



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

NORTH STATE JOURNAL

Hurricanes shut out in Vancouver

[December 6, 2017 Jim Morris. The Sports Xchange Article, NHL, Sports](#)

VANCOUVER, British Columbia — Winning was the most important thing.

Not having to answer questions about why a potential shutout disappeared late in a game made it even sweeter.

Jacob Markstrom made 30 saves for his first career shutout and defenseman Derrick Pouliot scored a goal and added two assists as the Vancouver Canucks defeated the Carolina Hurricanes 3-0 on Tuesday night.

The shutout came in Markstrom's 129th game and 115th start. He had come close before, including in Vancouver's 2-1 victory over Toronto on Saturday when the Maple Leafs scored with 2:52 left.

"If we won 3-2 today it would have been great," said the 27-year-old from Gavie, Sweden. "I'm just more happy about not getting the questions from you guys, to be honest.

"It's nice to be able to contribute. If you don't let in any goals that's a good way to do it. It's also a team game. If you look at the chances, they didn't have much."

Markstrom was muted in his celebration at the final whistle. He calmly skated out of his crease only to be mobbed by his teammates.

Pouliot seemed more excited for the shutout than his own three-point performance.

"You feel awesome for him," said Pouliot. "It was awesome to see him get that first one. He played unbelievable."

Thomas Vanek, who scored a power-play goal in the second period, said Markstrom is one of the reasons the Canucks remain in the playoff hunt.

"There's a few times this year he's bailed us out," said Vanek. "Tonight is the perfect night for him because in the first period we were god-awful. He kept it 0-0 and gave us a chance. It feels great for him."

Markstrom shrugged off the team's reaction after the game.

"I guess they were really happy about that win," he deadpanned. "We have a good group here. We battle together. We win and lose together. It's a good group of guys and it's nice when stuff like this happens."

Some of Markstrom's best saves came in the second period. Early on he used his left pad to stop Derek Ryan on a deke

in close. With about five minutes left, Justin Williams scooped up a turnover in the slot and took a shot that Markstrom gloved.

Nikolay Goldobin also scored for the Canucks (14-10-4), who won their third consecutive game.

Vancouver has won 10 straight contests against the Hurricanes at Rogers Arena.

Markstrom's performance overshadowed one of Pouliot's best games as a Canuck. Vancouver acquired the former first-round draft pick in a trade with Pittsburgh in October.

"He did a lot of good things," coach Travis Green said. "He moved the puck well when he needed. He's a young defenseman that is slowly feeling good about himself and finding his game.

We haven't found out what his ceiling is."

Pouliot, who has three goals and 18 assists in 91 games, said he's feeling more comfortable with his game.

"For me it's a confidence thing," he said. "I feel better each night. I'm starting to add things to my game. I'm playing well defensively, that's where it starts. I can add the offensive stuff after that."

The loss was the fifth in seven games for the Hurricanes (11-10-5). It was the first time this year Carolina was shut out.

The Hurricanes controlled most of the scoreless first period, outshooting Vancouver 12-3. The Canucks found their game in the second. They scored twice, outshot Carolina 10-5, and kept the Hurricanes hemmed in their own zone.

Defenseman Justin Faulk said the Hurricanes couldn't maintain the momentum they built in the first period.

"We had a little bit of a letdown," he said. "I don't know if it's a thing of not having confidence right now.

"We are trying to find a way to continue that play we had in the first period and carry it into the second and not get disappointed that we didn't score."

Coach Bill Peters said his team couldn't finish what it started.

"The start was fine, we did some good things," he said. "I don't think we had a very effective forecheck in the second period."

Vancouver center Bo Horvat left in the game in the third period. Green would only say Horvat had "a small injury."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Horvat went to the dressing room earlier in the period but returned. A few minutes later, he went to the room for good.

NOTES: The three-point game was a career high for Pouliot. ... C Alex Burmistrov and D Alex Biega were Vancouver scratches. ... D Michael Del Zotto leads the Canucks by

averaging almost 22 minutes of ice time a game. ... It was the second consecutive game Vancouver was held to three shots in a period. ... Carolina last won in Vancouver on Oct. 15, 1999. ... It was the first game of a season-long, six-game road trip for the Hurricanes. ... LW Phillip Di Giuseppe and D Klas Dahlbeck were Carolina scratches.



Recap: Hurricanes Blanked by Canucks

Canes winless in their last 10 visits to Vancouver

by Michael Smith [@MSmithCanes](#) / CarolinaHurricanes.com
12:25 AM

VANCOUVER - The Carolina Hurricanes were stymied by Jacob Markstrom and the Vancouver Canucks in a 3-0 shutout loss.

Markstrom made 30 saves in his first career shutout in 129 games, as the Canes fell to 0-7-3 in Vancouver since the turn of the century.

Here are five takeaways from tonight's game.

One

All things considered, the Hurricanes played a pretty good road period in the first 20 minutes. The Canes quadrupled the Canucks in shots, 12-3, and held Vancouver without a shot for the last 16:25 of the period, a stretch that included a power-play for the home team.

"I think we played a good first period," [Justin Faulk](#) said. "We had chances and looks."

"We played like we did against Florida," [Derek Ryan](#) said. "We were physical on the forecheck."

But, the Canes couldn't capitalize on their dominant effort, and it was a scoreless game heading into the first intermission. Coming into tonight, the Canes were 5-1-1 when leading after one period and 4-4-3 when tied after one; that's a sizable disparity and all the reason more why the Hurricanes need to manufacture something more tangible from their otherwise strong starts.

"The start was fine. I thought we did some good things," Head coach Bill Peters said. "We needed to be a little harder at the net, but I thought the start was fine."

Two

Things then got away from the Canes in the second period.

The Canucks began the period killing off the remaining 55 seconds of a carry over power play, a sequence capitalized by Bo Horvat's breakaway opportunity that was turned away by [Scott Darling](#).

"We felt good. We talked in the room after the first. Had some good looks, keep it going, keep skating, keep trying to get in on the forecheck and create turnovers," Faulk said. "We had a power play to start the second. Didn't necessarily get a ton of chances there."

"I think they got momentum off their kill," Peters said. "They got a little momentum off that, and then they capitalized."

Derrick Pouliot's second of the year ended up being the game-winner, as he walked through the Hurricanes group of five, dragged the puck to the middle of the ice and scored on a quick snap shot.

"They made a good play when we turned it over in transition and scored," Peters said.

Thomas Vanek stretched the lead to two with a redirection in the slot on the power play, and all of a sudden the Canes found themselves down a pair of goals.

"Second periods have been tough for us as of late," Faulk said. "We need to carry those first periods over to the second to build a game and try to win."

Three

So, second periods.

Including tonight, the Hurricanes have been outscored 10-2 in the middle frame in their last six games. Coming in to tonight's game on the season, the second period was the only one in which the Hurricanes had a negative goal differential (now 25-18).

"I think maybe it's puck management. It's the period of the long change. You've got to make sure you're making strong plays with the puck and make sure you have a forecheck," Peters said. "I didn't think we had a very effective forecheck in the second."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

"We almost have a little bit of a letdown," Faulk said. "I don't know if it's not having the confidence right now that it will continue, so we just need to find a way to continue that play we have in the first period, carry it over to the second and not get disappointed that we didn't score and get a 1-0 or 2-0 lead."

"Starting on time, coming out hard in the first. We've got to continue that in the second," Ryan said. "It just got away from us tonight."

Four

The issue of the second-period sag will need to be rectified sooner rather than later if the Hurricanes want to be more consistent as a bunch.

The team also needs to find a way to string together a number of quality efforts. Saturday night's overtime victory against Florida was emotional and dramatic. Tonight's game in Vancouver fell flat after a promising start.

"We need to put together a full 60 minutes," Ryan said. "We've had good periods here and good periods there, but

we haven't put together a good, full 60 minutes - against Florida we did - but more consistently, game after game."

"You just have to stick with the script, play your game every night, try to build and continue to grow as a team," Faulk said.

Five

[Marcus Kruger](#) was given a 10-minute misconduct in the second period following Vanek's power-play goal. On the video feed I saw at Rogers Arena, a replay showed Kruger being upended by Sven Baertschi away from the puck, so I assumed his anger was related to that unpenalized play. Perhaps that was part of it. But, the reason he was given the misconduct was that one of the linesmen believed Kruger had intentionally shot the puck in his direction. Kruger maintains his one-handed flip of the puck towards the linesman was in no way malicious, which was the source of the protest as he left the ice.

Up Next

The Hurricanes will head to California for a three-game set that begins on Thursday in San Jose.



SB NATION
CANES COUNTRY

Recap and Rank'em: Canucks, Markstrom Stymie Hurricanes in 3-0 Shutout

Canes follow familiar path in loss to begin six-game road trip.

by [Andy House](#) Dec 6, 2017, 12:43am EST

[Vancouver Canucks](#) goaltender [Jacob Markstrom](#) came into tonight's game [on the verge of a dubious record](#): four games away from the most career games for a starting NHL goaltender without recording a shutout. Welp...

Such is the way the [Carolina Hurricanes](#) longest road trip of the season began, as the Canes fell to the Canucks 3-0 for their first shutout loss of the season. The game followed an all too familiar pattern for the Canes; a solid first period which bore no fruit, followed by a second period that began with the Canucks taking control of the action and never relinquishing it.

Their stranglehold on the game began almost three minutes into the second period, as [Derrick Pouliot](#) breezed down right wing on the rush, and slipped over into the slot to snap one past [Scott Darling](#) on his glove side, making the score 1-0.

As play continued in the second, the Canucks continued to assert themselves, applying pressure in all three zones of the ice. That pressure was rewarded when [Josh Jooris](#) was sent off for slashing at 12:11 of the period. In the resulting power play, [Thomas Vanek](#), parked himself in front of the net

behind [Jacob Slavin](#) and [Brett Pesce](#), got his stick on a [Sam Gagner](#) shot, and directed it past Darling to make it 2-0.

During the power play, [Marcus Kruger](#) was upended by [Sven Baertschi](#) and fired the puck toward the official after the goal was scored, earning a 10-minute misconduct.

While the Canes controlled play for the first six minutes of the third period, they were again one-upped by the Canucks, as [Nikolay Goldobin](#) found his way to the front of the net, taking a pass from Horvat in the corner. Goldobin clanged one off the left post, then gathered the rebound and beat Darling to put the nail in the Canes coffin at 3-0.

A main driver of play for the Canucks, Pouliot, who was acquired 8th overall by the [Penguins](#) in the 2012 draft after the Canes traded the pick for [Jordan Staal](#), recorded a three-point night.

The Canes were again able to out-shoot an opponent, 29-22. The inability to turn opportunities into goals, particularly early in the contest, led to what has become a somewhat consistent pattern. They have now been outscored 25-18 in the second period this season.

The Canes will look to right the ship on the next leg of their road trip as they head to San Jose to take on the [Sharks](#) at 10:30 on Thursday night.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017



Markstrom gets 1st NHL shutout, Canucks blank Hurricanes 3-0

VANCOUVER, British Columbia (AP) — After more than 100 career starts, Vancouver goalie Jacob Markstrom finally has his first NHL shutout.

Markstrom made 30 saves and the Canucks blanked the Carolina Hurricanes 3-0 on Tuesday night for their third straight win.

Vancouver defenseman Derrick Pouliot had a goal and two assists. Nikolay Goldobin and Thomas Vanek also scored for the Canucks (14-10-4).

In his ninth NHL season, Markstrom had gone 129 career games and 115 starts without a shutout. He came close on Saturday night in a 2-1 victory over Toronto, but the Maple Leafs spoiled the party by scoring with just under three minutes left.

This time, the 27-year-old Swedish netminder would not be denied, and his Vancouver teammates swarmed him after the buzzer.

"I guess they were really happy about that win," joked Markstrom. "We have a good group here. We battle together and we win and lose together. It's a good group of guys and it's nice when stuff like this happens.

"It's nice to be able to contribute. If you don't let in any goals, that's a good way to do it."

The Hurricanes (11-10-5) dropped the opener of a six-game road trip, their longest of the season. They have lost 10 consecutive games at Rogers Arena (0-7-3), where they last won in October 1999.

Scott Darling stopped 19 shots for Carolina, which carried the play in the first period.

"We are trying to find a way to continue that play we had in the first period and carry it into the second and not get disappointed that we didn't score, that we didn't get a lead," defenseman Justin Faulk said.

The Hurricanes, who entered leading the league in shots on goal per game, outshot Vancouver 12-3 in the first. Darling didn't have much to do at the other end, even though the Canucks had a power-play opportunity.

That all changed quickly in the second, though. Canucks wing Bo Horvat missed on a breakaway chance in the first minute and then Pouliot scored the first goal at 2:58. Pouliot carried the puck into the slot, made a nice deke to fake out Darling and snapped it over the goalie's shoulder.

"I'm starting to add things to my game," said Pouliot, who had a breakout offensive performance. "So if I'm playing well defensively that's where it starts and I can add the offensive stuff after that. For me, it's a confidence thing. I feel better each night."

Vanek scored on a power play to make it 2-0 at 13:50. Sam Gagner fired from the top of the faceoff circle and Vanek, parked in front of Darling, tipped the puck into the top corner of the net. Pouliot also got an assist on the goal.

Justin Williams had the Hurricanes' best chance in the second with five minutes left on a point-blank shot from the slot that Markstrom just got a glove on.

Carolina came out firing against Markstrom in the third, but Vancouver extended its lead at 6:26. Goldobin took a pass from Horvat in the slot, hit the post, collected his rebounded and scored his first of the season to make it 3-0. Pouliot added his second assist of the night on the goal.

"Without a doubt his best game, especially offensively," Canucks coach Travis Green said. "He did a lot of good things. He moved the puck up well when he needed to, and he's a young D-man that is slowly feeling good about himself and finding his game."

NOTES: Horvat left in the third period and did not return. There was no update on his status after the game. ... The Canucks were without defenseman Erik Gudbranson (upper body) and forward Brandon Sutter (lower body). ... The teams meet once more this season, Feb. 9 in North Carolina.

UP NEXT

Hurricanes: Thursday night at San Jose.

Canucks: Host the Philadelphia Flyers on Thursday night.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017



Philip Samuelsson Proving Last Season Was No Fluke

Written by Nicholas Niedzielski

Published: December 05, 2017

Last season Philip Samuelsson was a late addition that sparked the Checkers and helped propel the team to a playoff berth. This season he is a cornerstone on Charlotte's blue line, pushing for the same end result.

Samuelsson joined the team at last February, heading over from the Montreal system in exchange for fan favorite and longtime Checker Keegan Lowe. Despite not having a ton of time to get acclimated to his new environment, the blueliner thrived and became a key piece of Charlotte's red-hot run down the stretch.

While Samuelsson was originally just here for that small chunk of the season before heading into free agency, the Hurricanes obviously saw something in the Swedish defenseman, inking him to a deal and sealing his return to Charlotte. Now through the first two months of the season with a new head coach after playing for his father, Ulf Samuelsson, last season, the younger Samuelsson is proving last year's success was no fluke.

"It's familiarity," said Samuelsson. "I'm comfortable with the system. We're playing the same system as we did last year even though we have [head coach] Mike [Vellucci] taking over now. Anytime you're comfortable on the ice it will show in your play."

"I think it's confidence," said assistant coach Peter Andersson, who runs the team's defense. "He got time to play here last year and we were playing good. You could see his confidence growing last year and it's kept going from there. That and his skating has gotten better, I know he has been working on that this summer. He gets down to the puck quicker and has more time to get better passes up to the forwards."

Samuelsson is a part of a Charlotte defensive corps that is largely the same from a season ago, with six of the eight blue liners on the current roster returning from last year. While the Checkers have seen an influx of new faces up front this season, the consistency on the back end has helped players like Samuelsson settle into their own.

"It's huge," said Samuelsson. "Anytime you get to play a bunch of consecutive games with a guy you start to really figure out how they play and all their little nuances. Me and

Rollie [Roland McKeown] have played together most of this year and we've kind of grown together as a pair and I think we've done a good job out there, we've been playing against some top lines. The next thing for us to just start contributing more offensively."

As he referenced, the Checkers have leaned on the duo of Samuelsson and McKeown heavily this season to help contain some of the high-flying offensive talent that their opponents trot out. They have been largely successful in that aspect, helping Charlotte rank 11th in the league in terms of goals-against per game, but also in helping out on the other side of the rink. Samuelsson and McKeown have the two best plus/minus marks on the team, with the former ranking as one of the best in the league, especially among defensemen.

"We're just trying to get the puck to the net," said Samuelsson. "When we have chances to get it down there we're getting it down there to the guys who are big and strong in front of the net. The main thing for us in the neutral zone is to move it quick. I think anytime you can do that and get the puck into our speedsters' hands they can take it from there."

"He has a good shot and he's a good passer from his own end," said Andersson. "That makes it easier for the forwards to go and create those scoring chances."

The 26-year-old mentioned wanting to bump up his offensive production moving forward, as he currently sits with a solid 10 points (3g, 7a) in 23 games. Last season Samuelsson hit a wall in St. John's, totaling just five points in 40 games with the IceCaps before getting reinvigorated in Charlotte for 14 points in 25 games. While he's not far off that pace this season and excelling in other areas, it's hard to watch his game and not think the points will start dropping soon.

"It's always nice to have your defensemen scoring," said Andersson. "But lately here he and McKeown have been playing against the other team's top line, so you probably don't get so much scoring there. Of course, he's good with the puck and he has a good shot so he's probably going to get you some points here as the season goes."

For now, Samuelsson continues to anchor what has proven to be a strong corps of blue liners.

"He's been around and he's a big fighter," said Andersson. "It's nice to have back there. It's nice for the young kids to see that if you fight hard you'll do well."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017



Markstrom gets first NHL shutout in Canucks win against Hurricanes

Makes 30 saves in 129th game; Pouliot has goal, two assists for Vancouver

by Kevin Woodley / NHL.com Correspondent

12:41 AM

VANCOUVER -- Vancouver Canucks goalie [Jacob Markstrom](#) insists he stopped worrying about shutouts and focused more on wins a long time ago, but admitted it was nice to finally combine the two in the NHL.

Markstrom made 30 saves for his first career shutout, and the Canucks defeated the Carolina Hurricanes 3-0 at Rogers Arena on Tuesday.

It was Markstrom's first shutout in 129 games (115 starts) over eight NHL seasons. The record for most games in an NHL career without a shutout is 132, by Pokey Reddick, who played for the Winnipeg Jets, Edmonton Oilers and Florida Panthers from 1986-94.

"Early in the career I had a couple really close ones and I was 21 years old and you really want a shutout in the NHL, and then it just kind of went away, that urge, and I just wanted to win and kind of accepted that I ain't getting one," Markstrom said with a laugh. "But it's fun, you want to help your team win, and if I don't let in any goals it's going to mean we're winning the hockey game."

Markstrom lost a shutout with 2:52 left in a 2-1 win against the Toronto Maple Leafs on Saturday but was perfect against Carolina. He got his left pad on [Derek Ryan](#)'s deke alone in tight 2:04 into the second period, and his glove on a [Justin Williams](#) wrist shot from the slot at 15:01.

Markstrom may not have been worried about the shutout but it was a topic of conversation on the Canucks bench in the third period as teammates tried to help close it out.

"You feel awesome for him. It was awesome to see him get that first one," said defenseman [Derrick Pouliot](#), who had a goal and two assists for his first NHL three-point game. "He played unbelievable. I'm sure there will be many more."

[Thomas Vanek](#) and Nikolay Goldobin each scored for the Canucks (14-10-4), who have won three straight.

[Scott Darling](#) made 19 saves for the Hurricanes (11-10-5), who have lost five of seven (2-4-1). Playing their first game of a season-long six-game road trip, Carolina outshot

Vancouver 12-3 in the first period but were outshot 10-5 and fell behind 2-0 in the second.

"We have a little bit of a letdown," defenseman [Justin Faulk](#) said. "I don't know if it's a thing of not having confidence right now. We are trying to find a way to continue that play we had in the first period and carry it into the second and not get disappointed that we didn't score, that we didn't get a lead. Just continue on with that play and know that if we continue to do that we're going to have plenty of opportunities and we are going to score."

Instead, Pouliot made it 1-0 on Vancouver's fifth shot of the game, at 2:58 of the second, after carrying the puck down the right wing, cutting into the slot and beating Darling with a shot to the glove side.

Vanek made it 2-0 at 13:50 with a power-play deflection in the slot, catching Darling moving right by tipping [Sam Gagner](#)'s slap pass the other way.

Goldobin scored his first goal of the season on a pretty solo effort 6:26 into the third period, cutting between two defenders in the slot before hitting the post with a wrist shot and scoring on the rebound.

Goal of the game

Goldobin's goal at 6:26 of the third period.

Save of the game

Markstrom threw out his glove to stop Williams with 4:59 left in the second period.

Highlight of the game

Pouliot's goal at 2:58 of the second period.

They said it

"When we are good on the forecheck I feel like we create a lot of offence. We can turn pucks over in their zone, spend whole shifts in there. We did that in the first [period] and kind of got away from it in the second and the third." -- *Carolina Hurricanes center Derek Ryan*

"It happened so fast you can't really think so you are just trying to make a save. It's kind of desperation, which is nice to have, which I don't want to take out of my game. I don't want to be one of those goalies who is kind of all technique." -- *Vancouver Canucks goalie Jacob Markstrom on his glove save off Justin Williams alone in the slot*



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Need to know

Carolina had lost 10 straight in Vancouver since Oct. 15, 1999. ... Canucks center [Bo Horvat](#) left with 11:10 remaining in the third period, returned briefly to the bench but left for good with 4:25 remaining with an undisclosed injury. "I don't have any update but he had a small injury that kept him out," coach Travis Green said.

