 | Goals: 212 | Assists: 604 | Points: 816

Backstrom is a talented playmaker and has been among the assist leaders every year since he joined the league. His 604 assists are the most by any player since 2007, and his 816 points are fifth. He has five seasons in which he recorded more than 60 assists, a mark matched only by Henrik Sedin and Joe Thornton over the same time period.

Patrice Bergeron, C, Boston Bruins

Games Played: 977 | Goals: 296 | Assists: 458 | Points: 754

Bergeron has been the model two-way centre since he joined the NHL as an 18-year-old in 2003 and he has an impressive 57.1 per cent success rate on faceoffs, which is the fourth-best over the past 15 seasons. He's won four Selke Trophies as the league's top defensive forward — tied for the most all-time with Hall of Famer Bob Gainey — and five other times he finished in the top-five in voting for that award. He also has a Stanley Cup and two Olympic gold medals.

Sidney Crosby, C, Pittsburgh Penguins

Games Played: 878 | Goals: 418 | Assists: 713 | Points: 1,131

Crosby is the best centre of his generation and, despite serious injuries, is one of its top scorers too. His absurd 1.29 points per game rate is the best in the post-2004 lockout era. And his trophy case is packed, with three Stanley Cup rings, two Olympic gold medals, two Conn Smythe Trophies, two Hart Trophies, three Ted Lindsay Awards, two Rocket Richard Trophies and two Art Ross Trophies.

Ryan Getzlaf, C, Anaheim Ducks

Games Played: 928 | Goals: 249 | Assists: 636 | Points: 885

A power forward who also has slick hands as an elite playmaker, Getzlaf can do it all. He has three seasons with more than 80 points in his career and ranks sixth in total points since 2005. In the playoffs, he's been equally dominant, and trails only Crosby, Evgeni Malkin and Patrick Kane in post-season points over his career. The Ducks have made the playoffs in 11 of the 13 seasons Getzlaf has played, winning the Cup once in 2007.

Patrick Kane, RW, Chicago Blackhawks

Games Played: 836 | Goals: 323 | Assists: 524 | Points: 847

The best winger not named Alex Ovechkin in the post-lockout era. Kane's 847 points trail only Ovechkin, Crosby and Evgeni Malkin since he joined the NHL in 2007 and his 1.01 points per game is tied with Ilya Kovalchuk for fifth (among players with at least 100 games played). Kane has been equally impressive in the playoffs with a 0.97 points per game and five playoff overtime winners, including a Stanley Cup clinching goal in 2010. He has also won every major trophy including the Hart, Ted Lindsay, Art Ross, Conn Smythe and Calder Trophies, plus three Stanley Cups.

Anze Kopitar, C, Los Angeles Kings

Games Played: 935 | Goals: 294 | Assists: 540 | Points: 834

The No. 1 centre on two Stanley Cup-winning teams, Kopitar has been one of the top two-way players in the game for most of his career. He's led the Kings in scoring 10 of his 12 seasons, but has also been a reliable penalty killer, with just under two minutes of shorthanded time per game. His play away from the puck has earned him two Selke Trophies and one Lady Byng. He's earned votes for the Byng in every season except his rookie year, and has finished with more than 30 penalty minutes in a season just once.

Ilya Kovalchuk, LW, Los Angeles Kings/New Jersey Devils/Atlanta Thrashers

Games Played: 830 | Goals: 422 | Assists: 408 | Points: 830

One of the most prolific goal scorers of his era. Kovalchuk entered the NHL in 2001-02 and since scoring 29 goals as a rookie, he's only failed to reach 30 in a season once: the lockout-shortened 2012-13 campaign. He scores goals at a rate of 0.51 per game, a number only surpassed by Steven Stamkos and Alex Ovechkin among players with more than 500 games played in his era. Kovalchuk shared the 2003-04 Art Ross Trophy with Jarome Iginla and Rick Nash, and has finished in the top-10 of NHL scoring in five different seasons.

Evgeni Malkin, C, Pittsburgh Penguins

Games Played: 798 | Goals: 377 | Assists: 573 | Points: 950

Though Crosby is the face of the franchise in Pittsburgh, Malkin is still one of the greatest scorers of his generation. Since he joined the league in 2006, only Crosby and Ovechkin have more goals and points than Malkin. When it comes to points per game, Malkin's 1.19 is bested only by Crosby and Connor McDavid among players with more than one season played. On top of his three Stanley Cups, Malkin has won every major individual award, including the Conn Smythe, Calder, Ted Lindsay and the Art Ross twice. Malkin also won the Hart Trophy in 2012 and has finished second in voting for that award twice.

Alex Ovechkin, LW, Washington Capitals

Games Played: 1,017 | Goals: 619 | Assists: 521 | Points: 1,140

One of the greatest goal scorers of all-time — and with an outside shot to topple one of Wayne Gretzky's grand records. At age 33, Ovechkin is already 17th all-time in goals scored and no one has more goals or points than him since he entered the league. Among players with at least 500 games played, Ovechkin's 0.61 goals per game is fourth best all-time, slightly better than Gretzky and just behind Pavel Bure. He's never scored less than 32 goals in a season, has scored more than 50 seven times and won the Rocket Richard seven times. Last season Ovechkin won his first Stanley Cup and Conn Smythe, which he can put on a shelf next to his three Hart Trophies, three Ted Lindsay Awards, Art Ross Trophy and Calder Trophy.

Joe Thornton, C, San Jose Sharks/Boston Bruins

Games Played: 1,499 | Goals: 399 | Assists: 1,031 | Points: 1,430

One of the greatest playmakers to ever play the game. Thornton ranks 12th all-time in assists and 16th all-time in total points. In fact, Jaromir Jagr is the only player with more points than Thornton who isn't in the Hall yet. In 15 of Thornton's 21 seasons he's registered at least 60 points. His 125-point campaign in 2005-06 is the most scored in the post-lockout era, and he won the Hart and Art Ross Trophies that year. He had 96 assists that season and followed it up with 92 the year after. Only 15 times has a player had more than 96 assists in a season — and Gretzky accounts for 11 of them.

#SJSharks Joe Thornton will become the first player in NHL history drafted 1st overall to play in 1,500 career games.

— Sportsnet Stats (@SNstats) November 8, 2018



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Honourable Mentions: Claude Giroux, Phil Kessel, Patrick Marleau, Connor McDavid, Eric Staal, Steven Stamkos, John Tavares, Jonathan Toews.

DEFENCEMEN

Zdeno Chara, D, Boston Bruins/Ottawa Senators/New York Islanders

Games Played: 1,437 | Goals: 198 | Assists: 434 | Points: 632

Chara has been a dominant force on the blue line for close to two decades. He led the Boston Bruins to the Stanley Cup in 2011 and has received votes for the Norris Trophy in 11 of his 19 seasons, winning once in 2009 and being named a finalist five other times. Among defencemen, he ranks ninth all-time in games played, 22nd in goals and 33rd in points. And he holds the record for the hardest shot, 108.8 m.p.h., which he set at the 2012 All-Star Game.