What's next

Hurricanes: At the San Jose Sharks on Thursday (10:30 p.m. ET; NBCSCA, FS-CR, NHL.TV)

Canucks: Host the Philadelphia Flyers on Thursday (10 p.m. ET; SNP, NBCSP, NHL.TV)

TODAY'S LINKS

<http://nsjonline.com/article/2017/12/hurricanes-shut-out-in-vancouver/>
<https://www.nhl.com/hurricanes/news/recap-hurricanes-blanked-by-canucks/c-293727598>
<https://www.canescountry.com/2017/12/6/16740704/game-recap-vancouver-canucks-3-carolina-hurricanes-0-jacob-markstrom-shutout-derrick-pouliot>
<https://apnews.com/336d3a9460dd4836b0473749b86a08b6/Markstrom-gets-1st-NHL-shutout-Canucks-blank-Hurricanes-3-0>
<http://gocheckers.com/articles/features/philip-samuelsson-proving-last-season-was-no-fluke>
<https://www.nhl.com/news/carolina-hurricanes-vancouver-canucks-game-recap/c-293729266>

SportScan

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

1086882 San Jose Sharks

Sharks defenseman Brenden Dillon suspended by NHL for slash

By CURTIS PASHIELKA | PUBLISHED: December 5, 2017

SAN JOSE — Sharks center Joe Thornton did not incur any supplemental discipline from the NHL's Department of Player Safety on Tuesday. Defenseman Brenden Dillon wasn't quite as fortunate.

Dillon was suspended one game by for his slash on defenseman Madison Bowey in the waning moments of Monday night's testy affair with the Washington Capitals. It is the first time Dillon has received supplemental discipline from the NHL.

With 4.6 seconds left in the Sharks' game Monday against the Capitals, Dillon sent the puck into the Capitals zone before he was hit by Bowey against the glass. As Dillon came back from the hit, he slashed Bowey on the left hand before the two began to push and shove. Dillon received a slashing major and a game misconduct.

In its video explanation for the suspension, the league stated after Dillon was hit off balance, he brought his stick down forcefully onto the hand of Bowey. "It is important to note that isn't a slash delivered as part of a hockey play. Dillon is not attempting to alert an opponent to his presence, or to make a defensive play on a player with the puck.

"This is simply a frustrated player delivering a retaliatory and forceful slash to a vulnerable area of an opponent's body."

Dillon suspended one game for slashing <https://t.co/hhLfnSqrq2> via @NHL

— Curtis Pashelka (@CurtisPashelka) December 6, 2017

Barring a successful appeal, Dillon's suspension further thins out an already depleted Sharks defense corps with Tim Heed and Paul Martin on injured reserve.

Martin has been out since the second week of October but is close to a return, Sharks coach Pete DeBoer said earlier this week. Heed was sent to IR over the weekend, retroactive to Nov. 25, with an upper body injury and considered day-to-day. Both would be at least eligible to come back for Thursday's home game against Carolina.

If Heed or Martin can't go, the Sharks would have just five available defensemen and need to recall another blueliner from the AHL. Candidates in that case would include Cavan Fitzgerald, Jacob Middleton and Julius Bergman.

Capitals coach Barry Trotz told reporters after Monday's game — which Washington won 4-1 — that he thought Bowey would be OK. Washington forward T.J. Oshie, though, was knocked out of the game with an upper body injury after a second period hit from Thornton.

Oshie was falling to the ice after a check on Logan Couture before Thornton came in and hit Oshie with his backside with 3:27 left in the second. Oshie spent a couple of minutes on the ice before he left the game. He also did not skate Tuesday.

The Thornton hit on Oshie. pic.twitter.com/RtVV6W2dWG

— StopThrowingHats (@stopthehats) December 5, 2017

"He was just falling a little bit. It's not like I ran him or anything," Thornton said after the game. "I bumped him and it felt like my hip kind of hit him in the head. So it's just unfortunate what happened."

Get Sharks news in your inbox. Sign up now for the free Sharks Report newsletter.

On whether a check to the head is avoidable, one factor considered, according to NHL Rule 48.1, is "Whether the opponent materially changed the position of his body or head immediately prior to or simultaneously with the hit in a way that significantly contributed to the head contact."

Still, DeBoer was upset with how Capitals forward Tom Wilson initiated a fight with Thornton at 2:14 of the third period in response to the hit.

"If someone were to grab Joe in the heat of the moment after the play because they thought a liberty was taken, then I've got no problem with



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

that," DeBoer said Monday night. "But to go into the dressing room, think about it, come out in the first shift and do that premeditated crap is just garbage."

There were 61 minutes in penalties in the game, with Barclay Goodrow fighting Alex Chiasson also in the third period.

"He was one of my favorite players growing up," Wilson said of Thornton after the game. "He's what's good for the game, and in that instance, that hit, I didn't like personally and I don't think our team liked."

"Any time a guy is down, it's kind of a no-hit zone. It's part of the game. He stood up for himself afterwards. I respect him for that. But Osh is one of our best players. He's one of the leaders in this room. Honestly, it's not great to see that hit in that instance."

The NHL has been cracking down on slashing infractions this season.

Dillon with the 2-handed swinging chop on Bowey with 4.6 seconds left in the game. pic.twitter.com/ql0uaqfMqY

— StopThrowingHats (@stopthehats) December 5, 2017

Sunday, Thornton was fined \$5,000 for his slash on Tampa Bay's Tyler Johnson, the same fine given to Chicago's Patrick Kane on Nov. 28 for his slash on Anaheim's Nick Ritchie and Buffalo's Marco Scandella on Nov. 15 for a slash on Pittsburgh's Patric Hornqvist.

On Nov. 19, Philadelphia's Radko Gudas was suspended ten games for slashing Winnipeg's Mathieu Perreault.

Dillon is the first Sharks player to be suspended this season. Timo Meier was fined \$2,403.67 on Nov. 12 for roughing Vancouver's Michael Del Zotto.

The Sharks flew home Tuesday morning. After Thursday, they host Ottawa on Saturday and Minnesota on Sunday.

San Jose Mercury News: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086823 Los Angeles Kings

Kings get to celebrate more than just a victory

Helene Elliott Helene Elliott

Anze Kopitar is usually thoughtful and articulate in interviews with reporters, but when a certain question was posed to the Kings captain the other day, a look of exasperation crossed his face and his tone reeked of annoyance.

What, he was asked, can he learn from the struggles he experienced during the nightmare that was his 2016-17 season? His answer was curt.

"Can we stop talking about last year at some point?" he said.

Tuesday night was that point.

Kopitar set up Marian Gaborik twice in the third period, once for the tying goal and again on a goal that was a milestone for both players, and also scored into an empty net as the Kings rallied for a 5-2 victory over the Minnesota Wild at Staples Center and extended their winning streak to six games.

On that fourth goal Kopitar won a faceoff and got the puck to Gaborik, whose shot went off the stick of defenseman Matt Dumba and past goaltender Devan Dubnyk. It was the 400th goal and 800th point for Gaborik, who is seven games into his return from a knee procedure, and the 500th assist for Kopitar.

The Slovenian center now has a team-leading 15 goals and team-best 34 points in 29 games; he had merely 12 goals and 52 points in 76 games

last season, the first time in 10 seasons that he was not the Kings' top scorer.

The Kings' biggest problem once they overcame a sleepy first period was how Kopitar and Gaborik would share the puck that produced their simultaneously memorable moment. But that dilemma was solved quickly.

"I told them I'd take it," said coach John Stevens, who moved Gaborik up to the top line with Kopitar and Dustin Brown during the second period because he liked Gaborik's jump and because he thought Gaborik would fare better than Alex Lafallo was doing against Minnesota's big forwards.

"I'm happy for those guys," said Stevens, who scored no goals in his 53-game NHL career. "Kopi's just been a horse all year and Gabby's worked so hard to come back and really wants to play and be a productive player. Four hundred, it's impressive to me to see that type of numbers and Gabby at his age and the injuries he's fought to be that good a player. Kind of fitting that those two guys would partner up on a milestone like that."

Kopitar and Gaborik, 35, had played together before, and their chemistry was obvious as soon as they were reunited Tuesday.

"You give him the puck in the areas that he needs them to score, more often than not he's going to put it in," Kopitar said. "And that's what we're going to need from him going forward, too."

The Wild had scored first, at 10 minutes 30 seconds of the second period, when defenseman Charlie Coyle got a step on Kings center Adrian Kempe and darted into the slot to redirect a pass from Chris Stewart past Jonathan Quick. The Kings matched that at 14:24, on a goal by defenseman Jake Muzzin. Nick Shore made it possible with a slick backpass to Drew Doughty, who earned the first of his three assists when he found Muzzin at the top of the left circle for a slap shot that got past Dubnyk's glove.

Minnesota came back to regain the lead at 15:34 after Tyler Ennis' second wraparound attempt got past Quick, but the Kings took over the rest of the way.

"The third period was huge for us," said Gaborik, who began his NHL career with Minnesota. "We were more desperate. We tried to create more energy within our group and tried to play more in their zone and just desperation."

That paid off when Gaborik finished off a two on one with Kopitar and tied it at 4:35. The Kings got a lucky bounce when Kempe's centering pass caromed off defenseman Jonas Brodin and into the net at 12:38, and benefitted again when Gaborik's shot deflected off Dumba and into the net for a 4-2 lead at the 14-minute mark.

Kopitar sealed it with the empty-netter with 56 seconds left, giving the announced sellout crowd more reason to celebrate.

"I'm very proud of it," Gaborik said of his 400 goals. "Congrats to Kopi for his 500th assist. It's kind of ironic he gets it on my 400th goal and it's against my former team as well."

LA Times: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086824 Los Angeles Kings

Marian Gaborik, Anze Kopitar reach milestones as Kings win 6th straight

By ROBERT MORALES | Orange County Register

LOS ANGELES — Marian Gaborik didn't start Tuesday's game against the Minnesota Wild on center Anze Kopitar's line. But the right wing was



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

moved there in the second period and later scored two of the Kings' four third-period goals to lead them to a 5-2 victory over the Wild before 18,230 at Staples Center.

The goals were Nos. 399 and 400 of Gaborik's career, making him the sixth active player to reach the milestone (Jaromir Jagr, Alex Ovechkin, Marian Hossa, Patrick Marleau, Rick Nash). Kopitar had two assists in the win, his 500th coming on Gaborik's second goal.

The Kings (18-8-3), who trailed 2-1 after two periods, extended their win streak to six games. The Wild (13-11-3) had their two-game winning streak snapped.

Gaborik was playing in just his seventh game of the season after missing the first 22 with a knee injury.

"Yeah, I mean, I missed a lot of games, obviously, so getting more comfortable each game," said Gaborik, who has four goals.

Coach John Stevens liked the idea that Gaborik and Kopitar both reached milestones on the same goal.

"The guys were asking, 'Who gets the puck?'" Stevens said, laughing. "I told them I'd take it. But I'm happy for those guys. Kopy's just been a horse all year and Gaby's worked so hard to get back and really wants to play and be a productive player. ... It's kind of fitting that those two guys would partner up on a milestone like that."

Kopitar didn't think much of the game through the first 40 minutes. But he liked what he saw thereafter.

"I don't think the first two periods were very energetic, I think the whole building kind of felt that," he said. "But then being down one going into the third, you kind of have to throw everything out there."

"Obviously, scoring pretty quick in the third, that certainly helped."

After Gaborik tied the score at 2-2 at 4:35 of the third, Adrian Kempe got credit for his 10th goal of the season when the puck went past Wild goaltender Devan Dubnyk off the skate of Minnesota defenseman Jonas Brodin. That gave the Kings a 3-2 lead.

Gaborik then scored his 400th after Kopitar won a faceoff to the left of Dubnyk for a 4-2 lead at the 14:00 mark. Kopitar scored an empty-net goal – this 15th of the season – at 19:04.

Stevens didn't hide how he felt about the third period of this one.

"I thought it was terrific," he said. "I actually thought it was a pretty good hockey game overall. It was really tight checking by both teams."

Stevens made a bold statement.

"It was probably as good a third period as we've had this year in terms of moving the puck, getting it deep, coming up with loose pucks," he said. "And, obviously, scoring goals goes without saying. But I thought that was just a really solid third period coming off a tough road trip."

The Kings won all four games on their recently concluded road trip.

The Wild got second-period goals by Charlie Coyle at 10:30 and Tyler Ennis at 15:34. They were sandwiched around a goal by Kings defenseman Jake Muzzin at 14:24.

Drew Doughty had three assists for the Kings.

With 13:46 left in the first period, Kings defenseman Kurtis MacDermid and Wild right wing Chris Stewart engaged one another in a brisk round of fisticuffs. MacDermid took some punches to the face early in the scuffle, but he came back and distinguished himself very well.

Orange County Register: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086825 Los Angeles Kings

Anze Kopitar having 'fun' rebound season for Kings

By ROBERT MORALES | Orange County Register

LOS ANGELES — Anze Kopitar played international hockey for his native Slovenia in the summer of 2016 and also played for Team Europe in that year's World Cup in September, before the 2016-17 NHL season.

What followed was Kopitar's worst season with the Kings. The center scored just 12 goals and had 40 assists. The 52 points were the lowest of his career, which is now in its 12th season, save for the strike-shortened 2012-13 campaign when he had 42 points in 47 games.

Kopitar did miss a handful of games with a wrist injury, but he still played in 76 of 82 games last season. He wasn't using the injury, nor his international play, as excuses this week when discussing the solid rebound season he's currently having.

"I mean, I'm enjoying myself, for sure," said Kopitar, who had 14 goals and 17 assists for a team-high 31 points – tied for 10th in the league – through 28 games before Tuesday's game against the visiting Minnesota Wild. "Good individual start and good team start will do that to you."

"It's obviously a lot more fun than it was last year from my point of view of scoring goals and putting up points. And just bottom line, I know how to play."

It wasn't just Kopitar who failed. The team did not make the playoffs, and its 2.43 goals per game average was 24th in the 30-team league. Out went Coach Darryl Sutter, with associate head coach John Stevens taking his place.

The Kings are now averaging 2.96 goals, and with 37 points before Tuesday's game were leading the Pacific Division and, along with Nashville, were just a point behind Winnipeg and St. Louis for top spot in the Western Conference.

Right wing Dustin Brown was asked to talk about his linemate's resurgence. Brown was funny.

"From a hockey standpoint, he's shooting the puck more. For sure, I've noticed that he hasn't passed it as much," Brown said, smiling and drawing laughs from reporters.

Brown said the team as a whole is having more fun, but especially Kopitar.

"I talked to Kopy a lot last year," Brown said. "We sit next to each other in the locker room, we'll sit next to each other on the bus. So I think he just wasn't enjoying the game last year. Every player has kind of been there at some point in their career, and I think this year he's just really enjoying playing."

Kopitar intimated there were moments last season when he felt kind of lost.

"There were a couple of times where I didn't know what to do with myself for a little bit," he said.

Kopitar, 30, said "last year was a really bad year" and that he has put it behind him. When a reporter kept questioning him, he made that clear in a friendly way.

"Will you stop talking about last year at some point?" he said, smiling.

He learned a lot, though.

"I don't know, just to really try and grind it out and you just try to stay as positive as you can," Kopitar said. "You can't get too low on yourself, that's for sure, and maybe I was guilty of doing that a couple of times last year when I wasn't feeling great."

COACH SAW IT COMING



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Stevens isn't surprised about Kopitar's turnaround. It's one he expected because of the work he put in over the summer.

"I mean, I've seen Kopi play at a really high level," Stevens said. "He was probably the one guy that I thought, 'If there's a guy that can get his game back, it's him.'"

Kopitar had 25 goals and 49 assists for 74 points in 2015-16. His best season was in 2009-10, when he had 34 goals and 47 assists for 81 points. He signed an eight-year, \$80 million contract prior to last season.

ICE CHIPS

The Kings will continue their three-game homestand by taking on the Ottawa Senators on Thursday at 7:30 p.m. The homestand will culminate with a game against Carolina on Saturday night at 7:30. ... The Kings then embark on a four-game trip that will include games with New Jersey, the New York Rangers, New York Islanders and Philadelphia Flyers.

Orange County Register: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086826 Los Angeles Kings

DOUGHTY: "I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN PLAYING SOME OF MY BEST HOCKEY"

JON ROSENDECEMBER 5, 20170 COMMENTS

John Stevens adjusted his defensive pairings for the November 24 game at Arizona, placing Jake Muzzin back alongside Drew Doughty and aligning Derek Forbort with the Christian Folin/Oscar Fantenberg consortium. The Kings have points in all six games since then and will carry a five-game winning streak into tonight's match-up with the Minnesota Wild.

How much does this Muzzin-Doughty combination affect the team, and most importantly, the output of its most important defensive player?

"It affects me a little bit, just because I was so used to playing with Forbs for a year and a half or however long it was, so the first couple of games were an adjustment, but now I'm right back to normal and I'm used to it already," he said. "Maybe one or two games I was like, 'there are a few different things,' but we're right back to where we were when we won the Cup five years ago, me and Muzz."

And that benefits both players. In the 136-plus minutes in which Doughty and Muzzin have skated together, the Kings have a Corsi-for of 57.8%. When they're apart, Doughty's on-ice rate drops to 50.0%. When Doughty and Forbort are together, the team's possession rate is 51.1%. When they're apart, Doughty's on-ice rate rises to 53.6%. (via Natural Stat Trick)

"It's different. Muzz is a little bit more ... active in the D-zone, where he's really going hard at guys and he's trying to react quicker, whereas Forbs, he's more patient," Doughty said. "Forbs is unbelievable at defense. Like, I can't even explain how good that guy is at defense. He's so good. The difference between him and Muzz is Muzz might be a little better at moving pucks, and that's not a knock against Forbs, but Forbs' defense, he might even be better than me at it. That's how good Forbs' defense is, and that's how much confidence I have in his D. Yeah, they've both been great."

That's some impressive praise for Forbort, among the better players on the roster at defending the rush. But, hey, let's agree to disagree with Drew here. There probably isn't another defender in the league as good as Doughty at moving his feet to cover ground and shut off plays, nor is there anyone as equipped at checking, using his stick to thwart net-

bound pucks or making dynamic plays to snuff out rushes. I could keep going.

"I always feel like there's never really a game where I don't play well, but as of late I feel like I've been playing some of my best hockey," he said. It comes with the context that before the recent winning streak, he might not have been at his absolute best. A brief, early-season lull has crept in from time to time in his career, but that's often corrected quickly.

And, it should be understood that "Doughty hadn't been playing his best hockey" comes with the reminder that even when he has a B-game, instead of, say, his performance in Detroit one week ago, the team still understands that he has a positive impact on the team's performance.

"Maybe I'm not getting crazy numbers or anything like that, but my defensive game has just been on point," he said. "Like, the other night, going against Ovechkin's line, [Sunday] night going against Kane and Toews' line, those are not easy things when you face those challenges with every team, but those two teams are really big challenges. Obviously, I have a lot of help from my partners. Derek's been an unbelievable partner for me. As of late, Muzz has been a great partner for me. I can't say it's all on me, but I do feel like I'm playing some of my best hockey right now, and a lot of that just has to do with getting older. My leadership has grown so much, so I really feel good out there and feel good about myself and feel good about our team, and that just helps with the confidence and makes me play better."

Of course, the Muzzin-Doughty partnership was a major boon for the team in the 2014 postseason, when their pairing matched up against the top lines on San Jose, Anaheim and Chicago, three of the Western Conference's four highest scoring teams that season, before the team completed its second Stanley Cup run.

"We have pretty good chemistry and we seem to not spend any time in our zone when we do get the puck. We're both good at breaking the puck out," Doughty said of Muzzin. "Muzz is a good player. He's been playing great, really. He makes things simple when he needs to. He makes the outlet passes when he needs to and gets up on the rush. He's got an unbelievable shot. He's been great for us, and we need him to be really good for us. He's one of our top two, three defensemen, and we need him to be great for us in order for us to win, and that's why we have won lately – because he's been great."

"I don't have the best shot, I'm not the fastest skater, and I don't have one of the best skills of any on the team. I just compete as hard as I possibly can, and I think that's what separates me from some other guys around the league. I hate losing. I hate being embarrassed. I don't want to ever get beat. I hate being on the ice for goals against, and I just want to help the team win and I know I've got to try to be one of the best players on the ice every single night."

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086827 Los Angeles Kings

VETERAN FORWARD MATT MOULSON JOINS ONTARIO REIGN ON A LOAN

JOEY ZAKRZEWSKIDECEMBER 5, 20170 COMMENTS

ONTARIO REIGN

Veteran NHL forward Matt Moulson is returning to Southern California.

On Tuesday, Moulson was loaned to the Ontario Reign (AHL) by the Buffalo Sabres after clearing waivers. The skilled forward of 650 NHL contests returns to the Golden State for the first time since the 2008-09 season when he was a member of the Kings. This time, he is tasked to



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

not only contribute on the score sheet for the Reign, but to also provide guidance to a young, developing squad. He will also be able to quickly make the Left Coast home as he is the brother-in-law is current Kings goaltender Jonathan Quick and frequently spends time in the Los Angeles area in the offseason.

Matt Moulson will join the Ontario Reign on a loan. Not LAK property. Still BUF. Believe LAK doing a solid here; obviously family ties in the area.

— Jon Rosen (@lakingsinsider) December 5, 2017

Moulson, 34, appeared in 14 games with the Sabres this season, recording no points before being placed on waivers. The North York, Ontario, native, who has family living in the Los Angeles area, is a veteran of 650 NHL games over 11 seasons with the Kings (2007-09), New York Islanders (2009-14), Sabres (2013-18) and Minnesota Wild (2013-14) totaling 369 points (176 goals, 193 assists).

The Reign are not unfamiliar with veteran NHL experience educating a young locker room. Last season, forward Teddy Purcell spent ample time with the Reign organization and defenseman Rob Scuderi, Tom Gilbert and Devin Setoguchi also made stops in the Inland Empire.

The 6-foot-1, 203-pound forward last skated in the AHL with the Kings' affiliate, the Manchester Monarchs, in 2008-09 and picked up 160 points (74 goals, 86 assists) in 188 games over three seasons. During his rookie season in 2006-07, Moulson led the Monarchs in scoring with 57 points (25 goals, 32 assists), skated with then-rookie and current Kings veteran Trevor Lewis and helped the team to the third round of the Calder Cup Playoffs before falling to the Hershey Bears. With the Kings, he contributed 10 points (six goals, four assists) in 29 games.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086828 Los Angeles Kings

STEVENS ON TOFFOLI, PEARSON, RETURNING HOME

JON ROSENDECEMBER 5, 20170 COMMENTS

PRACTICE QUOTES

On a "rebound season" for Tyler Toffoli:

I don't know if I would term it a 'rebound season.' I mean, I think his season was really affected by injury last year. I think Tyler's always been a very opportunistic scorer, and I think that line with Carter, Pearson and Toffoli is a line we've liked back since '14. With Jeff going down with injury this year, I think Tanner and Tyler have had some good continuity. Their centermen has changed a little bit, but our internal expectations of Tyler, that's kind of who we think he is. We think he should be somewhere between a 25 and a 30-goal scorer and a guy that can play in all situations.