Drew Doughty, D, Los Angeles Kings

Games Played: 784 | Goals: 103 | Assists: 329 | Points: 432

Doughty has been one of the best defencemen in the NHL since breaking into the league as an 18-year-old in 2008. At age 20, he was a key member of the Canadian team that won gold at the Vancouver Olympics, and he's since added another gold and two Stanley Cups to his collection. He's a talented scorer, too, having reached at least 10 goals in seven of his 11 seasons. Doughty has one Norris Trophy, but has been a finalist three other times. At 26:16 per game, only Ryan Suter has skated more minutes than Doughty over his career.

Erik Karlsson, D, San Jose Sharks/Ottawa Senators

Games Played: 642 | Goals: 126 | Assists: 399 | Points: 525

One of the best offensive defencemen to ever play the game. His 0.818 points per game is ninth all-time among defencemen with at least 200 games played, just behind Phil Housley. Karlsson finished with 82 points in his best season, but he's crossed the 70-point mark three other times. He's also won two Norris Trophies, has finished second in Norris voting twice, and led the league in defencemen scoring four times.

Duncan Keith, D, Chicago Blackhawks

Games Played: 1,010 | Goals: 92 | Assists: 458 | Points: 550

The top-defenceman on the premier franchise of the decade, Keith was a stable workhorse on three Stanley Cup wins with the Blackhawks. Keith has two Norris Trophies and has been top-10 in voting for the award five other times. He also won the Conn Smythe Trophy as playoff MVP in 2015. Keith has averaged 25:11 of ice time per game since breaking into the league in 2005-06, but that number jumps to a staggering 28:11 in the playoffs, which is third all-time since the stat started being tracked in 1997.

Honourable Mentions: Brent Burns, Victor Hedman, Kris Letang, P.K. Subban, Ryan Suter, Shea Weber.

A weekly deep dive into the biggest hockey news in the world with hosts Elliotte Friedman and Jeff Marek. New episodes every Thursday.

GOALTENDERS

Henrik Lundqvist, G, New York Rangers

Games Played: 817 | Wins: 436 | Save Percentage: .919 | Shutouts: 63

The best European goalie not named Dominik Hasek. Lundqvist is currently eighth all-time in wins — one behind Jacques Plante — and 14th in games played, but leads all European goalies in those categories. His .919 career save percentage is tied for eighth all-time (after at least 300 starts) and he's tied for third in this stat among European goalies. He's finished top-10 in wins nine different times, and had a top-10 save percentage seven times. Lundqvist has only one Vezina Trophy, but he finished top-six in voting for the award nine other times.

Roberto Luongo, G, Florida Panthers/Vancouver Canucks/New York Islanders

Games Played: 1,004 | Wins: 472 | Save Percentage: .920 | Shutouts: 76

Few goalies have been consistently on top of their game for as long as Luongo. He's only the third goalie to play in 1,000 career games and his 472 wins rank fourth all-time. Since Luongo first joined the league in 1999, he's tied for third in career save percentage at .920 and is tied for the lead with a .929 save percentage at even strength (among goaltenders with at least 300 games). While he's never won the Vezina Trophy, Luongo has finished in the top four in voting five times. He earned the William Jennings for lowest GAA in 2010-11.

Honourable Mentions: Sergei Bobrovsky, Marc-Andre Fleury, Carey Price, Tuukka Rask, Jonathan Quick.

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Sportsnet.ca / Where will Joel Quenneville coach in the NHL next? Analyzing seven teams

Rory Boylen | November 9, 2018, 11:33 AM

With the second-winningest coach in NHL history now out of work, and no indication he's done, you have to wonder how many teams out there are considering their options right now.

There were one or two hot seats prior to the Quenneville news on Tuesday, namely Mike Yeo with the St. Louis Blues, but the speculation about Quenneville's future has expanded to include teams whose coaches may otherwise have been safe (or at least, safe-ish) prior to Chicago's decision to let Quenneville go. Why? The guys on Hockey Central at Noon described it best:

Because... Joel Quenneville.

With one season after this left on his contract, at a cost of \$6 million, a team will have to pay top dollar to bring Quenneville aboard and likely have to give him some good tenure for job security, too. It's not unprecedented for a team sitting high in the standings to let go of its coach in order to pounce on a recently dismissed one that they see as a perfect fit for the organization.

In February of 2017 the Boston Bruins fired Claude Julien. One week later the Habs fired Michel Therrien and hired Julien as his replacement despite sitting atop the Atlantic Division with a 31-19-8 record. Granted they were there on the strength of a 13-1-1 start that cooled considerably, but had it not been Julien specifically who was available, it's easy to see Montreal continuing on with Therrien at that time.

So if a team wants Quenneville, who was completely unattainable just four days ago, they may feel emboldened to do something unconventional.

Here is a look at some potential landing spots for Quenneville, with a quick breakdown of why they may, and may not, make the move.

DETROIT RED WINGS

Why it makes sense: It may be a while before the Red Wings contend for the Stanley Cup again — but they're well on their way to contending for the first overall pick. It wouldn't hurt having the guy who led a very young Hawks team to its first Stanley Cup since the 1960s just three years after drafting Patrick Kane first overall leading the charge behind the bench. The players love Quenneville and he's been successful at every stop — he never missed the playoffs in seven full seasons with the Blues and he



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made it past the first round of the playoffs in two of three seasons with Colorado. New building, new core, new coach — new era in Detroit?

Why it doesn't make sense: "They got a new building, but also have Dan Bylsma already on the bench and the suspicion is if they're going to make a move with Blashill it's going to go right to Bylsma," Jeff Marek said on Hockey Central at Noon.

COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS

Why it makes sense: "If a team like Columbus, who could be looking at losing Panarin and Bobrovsky this year, start to fall, thinking they're going to go for it this year and keep these two guys, do they make a move even though everyone there has already been re-upped?" Marek asked. It's true that this could be an all-in scenario for Columbus and if that means spending big to bring in Quenneville, it may be worth considering. Plus, he has a relationship with Panarin, whom he coached one year in Chicago and didn't want to trade away, so maybe he can help keep the superstar around?

Why it doesn't make sense: Head coach John Tortorella just signed a two-year extension on Sept. 12 so not only would the Blue Jackets have to pay top dollar for their new hire, they'd also have to pay Tortorella a pretty penny through the 2020-21 season. That may not be something this small market team wishes to do and it's not as though they're playing poorly: despite another slow October from Bobrovsky, the Jackets are 8-6-1 and sit third in the Metro Division — though neither of their special teams units have performed well.