On whether aspects of Tanner Pearson's game are overlooked because he's not scoring regularly:

Yeah, that's a good point, Daryl. I think Tanner can finish more than he has. He's had some really good chances, and there are games where he's had great looks at the net but hasn't put the puck in the net. He is one of those guys that goals go in the net, and if you go back and look, and he won a board battle and chipped a puck out of his zone, or he got in on the forecheck and got a play sopped up, I think he does a lot of the yeoman's work that leads to a lot of offense, and I think that's why he fits well with Tyler – because Tyler usually puts himself in position on those pucks that get turned over that he can do something with them. I think there's a lot of really good in Tanner's game, and again, I think Tanner can score. There's no question that I don't think that he's a perennial 20-

plus goal scorer. He's really good around the net, and he really understands the value of being at the net. There's certainly a lot of small things in his game to lead to good things for the hockey team. [Reporter: Piggybacking off that, he's always been a high-percentage shooter in his career. Like, the shooting percentage this year seems to be a little bit of anomaly. Everything you said, it seems that he's doing a lot of other things well, but in terms of just the spots on the ice where he's getting the puck or shooting or the chances he's getting, is there any difference between this year and previous years?] I don't have the raw numbers, but there are lots of games where we come out of those games and Tanner and say, 'you're getting all the looks.' We'd like to see him finish on those looks, but I think he has been getting chances. Whether the percentage is different in terms of the total number of opportunities at different parts of the ice, we've liked his game. The road trip we had, going back to the beginning of the year, we thought those guys played really well – the trip that started in Columbus really I think got their game going. I think there's been some parts of the season where his game hasn't been as effective, but I think overall, he's doing the types of things that are going to lead to success as long as he stays with it.

On whether tonight's game is an extension of the road trip:

We've tried to approach it that way. We spent some time yesterday just talking about coming off the road. I think the tendency without even thinking about it is 'the road trip's over,' and you kind of want to know [inaudible]. We put a big value on preparation yesterday and coming home and being ready to play. Minnesota's playing well. They're a very good team that's going to forecheck hard and we need to be ready to go and be dialed in even though the road trip's over. You have three games at home here, but we'd like to treat it as an extension of the road trip.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086829 Los Angeles Kings

MORNING SKATE NOTES: INJURIES; PLAY AT HOME; GABORIK, KUEMPER, FOLIN, WILD

JON ROSENDECEMBER 5, 20170 COMMENTS

INJURIESMORNING SKATE NOTESVIDEO

Good afternoon from the offices adjacent to Toyota Sports Center, Insiders. A reminder: tonight's game against the Minnesota Wild starts at 7:00 p.m. (NBSCN / FUBO TV / KABC 790 / I Heart Radio). There will be a bit of a flashback as the game will be called by Chris Cuthbert and Jim Fox. For Kings fans, it wouldn't be a bad thing if that's where the 2016-17 parallels end. Lines and pairings:

Iafallo-Kopitar-Brown

Pearson-Shore-Toffoli

Gaborik-Kempe-Lewis

Jokinen-Mitchell-Brodzinski

Clifford-Andreoff-Dowd

Muzzin-Doughty

MacDermid-Martinez

Forbort-Folin

Fantenberg

Notes!



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

-Jonathan Quick left the ice first and will be expected to start in net. Nic Dowd, Oscar Fantenberg and the players on injured reserve remained on the ice with Darcy Kuemper for some extra work, so they're not expected to get into tonight's game. Speaking of the players on IR, the Kings shared some injury news yesterday, which I passed along via Twitter. Andy Andreoff has been cleared to resume practicing with the team, and Kyle Clifford continues to progress and will be integrated into practice this week. There's no real timetable yet on Clifford's return. Andreoff is closer. Both players have skated each of the last two days, and Clifford was becoming integrated into practice on last week's road trip. There's nothing new with Jeff Carter. He remains months away.

-Torrey Mitchell said he had some "butterflies" prior to his first shift, which is natural when joining a new team, but settled in well as his debut in Chicago progressed. He won 8-of-12 faceoffs in 12:49 of ice time. "It was fun just to put all the immigration stuff behind and just get back to what we're in here for, and that's just playing hockey, so it was good," he said.

-So, some may have noticed that the Kings are 10-3-1 on the road and only 7-5-2 at home. They won their last home game – the first game of their current five-game winning streak – but will be looking to channel the mentality and success they built up on last week's trip into tonight's game.

"Yeah, we talked about it yesterday – carrying that momentum from the road and our road game back into Staples Center," Jake Muzzin said. "[We're] Trying to put a finger on what's been the difference, and I think we found it, and hopefully we can execute coming out tonight with a big start to the game."

One thing I've picked up on is that many players will say finding success at home stems from having the right mindset so that they're ready right off the bat. The Kings have allowed the first goal in their last four home games and despite a Western Conference-best plus-24 goal differential have been out-scored 28-21 in first periods this season, so there's a clear reference point to attack and improve.

"It's more about getting your mental game ready and getting mentally prepared to come out with that same road mode intensity that we had on the road these past four games," Muzzin said.

For some players, that may mean cranking up the music en route to the game, whether traveling on a bus while on a road trip or carpooling with teammates to Staples Center. Muzzin usually will drive to games with Trevor Lewis and Tanner Pearson.

The trio shares the controls of the music, but if Muzzin has his say, and the radio is on, he wants a non-interrupted stream of music.

"I'm going with whatever's playing," he said. "If it's a commercial, I'm going to the next station right away. It could be country, it could be top hits, it could be top hits. I'm constantly rotating."

And blasting music isn't simply a cure for getting ready to play a game. That preparation starts before and continues after the players are taking the 105 to the 110.

"I mean, there are still some guys that do it that need to get focused that way," he said. "You've got to do what you've got to do to get ready for a game. If it's headphones on and loud music, then [heck], do it."

-I'll have more from Drew Doughty today, but here's what he shared about playing alongside Muzzin, as opposed to Derek Forbort: "It's different. Muzz is a little bit more ... active in the D-zone, where he's really going hard at guys and he's trying to react quicker, whereas Forbs, he's more patient. Forbs is unbelievable at defense. Like, I can't even explain how good that guy is at defense. He's so good. The difference between him and Muzz is Muzz might be a little better at moving pucks, and that's not a knock against Forbs, but Forbs' defense, he might even be better than me at it. That's how good Forbs' defense is, and that's how much confidence I have in his D. Yeah, they've both been great."

-Tonight's game pits three Kings against their former team. Darcy Kuemper and Christian Folin played for the Minnesota Wild as recently

as last season, while Marian Gaborik scored the first goal in Wild history and is the franchise's all-time leader in goals (219), power play goals (59) and game-winning goals (43), and ranks second in points (437) in 502 games between 2000-09.

But tonight will be Gaborik's 12th game against his former team. He has three goals and six points in his 11 previous games against Minnesota, one goal and one assist of which were netted at Xcel Energy Center in the teams' previous meeting on February 27.

Kuemper isn't expected to get into tonight's game. The next Kings-Wild match-up begins the first half of a March 19-20 at Minnesota / at Winnipeg back-to-back, so there's a good chance he could make his first career start against his former team some three and a half months from now. Folin, on the other hand, is projected to play tonight, one game after he scored an important third period goal against Chicago for his second marker as a King.

"I obviously circled [tonight's game] right away," Folin said. "I've been looking forward to it, actually, for sure. I've made a lot of really good friends in Minnesota and I had three good years there, so it's obviously a special day, but at the same time, it's just two points on the line and if we focus on our team game, we'll be successful."

That was essentially the sentiment that Kuemper shared. And despite being asked whether there was any bitterness towards the end of his Wild tenure, when he wasn't getting a ton of game work nor regular reps during infrequent late-season practices, and the team chose to recall Alex Stalock for work when trying to ease Devan Dubnyk's schedule, he said there weren't any regrets towards his final year of his five-year stint in St. Paul.

"No, not at all," he said. "I really enjoyed my experiences in Minnesota, enjoyed my time here. I'm just excited about a new chapter here in L.A. and really excited about how things have been going so far."

Things have been going exceedingly well through his first 419 minutes with the Kings. He's 4-0-2 with a shutout and leads all qualified goalies with a .944 save percentage and a 1.72 goals-against average.

"I think as you get older, things get a little bit easier," he said. "You learn a lot about yourself and your game. I've always just tried to keep improving, and right now I'm really happy with where my game's at."

He's also reunited with Bill Ranford, with whom he worked with "a couple times" when Kuemper was a member of the ECHL's Ontario Reign early in the 2011-12 season.

"He's obviously got a great track record," Kuemper said. "We've had really good experiences so far, and he's helped give me a really good foundation for this year that I'm quite comfortable with."

The Kings and Wild have employed structured systems play for much of this decade that have leaned to the defensive and have made them among the more detail-oriented teams in the league. Minnesota probably gained a bit of a jump on Los Angeles in the push towards a speed-oriented attack that relies on excellent pacing, while Los Angeles still retains some of its "heavy" identity, but both teams have found continued success at suppressing shots and chances against when they're on their games.

"It's probably fairly similar [systems], actually," Folin said. "My transition hasn't been that hard because in Minnesota we had really solid D, and everything starts in the back end with good goaltending, so it's fairly similar. They play kind of similar styles of hockey."

Not as similar: outdoor opportunities in December.

"The difference [between Minnesota and Los Angeles] would be I live by the beach here," Kuemper said. "It's hard to beat that. I'm not complaining about it."

-Still in the, uh, Wilderness are Zach Parise (IR / back surgery) and Jared Spurgeon (groin). Via Sarah McLellan, who joined the Star-Tribune after a terrific job on the Arizona Republic's Coyotes beat, Minnesota is



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

expected to line up with an offensive group of Granlund-Koivu-Zucker, Niederreiter-Staal-Foligno, Winnik-Coyle-Stewart and Ennis-Cullen-Mitchell and defensive pairings of Suter-Dumba, Brodin-Murphy and Reilly-Prosser. Devan Dubnyk is projected to start in goal.

-7:00 P.M. START, INSIDERS. Tonight's officials will be referees Francois StLaurent and Peter MacDougall, and linesmen Vaughan Rody and Trent Knorr. I'll join Jason Gregor on TSN 1260 Edmonton at 2:05 p.m. PT. Click here to listen live. John Stevens quotes will follow and will contain an interesting look at Tanner Pearson's season. Let's talk soon.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086830 Los Angeles Kings

DECEMBER 5 POSTGAME NOTES

JON ROSENDECEMBER 5, 20170 COMMENTS

POSTGAME NOTES

-With the win, Los Angeles improved to 27-19-14 all-time against Minnesota, a record that includes a home mark of 15-9-6. The win snapped the Wild's seven-game point streak in the series (5-0-2) and was only the 11th game in the last 27 head-to-head meetings that was not decided by a single goal. These teams have two games remaining, March 19 at Xcel Energy Center and April 5 at Staples Center.

-With the win, the Kings improved to 6-5-3 against the Western Conference, 3-2-1 against the Central Division, 8-1 in three-goal games, 9-6-3 when their opponent scores the first goal, 7-1-0 when tied after the first period, 3-6-3 when trailing after two periods and 9-3-2 when outshooting their opponent.

-With the win, Los Angeles increased its winning streak to six games, their longest streak since November 28 – December 11, 2015 (six games).

-By outscoring the Wild 4-0 in the third period, the Kings increased their league-best third period goal differential to +27 (40 GF, 13 GA).

-Marian Gaborik (2-0=2) scored his 399th and 400th career goals and registered his 799th and 800th NHL points (400-400=800). He has six points (4-2=6) in seven games this season and eight points (5-3=8) in 12 career games against Minnesota, the team that selected him third overall in 2000. The Kings' first four draft picks that year were Alexander Frolov, Andreas Lilja, Yanick Lehoux and Lubomir Visnovsky.

-Anze Kopitar (1-2=3) recorded his 500th career assist on Marian Gaborik's 400th career goal. He is the fifth player in Kings history to reach the 500 assist mark with the team. He has six points (3-3=6) during his current three-game point streak, while his 34 points are tied for fifth in the NHL.

-Jake Muzzin (1-1=2) tallied his third goal and 18th point of the season. He scored his 42nd career goal, surpassing Bob Murdoch (41 goals) to move into 10th place all time among club defensemen. He is two goals behind Garry Galley (44) for ninth place all time among club defensemen.

-Drew Doughty, who recorded three assists, surpassed the 20-point mark (4-18=22), most among team-defensemen.

-Los Angeles attempted 53 shots (28 on goal, 13 blocked, 12 missed). Minnesota attempted 43 shots (21 on goal, 11 blocked, 11 missed). Tyler Toffoli led all skaters with five shots on goal, four of which were recorded in the first period.

-The Kings won 34-of-59 faceoffs (58%). Adrian Kempe won 4-of-8, Anze Kopitar won 14-of-24, Nick Shore won 7-of-14, Jussi Jokinen won 3-of-4, Tanner Pearson won 0-of-2 and Torrey Mitchell won 6-of-7.

The Kings are scheduled to practice at 11:00 a.m. at Toyota Sports Center on Wednesday, December 5.

LA Kings Insider: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086760 Anaheim Ducks

Ducks' Hampus Lindholm sidelined again with upper-body injury

Mike Coppinger

For the third time this season, the Ducks are without top defenseman Hampus Lindholm.

The puck-moving blueliner suffered an upper-body injury and traveled back to Southern California. The Ducks are in Las Vegas tonight for a contest against the Golden Knights.

"It'll be something that hopefully will settle down over the next couple of days and he's ready for us in the short term here," coach Randy Carlyle said. "We don't expect it to be a long-term issue."

The Ducks return home for a contest against the Ottawa Senators on Wednesday, and it sure sounds like Lindholm won't be available for that game, either.

Lindholm missed the team's first seven games while he recovered from offseason shoulder surgery, and also was sidelined for a game last month against the Boston Bruins.

He has three goals and five assists this season.

To replace Lindholm in the lineup, the Ducks recalled Jaycob Megna, who has appeared in 11 games this season.

Jakob Silfverberg (upper-body injury) also will be unavailable for the Ducks on Tuesday. But Rickard Rakell figures to return after missing the last five games with an upper-body ailment.

The team's top goal scorer practiced Monday and also participated fully in Tuesday's morning skate.

LA Times: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086761 Anaheim Ducks

Ducks fall to Golden Knights in first shootout in Vegas

— Mike Coppinger

Alex Tuch scored the game-winning goal in the first shootout at Vegas, and Malcolm Subban stopped all three attempts he faced during the tiebreaker as the Golden Knights topped the Anaheim Ducks 4-3 on Tuesday night.

The expansion Golden Knights improved to 6-1 in overtime games, including 5-0 at home.

James Neal, Oscar Lindberg and Erik Haula scored in regulation for Vegas. Subban made 26 saves.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

The Golden Knights got two quick goals near the end of the first period, when Neal's knuckler found its way over the glove of an outstretched John Gibson. Moments later, from the same line, Lindberg caught Gibson in the same position and popped a rebound over his glove to give Vegas a 2-0 lead.

The Ducks took advantage of an aggressive attack in the second period, getting three straight goals from Francois Beauchemin, Antoine Vermette and Corey Perry to take a 3-2 lead.

Beauchemin cut Vegas' lead in half with a slap shot from the point a minute into the second, and four minutes later Vermette tied it when he redirected Kevin Bieksa's slap shot from the point.

Late in the period, Haula's pass to the crease went straight to Adam Henrique, whose perfect pass down the ice set up Perry for a breakaway goal to give the Ducks a 3-2 edge.

Henrique, acquired by the Ducks with Joseph Blandisi and a 2018 third-round draft pick from New Jersey on Nov. 30, has registered an assist in each of his first three games with Anaheim.

Haula made up for his ill-fated pass when he punched one past Gibson to tie it 3-all with a little more than four minutes left in the third.

Gibson stopped 40 shots for Anaheim.

TONIGHT

VS. OTTAWA

When: 7 p.m. Wednesday.

On the air: TV: FSW; Radio: 830.

Update: This is the first meeting with the Senators this season. The teams split the series last season, with the Senators picking up a victory in a shootout during the last contest. Perry and Vermette picked up three points apiece in the two games. ... The Senators made it to the Eastern Conference Finals last season but they've struggled thus far with just 24 points in 25 games.

LA Times: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086762 Anaheim Ducks

Ducks Gameday: Injury puts Hampus Lindholm back on shelf, won't play against Vegas

ERIC STEPHENS

December 5, 2017 at 5:33 PM

LAS VEGAS – Hampus Lindholm will be out of the Ducks lineup for the third time this season as they take on the Vegas Golden Knights on Tuesday night in their first visit to T-Mobile Arena.

Lindholm has an upper-body issue according to Ducks coach Randy Carlyle and the stalwart defenseman is back in Anaheim after flying here with the team from Nashville. His status for this week's games appears to be in doubt.

Lindholm missed the season's first seven contests in recovering from off-season shoulder surgery and sat out a Nov. 15 against Boston to rectify a minor lower-body ailment. The Ducks (11-11-5) head back home to play Ottawa on Wednesday and Minnesota on Friday.

"It'll be something that hopefully it'll settle down over the next couple of days and he's ready for us in the short term here," Carlyle said. "We don't expect it to be a long-term issue."

To fill Lindholm's spot in the lineup, the Ducks recalled Jaycob Megna from the AHL's San Diego Gulls. Megna, 24, played in 11 games earlier in the season and had one assist and two penalty minutes. He got his first and only NHL point on Oct. 20 against Montreal.

"We thought that Megs has given us some safe minutes and some solid minutes," Carlyle said. "Obviously when we get everybody back, it's a numbers game. Pushes people in and out. We felt that in needing a defenseman for tonight, he was the guy that fit the mold. And that's the decision we made."

The Ducks will also be without Jakob Silverberg (upper body) as he is back in Orange County. Silverberg will miss his third straight game but the possibility exists that he could be back this week.

Rickard Rakell (upper body) does come back into the lineup after a five-game absence. Rakell was taken off injured reserve Monday morning and his addition is a welcome one as the top-line winger leads the Ducks with eight goals and is second in scoring behind Corey Perry with 18 points.

John Gibson (8-10-1, 2.98 GAA, .920 SV%) gets back in net after having Saturday off in Nashville. Gibson has gotten regular rest of late after playing in the first 10 games of the season. He is coming off a 27-save effort Friday in a 3-2 loss to Columbus.

Here is the projected lineup for the Ducks:

Rickard Rakell-Adam Henrique-Corey Perry

Andrew Cogliano-Chris Wagner-Kevin Roy

Nick Ritchie-Antoine Vermette-Ondrej Kase

Logan Shaw-Derek Grant-Dennis Rasmussen

Cam Fowler-Kevin Bieksa

Jaycob Megna-Josh Manson

Francois Beauchemin-Brandon Montour

The Golden Knights (16-9-1) are having unprecedented success for an expansion team in the modern era and can be called a contender in the Pacific Division one-third of the way into the season.

A tremendous home record has provided a big boost. Perhaps with some help as a world-renowned night spot, Vegas has taken full advantage and rallied around a motivated group in front of a new and energized fan base. Its 10-2-0 record at T-Mobile is one of the NHL's best home marks.

Carlyle has lauded the work ethic of the Knights, which has been one of their defining traits under first-year coach Gerard Gallant. Vegas won the first-ever matchup between the teams in the regular season, taking a 4-2 victory Nov. 22 in Anaheim.

"Just finished watching their last game against (Arizona) in here," Carlyle said. "It was a good hockey game and they won it in overtime. We saw them in Anaheim and I thought it was a game where they outworked our hockey club."

"My message, and our message as a coaching staff, was that we can't expect and we will not accept being outworked. That was our focal point here this morning."

Jonathan Marchessault and William Karlsson each scored goals for the Knights in that win at Honda Center. Marchessault and Karlsson lead them in scoring with 25 points each, with Karlsson's 14 goals topping the club.

Veteran forward James Neal has added 12 goals while Reilly Smith (7 goals, 14 assists), Erik Haula (8 goals, 6 assists) and Alex Tuch (6 goals, 6 assists) have added depth scoring. Vegas has a 17th-ranked power play (18.7 percent) and a 25th-ranked penalty kill (76.8 percent).



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

David Perron could be a possibility after skating in practice Monday with Haula and Neal. Perron has been on injured reserve after suffering an upper-body injury on Nov. 24 when he was hit by San Jose's Timo Meier.

Former Ducks defenseman Luca Sbisa returned to the lineup on Nov. 30 and has a goal and seven assists in 19 games with the Knights. Malcolm Subban (5-2-0, 2.19 GAA, .926 SV%) is expected to make his first-ever start in goal against the Ducks.

Marc-Andre Fleury (concussion), Clayton Stoner (abdomen), Oscar Dansk (knee) and William Carrier (upper body) are out.

Here is the projected lineup for the Golden Knights:

Jonathan Marchessault-William Karlsson-Reilly Smith

David Perron-Erik Haula-James Neal

Brendan Leipsic-Cody Eakin-Alex Tuch

Tomas Nosek-Stefan Matteau-Pierre-Edouard Bellemare

Luca Sbisa-Nate Schmidt

Brayden McNabb-Colin Miller

Shea Theodore-Deryk Engelland

Orange County Register: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086763 Anaheim Ducks

Ducks miss another opportunity, lose to Golden Knights in shootout

ERIC STEPHENS

December 5, 2017 at 11:55 PM

LAS VEGAS — The most difficult stretch of a challenging season for the Ducks saw them trudge away with some emptiness from the land of missed opportunities.

Three straight games saw the Ducks hold a tie or a lead in the final minutes of the third period and envision themselves walking out of tough atmospheres against top teams with two points earned and pocketed. Instead, some valuable points were left on the ice in every case.