ST. LOUIS BLUES

Why it makes sense: Speaking of all-in, the Blues made a big trade in the summer to bring in Ryan O'Reilly and signed Tyler Bozak with the idea they'd return in 2018-19 with a solid 1-2-3 down the middle and be able to challenge coming out of the tough Central. It hasn't quite worked out that way as the Blues have coughed up leads on the regular and are just two points out of the West's basement. GM Doug Armstrong has already made one coaching change and has been with the Blues since 2010, over which time they've won four playoff rounds in six appearances. Is he under the gun to show progress? Head coach Mike Yeo was already on the hot seat prior to the Quenneville news.

"Anybody in that management team, Doug Armstrong, ownership, how are you not having that discussion right now?" asked Kypreos.

Why it doesn't make sense: There aren't a ton of reasons why this wouldn't make sense, though Yeo was first brought to the Blues as an assistant under Ken Hitchcock with the commitment that he'd take over when Hitchcock moved on. This is just Yeo's second full season behind the bench, so it would mean a rapid gear shift. Quenneville has already coached eight years with the Blues, would he go back?

ANAHEIM DUCKS

Why it makes sense: The only reason the Ducks aren't easily the worst team in the NHL right now is John Gibson's stellar play. They average allowing 36.5 shots against per game, and their average -11 shot differential per game is the worst mark in the league. They are lapped at 5-on-5 nightly and it's far too easy to get the puck into the middle of the ice against them. Randy Carlyle is in the final year of his contract and GM Bob Murray spoke last summer about the need for his team to play quicker. It hasn't happened yet. Murray has also fired Carlyle in-season once before, cutting him loose after a 7-13-4 start in 2011-12.

Why it doesn't make sense: Sure, the Ducks' numbers have been terrible so far, but they've faced a ton of injuries. Ryan Getzlaf has been in and out, Patrick Eaves just returned for the first time in a year, Ondrej Kase has been out all season with a concussion, Corey Perry won't be back for a while, Nick Ritchie held out the start of the season for a new contract and immediately got hurt after signing one, Josh Manson is out and Max Comtois, after a superb start to his NHL career, is now sidelined himself. You could argue that Carlyle hasn't been given a fair shake this season.

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SEATTLE

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Why it doesn't make sense: "The only thing though you have to keep in mind is Dave Tippett is a consultant there and Dave Tippett and Joel Quenneville are best friends. My understanding is Dave Tippett loves coaching and wants to continue loving coaching," Kypreos said.

PHILADELPHIA FLYERS

Why it makes sense: Would you believe Dave Hakstol is the fourth-longest tenured coach in the NHL right now? Hired on May 18, 2015 Hakstol is only exceeded by the coaches in Tampa Bay, Nashville and Winnipeg in how long he's been on the job, but he hasn't had the same regular- or post-season success. The Flyers have made the playoffs in two of Hakstol's three seasons, but have a 4-8 record. They are 8-7-1 so far this season, which puts them on the outside of the playoffs looking at the moment. Just a couple weeks ago GM Ron Hextall said he wanted to be patient with his team, but after they went on to win just one of their next five games the tone changed.

"You look at our team on paper, and we've got a pretty good team," Hextall said towards the end of October. "But paper doesn't mean a whole lot. We need to play better."

Why it doesn't make sense: The Flyers responded to Hextall's comments by winning three of four games on their Western road trip and getting a point via overtime loss in the other. So now especially would be a strange time for the patient GM (how weird is that to say about Hextall) to let go of the coach he targeted hiring in the first place. The Flyers have a favourable schedule ahead, too, with five home games in a row — four of which come against teams currently outside of a playoff spot. They started off the stretch with a 5-4 win over Arizona on Thursday.

BUFFALO SABRES

Why it makes sense: When Mike Babcock became available from Detroit a few years ago the Sabres were one of the teams making a hard push for him. At one point, in fact, they were viewed as a favourite to land him. The Pegulas have spent a lot of money over their years as owners of the team so it's reasonable to think they might take another big, expensive cut to hire a respected coach at a crucial juncture in the team's development.

Why it doesn't make sense: Phil Housley is a Hall of Fame player and celebrated former Sabre who is in just his second season behind the bench. And the team is showing signs of progress this season, with an 8-6-2 record. The Sabres had the worst offence last season and are the only team that hasn't scored 200 goals in any of the past five years — so far in 2018-19 their offence ranks 20th. That's not great, but it is an improvement. The defence has also moderately improved, allowing 1.5 fewer shots per game than last season as the rest of the league's average has risen.

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Sportsnet.ca / Logan Shaw embracing every moment of whirlwind journey to NHL



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • November 10, 2018

Sonny Sachdeva | November 9, 2018, 12:14 PM

TORONTO — The life of an NHLer can be a circuitous affair, with players at every level often enduring more than a few changes of address over the course of their careers. But even the most well-travelled of the big-league fraternity would marvel at the ride Glace Bay, N.S.'s Logan Shaw has been on over the past five years.

Drafted 76th overall in 2011, Shaw's path to the NHL has consisted of a whirlwind five-year stretch that's spun him through eight different cities and three different leagues. Now, after another brief AHL spell, Shaw is looking for another shot.

His most recent stop was with the Gulls in San Diego, Calif., the coastal Californian town just one of a number of unique dots on the map that Shaw passed through. That collection has included a fair few locales that were about as different from his native Nova Scotia as one could imagine, like the city in which his professional career began: San Antonio, Texas.

It was there, in 2013–14, that Shaw got his first taste of playing hockey regularly in an entirely new environment, spending his first professional season with the AHL's Rampage.

"I was obviously scared and nervous," Shaw says of making that jump into such a drastic change of scenery. "But I just did what I always tried to do. I just worked hard, did my best on and off the ice.... We had a coaching change and stuff happened in San Antonio, but nothing changed for me. I just did my own thing."

Shaw managed to weather that first test with the help of veterans like Jed Ortmeyer, his road roommate and one of 10 experienced skaters on that Rampage roster over the age of 30. But after settling into the Texas lifestyle and the upgrade in competition, Shaw was thrust into a veritable North American tour through the minor leagues as he worked his way up to the sport's highest level.

Celebrate Our Community. Celebrate Our Game.

First, during the same season as his Texan debut, Shaw was sent to Cincinnati, Ohio, to play for the ECHL's Cyclones. After another year in San Antonio, he was off to Portland, Maine, to play for the AHL's Pirates in 2015–16. That stint brought a shot with the big club, too, ushering Shaw to Florida to don a Panthers sweater for his first 53 NHL games.

The following season was split between Springfield, Mass. (for the AHL's Thunderbirds), San Diego (for the AHL's Gulls), and, finally, Anaheim for another lengthy NHL opportunity. In 2017–18, Shaw earned his first full big-league campaign — which, of course, included a waiver-wire move from Anaheim to Montreal. He started the 2018-19 campaign back with AHL San Diego, before being released from his contract Friday.