Alex Tuch scored the only goal in the shootout and Vegas goalie Malcolm Subban stopped all three Ducks attempts to lift the Golden Knights to a come-from-behind 4-3 win Tuesday night.

The Ducks (11-11-6) were making their first trip to T-Mobile Arena and had a lead they couldn't protect in failing to finish. Tuch scored on Ducks goalie John Gibson on the Knights' third try, while Subban foiled shooters Corey Perry, Rickard Rakell and Ondrej Kase.

A chance to win escaped the Ducks again — they've won only one of their last eight overall. Just three of those games have been regulation defeats. On Friday, it was Columbus' Josh Anderson who scored the winning goal with 4:54 left. On Saturday, it was Nashville's Calle Jarnkrok forging a tie with 8:43 remaining.

And on Tuesday, Erik Haula lifted Vegas into a 3-3 tie with 4:22 left in regulation on a short-side conversion on Gibson, who otherwise stopped 40 shots. Among those stops, he turned away chances by Haula and Jonathan Marchessault in the final 38 seconds. But the late goal hurt.

"The goal that they scored in the third was a very defendable goal," Ducks coach Randy Carlyle said. "They beat us off the wall and two guys to the net. I don't think that'd be a goal that Gibby would say he was proud of. It snuck through him. That's the way the game went."

Center Adam Henrique added, "It was tough to give that one up late. We had a lot of chances to put it away and then even in overtime too."

The Ducks have long struggled to create offensive chances in the 3-on-3 overtime. But they got an extra man for a power play when Tuch tripped up Rickard Rakell. Rakell clipped the post down low but Brandon Montour had his one-time shot smothered by Subban, who made 26 stops.

"We didn't create as much as we'd like," Carlyle said.

In a mostly empty dressing room, Perry assessed a trip when the Ducks went 1-2-3 against six teams that ended Tuesday with a combined 100-52-15 record. The Ducks were also facing those clubs without two more important injured players in defenseman Hampus Lindholm and right wing Jakob Silfverberg.

"There's probably some points we left out there," Perry said. "But at the same time, there's positives out of this road trip. With the banged-up guys that we do have. Guys pulled in different directions. Some of those games, they weren't pretty but we got points out of them."

"We've talked about it. Holding down the fort. Stay around it and try to get this team healthy and start playing some hockey."

The Ducks did change the game in the middle frame. Perhaps with some cajoling from Carlyle after a woeful first, the script was flipped with goals from Perry, Francois Beauchemin and Antoine Vermette.

Beauchemin got his second of the season with a point shot that was aided by Subban being screened by two of his own teammates. Shots from the point continued to be effective as Kevin Bieksa's was deflected in by Vermette on a power play for his sixth goal of the season.

Now operating with a new game, the Ducks further settled themselves and grabbed their first lead. Perry hung back at the Vegas blue line and Henrique spotted the winger after a change in possession.

Perry grabbed the pass, took a few strides and ripped a slap shot past Subban for his second goal in as many games and sixth of the season. Henrique's assist gave him points in all three games with the Ducks since arriving in the trade for Sami Vatanen.

Much like their Nov. 22 win in Anaheim, the Knights peppered Gibson. Nineteen of the 34 first-period shots sent in his direction got to him and the goalie did a fantastic job holding them off for a while. His splendid glove save of Tuch off a rush will make this week's highlight shows.

Between Gibson and Ryan Miller, the Ducks have been able to lean on their goaltending.

"He had a huge first period," Perry said. "We could have been down 5-0. It's a simple as that. He's been our rock back there. Both of them have been. They've both played really well."

Gibson made another strong stop on Brendan Leipsic from the slot, but as the first 20 minutes was coming to an end, there was nothing he could do about a deflected shot from James Neal that popped up in the air and behind his diving outstretched arm.

After opening the scoring, Vegas came right back on the net shift. Knights defenseman Deryk Engelland, a longtime Las Vegas resident and instant fan favorite, took a point shot that Gibson saved but left for a rebound. Oscar Lindberg beat several Ducks to it and made it 2-0 just 16 seconds later.

A blowout might have been in the works but the Ducks started to make amends after intermission.

"I just think we got a lot more efficient with the puck," Carlyle said. "We were pretty sloppy with it. The first 10 or 12 minutes we were OK and then we started turning pucks over. They scored two quick goals."

"We made a decision we weren't going to play that way. We were going to try to get ourselves back in the hockey game and we did. We scored three straight goals to give ourselves a chance."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Orange County Register: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086764 Anaheim Ducks

Ducks' Jaycob Megna happy to keep the same NHL address

ERIC STEPHENS

December 5, 2017 at 8:46 PM

LAS VEGAS — Less than two weeks ago, Jaycob Megna was pondering the possibility that his NHL address might change.

The Ducks put Megna on waivers only for the purpose of seeing if they could get him back to their American Hockey League team in San Diego. That process was required as the 24-year-old defenseman no longer has waiver-exempt status and can't go back and forth freely if needed.

Given his age and upside as a big, defensive-minded rearguard, Megna couldn't help but think another team might pluck him away from the one that selected him in the 2012 draft and cultivated him over the years to where he made his debut at the end of the 2016-17 regular season.

"It was a stressful 24 hours for me," Megna said Tuesday after being recalled from the Gulls. "I can't speak for them. All the possibilities run through your head. But I think it worked out the way it was supposed to. I'm just happy to be back."

Megna's services were needed against Las Vegas as Hampus Lindholm was sent back to Anaheim to nurse an upper-body injury that could keep him out for a handful of games. The Ducks have two more games this week at home, Wednesday against Ottawa and Friday against Minnesota.

"It'll be something that hopefully it'll settle down over the next couple of days and he's ready for us in the short term here," Ducks coach Randy Carlyle said. "We don't expect it to be a long-term issue."

Injury does provide opportunity and Megna has this one after getting in 11 games earlier in the year following an impressive training camp. A crowded blue line has blocked his path at times, though the trade of Sami Vatanen could make it a bit easier for Megna to stay.

The Ducks can get away with sending Megna back down provided he doesn't play in 10 games or stay with the club beyond 30 days from Nov. 24, the date that he first cleared the process.

"It's a business you know," Megna said. "Sometimes you got too many bodies. There's always a chance but I was obviously happy that I didn't get taken. I want to be here. They've got a great setup down in San Diego as far as development. I've grown a lot over the last two years there."

"Obviously this is the organization that drafted me. This is where I want to be. I was thankful in that end and I was obviously happy to be back and hopefully stick around."

Carlyle talks about the "safe minutes" that Megna has given him in earning a level of trust. Some players get specific instructions to work on parts of their game when they're reassigned to the minors but that wasn't the case the defender.

"They wanted me to go down there and play every game," Megna said. "Get my minutes. That way I still feel like I'm part of it and in all the game situations just so I don't kind of rot away."

"It was a pretty simple message. Just keep doing what you're doing. They're happy with how I played. Just to keep working hard and keep doing what you do."

NEW ARENA MAKES IMPRESSION

The Ducks spent Tuesday morning getting used to T-Mobile Arena after entering the place for the first time. Vegas' new showcase facility and hockey home received some good reviews.

"Everything is big and new. It looks really nice," winger Rickard Rakell said. "I thought the ice was really good. Felt like it held up through the whole morning skate. It's pretty good for all the rinks in the league."

Rakell said he didn't do anything different in terms of shooting the puck off the boards to test how it bounced off from different spots. Mostly, it was just soaking in the atmosphere.

"You get excited coming into a new arena," he said. "Playing somewhere for the first time. I heard a lot of guys saying the ice felt really good. Nice lighting. Seems to be a great arena."

Orange County Register: LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086933 Websites

The Athletic / Systems Analyst: A look at five goals from around the league, and what went wrong

Justin Bourne

I often get questions on Twitter from fans watching live hockey wondering "what the hell just happened" on a breakdown in the game they're watching. Often, I go in-depth to the point that I'm only able to answer one of those questions the following day if I do a "Systems Analyst" at all.

So, one thing I thought I'd start doing is trying to look at a handful at once, and maybe just not quite dig as deep into each. Below, five recent goals from around the NHL, with a look at how the breakdowns happened.

I would love to hear what the Detroit coaching staff has to say about this goal against because it's fascinating. There's a pretty good chance this is less of a brain fart than just a single lost battle, which I know looks impossible to be true when you watch this goal:

So, a few things to note. Check out Henrik Zetterberg on the left side, and his positioning. You may remember: Jeff Blashill is a Mike Babcock disciple, and if you'll recall, Babcock has talked many times about "cutting off the top." Here's what that looks like — the backs of Zetterberg's skates are against the boards, so the Montreal players no longer have the strong side D as an option out of the tight battle. The obvious person to pick out on this goal is Martin Frk, the right winger, whose job in the D-zone is generally to make sure the opposing D doesn't get the puck and get a shot. Or at least, that used to be the job of weak side wingers.

But this is another thing that Babcock, and I assume Blashill, talk about with regularity. Watch how their forwards play in the D-zone on any given night. When there's a battle in the weak side corner, all five guys are packed in pretty tight around that scrum. They want to give the opposing forwards no room to make a play and spread the defence out. They want to choke the play like a snake, smother it, take the puck back, and go play in the other end. They want there to be nowhere for their opponents to go.

The biggest issue here?

It's body position. Gustav Nyqvist is on the wrong side of his guy in the battle. Part of choking the play is being on the defensive side of your guy, and pushing that other guy up against the glass or into the mess of bodies so again, he has nowhere to go. He's smothered. Because when you're not on the right side of your guy, and the puck pops through your feet...



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Now you're boned. So, this is why this is such a curious play. How did the breakdown come to look so glaring? Jonathan Ericsson is in a fine spot, acting as an outlet if the Wings win the puck, while staying between the pile and the net. Henrik Zetterberg's good. Trevor Daley could not be providing a better demonstration of what Gustav Nyqvist should have been doing. I'm just a bit curious to know if the Wings coaches want Frk in that tight — look how above he's actually helping on the Habs F3, which is good — or if he's way, way too far in there. It seems like he's too far in, for sure. It seems obvious. But there's a chance they want him over there, and that the only issue was Nyqvist's body position in the scrum.

Once the Canadiens pull it out of the pile, it's over.

It's tough to imagine this is a picture they want to see often, but it's not often opponents find their way out of the scrum with their heads up and possession. Here's just a random puck battle from earlier in the game in the other corner. The video is crappy because they zoom in, but at the start you can see the weak side winger (No. 21 Tomas Tatar) creeping way over to the pile, and by the time they pan back out and the Wings get the puck, look where how close he is to the battle:

I mean, he's at the faceoff dot.

So, I guess what I'm saying is I don't think Frk's the major problem he appears to be on the goal. But it sure didn't look good.

12.06.2017=

Glad you asked about this one, John — I hadn't seen it, and it's a great example of a player trying to do too much.

When a player is backchecking an odd-numbered rush against, they're told to do one of two things: if they can get to and pressure the puck carrier early enough, by all means, give 'er. If not, take the opposing player in the wide lane, and let whoever's back on D hopefully play with what now should be an even-numbered rush (2-on-2, 3-on-3, whatever), thanks to that great backchecking.

Well, here's the goal from New Jersey's game against Arizona:

The short answer is that no, Miles Wood (No. 44) did not backcheck in a helpful manner.

This all starts in the offensive zone. He's supposed to be F3, so that means generally finding a soft spot that's above the opposing center, and be high enough that if the D needs to pinch, he can help. He jumps on the ice after a change and creeps down a little too low. Then, even though the opposing D has solid possession, he doesn't pull out to defend, he "dives in" on Coyotes D-man Alex Goligoski. That's a pretty big sin as F3.

The Devils defender that pinches is above his guy and stays above his guy. Maybe that D-man should've read that his F3 abandoned his post and played more cautiously by backing out, but still — it's Wood who screwed him over here, thinking he could be fast enough to make Goligoski turn the puck over.

But anyway, Wood is also one of the 10 fastest skaters or so on earth, so he's gonna be fine. When Goligoski passes the puck he sees the dive in by Wood, and tries to jump past him to get in on the rush. Only, it's not a fair race. Wood gets on his horse, and catches Goligoski with relative ease.

So, above is one of the strangest pictures. The odd-man rush is over, done, finito. The Devils have two players on the D side of the two rushers. Wood has Goligoski caught, and Andy Greene on D is free to play puck carrier Anthony Duclair 1-on-1. And I mean, you know how many people beat NHL defenders for a goal on 1-on-1s? It basically never happens, which is why when it does people go all crazy like The Professor just punked someone in an And1 basketball game. Getting so much as a shot is a victory 1-on-1. Yet look at that damn picture above again. Wood is fresh and flying, so he's signaling here to Greene to take ... Goligoski? Greene can't even see the signal, given he's CLEARLY busy playing a 1-on-1.

Even crazier, is that Wood almost DOES catch Duclair. But he's screwed Greene over, who couldn't have exactly just left Duclair — it would've given him a clean breakaway.

So, to me, this appears to be either over-confidence (I'm fast and I can catch that guy) or foolishness with a good heart (I messed up in the O-zone so now I'm gonna come all the way back and gets us the puck back, guys!)

Next!

Yup, I'm with you, man. Take a look at this beauty here from Ryan Strome:

Tim Schaller is caught behind the Oilers rush, with Leon Draisaitl in possession of the puck wide. Drake Caggiula executes his role as the mid-lane drive guy awfully well even though he doesn't get through. The attempt itself pushes back the D and forces the play into the wide D. This gives his linemates a chance to make a play. The other thing I really like, is how Strome saves ice. He swings out wide to keep his speed up and find the soft spot. (I wrote about that technique and Patrick Marleau here.)

But back to the Bruins. Check out the Bruins F3 is in the middle of the ice (No. 55 Noel Acciari). He sees the puck carrier going wide, and recognizes he's high enough that he can take him. This is a better look at the F3 position.

So he goes ahead, and the D can play the other two forwards 2-on-2.

I mean, it's a pretty clear picture who has who here, isn't it? Schaller skated hard until he got above his guy — that's Oscar Klefbom joining the rush, then slowed his skating. He was back far enough to get his guy.

My main critique of Schaller, really, is just that he isn't locked on to Klefbom. The whole issue here is that Torey Krug, the Bruins left D, is staring at the puck, and not getting tighter on to Strome, the eventual goal scorer.

At this point, Schaller is kinda dead in the water. But the lack of skating after center (which he didn't need to do), and the weak little stick flip attempt on Strome make him look lazy. But the D just blew the coverage on an even-manned situation.

Nice goal, though.

How about Anders Lee? Guy had 34 goals last year and has 16 in 26 games this year (this one below was his 100th in his career). I mean, this was a lucky one, but he's a pretty unheralded player given his value.

So what we've got here is a look at how when a penalty is about to be called, teams play differently. Here's the goal:

When the refs arm goes up, you know if the other team touches the puck you aren't going to be in any defensive trouble, so you can make more risky plays higher in the zone, and defencemen can dive in and be active. That's what you see here: Bailey can take the risk of a high turnover knowing there really isn't any risk.

And similarly, that frees up Isles' defenseman Adam Pelech to jump in on the offence. What you see then is just exactly what I wrote about here about how D-men get pucks through today. Instead of wasting the puck into opposing shinpads, Calvin de Haan wisely puts the puck off the back boards, knowing it'll kick into a dangerous area. All told the coverage on this goal is pretty darn good, that's just a smart play to keep the offensive zone possession going instead of trying to stuff the puck through shot-blocking layers.

The Islanders never do see the power play (which is a dumb rule, just as a tangent), but it definitely helped them create this goal.

I think I'm more more likely to blame the Wings forward Dylan Larkin for not working hard enough. As you can see in the video, Paul Byron has just jumped on the ice, while Larkin has been on for 30 seconds already. (That could have something to do with it.)



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

But none of that has to happen if he's just more diligent with his "track," as coaches call efficient backchecking today. If he goes from here with his stick blade "on the puck," and angles him back hard into the boards, the Wings D don't panic, and they go back on a simple retrieval.

He never really gets on his horse the entire backcheck, and we know how well the guy can skate. These are the types of things (combined with the poor body position and lost battle in the first Habs goal we looked at) that lead to teams getting blown out, and makes their coaches crazy.

After that I just have two minor issues, and they're both with Wings' D-man Niklas Kronwall. One, he gets caught outside the dots, and lets Byron jump him on the inside.

But two is that he doesn't at least get a little skin, as they say. He's got to assume his partner will be going to retrieve the puck, so he needs to slow the forechecker down at least a bit to give him a half-second. Would that be interference? Yes! Do refs call interference? Not really anymore! Only if it's really bad, and usually someone needs to end up on the ice.

Once Nick Jensen does this...

It's over. One of the reasons guys "do this," by the way, is the sudden recognition that their opponent is flying, and they panic trying to kick it immediately into fifth gear, which is a long way to go from about second.

And lastly ...

I HAVEN'T EVEN WATCHED TONIGHT'S SABRES GAME YET AND I AM PRETTY SURE I'LL BE SAYING "WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED THERE?" ABOUT 2/3 OF THE TIME.

— JOHN GWOREK (@JOHNGWOREK) DECEMBER 5, 2017

Yeah. I look forward to getting into it!

The Athletic LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086934 Websites

The Athletic / LeBrun: Seattle will be on the minds of owners and executives at Board of Governors meetings

Pierre LeBrun

It was three years ago this week that a room full of jaw-dropped media heard Gary Bettman announce the first baby step that eventually led to Las Vegas expansion.

After the first day of the Board of Governors meetings in December 2014, without warning, the NHL commissioner stepped up to the microphone and told the room that Bill Foley had been given the green light to run a ticket drive to gauge market interest, that no promises or plans were being made beyond that, and he pleaded with media members not to overstate the story.

But we all figured where it eventually headed, and now the Vegas Golden Knights are on the ice and knocking it out of the park so far in their inaugural season.

Is Seattle next?

Should we expect some form of preliminary announcement from Bettman this week on Seattle? I would say, yes, it's possible, at least something which puts it officially on the league's radar. It likely depends on what NHL owners will want to do this week.

A source told The Athletic the official agenda went out to governors Monday and that Seattle wasn't on it. However, that was before Seattle city council voted to approve a \$600-million KeyArena renovation plan.

So, one expects Bettman and/or deputy commissioner Bill Daly to have some form of Seattle update for the governors (owners, team executives, some GMs) Thursday or Friday in Palm Beach, Fla.

In addition, I'd be surprised if the league didn't have something formal to share with media regarding Seattle, certainly not the ultimate announcement that Seattle is getting a team, but some form of public acknowledgment from the league that the market is of interest.

Seattle is a market the NHL has long coveted, but one that didn't make any sense until the arena issue was resolved.

It appears it now has been with the Tim Leiweke-led Oak View Group getting its arena proposal approved. They hope to have the arena fully gutted and renovated and ready to go by October 2020.

Neither Leiweke nor potential Seattle hockey owners David Bonderman and Jerry Bruckheimer are expected to be in Palm Beach for the Board of Governors meeting this week but that shouldn't stop the league from addressing the Seattle question.

Now, are we talking expansion or relocation? Obviously, expansion would be preferential for the league given the price tag associated with it. If Vegas paid \$500 million you better believe that price will go up for Seattle, at least \$600 million if not more, I bet.

Regardless of how it all shakes out, there's no question Monday's city council vote in Seattle is a significant development when it comes to a potential NHL future in that city.

Governors may also want to ask the league where Houston stands in all this. There's a market that screams relocation candidate. Arizona obviously comes to mind if the Coyotes are unable to figure out their arena issues. They can't stay in Glendale long-term. The word is the Coyotes organization is in talks about a potential new arena in downtown Phoenix or Scottsdale but time is clearly of the essence. And yes, despite the fact many of us find it hard to believe the Flames could ever move, it remains a fact that Calgary currently doesn't have any plans for a new rink and that's a front-burner issue to be sure.

In the meantime, there are other matters to attend this week at the Board of Governors including an update on the potential sale of the Carolina Hurricanes. The NHL has an executive committee scheduled for Thursday before the main Board of Governors meeting convenes. While no one would confirm this, it's possible the Hurricanes potential sale would be part of the subject matter for the smaller executive committee to chew on. And obviously, it would be an absolute shock if Seattle wasn't on the executive committee's agenda.

The committee, by the way, consists of Mark Chipman (Winnipeg), Jeremy Jacobs (Boston), Murray Edwards (Calgary), Craig Leipold (Minnesota), Ted Leonsis (Washington), Geoff Molson (Montreal), Henry Samueli (Anaheim), Larry Tanenbaum (Toronto), Jeff Vinik (Tampa Bay) and Rocky Wirtz (Chicago).

This is the group that first gets to hear about potential ownership changes. The Hurricanes remain in contact with a few interested groups, I'm told, but there's no question the clubhouse leader as of now is Dallas businessman Tom Dundon. A purchase agreement could be in place by the end of this week although it sounds like there was still work to do on it as of Tuesday. Current Hurricanes owner Peter Karmanos Jr. would be retaining a share in the team, according to a source, if the deal with Dundon goes through.

And know this, my understanding is that whatever communication the league has had with Dundon, it's been made clear that the Hurricanes are to stay put in Raleigh. Dundon would not be buying the team simply to move them.

Other items believed to be on the agenda this week at the Board of Governors:

—This is the traditional meeting where governors get a ballpark projection for revenues and therefore the salary cap for next season. It's expected the cap could go up from the current \$75 million to around \$80 million



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

based on strong revenue growth. What the NHL Players' Association will want to do in June with its negotiations on the cap with the league will have its usual impact, of course, in terms of the escalator and whether the union will want to go the full five percent or a smaller figure like last year in order to limit escrow. Whatever projections Bettman gives owners this week, they are certainly not written in stone. But at the very least clubs will have something to plan with in terms of how they approach re-signing players, etc.

—There will be a presentation from Hockey Operations although I don't believe Player Safety head George Parros will present this time around. He'll present in June instead.

—The league will update governors on international events, how they feel games went this year in China and Sweden and also an update on where things stand in negotiations with the NHLPA on events for next year.

—Business initiatives: part of that will be the league updating the board on puck and player tracking technology, etc.