Career-wise, there's no doubt this five-year stretch has been gruelling. But in terms of life experience, of Shaw's growth as a person, there's something to be said for the unique value in the ride he's had. The Glace Bay native says, most importantly, he cherishes the friendships he's made along the way, despite the tough road. But this road might just wind up being the most memorable part of his career, according to the man who served as his most recent head coach.

"Number one, you get to experience lots of different people," says former Oilers coach and now Gulls bench boss Dallas Eakins, who's done plenty of moving himself. "Different teammates, different cultures within different cities. You get to experience different coaches and how they coach, different organizations and how they're managed."

And on the ice, all that change has simply helped Shaw grow his game, turning him into a valuable, adaptable weapon able to slot in anywhere he's needed.

"I think as a player, it's really helped me be able to adjust to different situations," Shaw says. "I was a right winger basically my whole career, and then it was in those playoffs in Florida that first year, [then-head

coach Gerard] Gallant put me at centre. They put me at centre in Anaheim, too... then back to the wing. Then Montreal claimed me on waivers because they had injuries and needed a centreman.

"So I just learned to adjust to different situations that come up in the game. Now I just consider myself a forward — I kind of bounce around, whatever position I'm needed in the lineup. And I think that's a good way to be, more of a versatile player rather than just a straight right winger or centreman."

Eakins doesn't need any convincing of the fact that Shaw's career has shaped him into a versatile threat.

"You know what, the greatest thing is that he's smart enough to understand that," says Eakins. "He doesn't take the approach of, 'Oh I'm getting screwed because they're putting me on the wing' or 'I'm getting screwed because I'm playing centre,' or 'I'm on this line or that line.'

"He's simply a guy who said to me, 'Play me wherever you like. I'm going to give you everything I have.'"

Logan Shaw celebrates with teammates during his time with the Montreal Canadiens. (Graham Hughes/CP)

Shaw's blue-collar mindset helped him achieve longevity others in his situation might not have found. But the origin of that approach is no mystery. It's the same one carried out by most young players from his tight-knit hometown — the town that granted him keys to the city after he first made it to the NHL level, and the one that dubbed June 11, 2016, Logan Shaw Day.

"I'm super proud of where I'm from. I always have been. I always will be," Shaw says of Glace Bay, where Rogers Hometown Hockey touches down this weekend.

Taking his first laps around the ice in Glace Bay rinks and remaining a junior player in Cape Breton for the first four years of his competitive hockey life, Shaw's loyalty to the area runs deep. And the community has always answered with loyalty of its own, as it has to all the other young locals honing their game there.

"We'd be playing games in atom, bantam, triple-A, and you'd have 500 or 600 people at the rink," Shaw recalls. "That's a lot of people for your kids to play in front of — the support was always there for young kids in the area."

"He's simply a guy who said to me, 'Play me wherever you like. I'm going to give you everything I have.'"

It's that same collective approach that's driven the Nova Scotian hockey community to stick together even as its stars move off in wildly different directions. The province's two most dominant exports, Sidney Crosby and Nathan MacKinnon, are the clearest examples. Both at the pinnacle of the sport, one might expect the duo to spend their off-seasons hidden away, working only with the best of the best while preparing to dominate the NHL scoring charts.

Instead, they return home, skating in Halifax each summer with the same group of fellow Nova Scotians who lined up against them years ago — Shaw included.

"I've skated with them since I was 19, and I'm pretty fortunate," Shaw says, adding that there's no question the summer sessions have helped improve his game. "You skate with the best players in the world, and you're going to get better. I love Halifax for that — those guys are there pushing each other on and off the ice, and it's great to be part of that."

While it might seem a surprising choice to some, there's no confusion on Shaw's part as to why he, Crosby and MacKinnon all look to their roots each summer in their quest to improve their game.

"It's special," Shaw says of his home province and its tight-knit community. "Everyone comes back to Nova Scotia because it's home. The people are proud to call it home. It's a beautiful place."

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CAROLINA HURRICANES

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Sportsnet.ca / Writing was on wall for Tomas Plekanec with Canadiens

Ryan Dixon | November 9, 2018, 1:51 PM

BROSSARD, Que. — For the vast majority of his time with the Montreal Canadiens, Tomas Plekanec was defined by the fact neither his high-level play nor his demeanour ever varied much. Of course, his performance was bound to trail off at some point and, on his final day as a Hab, his countenance — if ever so slightly — finally cracked, too.

Sitting beside GM Marc Bergevin at the team's practice facility, Plekanec was his soft-spoken self while discussing the fact the Canadiens had placed him on unconditional waivers for the purpose of terminating his contract. He was a company man until the end, because had he simply opted to retire upon hearing he wouldn't get back in the lineup, the remainder of his \$2.25-million cap — said to be \$1.79 million by CapFriendly.com — would have stayed on the books throughout the year.

Instead, he listened to what Bergevin — who confirmed the Habs are fully clear of Plekanec's cap hit due to the mutually agreed upon contract termination — had to say about creating room for the young players who are the future of this team and accepted his fate. After 1,001 NHL games, 984 with Montreal, his time in the world's best league is over.

"It was harder than I thought it was going to be," said Plekanec when asked about delivering that very message to his teammates just before they hit the ice for practice on Friday morning.

When Plekanec re-signed to play for Montreal last summer following a brief stint with the Toronto Maple Leafs, it was understood he would fill a greatly reduced role from the top-six minutes he logged for so many years on the Canadiens. But right from the drop, there were signs he could be squeezed out. Plekanec was a healthy scratch for Montreal's first three contests of the season. Then, after returning to play his 1,000th NHL game, he was sidelined with a back ailment. Now that he's almost ready to return, Bergevin had to make what he called an extremely difficult decision, informing Plekanec that there simply isn't room for him on the Habs anymore thanks to sudden changes in the middle of the ice.

Nobody could have anticipated off-season acquisition Max Domi would thrive to the tune of 19 points in 16 games after being moved from the wing with the Arizona Coyotes to centre in Montreal. Another eyebrow-raiser is the rapid development of 2018 third-overall pick Jesperi Kotkaniemi, who may not be putting up big numbers, but has almost seemed Plekanec-esque in his ability to aptly handle all zones of the ice.

Even with forwards Paul Byron and Joel Armia sidelined by injuries, the writing on the wall was getting more clear and bold.

"I've been around for long enough to know these guys need to get the chance," said Plekanec, who thanked Bergevin and owner Geoff Molson for the way he was treated right through the end.

Every one of Montreal's young guns would do well to follow the example Plekanec set since becoming a full-time member of the Canadiens in 2005-06. Steady and stoic night after night, Plekanec's 606 points in 984 games is by far the most put up by a Hab between his Dec. 31, 2003 start date with the club through the present day. Of the 12 seasons Plekanec finished in Montreal, nine resulted in playoff showings and his 49 playoff points pace all Canadiens during his tenure.