There's more, but that's certainly some of it.

And let's not kid ourselves, regardless of the actual meat of the meetings, potential expansion to Seattle will be at the forefront of the minds of owners and team executives.

The Athletic LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086935 Websites

The Athletic / Pronman: AHL president Dave Andrews on relocation, schedules and AHL Live rates

Corey Pronman

A few weeks ago I traveled to Springfield, Massachusetts, to visit the American Hockey League's office. During that visit, I interviewed the AHL president and CEO David Andrews on a wide array of topics around the AHL, many of which will be of interest to fans of NHL teams.

In the first part of the interview, we discussed relocation, expansion and schedules in the AHL, plus statistical offerings and AHL Live.

In the second part, on Wednesday, we will share his thoughts on fighting and concussions, video replay and slashing rules, and the development structure of the league, major junior players and a 19-year-old draft.

RELOCATION AND EXPANSION

In the last few years, the AHL has seen a significant amount of relocation. The most important reason for this is establishing teams in California that could be closer to their NHL teams. New affiliates in Bakersfield, California (Oilers); Ontario, California (Kings); San Diego (Ducks); San Jose (in the Sharks building); Stockton, California (Flames) and Tucson, Arizona (Coyotes) have emerged. It's also been announced a 31st AHL team will begin next season in Colorado, affiliated with the Avalanche.

Pronman: Is the goal to have all 31 NHL teams be near their AHL affiliates?

Andrews: It's not our goal. This recent relocation of franchises over the last five years was not our goal. Things change, and strategically the needs of NHL teams have changed.

CP: How receptive have these newly relocated markets, particularly the California markets, been to the AHL? I know for example San Diego (Anaheim) has been very high in attendance, whereas Stockton's

(Calgary) average attendance [was 4,647 in their first season and 4,531 this season].

Andrews: I think it's mixed. San Diego and Ontario (Los Angeles) have been outstanding. Bakersfield (Edmonton) has been solid. Support in Tucson (Arizona) has been strong as well. Having the Barracuda play in the SAP Center wasn't initially the No. 1 choice for the Sharks, but it's working for them. Stockton has made some changes in their management and I expect things will get better there this year. The important thing to keep in mind is — if you speak to Brian Burke of the Flames about their move to Stockton or to Doug Wilson about their move to San Jose — in the bigger picture of their organizational goals, it's a huge win. You can't entirely measure the success of these moves based on just the business success of each individual franchise; the player development aspect is key also.

CP: For the first time in a few years, you have a few AHL teams that have multiple NHL teams affiliated with them. Chicago is affiliated with St. Louis and Vegas, while San Antonio is affiliated with Colorado and St. Louis. This isn't the first time this has happened, but what are some of the unique challenges that come with dealing with those kinds of teams?

Andrews: We played a role in that outcome. With Vegas coming into the NHL, we didn't have a 31st franchise to match up, and Vegas came to the conclusion that they probably weren't going to have enough players to ice a full affiliate in the AHL while meeting our league's roster regulations. I spoke with [Vegas owner] Mr. [Bill] Foley and [general manager] George [McPhee] and came to the conclusion that purchasing an AHL expansion franchise was not strategically in their best interests, which left us at 30 teams for this season.

As we moved along, we recognized there was an opportunity in Colorado [for an expansion team] and that the Avalanche would like to be the partner. The Avalanche had an existing contract in San Antonio that ran for a number of years. Vegas had an interest in being with the Chicago Wolves, where St. Louis has been. The Blues were prepared to send players to both Chicago and San Antonio this season in order to bridge into a full-time agreement next season in San Antonio. So next season, St. Louis will be a full affiliate with San Antonio, the Avalanche will be a full affiliate in Colorado and Vegas will be the full affiliate in Chicago.

We don't encourage shared affiliation agreements, but we had no choice this season, and my responsibility in managing those kinds of transactions is to find a solution that works the best for the most possible teams.

CP: Are there ever any internal struggles when this happens with two sets of players from different organizations trying to be developed and ice time can only go to so many players?

Andrews: There's the potential for that, but I don't expect that there will be in Chicago or San Antonio. The coach in Chicago is a Vegas hire and the coach in San Antonio is a Colorado hire and there are arrangements between the general managers with respect to which players are going to go to which team. Generally, I think there's a commitment that every player on these teams is going to be treated the same way regardless of his affiliation, but teams are trying to win and also trying to develop players, so there is always a potential for issues.

One of the challenges is with goaltenders. If you look at where your No. 3 [NHL] goaltender is and how much is he playing — finding enough playing time for your top goalie prospects when you're sharing an affiliation can be really challenging.

CP: One new wrinkle of your new western division has been a different length of schedule, as they play 68 games [eight fewer games than the other teams]. What has been the feedback from those teams and have there been issues with bringing in revenue?

Andrews: Those teams asked for a 68-game schedule as a condition of their moving to the West Coast and remaining members of the AHL. As a group, they believe it is to their advantage from a player development



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

perspective to have fewer games and more practice time, and particularly with the travel time involved, it made more sense for them.

We were supportive of going to the West Coast, but it was a lengthy and difficult process with lots of negotiations and challenges for our league. There's a transactional management piece to moving five franchises: In some cases, we had to find franchises for them to purchase and negotiate sales. It was a very complex undertaking. We wanted to make certain that we got an agreement that worked for all involved and one of the things the western teams wanted was a shorter schedule, and we as a league determined that we could live with that. And I think it's been fine.

From a competitive integrity perspective, although it might look odd at first glance, there really hasn't been an issue within the league. My preference would be to get everyone at the same schedule length, and I expect at some point the league will get there, whatever the number is.

CP: Do you think it would be beneficial for the NHL to play 70 games?

Andrews: I don't think the NHL schedule is going to go anywhere soon because they have revenue sharing with their players. So I doubt anyone is going to push to play fewer games. Would it be better to play fewer games? That's not for me to say, but I don't certainly hear anything that would suggest they will reduce their schedule anytime soon.

It's a challenging question because revenues are important — we're in a business — and anytime you ask your owners to take a step that leads to less revenue generation, you're walking a difficult path.

CP: Could you argue if you reduce the number of games the average attendance will go up since games are scarcer?

Andrews: Theoretically you could, but there's some risk there. We've done it. We reduced our schedule from 80 games to 76 [in 2011], and I think that was good for our league. Our teams rely more strongly on revenue from group tickets than major-league teams do, but you can move groups around into fewer games without losing those sales. And going from 80 to 76, our schedule makers focused on eliminating weeknight games that aren't terrific revenue generators anyway.

As you start to lower that number more, you start to bite into some of your weekend dates and that can be troublesome for some owners.

CP: In the AHL, we see a decent amount of three games in three consecutive nights. Has there been any thoughts on trying to reduce those? What has the feedback been from teams?

Andrews: Any time you discuss scheduling, there is a hockey argument and there is a business argument. We play three-in-three's because weekends are when we draw the best. After the Super Bowl, many teams do as well on a Sunday afternoon as they do on a Friday night.

We used to allow teams to play four games in five nights, we don't anymore. We have reduced the number of three-in-three's every single season. We understand from a player development perspective and perhaps from a competitive quality perspective that the game is not always terrific at the end of those stretches. But we've said to our teams and our NHL partners: If you don't want to play three-in-three's, then we'll move you out of them, but you're going to have to sacrifice some weekend dates in your own building.

Some teams are willing to do that and others aren't. Some think three-in-three's are fine. There are different opinions, and one of the challenges of managing a league of 30 or 31 teams is that there are different opinions on all of these questions. On the question of schedule length, there are successful, long-standing NHL general managers who believe a 76-game schedule is far better for their players than playing a shorter schedule. If we could get all the NHL teams to say a 72-game schedule would be better for player development, we could get there, but they don't all agree on that.

There are a number of NHL GMs who like it the way it is; they think we've got it right. Same with our roster regulation — our development rule on how many veterans you can have in your lineup. We have found that

balance now where they're happy; it's not a debate anymore among any of the NHL GMs or any of our teams. That was a change we made when I first came in 24 years ago, when we created the business model that we have.

When I started in 1994, we were trying to survive. We had 16 teams, and we were in a lot of weak markets. The IHL was moving into major markets, and NHL teams were starting to move their affiliation agreements to the IHL to get a bigger financial return for their agreements. That left us in a bit of a rough spot. Any time you do any sort of strategic planning, you do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats) analysis, and the one strength we knew we had was our relationships with NHL teams. We had been a development league for some time, but we were in weak markets with not very strong ownership, and we were at risk, so we needed a plan. What should our business model be? We had to differentiate ourselves from the IHL. We decided to serve the needs of NHL teams in player development, and create a level playing field for young players to compete against each other. And in so doing we'd create a business model where NHL teams would want to invest in the AHL and help us to cover player costs so that our operators could survive financially. That's been our process ever since then. So every decision that we make is driven by supporting our business model so we can afford to be in the cities we're in, and we can provide the entertainment we provide, and we can give players the chance to develop in this league. That has led to all sorts of changes and legislation, and that's why the schedule is a hot discussion point — we need to make sure we are doing what we need to do for player development, but at the same time keep our businesses healthy.

STATISTICAL OFFERINGS AND AHL LIVE

The AHL's statistical offerings for games include goals, points, plus/minus, penalties and shots for players in a given game, as well as information about who was on the ice for a given goal.

AHL Live, which is the league's subscription package for broadcasts of every game, has a relatively high price compared to the rest of the sports world. All-access starts at \$349.99 USD per season, team passes for all games are \$199.99 and a single live game is \$7.99. NHL.tv all-access costs \$139.99, MLB.tv is \$112.99 and minor league baseball's all-access is \$49.99.

CP: When will the AHL publish individual players' time on ice publicly?

Andrews: Whenever general managers decide they'd like to do that. The question comes up at our board meetings and within our competition committee, which is made up of NHL GMs and assistant GMs. And right now, they're not interested in doing that.

CP: Why?

Andrews: They don't want to share the time on ice with each other.

CP: So why do they do that in the NHL?

Andrews: For fan interest, I guess. If you go to the 30 teams in our league and you ask them, 'Do you want to publicly share your players' time on ice?' the answer is no.

CP: Is it being tracked in every AHL rink right now?

Andrews: It is being tracked in every rink at every game.

CP: Is it shared with both teams or only the home team?

Andrews: It is shared with both teams.

CP: So what is different in the incentives for other pro leagues, be it the KHL or other European leagues, to share time on ice from the AHL?

Andrews: You'd need to ask the NHL general managers why that is, but I think I know. They are very protective of what they're doing in player development and they may not want 30 other general managers to have a look at how many minutes each player is playing. They want them to earn their money scouting.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Author's Note: This answer didn't shock me, as I also discussed this with an executive who said, "Leagues balance the public service to their return on investment. Giving out major league time on ice is not only a public service but also promotes fan engagement (which means they can indirectly convert their fandom into dollars). Giving out minor league time on ice has limited fan engagement appeal, and so clubs are less likely to justify enough benefit to counteract the cost of such valuable information for the team."

CP: We see the real-time scoring system in the NHL, where different types of events are tracked and which players are on the ice for those events are identified, would that be something the AHL would ever want to implement?

(To clarify, the AHL has real-time scoring but does not do in-depth tracking like the NHL.)

Andrews: No. It's all about resources.

CP: Of course.

Andrews: For us, there's no upside to that. I attend 50-60 AHL games a year around the league. I have not once been asked why we don't do any of that. Fans come to me and they talk about not playing against enough different opponents, they complain about officiating, but they are mostly supportive of the league and their team. You respond as best you can, you want to satisfy your fan base and all of your stakeholders. We do the best we can to meet the expectations of our ownership, our players, our officials and our fans — not in that order — and so you respond as best you can to what you believe the demands are. And I would say the demands are for us to deliver a high-caliber league and high-caliber competition and help our players get to the NHL, help our owners survive in business or thrive in business. Collecting hockey analytics data is way down the list.

CP: One other thing I wanted to talk about from your offerings is AHL Live, which is the main way that you deliver games to fans. The price for an all-access subscription is \$350 USD. I have talked to an AHL employee before that the AHL doesn't set the price, but rather NeuLion does. Is that correct?

Andrews: NeuLion does. They're a third party.

CP: You look at NHL or MLB's subscription cost or even minor league baseball's subscription cost, they're all substantially lower. Is the high price a potential problem in trying to draw people into the league?

Andrews: It can be. It's a very fair question. We have had that conversation over the years with NeuLion. They're making business decisions themselves as to what the appropriate way to price it is. And they offer a lot of different packages at different price points.

If you're going to compare the cost to the NHL's subscription prices, you have to factor in the whole different set of variables that is involved, including the volume of subscribers for the NHL level and the fact that the NHL product is simply streaming an existing television production.

There's some deeper answers to this, but to answer your question about whether the price point is an issue: for us, I think it is. We understand the complaints, but we also aren't in a position to dictate to our partner NeuLion how they price the product.

CP: Why do you think it's so much different than minor league baseball, which is around \$50 a year? Has NeuLion ever expressed why the price is so high?

Andrews: They are running a business and make their pricing decisions to fit their business model.

The AHL later noted: But we also recognize that it's our name attached to the product. We're receptive and responsive to the feedback we get regarding all aspects of the AHL Live program — price points, video quality, customer service. We've worked closely with NeuLion to implement improvements over the course of our relationship, and we

have a senior-level league committee in place working to determine what the future of our streaming property should look like.

CP: Last season ...

Andrews: I want to go back to analytics for a minute.

CP: Sure.

Andrews: Our teams all have full-time video coaches and they're tracking whatever data they want to track. Our teams have not expressed a need for the league to take over that hockey analytics role. Where we are a leader, however, is in business analytics. We have built an analytics platform on the business side which is second to none in hockey. We are in the process of beginning to license that to other leagues. We've been developing this over the last decade, we've got a whole wing of our office collecting financial data from our teams on a real-time basis, identifying best practices and sharing best practices. We've grown our business since the time we began the business analytics program here by about 60 percent in ticket revenue and 50 percent in corporate revenue. So when we look at where analytics are important to us as a league, it's where the analytics helps drive our business.

CP: On the hockey side of analytics, in order for that to grow would there need to be more demand from fans or from the managers?

Andrews: Probably more demand from managers. We have responded and do respond to anything that our managers are looking for because we pass the cost back to them. So if our NHL general managers and our AHL general managers said to us, "We want this analytics program, we want real-time tracking that tells us about hits, etc." we would go and find out how much it's going to cost and we can say for example, "This is a million dollar expense, it will cost you \$35,000 each per year," and ask, "Do you still want to do it?" And if three-fourths of them say yes, then we do it.

The Athletic LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086936 Websites

The Athletic / With Olympics getting closer, do U.S. women regret limiting their roster?

Hannah Bevis

In April, Team USA selected 23 players for their national team roster. Not the Olympic roster. The national team roster.

That's an important distinction, said Team USA head coach Robb Stauber.

It's an unusually low number; Canada originally selected 28 players for their centralization roster.

The decision to go with a smaller roster was a deliberate one, said USA general manager Reagan Carey.

"Through our selection camp last spring ... we wanted to narrow the number of roster players that we had for the majority of the time at residency to really work on team chemistry and to continue to focus on the team rather than the selection," said Carey.

Twenty-three also happens to be the magic number of players that the USA can bring to the 2018 Olympic Games in Pyeongchang, and so it was natural for some to assume that when USA Hockey selected 23 players for centralization that those players would likely be the final roster the team would take to Pyeongchang.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

But as time has gone on, it's become clear that maybe those pieces aren't quite there yet for Team USA, so they've started to bring in some fresh faces. First, it was Cayla Barnes who joined the team just before the Four Nations Cup in November, choosing to redshirt her freshman year at Boston College in hopes of making an Olympic squad at just 18. Then, more recently, the roster changed again; young defender Sidney Morin left her squad in the SDHL (Sweden's professional league) and forward Haley Skarupa departed the Boston Pride in the NWHL to join the team in Wesley Chapel, Florida.

Now, with a month to go until the team announces its final roster on Jan. 1, there are 26 players to choose from. That means lines will be shuffled and the coaching staff will have to evaluate the three new players who are learning the team's system on the fly. Especially for players like Barnes or Morin, who aren't new to Team USA but are newer to the senior team, that's certainly an obstacle.

"It's unique or challenging to come in at this point for those players, but at the same time, that's part of the decision process, is bringing players in that fit the style of play and vision (of Team USA)," said Carey. "Haley has definitely been a member of our team consistently, so it might be a little easier for her to step right into those roles, while Sidney hasn't had as much experience, but at the same time, she's a fast player, sees the ice well and somebody we thought we would have the ability to step in and contribute as well. So we're looking forward to seeing how that unfolds in the next few weeks."

With three new players on the roster and only a month to go until the team is selected, it seems fair to ask: Should the team have gone with a larger roster to begin with? It's one thing to say that the team wants to focus on group chemistry, but now there are players, specifically younger, less experienced players, that are being added to the roster late. Not only does that mean they'll have less time to learn the team's system, but it's also a bit jarring for the 23 players who have been there since August. Now there's new players to mesh with and the added stress of knowing there are cuts coming at the end of the month — or sooner, depending on what the coaching staff decides.

But Carey and Stauber aren't concerned about adding players late. Rather, they appreciate the flexibility they have with this kind of plan. They've been able to observe the original team and look at where they need improvements, and select players that they think could fill those needs.

"You have a plan and you've got to believe in your plan, and we believed in our plan, so I wouldn't go back at all. But you've also got to be cognizant and aware that there are some things that, right now, we think we can be a little bit better," said Stauber. "And you have to be willing to say, 'Hey, we still have time, it's not a lot of time, and if we're going to do this, and if we're going to do this, now is the time.'"

"When we selected the team in May and April, it was the national team, it was not the Olympic team, and all the players were well aware of that. ... At the end of the day, you can't be afraid to say, 'Hey, we may need to take a look at a couple of things here.'"

And from a practical standpoint, having 26 players is going to benefit those on the roster, too. While it may be difficult for newer players like Barnes and Morin to pick up the same habits and skills that other national players have had months to learn, a larger roster allows for players to take days off if needed. And when you're practicing every day and playing a full slate of games over the course of six or seven months, you're going to need time to breath and recover, especially if you get hurt.

"If you have a player or two that gets dinged up, having the ability to practice with a full lineup is important without a doubt," said Stauber. "It does help when somebody gets some bumps and bruises, which is normal along the way, but sometimes they're a little more severe and they might need to miss a couple of days, and that ultimately affects your practices. It does allow us some flexibility here at the end to make sure our practices are high-paced, day in and day out, and that is important to us."

But regardless of why the team waited so long to add players, now that they're here, the evaluation staff has some decisions to make, and they'll have to be particularly careful with how they evaluate players who have had less time on the team. Carey noted that the coaching staff is familiar with these players already, so while they're new to the centralization roster, they aren't new to USAH.

"We have a really good sense of the body of work of all these players and then how we anticipate them fitting in. So having a shorter window certainly makes it a different approach, but at the same time, these are players that are familiar to us and they're familiar with what we're trying to do," she said. "I don't think anybody's concerned about the timing of that process."

"What we value isn't going to change," added Stauber. "It's just whether or not they can pick it up and provide themselves with an opportunity to make this team and, in the end, make us a better team."

There aren't many of those opportunities left, so players will have to make the most of them as they come. Mostly, those will come in the form of games against Canada; the team has three contests left against their toughest competitor, and those games will surely weigh heavily as the coaching staff makes final roster decisions.

Skarupa and Morin, along with Barnes, were both in the lineup against Canada for the team's most recent contest in Minnesota. Expect to see them in the games moving forward, too.

After all, if they're going to prove themselves, the clock is ticking, for both them and the coaching staff.

The Athletic LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086937 Websites

The Athletic / Tomas Plekanec is not slowing down with age; he's getting better

Arpon Basu

The Canadiens will face one of the top forward lines in the NHL on Tuesday when Jaden Schwartz, Brayden Schenn, Vladimir Tarasenko and the St. Louis Blues step onto the Bell Centre ice.

Those three players can expect to see a steady dose of Tomas Plekanec with Brendan Gallagher and Charles Hudon on his wings, not only because that is the Canadiens' best forward line, it is also the one charged with shutting down the opposition's best on a regular basis.

The centrepiece of that role is Plekanec, as he always has been, ever since his current coach, Claude Julien, had him in the American Hockey League with the Hamilton Bulldogs 15 years ago. But this season, at age 35 and in the final year of his two-year, \$12 million contract, he is playing that role as well as he ever has.

That dollar figure often clouds how people look at Plekanec because the offensive numbers, 12 points in 28 games, don't justify a salary like that.

Just don't tell that to any of his teammates.

"Pleky?" centre Phillip Danault said in his native French. "Pleky c'est un grand joueur en tabarnouche. Vraiment."

Loosely translated, that means, "Pleky is a freaking great player. Really."

Danault has trouble understanding why Plekanec would be seen any other way.

"I have no idea how anyone couldn't see how valuable he is," Danault continued. "I guess it's because of his salary, but that's totally irrelevant."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Indeed, on a team swimming in cap space, Plekanec's salary should not be considered when judging how he has played this season.

His line with Gallagher and Hudon have been together for 142:28 of 5-on-5 ice time this season, and in that time they have produced 10 goals and allowed only two, they have taken 55.6 percent of the shot attempts, 54.9 percent of the shots on goal and had 62.7 percent of the scoring chances.

They have done so while starting 32 percent of their shifts in the defensive zone, compared to 24.3 percent in the offensive zone, against the best forward lines in the NHL.

"With us, a lot of our responsibility is also defensive and I think that's been big for both me and Charlie," Gallagher said. "When you get those challenges your mindset as a player is you've got to go out there and be ready to compete, because if you're not ready the puck's going to end up in the back of your net."

Plekanec has been doing this all season, no matter who he has played with. He and Gallagher have been a duo for the bulk of the season, with either Hudon or Paul Byron on the left wing most of the time, and what's happened with Plekanec on the ice this season is nothing short of remarkable considering how the season began for the Canadiens.

Plekanec has been on the ice for eight goals against at 5-on-5 this season. That's right, eight. In 10 games from the beginning of the season on Oct. 5 to a 4-0 loss to the Los Angeles Kings on Oct. 26, the Canadiens had a 2-7-1 record and had allowed 27 goals against at 5-on-5, third-most in the NHL over that time. Plekanec was on the ice for four of those goals against.