Things were still going swimmingly on the October day in 2015 when, about two weeks before his 33rd birthday, Plekanec signed a two-year extension with Montreal worth \$6 million annually. He put up 23 points through the first 23 games of that 2015-16 campaign, but things fell apart

for the team that winter when Carey Price was hurt and the club missed the playoffs by a mile. Though still a reliable defensive player, Plekanec's production dropped to 28 points in 78 outings in 2017-18 and, last season, he found himself on the move at the trade deadline, headed to the young Maple Leafs to help solidify their depth up the middle for a playoff run.

Even on the day he was dealt, there was a sense Plekanec — who acknowledged it was "weird" wearing another jersey for a couple months — was a strong candidate to return to Montreal, the franchise that meant so much to him, and vice-versa.

"It's hard," said injured Habs captain Shea Weber. "It's an emotional time, I'm sure, for him and even for myself and our team. [He's] a guy who's poured his heart into this organization."

Weber said it was tough seeing Plekanec struggle to tell the boys what was going on, but he lightened the mood a little by noting — in true 'Pleky' fashion — he kept it short and sweet.

Plekanec, who turned 36 on Halloween, said he will not suit up for another NHL team no matter how things play out and will instead focus on the possibility of continuing his career at home in the Czech Republic. He will continue to pull for the Canadiens and noted he hopes the newcomers and youngsters on the club soon get to experience his favourite thing about playing in Montreal, suiting up for post-season matches at the Bell Centre. In a sign of just how universally respected Plekanec is, most of the assembled media walked up to the podium at the conclusion of his press conference to shake the hand of a guy who embodies the "true pro" cliché.

"The fans were always so great with me," Plekanec said. "I'm just hoping they will remember me as a guy who always gave 100 percent for the team, for the logo."

There's really no other way to see it.

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Sportsnet.ca / Why Vegas's controversial fifth goal against Ottawa counted

Rory Boylen | November 9, 2018, 2:08 PM

Controversy around goaltender interference is nothing new in the NHL. So forgive us if you've heard this before.

On Thursday night, trailing Vegas 4-3 in the third period, the Ottawa Senators gave up a goal they immediately wanted reviewed for goalie interference (you can see it atop this post). They were sure the ruling would be overturned, but the controversial goal stood and the Golden Knights took a two-goal lead with eight minutes left.

It was a backbreaker for the Sens.

"I don't know anymore. All of us together we just don't know anymore. We'll let them decide and that's it," a frustrated Guy Boucher said after the loss. "I guess that's why I'm not paid for those decisions. I don't want to think anything, it's not my job. I'll let them do their job. Just personally I couldn't explain it anymore."

There was no doubt contact between Craig Anderson and Vegas's William Carrier in front of the net. But the nature of the contact and the position of the skater is a factor into why the league made this ruling.

From the league:



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The Situation Room determined that Anderson initiated contact with Carrier, who was outside the crease prior to the goal. Therefore no goaltender interference infractions occurred. The decision was made in accordance with Rule 69.7 which states, in part, that the goal on the ice should have been allowed because "in a rebound situation, or where a goalkeeper and attacking player(s) are simultaneously attempting to play a loose puck, whether inside or outside the crease, incidental contact will be permitted, and any goal that is scored as a result thereof will be allowed.

It's important to note that Carrier's positioning alone wasn't enough to ensure this was a goal. Had he initiated contact, even standing outside the crease, in a way that prevented Anderson from stopping the shot it would have been goaltender interference. But at the very least this was incidental contact, and Anderson himself could even be seen as the one who initiated the contact when his leg kicked out and hit Carrier, causing him to fall.

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

Not only is this covered in Rule 69.7 (Rebounds and Loose Pucks) as cited by the league, but also in Rule 69.4 (Contact Outside the Goal Crease). Emphasis our own:

"If an attacking player initiates any contact with a goalkeeper, other than incidental contact, while the goalkeeper is outside his goal crease, and a goal is scored, the goal will be disallowed. A goalkeeper is not "fair game" just because he is outside the goal crease. The appropriate penalty should be assessed in every case where an attacking player makes unnecessary contact with the goalkeeper. However, incidental contact will be permitted when the goalkeeper is in the act of playing the puck outside his goal crease provided the attacking player has made a reasonable effort to avoid such unnecessary contact."

In the initial definition of the rule (69.1), it is clearly stated that a goal will count if contact is made with the goalie outside of the crease, so long as it was not intentionally done by the attacker, or if it was a defender or the goalie himself who initiates it.

It is hard to argue that Carrier was unreasonably interfering with the goalie here, as his back was turned to Anderson the whole time.

It was a frustrating goal and ruling at a bad time in the game for Ottawa, and had this happened in a playoff game the controversy may have taken on a life of its own. But by the NHL's own rulebook, it's pretty clear Carrier was not at fault on this play and, therefore, the goal stood.

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TSN.CA / Maple Leafs spread out the scoring in rout of Devils

Kristen Shilton

TORONTO – The Maple Leafs' offence has worked all season to produce the kind of balanced attack they put on display Friday, where all four of Toronto's lines contributed at least one even-strength goal in a 6-1 victory over the New Jersey Devils.

Toronto has tread dangerously before this season when relying too heavily on its stars' output, but lately they've strived to move towards more well-rounded execution. And it's working. While Mitch Marner was held off the scoresheet in Friday's win for the second time in four games (and passed for the Leafs' lead in scoring by Morgan Rielly on his two-

point night), six different scorers came through with a goal, and 10 players tallied at least a point.

"It was great, the more spread out the scoring, the better," said Patrick Marleau, who notched the 600th assist of his career on Friday. "And I think guys are starting to feel better about themselves, and we're scoring the right way, by playing the systems, so we just want to build on that."

For the second consecutive game, Toronto (11-5-0) was on the board first when John Tavares finished off a superb tic-tac-toe play from Rielly and Ron Hainsey with a tap-in goal behind Keith Kinkaid. Tavares has points in four consecutive games now (two goals, three assists), amounting to his longest point streak of the season, and Toronto was ahead 1-0 after 20 minutes while outshooting New Jersey 15-7.

"The first period was unbelievable," said Frederik Andersen after a 38-save performance in net for Toronto. "I thought we limited their chances to barely any, actually. And obviously they came out a little harder in the second and third chasing the game, but I thought we did a good job."

With the Leafs' first line going, Nazem Kadri got the second unit firing with a soft goal sent from the right circle high-glove past Kinkaid early in the second period for his fifth score of the season. Then it was Connor Brown adding his second goal in as many games from the Leafs' third line, knocking in a pass from behind the net from linemate Par Lindholm. With two assists in the game, Lindholm tallied the first multi-point outing of his NHL career.

Next up was Brown's other linemate Andreas Johnsson driving hard to the net to pot the rebound off Jake Gardiner's initial shot to finally shove the monkey off his back with his first goal of the season.

"It was probably the most chances I had in a game, so it was nice to get it," Johnsson said. "I feel like the hardest part here is you have to be good every day, or else you're getting run over. [Our line has been] feeling good together these last couple of games, so it was nice to score more."

Rounding out the offensive performance for Toronto were goals from Rielly (an easy wrister from the blueline that snaked past Kinkaid) and fourth-line winger Tyler Ennis (a slick shortside strike).

"If players work real hard, and do things together, we have a chance to have a lot of success," assessed coach Mike Babcock. "So that's what we're trying to do each and every day. Some days it goes good. There were a lot of those see-through pucks tonight going through crowds, and you know it's never fun being on the wrong end of those; it's more fun being on the right end."

The Leafs had bemoaned earlier in the week how those bounces weren't going their way. But over this current three-game win streak, Toronto has seen its luck start to change as all skaters are becoming more regularly involved, and maximizing the team's greatest strengths.

"We're such a fast group through the neutral zone, we just try to wear teams down with our speed and I think it showed tonight," said Ennis. "I think everyone was on the same page and we were just trying to play fast."

"Everyone got to play, everyone got some puck touches so in the end you leave feeling good," added Babcock. "And we didn't put too much duress on our team playing back-to-back [on Saturday in Boston], so that gives us a better opportunity."

TAKEAWAYS

Andersen in the zone

It was late in the third period against New Jersey, with the Leafs' safely ahead 6-1, that Andersen made an outstanding, sprawled-out save as if Toronto's two points depended on it. But that's the type of zone Andersen is in now, where he's stringing together one outstanding performance after another.



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Making his ninth consecutive start for the Leafs, Andersen once again allowed two or fewer goals-against to the Devils, which he's done now in seven straight games and nine times in his last 10 starts. There's a looseness emerging to Andersen's game that's led to the kind of start to this season he worked all off-season to create. Including his .974 save percentage on Friday, Andersen has tallied a save percentage above .900 in eight of his last 10 starts, and he remains tied for the NHL lead in wins with nine.

And while the Leafs have aimed to keep shots on Andersen down, the netminder has seen 30 or more in five of his last seven starts, all the while posting similarly impressive results each night. He's projected to get Saturday night off when Garret Sparks takes over the crease in Boston, marking the first time Andersen hasn't played since Oct. 14.

Finding their form at home

Home ice wasn't kind to the Leafs when the season began, when they posted a 3-5-0 record through the first eight games. But Toronto got to work reversing that losing trend with a win Tuesday over the Vegas Golden Knights and won consecutive home games for the first time all season with their most dominating performance of the year at Scotiabank Arena in the Hall of Fame game. Through two periods alone, the Leafs scored as many goals (5) against New Jersey as they had in all three of their prior home games combined, and worked their way back to .500 at home with a 5-5-0 record as they head out on another long road trip.

Helping hand from Hainsey

Paired with the more offensively inclined Rielly, Hainsey isn't often as involved in what the Leafs do up front. But on Friday he made an exception, jumping into the fray to generate terrific assists on each of the Leafs' first two goals.

Hainsey planted himself as the middle man on Tavares' score, tipping a quick pass from Rielly directly onto Tavares stick for him to tap into Kinkaid's gaping net. The 37-year-old veteran made an even better play for the second assist on Brown's goal, completing an incredible cross-ice play to Lindholm behind the net that he fed to Brown.

Those contributions marked the first two-assist night for Hainsey since Nov. 1, 2017 vs. Anaheim, and the 20th multi-assist game of Hainsey's career.

The one blemish on an otherwise superb night for Hainsey: When he and Kadri got tied up down low in the second period, allowing Travis Zajac to break through with the Devils' first goal. Hainsey finished the game plus-2 in 17:52 of ice time.

Blue and White Trending

Tracking Leafs' trends all season long

The Leafs were outshot for the eighth time in 16 games this season on Friday, but that's actually not all bad – Toronto is now 6-2-0 on the year when being outshot.

Next up

Toronto heads out on a four-game road trip, starting Saturday in Boston.

Last word

"It means that you're on a good team, means you're helping the team out getting a win every night, and the guys are helping you out. For goalies it's fun, but it reflects on how you're playing as a team."

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TSN.CA / Battle over paying OHL players ratchets up in open letters

Rick Westhead

The battle over whether Ontario Hockey League teams should be paying their players has ratcheted up this week after the league, the provincial government and the law firm representing a group of former players suing the OHL for back pay all released open letters on the issue.

On Monday, OHL commissioner David Branch wrote that the league's 425 players should be exempt from Ontario's minimum-wage legislation as amateur athletes. A day later, Michael Tibollo, Minister of Tourism, Culture and Sport, pledged his support in an open letter.

This week @OHLHockey wrote to me about a threat facing junior and amateur hockey in #Ontario. I wrote the OHL to assure them that very soon we'll be able to provide a solution the League, the fans, the billets, and the players will all be happy with. pic.twitter.com/abcNtBv0Rd

— Michael Tibollo (@MichaelTibollo) November 8, 2018

"I want you to know that our government is behind you," said Tibollo in his letter. "We are going to do everything in our capacity to grow and support the Ontario Hockey League and junior hockey across our province. I want to reassure the OHL and the people of Ontario that we are actively looking at providing this clarity to the OHL and we will have more to say in the coming weeks."

The Toronto law firm Charney Lawyers in 2014 filed a \$180-million lawsuit against the OHL on behalf of all current and many former players for outstanding wages, plus overtime, holiday and vacation pay.

On Thursday, Joshua Mandryk, a lawyer representing the plaintiffs, wrote in an open letter to Premier Doug Ford, Minister of Labour Laurie Scott and Tibollo that OHL teams are owned for-profit companies "who make money, big money in most cases, from the players' work – work that the owners and the media like to call 'play'... Virtually all [OHL teams] are owned by private companies that are able to hide their books, and their profits, from the players, from their employees."

"Other multi-million dollar employers don't get to avoid paying the employees who drive their revenue," Mandryk wrote. "Paying wages is part of doing business. Why should the OHL be any different?"

Former Niagara IceDogs forward Sam Berg and former Oshawa Generals player Daniel Pachis were recognized as representative plaintiffs against the OHL when the lawsuit was certified as a class action in March 2017.

If the courts rule in favour of the players, Branch and team owners have said it might put some teams out of business. It could also jeopardize the league's offering of post-secondary education scholarships to players who don't move forward with a pro hockey career and could mean cutbacks to the OHL's concussion management and mental health programs, Branch has said.