In the 18 games since, Plekanec has been on the ice for four 5-on-5 goals against in two games; he was on for two each against the New York Rangers on Oct. 28, which was the game after the Kings game, and the Toronto Maple Leafs on Nov. 18. So he hasn't been on the ice for any 5-on-5 goals against in 16 of his last 17 games.

Among NHL forwards who had played 200 minutes at 5-on-5 prior to games Monday night, Plekanec was ranked 16th with a 66.7 on-ice goals for percentage and 17th with a 1.29 goals against per 60 minutes of ice time ratio.

In terms of goals against, Gallagher is the next-highest ranked Canadiens forward at 74th in the NHL at 1.88, and Plekanec's 1.29 goals against is nearly three times lower than the worst Canadiens forward, Max Pacioretty at 3.63.

"With Pleky out there, he's always on the right side of the puck, he's always in a good position defensively, he takes care of that end and that's really how our offence has come," Gallagher said. "It's a 200-foot game and when you're out there against some of the best players in the world, it's a challenge that we've enjoyed."

But Plekanec's offence shouldn't be ignored either.

"Gally and I put a lot of pressure on defencemen so we recover a lot of pucks, and when we recover pucks it often winds up on Tomas' stick," Hudon said. "He's able to create plays with his vision, you don't need to tell him, he already knows where you are. He really has incredible vision."

Again, remember that Plekanec is starting a high rate of his shifts in his own zone against the opposition's top players, and doing this night after night. Despite that, he is producing 1.46 primary points (goals and first assists) per 60 minutes of 5-on-5 ice time, which compares very favourably with Jonathan Drouin at 1.48, who benefits from starting 38 percent of his shifts in the offensive zone compared to 27.6 percent for Plekanec.

"He's a player that we've encouraged to not just focus on the defensive part of his game; he's got enough skill to be a good player offensively and sometimes you need to encourage players to do that," Julien said. "But he's also got some wingers on each side of him that are playing well.

"That trio of players, they work hard and they make things happen. Pleky's part of that group; he's the oldest guy obviously that has the experience, he's the one that's calm and keeps, I guess, his linemates in line, if I can say that. All three of them are good, honest guys that work hard and want to work with each other."

That trio will need to work in order to shut down Schwartz, Schenn and Tarasenko on Tuesday, though they enter the game in a bit of a slump with one assist between the three of them over their last three games.

They are about to face a matchup that will make breaking that slump very difficult.

The Athletic LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086938 Websites

The Athletic / Blues begin contract talks with GM Doug Armstrong, who deserves to have future sealed sooner than later

Jeremy Rutherford

The Blues' flight home from Vancouver International Airport had already been delayed several hours because of a mechanical issue with the team's plane when general manager Doug Armstrong stepped to the front of the waiting area to provide the players and staff with an update.

"I've got good news and bad news," Armstrong said. "The bad news is it's going to be a little while longer before we get out of here. The good news is I just signed a five-year contract extension!"

As difficult as it was for the Blues to summon even a smile toward the end of what turned out to be a 14-hour wait, the room roared in laughter. The slap-happy club would eventually make it back to St. Louis, and in the five years since that lengthy layover in 2013, they've been flying near the top of the NHL standings every year.

There's been some turbulence lately, but the Blues still sit fifth in the league before meeting Montreal at the Bell Centre Wednesday night. All seems to be smooth sailing, with one exception — Armstrong's contract is set to expire in June.

The Blues' general manager is not alone. Frank Provenzano, who worked for Armstrong in Dallas, recently wrote an article for The Athletic addressing the dangers NHL teams face by operating with a GM in the final year of his contract. But of the three Provenzano mentioned in the piece, the stamp Armstrong has put on the Blues would make it seem that a return beyond his eighth season needs only a rubber-stamp.

So what's taking so long?

In training camp last September, Blues owner Tom Stillman told The Athletic that he was in no rush to finalize an extension with Armstrong and that being in the walk-year of his contract would not be a distraction to the organization. Two months later, there remains no agreement between the two sides, but when asked for an update Monday, Stillman offered: "We have begun discussions on a contract extension, and we have every expectation that Doug will remain as the Blues' GM."

There's no reason to doubt the Blues' owner, who has tremendous respect for Armstrong, and it's hard to envision a scenario in which the GM won't stay in charge of the Blues. But the longer this stays unsettled leaves the possibility — however slim — that things can go awry, and at the very least it leaves some of his staff whose contracts may also be expiring this summer wondering about their futures as well.

THE SUCCESS



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

In 2008, the Blues hired Armstrong as their "GM in waiting," the person who would replace Larry Pleau in 2010. In the seven-plus seasons since, the Blues have a record of 331-180-56. The 331 wins are the second-most in the NHL behind Pittsburgh (343), and the team's .633 points-percentage is third in the league behind Pittsburgh (.652) and Chicago (.639).

The Blues missed the postseason in Armstrong's first season at the helm, but have advanced in each of the past six seasons, one of only four teams to do so. The list includes Pittsburgh, Chicago and the New York Rangers. While the Penguins and Blackhawks won two Stanley Cups in that span, and the Rangers lost in the Cup finals, the Blues did make the franchise's first trip to the Western Conference Finals in 15 years in 2016.

Another team that won two Cups during those six years is Los Angeles, whose general manager at the time was Dean Lombardi. The Blues were ousted by the Kings in their first two trips to the postseason under Armstrong — 2012 and 2013 — but Lombardi remained impressed by what he has accomplished in St. Louis.

"One of the best in the league," Lombardi, who had a 20-year career as a general manager in the NHL, told The Athletic this week. "His body of work speaks for itself. I have nothing but the utmost respect for him as GM and more importantly as a person."

THE BUDGET

The Blues' payroll has steadily grown during Armstrong's tenure and has been considered a cap team under Stillman the past few seasons. But it hasn't always been that way, particularly under previous ownership. Armstrong was forced to construct contracts that would not hand-cuff a small-market franchise in the future.

Since Armstrong took over the roster in 2010, there have been 105 buyouts in the NHL, according to figures compiled by The Athletic. Excluding the expansion Vegas Golden Knights, who just entered the NHL in 2017-18, the Blues are the only team in the league who have not participated in a buyout. New Jersey leads the way with nine, followed by Nashville with seven, Florida with six, five teams with five, eight teams with four, three teams with three, seven teams with two and three teams with one.

The Blues did have one buyout in 2009, purchasing the final year of defenseman Jay McKee's four-year, \$16 million contract, but that took place before Armstrong assumed control from Pleau. The closest the club has come under Armstrong was the mutual termination of contracts with Peter Mueller and Martin Havlat, who chose to end their NHL careers.

In fact, even the list of Blues who have held one-way contracts and were paid an NHL salary after being sent to the American Hockey League is relatively short. The group includes Chris Porter and Magnus Paajarvi going back a few years and Beau Bennett this season, but of those, only Paajarvi made enough money to count toward the NHL salary cap while in the minors.

"I think that's incredible," Devils GM Ray Shero told The Athletic of Armstrong not having any buyouts. "Doug does a great short and long-term job with his vision. The contracts. Look at Backes, original Blue ... it's hard to make those decisions. (Armstrong) gets a lot of [heat] for it until it all plays out.

"He's got an incredible track record. ... I think he's one of the top GMs in the league. Depending on what that criteria can be, Doug has done it exactly the right way."

THE TRADES

The Blues have benefited from Armstrong's trades, a claim supported by last summer's acquisition of Brayden Schenn in exchange for Jori Lehtera and two first-round picks. Schenn is currently second on the club with 30 points and shares the team plus-minus lead at plus-19, while Lehtera is sitting on just two points and a minus-5 with the Flyers.

That isn't the only deal that has worked out for the Blues under Armstrong. The headliners include bringing in a first-round pick for Ryan Reaves and two trades involving Kevin Shattenkirk. The first was sending Erik Johnson and a first-round pick to Colorado for Shattenkirk and Chris Stewart, and then parting ways with Shattenkirk six years later in a trade with Washington that yielded Zach Sanford and the first-round pick used in the Schenn trade.

"He was a real pro to deal with — honest, knowledgeable, forthright and no BS. You could always trust him with a conversation," Lombardi said. "And he has guts, not afraid to take a chance to improve his team, realizes that it takes some hair if you are going to make one plus one equal three."

Armstrong has a favorable track record, but not all of his trades have panned out. Though he might make the same move all over again, his deal in 2015 that sent T.J. Oshie to Washington in exchange for Troy Brouwer, Pheonix Copley and a third-round pick, has seen Oshie put up 130 points in 176 games for the Capitals and continue to be a contributor, recently signing an eight-year contract. Brouwer, although he scored the game-winning goal in Game 7 of the first round against Chicago in 2016, left for Calgary via free agency. But Oshie has never escaped the second round of the playoffs with the Caps, and really, of all the trades Armstrong has made, only Ian Cole has gone on to significant success, winning two Stanley Cups with Pittsburgh.

THE PROSPECTS

The Blues have also built one of the best pools of prospects in the NHL under Armstrong, who promoted Bill Armstrong (no relation) to director of amateur scouting in 2010 after Jarmo Kekalainen left the organization. This season, the list includes forward Sammy Blais and defenseman Vince Dunn on the NHL roster; Tage Thompson and Klim Kostin in the AHL; and Jordan Kyrou and Robert Thomas, who are regarded as two of the top junior hockey players in the Ontario Hockey League.

Corey Pronman, who is a prospects expert for The Athletic, compiled a list of the top NHL minor-league systems for ESPN.com prior to the 2017-18 season and had the Blues listed at No. 8. Here's what Pronman wrote at the time:

The emergence of a few of the Blues' prospects since the release of Pronman's rankings could change the scope.

"I can't give an exact rank as of now, as that's a lengthy process that will be done in the summer, but the significant development of Robert Thomas helps elevate the Blues system to a higher place than most teams would be with their draft slots," Pronman said Monday. "Coupled with Kostin, Kyrou, Tage Thompson and Jake Walman, there is enough high-end in the system that I think you'd have to grade their farm system as above-average for sure. Is it elite? Tough to say, I'm hesitant to put them in that range, but not too far out."

THE CONSEQUENCES

What is clear is that if Armstrong becomes disenchanted by not having a deal soon and decides to explore other options, there could be several vacancies around the NHL next summer. Montreal, Colorado, Detroit, Minnesota, Philadelphia, Edmonton, Washington and Vancouver are all situations where change could occur.

And if the person who has signed the Blues' contracts for the past eight years comes close enough to free agency himself, the Blues may risk losing not only him but his "Army" as well. Assistant GM Martin Brodeur, vice president of hockey operations Dave Taylor, senior consultant Larry Robinson, director of player development Tim Taylor, director of hockey analytics Thomas Cason were all brought in by Armstrong. And in addition to Bill Armstrong being promoted, Rob DiMaio ascended to director of player personnel under Doug Armstrong.

There are many examples in the NHL of staffs that have followed their boss to his next job, and the Blues have seen this first-hand with former Blues president John Davidson and Kekalainen taking multiple scouts to Columbus when they took over the Blue Jackets. More recently, Jason



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Botterill was recently hired as the GM in Buffalo and lured several key people from Pittsburgh, his former employer.

"It's like an Octopus," one NHL executive told The Athletic on the condition of anonymity. "You start pulling and you pull from what you know. The people in his business, very rarely do they go into an interview and get the job. The GMs hire people behind the scenes, whom they've built trust in over the years. They go somewhere else and they pull you along like an Octopus, and once they start plucking guys, it's like the team they left is starting all over again."

Since Armstrong's well-played announcement after the long plane delay in Vancouver that he had signed a five-year extension, he's become the ninth-longest tenured GM in the league, behind Nashville's David Poile, Detroit's Ken Holland, San Jose's Doug Wilson, the New York Islanders' Garth Snow, Anaheim's Bob Murray, Minnesota's Chuck Fletcher, Chicago's Stan Bowman and Tampa Bay' Steve Yzerman. Seven of those nine teams, including Armstrong's club, made the playoffs last season and four of them are currently among the top eight in the NHL standings.

The Blues may not be playing with fire yet, but if they want to continue playing with a competitive team on the ice, they should wrap up an extension soon with the GM who's been one of the best in the business since his arrival.

The Athletic LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086939 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Canadiens' mettle in hard-fought loss to Blues a sign of progress

Brayden Schenn scored a goal in each period to help the St. Louis Blues beat the Montreal Canadiens 4-3.

Eric Engels

December 5, 2017, 11:57 PM

MONTREAL — This one had sobering loss written all over it for the Montreal Canadiens.

Coming off five straight wins against mostly marginal opponents — a hard-fought one against the Columbus Blue Jackets being an exception — and up against a Western Conference juggernaut in the St. Louis Blues, who were coming in angry on the heels of a three-game losing streak, the odds seemed to favour that outcome.

The thing is, Montreal's 4-3 loss to the Blues on Tuesday boiled down to one unlucky sequence and did very little to dull the confidence they've gained as a team over the last couple of weeks of winning hockey.

It would've fit the presupposed narrative to a tee if the game had effectively ended less than three minutes into the second period, when the Blues got goals from Scottie Upshall and Brayden Schenn to put them up 3-1 in the span of just seven seconds. It had marked the 10th time the Canadiens had allowed two goals within a minute, and on the previous nine occasions their resolve to punch back had been less than apparent. More of the same would've reinforced the idea that their recent winning streak had created a bit of a mirage.

But given that the Canadiens battled back with a big goal in the second period, another in the third to tie the game 3-3, and kept coming after Schenn capped a hat trick on a hope shot from the corner that hit Canadiens defenceman David Schlemko's skate and squeezed its way through goaltender Carey Price to make it 4-3 with 7:49 remaining, there was nothing sobering about this loss.

"You lose some games throughout the season and some of them are really frustrating," said Canadiens coach Claude Julien. "This one — I feel like at least the guys competed well, and I'd have liked for us to have had a better result for it but I'm not disappointed in the effort of our players."

Nor should he be.

The Canadiens played with the belief they could beat one of the league's best teams. Some may not have seen it that way through the first 10 minutes of the game, over which they had failed to register a shot on net. But a closer look revealed they missed six attempts during that span and came out of the opening frame with two more shot attempts than the Blues and with a 1-1 tie.

They also didn't wilt after allowing those two quick strikes and after getting dominated for the first 15 minutes of the second period.

And about that particularly tough sequence, it had much less to do with how the Canadiens were playing and much more to do with the Blues seizing momentum off a couple of mental errors their opponents made on the goals against.

You have to give credit where it's due.

"They took away the boards from us and hemmed us in," said Julien.

"I would say we were playing against a good hockey team," Julien added. "They're big, they're talented, they're a team that's been through a lot and gone far — even in the playoffs."

This Canadiens team is something else. Its defence has been completely rearranged, with a player on each pair that wasn't in a Montreal uniform last season. On offence, it's got a whole new fourth line from the one it ended last season with. In fact it's a whole new fourth line than the one it began this season with.

The team was also playing its third straight game without top-line centre Jonathan Drouin.

All things considered, the Canadiens have done a good job distancing themselves from a franchise-worst start to a season in 76 years.

More from Sportsnet

Brayden Schenn scores hat trick to power Blues over Canadiens

CANADIAN PRESS

Canadiens' Jonathan Drouin to miss 3rd straight game

SPORTSNET STAFF

"We don't need to go back there, in my estimation," said Julien.

"The way we've been playing lately, even down 3-1 we still had an opportunity," Julien added. "That second goal gave us some life at the end of the second period and we came out in the third determined to get ourselves back in and we did."

That second goal was Shea Weber's 500th point in the NHL, and the one in the third came off his stick as well. Both of them were scored off set faceoff plays, where Andrew Shaw drew the puck back and Weber fired both of them in before Blues goalie Jake Allen could react.

The Canadiens came close in the third, outshooting the Blues 12-8, outchancing them marginally in the frame, too.

Even with the result in St. Louis' favour, Montreal showed its mettle and flashed the type of confidence that can help them continue to carry forward on a positive note.

That's important considering the next challenge the Canadiens will face, with a strong Calgary Flames team visiting the Bell Centre Thursday and a motivated and desperate Edmonton Oilers team in town Saturday.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

1086940 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Canucks, Markstrom step up to put shutout-less streak to bed

Jacob Markstrom made 30 saves as the Vancouver Canucks beat the Carolina Hurricanes 3-0.

Iain MacIntyre

December 6, 2017, 1:56 AM

VANCOUVER – When the final horn sounded Tuesday, players skated from the Vancouver Canucks bench, arms high, smiles wide, and engulfed goalie Jacob Markstrom.

A division title? First place? No, just a shutout – Markstrom's first in the National Hockey League.

Once every seven years or 129 games, whether he needs one or not, Markstrom records a shutout. His teammates were as happy as he was after blanking the Carolina Hurricanes 3-0 at Rogers Arena.

Markstrom's (non) shutout streak was nearing the record 132 games that Pokey Reddick played in the NHL without ever recording a shutout. Goalies have gone longer in the NHL without a shutout, but 132 games is the most games played by a goalie who never had one.

"I'm just more happy about not getting the question (again)," Markstrom said, reporters nodding in agreement.

Understandably, Markstrom has never enjoyed talking about his failure, which was more an embarrassing, almost inconceivable, anomaly rather than an indication of the 27-year-old's ability.

But some Canuck teammates were talking about it. On the bench. In the third period.

They were breaking the first rule about shutouts, which is to never talk about shutouts until they are finalized.

"Some of the guys were talking about it – just to buckle down and make sure that we're doing things the right way and try to play in their end as much as we could," veteran Sam Gagner said. "Try to get pucks deep and not give them any odd-man situations. I was very surprised when I first heard (about the streak). He has played really good hockey for us, helped us win a lot of games. It's kind of a quirky stat, I guess, and we're happy that's over and he can just focus on doing what he's been doing."

Since a two-game reset last week when backup Anders Nilsson got consecutive starts so that Markstrom could work with goaltending coach Dan Cloutier, the Canucks' No. 1 netminder has stopped 65 of 66 shots as the Canucks beat the Hurricanes and Toronto Maple Leafs.

In Saturday's 2-1 win against the Leafs, Markstrom was beaten only by a deflection with 2:52 remaining in the third period.

"I don't know about tension, but there certainly was a lot of talk to do whatever it takes out there to get that monkey off his back," veteran winger Thomas Vanek said. "The boys really bought in after he bailed us out."

Looking physically and mentally spent after emotional wins against the Leafs and Nashville Predators amid the sudden forced retirement of Canuck Derek Dorsett, Vancouver was outshot 12-3 in the first period by Carolina.

But Vanek and Derrick Pouliot scored for the Canucks in the second period, and Nikolay Goldobin in the third. Markstrom's best saves were a couple of point-blank glove stops against Hurricane Justin Williams.

"I tried to stay focused and not think about it," Markstrom said of his shutout. "It's hard, obviously, seeing the clock roll down. If they would have scored, it would have been fine, too. Nothing would have changed. We'd have a big win at home.

"Early in my career, I had a couple of really close ones. I was 21 years old and then you really want a shutout in the NHL. And then it kind of went away, that urge. I just wanted to win hockey games. You kind of accept that I ain't getting one. It's fun. You want to help your team win and if I don't let in any goals it's going to mean we're winning the hockey game."

If Markstrom had allowed a late goal, it wouldn't have changed the outcome for the Canucks but there would be a very different conversation today about the goaltender.

As Sportsnet's Sean McIndoe noted in his excellent blog, Down Goes Brown, there are 90 goalies in the last 30 years who have played 100 or more NHL games with a save percentage of .905 or better, and 89 of those goalies have at least five shutouts. And Markstrom had zero.

But the discussion about Markstrom's futility streak has been misleading because it created a false impression that the 27-year-old could soon break the record for games without a shutout. That's a half-truth. Reddick's record of 132 games without a shutout is a career mark – literally the most games a goalie has played in the NHL without ever recording a shutout.

Ed Staniowski's first NHL shutout, in 1981-82, came in his 176th game. Numerous other goalies, almost all of them in the 1970s and '80s, went more than 132 games between shutouts. Reddick's final game was in 1994.

What made Markstrom's run astonishing is the low-scoring era in which it came and that, nearly seven years since his NHL debut for the Florida Panthers at age 20, the Swede had rarely even been close to a shutout.

Tuesday's contest was just the third time in 86 games as a Canuck that Markstrom carried a goalless start into the third period.

As if to rub it in, Nilsson, Markstrom's backup, had two shutouts in his first three games after signing with the Canucks in July, bringing his shutout total to five in 87 NHL games.

"We've been joking about it a little bit, so I'm happy for him," Nilsson said Tuesday. "He worked really hard for this and has been playing good lately. It's nice for him to finally get a shutout. He deserves it. It's a night to remember."

And a streak to forget.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086941 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / How IOC's decision could impact Team Canada and Olympic hockey

Chris Johnston

December 5, 2017, 4:35 PM

Will they go?

Will Ilya Kovalchuk, Pavel Datsyuk and the rest of the Russian hockey team consent to pulling on a sweater featuring the Olympic rings rather than one of their own? Will they even be allowed to?

There was considerable doubt on Tuesday afternoon in the wake of a ruling from the International Olympic Committee that Russian athletes will



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

have to compete as neutrals at the Pyeongchang Games in February. No hockey players were named directly in the reports about that country's state-sponsored doping program ahead of the 2014 Sochi Olympics, but the IOC felt compelled to impose sanctions across all sports because the violations were deemed so brazen.

"This has caused unprecedented damage to Olympism and to sport," Samuel Schmid, who led the IOC commission into the allegations, told a news conference in Lausanne, Switzerland.

What it will do to the men's and women's hockey tournaments remains to be seen.

The International Ice Hockey Federation said it would need to consider the fallout before commenting on the IOC's decision. No doubt IIHF president Rene Fasel will spend the hours and days ahead consulting with officials from the KHL and Russian Ice Hockey Federation.

(KHL president Dmitry Chernyshenko was removed from the coordinating commission for the 2022 Beijing Games as part of Tuesday's sanctions after serving as CEO of the Sochi organizing campaign).