The OHL's efforts in Ontario came after other provinces, including Quebec, New Brunswick, B.C., Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, Manitoba and Prince Edward Island, as well as the U.S. states of Washington and Michigan, passed minimum-wage exemptions requested by the CHL – the umbrella organization that represents the three Canada-based major junior hockey leagues.

Richard Clark, a spokesman for Minister Tibollo, forwarded TSN a copy of the government's response letter to the OHL on Thursday.

TSN sent Clark two questions in response: Would the government ask for proof about the finances of OHL teams before changing provincial law, and would the government ask the OHL whether revenue sharing might be explored if the league is worried about keeping some teams in business?

Clark didn't answer those questions. Instead, in an emailed statement, he wrote "most OHL franchises operate at or near a break-even point each



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season. According to a KPMG study, over a five-year period (2012 – 2016), 11 teams had an annual net loss and 9 teams had an annual net income. The average net loss/income per team each year ranged from -\$114,000 to \$175,000.

TSN reported on the KPMG study in 2017. A subsequent study of OHL team finances commissioned by Charney Lawyers found 17 OHL teams do not historically have their financial statements audited. In 2016, the Erie Otters, Ottawa 67's and Kitchener Rangers were the only OHL teams who said their books were audited.

The Charney Lawyers-commissioned review of the financial statements of OHL clubs showed that the Rangers reported league-high revenue of \$6.5 million in the fiscal year ending May 31, 2016.

In 2015, the most recent year for which they provided their financial statements, the London Knights – widely considered a financial juggernaut among Canadian major-junior teams – said they generated \$6.2 million, down from \$7 million a year earlier, according to the Charney Lawyers review.

"It's impossible to learn anything meaningful from the Knights' records," forensic accountant Al Rosen told TSN in 2017. "They're useless. They bundle everything into revenue without any explanations. We have no clue what they are including as revenue, and what they are not."

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1114885 Websites

TSN.CA / Blanked by Leafs last year, Hall aims to reach another level

Mark Masters

TSN Toronto reporter Mark Masters checks in daily with news and notes on the Maple Leafs. The Leafs (optional) and Devils (optional) skated at Scotiabank Arena on Friday.

The Maple Leafs did something no other Eastern Conference team did last season: hold Taylor Hall off the scoresheet.

The dynamic Devils winger, who won the Hart Trophy after picking up 93 points in 76 games, failed to register a goal or assist in three games against the Leafs. The only other team to shut Hall out a year ago was Nashville and he only played the Predators once.

"When you're playing those top guys, you just try to play them a little harder," Leafs defenceman Morgan Rielly said. "He plays a lot of minutes (19:46 TOI/G), very important on their power play so you try and be a bit harder on him ... He's a great skater, that's a big strength of his."

Leafs goalie Frederik Andersen, in particular, seems to have Hall's number allowing just one goal against him in 11 career NHL showdowns.

"Personally, I've had trouble scoring on him in my career," Hall admitted without prompting this morning. "He seems to be a guy that when he sees the shot he's going to make the save because he's so big and he reacts well. [It's] huge to get traffic in front of him and make his job hard. Whether it's traffic or getting him sliding side to side and rebound shots, second chances, those are the ways you beat the best goalies in the league and he's obviously up there."

Hall has started strong this season with 15 points in 13 games. He's only been held without a point in two games and one was the season opener.

"I still think I have another level to get to this year," Hall said. "Certainly, the line (with Nico Hischier and Kyle Palmieri) has been playing well. We have been producing and a game like tonight is huge for us. We have to lead the way and play well."

"I think their line is unbelievable," Leafs coach Mike Babcock said. "Palmieri scores and gets to the net. [Hischier] is unbelievable, unreal edges, sees the whole rink, plays fast. Hall has got unbelievable speed and shoots the puck. Together they're a real good unit."

Leafs Ice Chips: Andersen has Hall's number

Reigning NHL MVP Taylor Hall produced against pretty much every team in the NHL except for the Maple Leafs, and more specifically Frederik Andersen. Mark Masters has more.

Hall and the Devils toured the Hockey Hall of Fame yesterday. Hall has visited the shrine a number of times over the years, but this was the first time he could see his name on the Hart Trophy.

"Yeah, they had me take a couple pictures with it," he said sheepishly. "I mean, it's probably something that later on in my life I'll go back and kind of revisit and think about how cool it was, but in the moment, now, it's something where I want to focus on my season this year and my career going forward. But, obviously, very cool to see my name up there."

The lesson to not take anything for granted was hammered home early in Hall's career as the No. 1 pick in the 2010 draft was traded by Edmonton in 2016 and didn't experience playoff hockey until last spring. And that run ended in the first round after only five games.

So, Hall is still seeking a prolonged postseason run and many of his teammates are in a similar position. Perhaps that's why a certain request by the Hall of Fame created some tension after the team polished off a special dinner in the Great Hall. "A little awkward at the end," Hall revealed. "They wanted us to take a picture around the Stanley Cup and there are not many guys that have really ever been close to winning it on our team, so we had to move to the side and get a better picture. But it's always cool to be around the history of the game. And when you're in Toronto you definitely feel the love of hockey that Toronto has."

Devils' Hall of Fame trip ends awkwardly due to Cup picture

Reigning Hart trophy winner Taylor Hall took time with his Devils teammates to visit the Hockey Hall of Fame while in Toronto. The night ended with an awkward situation involving the Stanley Cup.

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TSN.CA / Leafs hope third line about to break through

Kristen Shilton

TORONTO – Connor Brown knew the Maple Leafs' third line had more to give offensively, if only he, Par Lindholm and Andreas Johnsson could stay confident through failing to produce an even-strength point in their first three games together.

So when he scored Toronto's opening goal on Tuesday against Vegas, it was proof positive to Brown that the unit's hard work was starting to pay off.

"In our bad games, I don't think we've played so bad, but I don't know if we've been able to sustain offence as much as we want," said Brown after the Leafs' optional morning skate on Friday.

"Confidence is a big part of it. We had done a lot of good things, but hadn't been able to get on the board. It's important for our team to get more production [from secondary scorers] and it's important for our line to create some chances, not get discouraged."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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That would have been an easy trap for the trio to fall into, given that all three were struggling offensively even before a shoulder injury to Auston Matthews on Oct. 27 led to the formation of the line. At that point, Brown had four points, Lindholm had three and Johnsson one.

The group has been sound defensively since coming together with zero goals against, but with zero even-strength points produced and less than 50 per cent possession, they were average everywhere else.

That was until Brown outworked a pair of defenders in front of Vegas goalie Marc-Andre Fleury to bury a marker that showed the line could contribute at both ends of the ice.

"There are times where you go through stretches of the season where you have tons of confidence and stretches where there's not much confidence there," Brown said. "We were relentless in recovering pucks and we were able to stay on it. We've been working on holding onto the puck down low and not being one-and-done."