The initial feeling from international hockey sources was that Russia was unlikely to agree to participate in the event as a neutral, but no official reaction has come from that country so far.

Thomas Bach, the IOC's president, told reporters that he didn't expect the decision to be met with a boycott from Russian athletes.

"First of all, an Olympic boycott has never achieved anything," said Bach. "Secondly, I don't see any reason there for a boycott by the Russian athletes because we allowed the clean Russian athletes to participate, and to show there are clean athletes in Russia. In this way we think that these clean Russian athletes can be more about building a bridge into the future of a cleaner sport than erecting a new wall between Russia and the Olympic movement."

If the hockey players end up going to South Korea, they'll compete under the acronym "OAR" – Olympic Athletes from Russia. Any national symbols and the Russian anthem won't be permitted at the Games.

The ramifications on the men's side of the draw could stretch well beyond Russian borders.

In recent weeks, the KHL has threatened to rework its schedule and not let athletes from any country leave their teams for an Olympic break. With NHL players already ruled out of the event, Hockey Canada is looking at bringing as many as 15 players from the Russian-based league to the Games.

There's been enough concern that Hockey Canada CEO Tom Renney recently signed off on a letter urging the KHL to rethink its stance. Officials from the Swedish, Finnish and Czech federations co-signed as well.

Following a meeting of the IIHF Council last week, Fasel released a statement in support of Russian hockey players: "Although we recognize the need to confront doping in sport, Olympic participation should not be used to sanction the many for the actions of the few. In addition, the extent to which the IOC is seeking punitive measures in the case of Russia is putting the health of ice hockey at risk.

"Russia's role in the growth and development of ice hockey cannot be understated. This country forms a pillar on which our sport's legacy rests upon."

As we await word on how the Russian hockey players will proceed, it's worth mentioning how vehemently patriotic they are.

Datsyuk captained the team in Sochi despite dealing with a significant groin injury, and left the Detroit Red Wings in a lurch by returning home mid-contract to play for SKA St. Petersburg last year.

Kovalchuk "retired" from the New Jersey Devils in 2013 and is now in his fifth KHL season. He's answered the call from the national team at every turn – competing in four Olympics and 10 IIHF World Hockey

Championships. It's little wonder since the first line of a training journal he kept as a child read: "Our goal is always the Russian national team."

Players from that country have won gold under a neutral flag before – the Unified Team beat Team Canada at the 1992 Albertville Games, following the breakup of the Soviet Union – but the circumstances are completely different now.

This decision was imposed on them from above.

This was going to be Russia's best chance to step back atop the Olympic podium in men's hockey, but if there's no flag-raising or anthem played afterwards, is it even worth showing up?

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086942 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Toronto Maple Leafs Prospect Report: Which 2017 picks are worthy of WJC?

Luke Fox

December 5, 2017, 12:02 PM

No fewer than three members of the Toronto Maple Leafs' 2017 draft class have a legitimate chance at showcasing their skills at this month's IIHF World Junior Championship, improved stat lines abound (despite a few minor injuries), and the Toronto Marlies (18-5) are the toast of the American Hockey League.

"They've got an unbelievable team," says Leafs coach Mike Babcock. "They've got an elite D down there. They do a good job and they win games and they develop players for us.

"Ideally, there's a few more guys there that are going to end up playing for us."

In this month's Toronto Maple Leafs prospect report, we focus exclusively on the players selected by the club in the most recent draft—a group led by Timothy Lijegren—to see how their games have developed since having their name called.

Timothy Lijegren, 18, D, Toronto Marlies

Drafted: First round, 17th overall, 2017

Season to date: 14 GP | 1 G | 7 A | 8 P | +5

Reason for optimism: Considered a Round 1 steal in June, Lijegren has grown more comfortable in North America since the decision was made to develop him an overpass cab ride instead of an overseas plane ride away from the Maple Leafs.

The right-shot defenceman has found his own Toronto condo and has made a significant impact on the Marlies whenever he's healthy enough to be in the lineup. (The kid sat out six games in November to heal an upper-body injury.)

Lijegren has found an ideal partner in left-shot Travis Dermott (a top-four Leafs pairing in 2019-20?) and managed already to drive play for an upper-echelon American League squad.

Adjusting to a faster pace and smaller ice surface, the youngest defenceman in the AHL is getting giddy about making a splash at the world juniors later this month.

"It's something every kid dreams about in Sweden," Lijegren told the Toronto Star. "We're one of the top teams every year so it's always fun to come together and play with your national team."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

"I don't think we've lost a game in the preliminary round since 10 years back so obviously that's a huge part that you try to work on as a group — to compete all the way, not be satisfied with semifinals."

Liljegren could be leaned upon to move the puck on his nation's top pairing.

Eemeli Rasanen, 18, D, Kingston Frontenacs

Drafted: Second round, 59th overall, 2017

Season to date: 26 GP | 3 G | 18 A | 21 P | +12

The right-shot behemoth has taken another giant step in his sophomore campaign in the Ontario Hockey League. The Frontenacs' 18-year-old alternate captain is not only producing offensively — he's on track to easily eclipse the 39 points he put up as an OHL rookie — but he has trimmed out some of his defensive gaffes en route to swinging from a minus-7 player to a plus-12.

Rasanen hits harder than he shoots, and he shoots hard. Some are calling for him to let that clapper blast more often. Like Liljegren, Rasanen also missed a couple games in November due to an undisclosed injury, yet he still leads his team's blueliners in scoring and is a significant reason why Kingston is right in the mix to finish first in the OHL East.

Rasanen spent time on Finland's bottom pairing during the national team's summer showcase in preparation for the world juniors and will be in the conversation to suit up for the 2016 champions. With so many first-round Finnish defenders to consider, however, it'll be a tough squad to crack. It'll be bottom pairing or bust for Rasanen at the showcase tournament.

"Good to have some healthy competition," Finnish defenceman Urho Valimaki told NHL.com. "[Defence] is obviously a big strength for our team."

#Leafs' Stephane Robidas was in Oshawa tonight to watch prospect Eemeli Rasanen. The defenceman had 2 assists in the Fronts 4-1 win.

— Dhiren Mahiban (@dcmahiban) November 6, 2017

Ian Scott, 18, G, Prince Albert Raiders

Drafted: Fourth round, 110th overall, 2017

Season to date: 15 GP | 7-6-1 | 3.08 GAA | .908 SV%

Viewed as an elite minor-league goaltender during his development years in Calgary, Scott's save percentage has taken a giant leap this season, his third in the Western Hockey League.

Scott posted an .892 rate as a Prince Albert rookie, then nudged his mark up to .895 with double the workload as a sophomore. This season he's posted a winning record for a rather mediocre Raiders team and escalated his save rate over .900. The teenager is already tall — 6-foot-3 — and once he fills out, who knows? He could develop into that big goalie Babcock is so fond of.

Drafted: Fourth round, 124th overall, 2017

Season to date: 10 GP | 0 G | 0 A | 0 P | -2

Unranked by prominent scouting services, the Leafs' Round 4 Russian pickup was a bit of a draft mystery. Born in a remote arctic town of Salekhard, Kara made his KHL debut this season for Ak-Bars but has yet to register a point and has only seen 10 games' worth of action.

The power forward did not attend the Maple Leafs' prospect camp over the summer, but did earn an invite to November's Canada-Russia series. He is in contention to suit up for Russia at the world juniors, but no sure thing.

In case #Leafs fans were wondering who is that Vladislav Kara guy.
#TMLtalk pic.twitter.com/gNheaxVyEA

— Russian Prospects (@RUSProspects) June 24, 2017

Vladislav Kara fulfills the Leafs 2017 "Off-the-board Russians" quota for 2017. I'm intrigued.

— Steve Dangle Glynn (@Steve_Dangle) June 24, 2017

Fedor Gordeev, 18, D, Flint Firebirds

Drafted: Fifth round, 141st overall, 2017

Season to date: 27 GP | 3 G | 8 A | 11 P | -20

Go big or go home? Toronto went both, taking a 6-foot-6, 211-pound local boy in Round 5 of the June draft. Gordeev and Flint weren't quite sure if the player was a forward or a defenceman, but he's strong and can run a power play, so the Firebirds, who acquired Gordeev in a trade with the London Knights, are developing him as a blueliner. The teenager has been forced to sharpen his game in a losing environment: Flint sits last in the OHL standings and has surrendered a league-worst 137 goals. Hence, Gordeev's ugly minus-20 rating.

Fedor Gordeev rips one home for the power play goal, Flint's lone goal in their 6-1 loss to Windsor pic.twitter.com/Bvw2mzTvco

— Future Of The Six (@FutureOfThe6) October 23, 2017

@FlintFirebirds Fedor Gordeev after being selected 142nd overall by the @MapleLeafs.

#NHL #news #sportsnews #leafs pic.twitter.com/86blJw1sBV

— Toronto Blueshirts (@TOBlueshirts) June 25, 2017

Ryan McGregor, 18, C, Sarnia Sting

Drafted: Sixth round, 172nd overall, 2017

Season to date: 29 GP | 8 G | 12 A | 20 P | +14

The third-year OHL forward credits the Maple Leafs prospect camp this past summer for improving his game and opening his eyes. McGregor, a native of Burlington, Ont., is on pace for a career season offensively for Sarnia — an OHL power that boasts nine players with 20 points.

Ryan O'Connell, 18, D, Penticton Vees

Drafted: Seventh round, 203rd overall, 2017

Season to date: 25 GP | 3 G | 11 A | 14 P | EV

Toronto's last pick of the '17 draft made the jump this season from St. Andrew's College to the BCHL's Penticton Vees and has committed to Boston University's high-profile NCAA program in 2018-19. An offensive left-shot defenceman, the Ontario-born O'Connell continues to produce points while staying out of the penalty box.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086943 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Down Goes Brown: Jacob Markstrom's amazing, unlikely record chase

Kyle Bukauskas spoke with Jacob Markstrom following the Vancouver Canucks 2-1 win over the Toronto Maple Leafs Saturday.

Sean McIndoe

December 5, 2017, 10:53 AM



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Late in Saturday's game against the Maple Leafs, the Canucks watched as James van Riemsdyk tipped home a Morgan Rielly shot to cut Vancouver's lead to 2-1.

While the Maple Leafs pressed hard over the final few minutes, the Canucks ultimately held on for the win. In terms of the outcome of the game, the goal didn't end up mattering.

But in terms of history, it did matter. It mattered a lot.

Forget about the Canucks honouring Daniel Sedin for hitting the 1,000-point mark. That was impressive and all, but there are 87 members of that club. It's not all that rare. Sedin isn't even the first to accomplish the feat among people with his exact DNA sequence.

No, we're talking about real history. Somebody who has a chance to enter truly uncharted territory.

We're talking about Jacob Markstrom's shutout streak.

Or more specifically, we're talking about his lack-of-shutout streak. Markstrom has now played 128 NHL games without one. That leaves him just four games short of matching Pokey Reddick's all-time record for most games played in a career without recording so much as a single shutout.

When you think about it, that's pretty amazing. Reddick's 132-game career was played between 1986 and 1994, which largely overlaps with the highest-scoring era in NHL history. Markstrom's streak dates back to 2010, meaning it takes place entirely during the Dead Puck Era. It shouldn't be possible for a modern player to break a 1980s record for goaltending futility; that would be like somebody coming along today to challenge Wayne Gretzky's scoring marks.

And that makes Markstrom's streak an accomplishment worth recognizing, even celebrating. Preferably now, before he inevitably gets a shutout in the next few starts and ruins it.

So today, let's take a look at Markstrom's quest for the record from a couple of different angles. And we'll start with the man he's chasing.

The record-holder

Pokey Reddick was awesome.

If you were around during those days then you already know that, but it's worth noting just in case. He was small even for his era at just five-foot-eight, meaning he had to actually move his limbs to make a save, which made him all sorts of fun to watch.

Reddick was undrafted but signed with the Jets as a free agent and made his debut during the 1986-87 season, during which he was given the traditional NHL welcome of getting trucked by Tiger Williams. He had his best season as a rookie, playing 48 games and winning 21 while posting an .881 save percentage and a 3.24 goals-against average, which were good numbers back then. He finished fourth in that year's Vezina voting and fifth for the Calder.

Pokey (who's real name was Eldon) would spend two more years in Winnipeg before being dealt to the Oilers in 1989. He backed up Bill Ranford during Edmonton's 1990 title run, earning himself a Cup ring. That was pretty much it for his NHL career, as he'd play just two more games for the Oilers and then two for the Panthers during a brief comeback in 1994.

Other important things to know about Pokey Reddick: He went on to a long career in the minors, including a 12-0 IHL playoff run; he once fought Jeff Reese; and he has a younger brother who is also a goaltender and is named Smokey Reddick.

And, of course, that he made it all the way through his 132-game career without ever recording a shutout. He didn't even come especially close, at least from 1987 on (which is where the full game logs start on hockey-reference.com). He carried a shutout into the third period in only two starts over that time, and each time it was broken up a few minutes into the period.

Shutouts were a lot harder to come by back then — from 1986 through 1990, only one goalie managed to have more than four in a single season — but most goalies would luck into a handful over the course of a career. In fact, until Markstrom came along, nobody had put up much of a challenge to Reddick's mark.

The contenders

The list of goaltenders who come close to Reddick's 132 games is a short one. It's basically just Markstrom, actually.

But it's still worth browsing the leaderboard, if only because it surfaces some familiar names from days gone by. Like Jim Hrivnak, the former Capitals, Jets and Blues backup, whose 85 career games without a shutout put him third on the all-time list.

Then there's former Colorado Rockie and New York Ranger Hardy Astrom, who went 83 games without a goose egg. You should recognize him as the first European goaltender to ever start an NHL game, back in 1978. Instead, you probably know him as the man Don Cherry has called the worst goaltender ever. Astrom's struggles with Colorado helped get Cherry fired, leading him to try out a career in broadcasting. So depending on how much you enjoy Coach's Corner, you may want to send Astrom a thank-you note.

Speaking of broadcasters, fifth spot on the all-time list belongs to Darren Pang, with 81 games. He was even smaller than Reddick, measuring five-foot-five, and was another of the era's more entertaining goalies. He finished third in Calder voting in 1988 (two spots ahead of Brett Hull) while posting the eighth-best save percentage in the league. His career was cut short by an injury in 1990, and he's now one of the better TV personalities working in the States.

Other names in the top 10 include Czech pioneer Jiri Crha, Original Six-era Red Wing George Gardner, and my one-time favourite player, Tim Bernhardt. (I had low standards as a kid.)

Aside from Markstrom, the highest total by a goalie who's still active in hockey is Kevin Poulin's 50, and he's playing in Austria. Amazingly, if you limit it to players who are currently in the NHL, the runner-up to Markstrom is Edmonton's Laurent Brossoit, who's played just 22 games. Yes, Markstrom is currently over 100 games ahead of the next active NHLer on the list.

Tape II Tape

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.

The odds

Based on the math, it really shouldn't be possible for goalie to do what Markstrom's done. Most of the guys we mentioned in that last section had NHL careers that lasted three or four seasons. Markstrom has appeared in parts of eight.

And he's been reasonably good in that time, posting a save percentage of .907. That's below league average, but it's certainly not terrible, and he's been a .911 goalie since coming over to Vancouver in a trade for Roberto Luongo (who, for the record, has at least one shutout in every one of his 18 seasons).

Among the 90 goalies who have played at least 100 NHL games and posted a career save percentage of .905 or better over the last three decades, every single one other than Markstrom has at least five shutouts. Eddie Belfour had a career save percentage of .906 — slightly worse than Markstrom's — and he finished with 76, or one every 12 games or so.

To look at it differently, Markstrom has averaged just under 28 shots against per game. That includes relief appearances, so let's bump it up to an even 30 for a typical start. If he saves those 30 shots at his career 90.7-per cent rate, his odds of recording a shutout would be about 5.3 per cent. All else being equal, that would give him an expected shutout



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

total of five or six on his career. Instead, he's at zero. It's really pretty amazing.

By contrast, Brian Boucher was a career .901 goalie, but he once posted five shutouts in a row, establishing an NHL record that still stands. And if you need any more evidence of how fickle shutouts can be, consider that the AHL shutout-streak record belongs to Matt Murray. But prior to that it was held by a guy named Barry Brust, who was five years removed from an 11-game stint in the NHL when he set the mark in 2012.

Before Murray came along, Brust's record was nearly broken in 2014 by a Canucks prospect who didn't allow a goal for over 238 straight minutes, the equivalent of shutting out the opposition for just short of four straight games.

That prospect? Jakob Markstrom, of course.

The near-misses

You can't do a piece celebrating a goalie's lack of shutouts without looking back on the times he came agonizingly close. In Markstrom's case, we can find 19 starts where he's allowed just one goal, including Saturday night against the Maple Leafs.

As it turns out, van Riemsdyk's goal at 17:08 of the third period was the second-latest goal in that group. The only time Markstrom has taken a shutout deeper into a game came back in 2012–13, when he was a member of the Panthers. On March 19 that season, a Jordan Staal power-play goal at 17:27 was his only blemish.

In his very next game after that near-miss, Markstrom had a shutout through 56 minutes before a Marian Gaborik goal ended the bid, spoiling a 44-save effort. As a Canuck, he's had two other nights in which his only goal allowed came in the third period – against the Jets in March of 2016, and then again against the Sabres last October. He also took a shutout into the third against the Blackhawks last year, only to give up four goals the rest of the way and take the loss.

In case you're wondering, Markstrom has pitched a shutout in relief. That's happened nine times in appearances of varying lengths, including the bizarre game in 2015 in which he had to come in cold for a shootout after Ryan Miller got hurt, leaving Markstrom to manage the rare feat of taking the loss in a game in which he technically played zero seconds and allowed zero goals.

His longest shutout in relief came with the Panthers in 2013, when he replaced Tim Thomas seven minutes into the game and held the fort the rest of the way in an eventual 2–1 loss. He even has one career win in which he hasn't allowed a goal, making 18 saves in the third period in a 4–2 win back in 2011. That one was actually the first win of his NHL career, which probably should have told us something.

So lots of near-misses, but so far no cigar. At this point in his career, he's basically the Dave Stieb of NHL shutouts.

The future

Over the next week or two, one of two things will happen. Either Markstrom will come through with that long-awaited shutout, or he'll do the seemingly unthinkable and knock Reddick out of the record books.

Well, temporarily, at least.

That's the catch here. The record is for most games played without ever recording a shutout, which means when — if? — Markstrom finally gets one, he'll vacate the mark and it will return to Reddick. That leads to the question of which player holds the record for the longest streak without a shutout to start a career, or even at any point in a career. That's a harder number to find, but there are players who'd had a longer stretch than Reddick. For example, Ed Staniowski went without a shutout in all 137 games he played for the Blues, then played 38 more for the Jets before finally recording his first against the Maple Leafs.

That's a streak of 175 games, which is the longest I can find. But there are probably others out there. And that's good news for Markstrom. After

all, after you climb a mountain, you start your search for a higher one. If Markstrom can pass Reddick, there will be other streaks on the horizon to chase.

So look out Pokey, Ed and whoever else might be lurking in the record books. Jacob Markstrom has come here to chew bubblegum and give up a minimum of one goal against, and he's all out of bubblegum.

(And congratulations in advance on the shutout tonight, Jacob.)

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086944 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Jonathan Toews tops Forbes' ranking of highest-paid NHLers

Staff Writer

December 5, 2017, 4:46 PM

Along with its annual ranking of the NHL's most valuable teams, Forbes on Tuesday unveiled its list of highest-paid NHL players, combining their on-ice salaries with their off-ice endorsements.

For the second straight season, Chicago Blackhawks centre and captain Jonathan Toews came out on top with total earnings of \$16 million. Toews will make \$13.8 million in actual salary this season and Forbes calculated his total endorsements at \$2.2 million.

Toews' reign at the top of this list continues after he dethroned Sidney Crosby from his run of eight straight years on top in 2016. Crosby, who makes \$10.9 million in salary this season on a contract that kicked in for the 2013-14 season, is second on the list with \$15.7 million in total earnings.

Forbes said it did not deduct income taxes or escrow from a player's total and that endorsement estimates include sponsors, appearances, licensing and memorabilia.

Here are a few other takeaways from the top 10:

- The New York Rangers and Toronto Maple Leafs are the highest-valued teams according to Forbes, but none of their players crack the top 10 highest-earners list.
- Connor McDavid didn't come close to cracking the top 10 this season, but figures to be at or near the top next season. Accounting for only his on-ice earnings in his first post-entry-level contract that kicks in next season, McDavid's \$15-million actual salary would rank third behind Toews and Crosby on this year's list.
- Shea Weber is the only player on a Canadian NHL team to crack this year's list, ranking eighth with \$12.1 million in total earnings (\$12 million salary, \$500,000 in endorsements). P.K. Subban, for whom Weber was traded to the Canadiens, is seventh on the list with \$12.5 million in earnings (\$11 million salary, \$1.5 million in endorsements).
- Corey Perry is 10th on the list, but may not be back next season. That's because he makes \$10 million in salary this season, but that total declines by \$1 million in each of the final three years of his contract.
- As for the future of this list, while we expect McDavid to crack the top 10 next season, UFA-to-be John Tavares is also a good bet to make it next season after he signs a big deal somewhere. Two years from now, Erik Karlsson and Drew Doughty — who made their UFA thoughts very public last week — are a couple of other players to watch, as is Maple Leafs star Auston Matthews. Another factor that could influence this list in coming years is the salary cap, which currently sits at \$75 million, but



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

could reportedly rise to as high as \$80 million next season. That, in turn, will bring up player costs.

• As Forbes noted, the total earnings of the top 10 NHLers (\$133 million) is virtually the same as it was in 2016. Meanwhile, NHL team values are up 15 per cent over last season, which is the biggest increase in three years.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086945 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Rangers top Forbes' ranking of most valuable NHL teams

Watch as Michael Grabner scores after the New York Rangers make three passes to go the entire ice. Before the play, Henrik Lundqvist made a save to keep the game tied at ones against the Carolina Hurricanes.

Emily Sadler

December 5, 2017, 1:47 PM

It's a good time to be in the business of professional hockey, as Forbes proved with its 19th annual ranking of the league's most valuable teams.