Mike Babcock could sense a breakthrough outing for his third line coming even before Brown's goal, and has since singled them out as being "our best line doing everything right."

"I thought the last two games, their line was really good," Babcock said. "We'd still like them to spend more time in the offensive zone, but they did everything right last game. We'd like them to get heavier and spend more time in the offensive zone, but it's just a matter of time."

The Leafs will count on that being the case since the third line's middle-of-the-pack numbers haven't helped solve the team's secondary scoring woes. Brown's goal this week was the first by the Leafs' third or fourth line since Oct. 24 and only his second goal of the season, while Lindholm has added one and Johnsson has none.

In total, the Leafs bottom six (comprised of Brown, Lindholm, Johnsson, Tyler Ennis, Josh Leivo and Frederik Gauthier) has produced nine points (three goals, six assists) at even strength through 15 games, compared to 67 points (26 goals, 41 assists) at 5-on-5 from their top two lines.

But Toronto's third unit hopes Brown's goal will ignite more production going forward.

"I still don't think I'm there quite yet [offensively]," admitted Lindholm. "But we've talked about it, and even though my focus is on the defensive side, it feels way better now. I know Brown and Johnsson are good offensive players, so I think if we all keep improving, we're going to be dangerous."

"Our intensity has been our biggest weapon," added Johnsson. "We're winning pucks back. Last game we got a goal because of it. It felt good to work and get a goal for it. Our confidence is going up and we're playing with a lot of speed so right now we're more successful."

Johnsson's lack of offence so far might be the biggest surprise of the Leafs' season. After producing three goals and two assists in 15 games with Toronto last season, Johnsson earned American Hockey League MVP honours as he led the Toronto Marlies to their first-ever Calder Cup championship with 24 points in 16 games.

Johnsson has only one power-play assist to his credit this year. He had been a healthy scratch five times before Matthews got hurt while splitting time with Ennis on the Leafs' fourth line.

Lindholm, who played with Johnsson briefly on that line, said the 23-year-old has come a long way from the start of the year.

"The last couple of weeks he's been for sure way better," said Lindholm. "He has more confidence, he's skating more. You can see compared to how it was previously that he's getting there. We talk to each other quite a bit. When you get to know each other, it's easier to work hard together."

Babcock also observed that Johnsson is "starting to get going" too, and believes it will give the Leafs' offence much-needed depth when he does.

For that to happen, the Leafs' entire third line will be counted upon to their newfound momentum alive.

"All three of us are on the same page," Johnsson said. "We're similar players, too, so all three of us can be on the net or have the puck or be the first fore-checker. I feel like that we can read each other well in that sense and that's when we work."

Maple Leafs' projected lineup vs. New Jersey:

Forwards

Hyman-Tavares-Marner

Marleau-Kadri-Kapanen

Johnsson-Lindholm-Brown

Ennis-Gauthier-Leivo

Defence

Rielly-Hainsey

Gardiner-Zaitsev

Dermott-Ozhiganov

Goaltenders

Andersen starts

Sparks

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USA TODAY / Five things to know in the NHL: Penguins sure to trade to shake things up

Kevin Allen, USA TODAY Published 11:50 a.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018 | Updated 3:22 p.m. ET Nov. 9, 2018

Are the New York Islanders a playoff team? Are the Vancouver Canucks this good? Are Bob Boughner's and Mike Yeo's jobs safe?

There is plenty we don't know early in the second month of this NHL season. But here are five things we do know less than two weeks before Thanksgiving:

Let's make a deal

When Pittsburgh Penguins general manager Jim Rutherford took his team to task in a candid interview on 105.9 FM in Pittsburgh Wednesday, you can be sure players took notice. He will make a trade. Soon.

"Has this team been together too long? It's something I always have to watch for," Rutherford said. "When do you have to make those changes? The players are doing everything they can to tell me now's the time."

Rutherford is among the most aggressive traders in NHL history. In an era when GMs lament how difficult it is to make deals, Rutherford has made multiple trades, many having major impacts on his team. Among Penguins he acquired through trades: Phil Kessel, Justin Schultz, Riley Sheahan, Patric Hornqvist and Jamie Oleksiak.

The Penguins need defensive help and a spark up front. Rutherford said he doesn't see any desirable defensemen in the market place, but he has a history of finding what he needs. The Los Angeles Kings and Carolina Hurricanes could be willing trade partners.

Swedish sensation



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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Unquestionably, Elias Pettersson, 19, is the NHL's best rookie. The debate is whether we should already consider the Canucks forward one of the league's top players.

Detroit Red Wings coach Jeff Blashill compared him to Pavel Datsyuk because of his deceptiveness. He pointed out Pettersson is more dominant than fellow Swedish countryman Peter Forsberg was at his age. He was the first player in 26 years to score nine or more goals in the first nine games of his NHL career.

Pettersson has 10 goals and 17 points in 11 games. He's slick, quick and magical with the puck and he's better than average defensively. How good are his hands? Look at videos online that show him juggling while riding a unicycle. As a teenager, Pettersson is already one of the league's most entertaining players.

Stanley Cup preview

The Nashville Predators and Tampa Bay Lightning are the two teams that have most lived up to expectations this season.

Nobody would be shocked if they ended up in the Stanley Cup Final. Both teams have a balanced roster, rich in skill and playoff experience. Nashville goalie Pekka Rinne, 36, is playing as if he is in the prime of his career. Tampa Bay goalie Andrei Vasilevskiy is only now exploring the depths of his talent.

The Predators have the No. 1 defensive team (2.07 goals per game), and Lightning have the No. 5 defensive team. The Lightning are the No. 2 offensive team (3.63) and the Predators are tied for sixth (3.40).

Nashville downed Tampa Bay 4-1 when they met last week.

Offense back in style

With nearly a fifth of the season in the books, scoring is up 4.7 percent. Teams are averaging 3.11 goals per game, according to hockey-reference.com. If that holds, it would be the NHL's highest team average since 1995-96 when teams averaged 3.14.

"In the last several years, it's been close to a 3-2 league, meaning five goals per game," Predators general manager David Poile said. "My personal preference would be that we be a 4-3 league. ... It feels like we might have the opportunity to get there."

It's unlikely the NHL will return to the high-scoring ways of the 1980s when teams averaged 3.5 to 4.0 goals per game. Goalies are too big, too talented, and emphasis on defense is too unwavering.

Don't write off Golden Knights

The Vegas Golden Knights aren't in a playoff spot, but give them credit for hanging in there while enduring this period of injuries and bad luck.

Injuries and No. 1 defenseman Nate Schmidt's 20-game suspension are the reasons for the slow start. Alex Tuch missed the first eight games because of a lower-body injury. Paul Stastny's injury was a major blow. Max Pacioretty was hurt and now Erik Haula is out for an undetermined time. When everyone is healthy and Schmidt returns, the Golden Knights will be back in the hunt.

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