According to the publication, overall team values rose 15 per cent over the past year, the largest increase in three years, bringing the average team value to \$594 million.

Top spot goes to the New York Rangers for the third straight year, valued at a whopping \$1.5 billion, with second place going to—you guessed it—the Toronto Maple Leafs (\$1.4 billion). Two other teams broke the billion-dollar plateau: the Montreal Canadiens (\$1.25 billion) and Chicago Blackhawks (\$1 billion).

The top five teams on the list are Original Six franchises, with the Bruins (\$890M) coming in at No. 5, while all six clubs are in the top 10—the Detroit Red Wings are ninth, at \$700 million.

Here are a few other interesting takeaways from the ranking:

* The Vancouver Canucks (No. 8, \$730M) were the only other Canadian team to join the Leafs and Habs in the top 10.

* The Winnipeg Jets were ranked as the least valuable Canadian team, worth \$375 million for 26th on the overall list.

* Four of Canada's franchises — Edmonton Oilers (No. 12, \$520M), Calgary Flames (No. 19, \$430M), Ottawa Senators (No. 20, \$420M), and the Jets — came in below the league's \$594-million average team value.

* The least valuable team, according to Forbes? Unsurprisingly, that spot goes to the Arizona Coyotes (\$300M).

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086946 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Leafs' Bozak battling through slump at critical point in career

Tyler Bozak discusses his two-day bout of food poisoning, took a lot out of him, says he's better now, but needs to get himself back into game-ready shape.

Luke Fox

December 5, 2017, 3:13 PM

TORONTO — It is look-in-the-mirror time for Tyler Bozak, and the face the longest-tenured Toronto Maple Leaf sees staring back at him is pale and malnourished and working hard to mask frustration.

The veteran centre returned to the ice Tuesday, assuming his regular spot in rushes between James van Riemsdyk and Mitchell Marner.

Bozak is still recovering from a nasty bout of food poisoning that seized him Friday night in Vancouver and kept him out of the lineup for Saturday's loss to the Canucks. Tuesday marked his first day back in skates and first day keeping food in his stomach since, and he still doesn't feel quite like himself.

"Not great. I'm not gonna lie," Bozak described his energy after practice. "The night before the [Canucks] game I started throwing up all night. Couldn't keep anything down. Same thing the next morning and the next two days after that. I haven't thrown up yet today."

Through two months of his contract season, Bozak has grown accustomed to clinging to silver linings. He's a minus-4, but the team is plus-15. He's not scoring, but the opportunities keep coming. His production has dropped significantly after a career-best, 55-point campaign in 2016-17, but, hey, the team is 17-10-1 and looks like a legitimate contender one third of way through its regular-season grind.

"If you look at your numbers right here today and you multiply it by three, that tells you who you are — unless you do something about it," coach Mike Babcock said. "The guys who are off to a great start wanna replicate it. The guys who aren't wanna fix it."

Bozak undoubtedly falls into the latter category.

Triple Bozak's goals (four) and assists (seven) and you'll get a production line of 12-21-33. That would be the 31-year-old's smallest numbers in a full 82-game season since he was a sophomore in 2010-11.

For the fourth consecutive season, Bozak's average ice time has dropped; he's steadily fallen from 20:57 in his Phil Kessel-feeding salad days to the 14:55 he now logs pivoting Toronto's third line.

Bozak has registered just three points over his past 12 outings and hasn't celebrated a goal in over a month.

"All three of us haven't been happy with ourselves. Thing is, it's still early. There's still lots of time to get our game back," Marner said.

"We get a lot of chances per game. When James gets a chance, it's going in the net because he's around that net and he's very good. With me or Bozie, it seems like it's getting saved, bouncing over our stick, or a guy's diving and getting a poke on it. I think Bozie's had two or three empty nets where a [defender] has dove and just chipped it over his stick. I've had a couple back doors where the goalie's been there on me. It gets frustrating after a while."

Bozak is still an above-average face-off artist (50.5 per cent), but his success in the dot has dropped significantly from the career-best 56.7 per cent rate he enjoyed in 2016-17.

"That was one of Bozie's big strengths in the past. The new [face-off] rules haven't helped him," Babcock said, "but we need him to get back to that form. Being a dominant face-off guy really helps him. He gets a lot of offence in the O-zone out of that."

Factor in the face-off improvement of Nazem Kadri, Auston Matthews and William Nylander — plus the addition of draw-winners Patrick Marleau and Dominic Moore, a couple of smart free-agent pickups — and Bozak is being leaned on less often in critical set-play scenarios.

"[Bozak] is a pretty important part of our team. Every time you lose a centre, you're mixing things up. Sometimes Patty plays centre or Willy," Matthews said. "We've got a lot of depth on this team. You make up for it."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Smiling through his weakened state, Bozak is just happy to be home, not hurling across the sky on a five-hour, cross-country flight. (He can't pinpoint the culprit meal but says, "Hopefully I don't eat that again.") He plans to eat, hydrate and use an IV to replenish the lost fluids before Wednesday's puck drop.

Bozak wants to draw back in against Calgary at Air Canada Centre and quench his drought, but Babcock said Nylander would skate in the veteran's spot if he's not up to par.

Because of Nylander's strides, Bozak's struggles, Babcock's words and a ruthless salary-cap reality, one can't help but see a man gradually losing his position to a younger, faster talent.

"I told Willy to make sure he's ready to play centre if we need him to play centre," Babcock said. "Over time, we'll just keep working Willy down low in practice, so when it's time, he can just jump in and play centre."

Insert perked eyeballs emoji here. The day Nylander takes over for Bozak as an established Toronto centre feels more like a when than an if.

Yes, the Maple Leafs' spirit (demon?) of internal competition has touched Bozak at a time when his next salary depends on it.

On July 1, he will become one of the most coveted unrestricted free agents at his position under the age of 33, a small group headlined by John Tavares and featuring St. Louis's Paul Stastny, Washington's Lars Eller, and Calgary's Mikael Backlund.

Before the season began, Bozak was optimistic that he could have another career year.

"I want to take it another step further and lead on and off the ice and produce," Bozak said back in September. "As athletes, we always expect to improve as individuals and as a team. We expect to be better than we were last year."

Babcock says when a player is underperforming like Bozak, there are two steps he must take to get on the right track.

First: Own it. Bozak has done that.

"I haven't got the numbers I want personally," Bozak said Tuesday. "Hopefully I can produce a little more individually."

"This [slump] has gone a little longer than it has in the past, but you can have one good month and be right back in it, so I'm not too worried about it."

The second key to busting a slump is to get to work: skate hard in practice, dedicate yourself to the gym. The numbers will come.

"It's not luck," Babcock said. "It just turns."

Sometimes faster than you can believe.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086947 Websites

TSN.CA / What do Russia's IOC sanctions mean for Hockey Canada?

Frank Seravalli

The International Olympic Committee banned Russia from competing in the 2018 Winter Olympic Games, throwing a hockey tournament without NHL players into disarray just 70 days from puck drop in South Korea.

Some Russian athletes will be invited to compete as an "Olympic Athlete from Russia (OAR)" without their national flag or anthem.

Two Russian Olympic officials were banned, plus the Russian Olympic Committee was fined \$15 million, for orchestrating an elaborate doping scheme at the 2014 Sochi Games.

Russia could refuse the offer for its clean athletes to participate as neutrals and boycott the games. The sanctions could also be challenged at the Court of Arbitration for Sport.

Russian President Vladimir Putin has previously said it would be "humiliating" for Russians to compete in PyeongChang without national symbols.

Tuesday's landmark sanctions raised plenty of questions, whose answers have the potential to impact Hockey Canada and nearly every men's team in the tournament:

> Will the Russian hockey team compete as Team Olympic Athletes from Russia?

This is the lingering question that will determine the size of the ripple effect. If Team Russia, the favourites in the men's hockey tournament, chooses to play under the Olympic flag, the overall impact on the tournament may be minimal – at least aside from aesthetics.

That would not be unprecedented. In 1992 in Albertville, France, one of the last Olympic hockey tournaments without NHL participation, a Unified Team composed of newly emerged nations from the former Soviet Union beat Eric Lindros and Team Canada for the gold medal just weeks after the Soviet Union dissolved.

IOC president Thomas Bach said Tuesday he does not expect a boycott from Russian athletes.

"First of all, an Olympic boycott has never achieved anything," Bach said. "Secondly, I don't see any reason there for a boycott by the Russian athletes because we allowed the clean athletes to participate and show there are clean athletes in Russia."

So far, the Russian Olympic Committee has yet to officially respond to the sanctions. In a word, Vancouver Canucks forward Alexander Burmistrov called them "bull(bleep)." No NHL players are participating in the Olympics.

Former NHL player Ilya Kovalchuk told Russian news agencies that Russia must go to the Olympics despite not being able to use its national flag.

"Refusing means giving in," said Kovalchuk, who was named to Russia's pre-Olympic team. The IOC ruled Russian athletes will use the Olympic anthem, not the Russian anthem.

"Patriotism and love for your country, it's in your heart," Kovalchuk told reporters. "For that, you don't have to shout or even wear the flag on your chest. And if, I hope to God, we manage to compete well, then we'll definitely sing for the anthem."

> If Russia boycotts playing as "Team OAR," will the KHL ban players from participating?

More than 20 Canadians currently playing in Russia's KHL are on Team Canada's radar for the Olympic team.

But with sanctions looming, the KHL threatened to bar all players – including all foreign nationals such as Canadians, Americans, Czechs, Finns and Swedes under contract in the KHL – from playing in the Olympics via Russian parliamentary procedure.

How will the Russian Kremlin react to the sanctions? Will Putin issue an edict to boycott the Games? Even if not, will the KHL act subversively on Russia's behalf to damage other rosters in the tournament?

Another twist was added on Tuesday when KHL president Dmitry Chernyshenko was removed from the IOC panel overseeing preparations for the 2022 Beijing Olympics.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

Hockey Canada CEO Tom Renney recently sent a letter co-signed by other nations urging the KHL to release foreign nationals for the Olympics, no matter Russia's status. Renney declined to comment on Tuesday, but Hockey Canada released a brief statement on the sanctions while it holds its breath for more news.

"Hockey Canada believes in clean sport and a level playing field for all athletes. We trust that the IOC and IIHF will continue to ensure that all athletes compete on an equal playing field."

> What kind of power does the International Ice Hockey Federation have to coerce the KHL to release all foreign nationals to participate in the Olympics?

IIHF president Rene Fasel previously urged for the IOC to tread lightly with sanctions against Russia because they would "put the health of ice hockey at risk."

The IIHF's position has been that since the KHL and Russian Federation are sanctioned by the IIHF, any non-Russian player in the KHL who is asked to represent his country must be released by the KHL to play in the Olympics because the Olympic tournament is also sanctioned by the IIHF.

Fasel said Tuesday it was "too early" to make a declaration about where the Olympic hockey tournament will go from here.

"We need 24 to 48 hours to see where things are at," Fasel told TSN Hockey Insider Bob McKenzie. "This is the first time in history we've had to deal with something like this. We'll see where things are tomorrow, in the next 48 hours. We have to see how Russia will react. We need to talk to our [IIHF] people, we need to talk to the Russians. It's too early to make statements."

If the KHL plans to flex its muscles, the IIHF could potentially threaten the Russian Federation with potential sanctions – such as a ban from future World Championships, World Junior Championships, Champions League games, as well as transfer agreements between the KHL and NHL – if the KHL chooses to prevent foreign nationals from being released for the Olympics.

It remains to be seen whether any of those threats could compel Russia and the KHL to comply.

> Could Canadians and Americans in the KHL simply walk away and participate in the Olympics anyway if chosen?

The short answer is yes. If it came to that, many players would have to think long and hard about walking away from a paycheck for a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.

However, Russia and the KHL could make it more complicated. In a league notoriously known for paying players in a tardy fashion, the KHL could not only withhold pay for those players for the meantime, but also void contracts and threaten to never let them return.

The decision for a 25-year-old Canadian or American may be different than a 35-year-old Canadian or American with a family to support. It would put many players in a difficult position.

> How would Hockey Canada ice a team in the event of a ban from the KHL?

It's too soon to say. Hockey Canada may be forced to lean on Canadians playing in other unaffected leagues which are shutting down for the Olympic tournament, including the Finnish Elite League, German Ice Hockey League (DEL), Swiss National A League and Sweden's Swedish Hockey League.

For now, Hockey Canada has tabled discussions with the Canadian Hockey League about potentially using major junior players in the Olympics until after the World Junior Championship has concluded in Buffalo on Jan. 6.

> What will happen to the Channel One Cup, slated to start on Dec. 13 in Moscow?

That remains to be seen. The Channel One Cup was Team Canada's next tournament in the evaluation phase, following the Karjala Cup in Finland last month. Team Canada brass, including GM Sean Burke and coach Willie Desjardins, were hoping to evaluate 19 Canadians who currently play in the KHL – along with Canadians playing in Sweden, Germany and Switzerland.

Five other countries were scheduled to play in the Channel One Cup next week, including Sweden, Czech Republic, South Korea, Finland and Russia. It's unclear whether the tournament will be played at all.

> What happens next?

Stay tuned.

TSN.CA LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086948 Websites

TSN.CA / Marleau strikes up fast friendship with Matthews, Marner

Mark Masters

TSN Toronto reporter Mark Masters checks in daily with news and notes from Maple Leafs practices and game-day skates. The team practised at the MasterCard Centre on Tuesday.

The Toronto Maple Leafs' oldest player and the team's two youngest players have struck up a fast friendship. Patrick Marleau, a father of four young sons, hangs out with 20-year-olds Auston Matthews and Mitch Marner pretty much every night during road trips. He sits with them on the flights as well.

"Everybody says Patty's got four kids at home and two on the road, because he kind of takes care of me and Mitchy," Matthews said with a big smile. "Yeah, he's like 38 going on 20 so it's fun hanging out with him. He's been great to us."

"It just kind of happened organically, I think," Marleau said. "They're fun guys to be around, that's for sure."

The trio all like watching movies and playing cards so there is some common ground, although the age gap is hard to ignore at times.

"He's caught on to little catch phrases and stuff like texting and little shortcuts," Matthews said. "I texted him something and then I said, 'HBU' like, 'How about you?' He asked Mitch what that meant and we thought it was the funniest thing, because we're 20-years-old and familiar with all these little [texting] shortcuts. We know all them and Patty is a little bit confused."

"It's good practice," Marleau noted with a grin. "I'll learn all the lingo and maybe I'll be the cool dad."

Marleau mentors Matthews, Marner with movie nights on the road

Toronto's oldest player and the team's youngest players have struck up a bond during road trips. Patrick Marleau, 38, hangs out with 20-year-olds Mitch Marner watching movies and playing card games, including Old Maid. The pair of youngsters are even helping Marleau learn some new lingo, including that "HBU" stands for. "How bout you?"

Marleau's experience is an asset in the card games.

"We played poker once and Patty took us for all our money," Matthews admitted. "Then we played Old Maid."

Really?



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

"Yeah, because I didn't know how to play Euchre a couple weeks ago so we were playing simple card games," Matthews said.

Not anymore.

"We just taught Auston how to play Euchre," Marnier said, "so it's pretty funny, because now he's absolutely addicted to it and now he wants to play constantly, which kind of sucks because sometimes you just want to sit there and relax on your phone and he's begging you to play Euchre."

As for the movies, Marnier is the resident critic and in charge of choosing the flicks.

"We let Mitchy pick a couple, but he's on the outs right now so we have to pick for him," Marleau said with a chuckle.

Marnier has no preferred genre, but tends to steer clear of horror films. As for Marleau?

"He's got four kids so if we're watching any kind of movie I think he's down," Marnier said. "I think he's almost seen every cartoon movie or gore movie so I don't think he has any kind of taste in movies now."

Head coach Mike Babcock can only smile when informed of the blooming bromance between Marleau, Matthews and Marnier.

"Well, that's a home run for us," he said. "I had Nick Lidstrom and now I have Patty Marleau and those are fine, fine, fine human beings to say the least and they make people better. They don't say nothing – they just do what they do every day and do it better than everybody else. And pretty soon you look at him and say, 'Hey, he's got 100-plus game winners, been in the league for 1,500 or whatever games, he's been doing what he loves to do and he comes every day and he doesn't say nothing, he just works hard.' Not a bad concept. So, you're hoping it rubs off."

As for Marleau, this is also a chance to pay it forward after he was mentored by the likes of Kelly Hrudef, Mike Ricci, Tony Granato and Owen Nolan during his early days with the Sharks.

"They were all great to me," Marleau recalled. "I couldn't have come in with a better group of veterans."

The Leafs are securely in a playoff spot and enjoying a couple days between games after a mostly successful Western Canada trip. Things are actually fairly calm around the team, at least by the usual standards. The coach certainly has noticed.

"It's gotten a little quiet around here," Babcock said before a question was asked at his daily media session. "I'm disappointed. Let's get some rumours going right now. Let's get some s--- that really doesn't matter. What do you want to go with?"

A reporter shot back, "Any suggestions?"

"No," Babcock said with a laugh, "but that's your job."

Babcock jokes Toronto media should start more rumours about 's*%! that doesn't matter'

Life is good in the centre of the hockey universe. The Leafs are riding high in the standings after returning home from a successful Western Canada swing. And things are apparently too quiet for Mike Babcock. The team's head coach had a little fun with the reporters at the start of Tuesday's media session.

The coach was in great spirits offering expansive answers to a host of questions. And, in light of Marleau's mentorship of Matthews and Marnier, Babcock shared some memories of his coaching role models, including Jacques Lemaire.

"I always tell Jacques, my first year in Anaheim we went into Minny and I thought we were all ready to go and I watched his morning skate and how fast everything was going compared to my morning skate and I was like, 'Are you kidding me here? We're in a different league.' I remember sneaking into his practice, because Jacques would stop practice if he

saw you so I snuck in, and hid behind a pole and learned something. I call a drill we do the Jacques Lemaire forecheck drill and he said, 'I never, ever did that drill,' and I said, 'Well, I stole it from you,' and he said, 'Well, you changed it then!' Anyway, you learn from all people and some people help you on purpose and some people you just admire how their team plays and so you watch them and learn."

Lemaire is currently working as a special assignment coach with the Leafs.

After the main practice wrapped up on Wednesday, the top Leafs shootout options stayed out for some extra work on breakaways. Last year, Toronto struggled in the skills competition going 1-8. So far this season, the team is 1-1.

"It's something that probably everyone would like to work on more," Matthews said. "It's always fun to mess around and work on different things."

"That was our first one in a while," Marnier noted of the after-practice session. "I think it's up to the goalie coach [Steve Briere] when he decides ... last season shootouts happened quite a bit so we were practising quite a bit. Hopefully it doesn't happen too often."

Matthews said the moves by Marnier and Marleau stood out the most. Here are the highlights:

TSN.CA LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086949 Websites

TSN.CA / Bozak back at practice as Leafs prepare for Flames

Kristen Shilton

TORONTO – It was the middle of the night last Friday when Tyler Bozak woke with a violent urge to vomit.

The Maple Leafs centre had contracted a vicious bout of food poisoning on the eve of Toronto's final game of their Western Canada road trip against the Vancouver Canucks. After spending the wee hours of Saturday morning being repeatedly ill, Bozak sat out the game – but still had to join his teammates for a "not great" four-and-a-half hour flight home.

Bozak wasn't healthy enough for Monday's practice, but returned Tuesday to try and shake off the lingering effects of a tough 72 hours.

"[Energy's] not great, not going to lie," Bozak said following the 40-minute workout. "Whenever that happens for a few days you're not going to feel great right off the bat. I feel a lot better now. It's just nice to get out on the ice and do some activity."

With Bozak absent Monday, head coach Mike Babcock unveiled an intriguing new possibility for his lineup: William Nylander at centre. Nylander had only shuffled from the wing to the middle as placeholder at a couple morning skates so far this season. Babcock said last April he wasn't moving Nylander to centre this season, but like the Leafs' five-year "Shanaplan," Babcock's intentions are subject to change – perhaps as soon as Wednesday's game against Calgary.

"I told Willy to make sure he's ready to play centre if we need him to play centre if Bozie isn't up to it," Babcock said. "Otherwise we'll keep working on it with Willy down low in practice so when it's time he can jump in and play centre."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

The centre position has been a bit of a revolving door for the Leafs all season long. Patrick Marleau played significant minutes there in November, either filling in for an injured Auston Matthews or bumping Dominic Moore out of the lineup. But Babcock has long said he wants Marleau on the wing, and expediting Nylander's transition would reflect that.

Bozak would like to delay that by getting back to work Wednesday, and ideally score a few points when he does. Now in his eighth full season with the Leafs, Bozak's first 27 games have produced just four goals and seven assists. Among regular Leafs forwards, only Matt Martin and Leo Komarov have fewer points.

Tied to his low totals is a declining faceoff win percentage, which has long been one of Bozak's strongest skills. Currently he's winning 50.5 per cent of his draws, down from 56.7 per cent at the end of last season, and only 48.9 per cent of draws in the offensive zone.

"The new [faceoff] rules haven't helped him as much but we need him to get back to that form, being a dominant faceoff guy. He gets a lot of offence in the o-zone out of that," said Babcock. "The first thing you do is you own [your struggles], which he's done and that's fantastic. The second thing you do if you get to work. It's not luck; it just turns [when you work]. That's the way it is."

Bozak's last 12 games have been particularly fruitless, with no goals and just three assists. While admitting he's not happy with his play, Bozak has focused more on the team's success than wallowing in his own frustrations.

"It's a long season. There are ups and downs," he said. "You're going to have stretches where everything goes in for you and where everything doesn't. This one has gone on a little longer than they have in the past, but you can have one good month and get right back in it so I'm not too worried about it."

Since his regular line with James van Riemsdyk and Mitch Marner was split up in late October for poor defensive play (they were on the ice for eight of Toronto's first 12 even-strength goals against), Bozak has centred several wingers while moving between the third and fourth line. Babcock reunited the trio in mid-November and over the Leafs' last games (nine of which they've started together), the Bozak line has only been on the ice for one 5-on-5 goal against.

"For the most part, it's been going pretty good here," said van Riemsdyk. "There was some unfortunate stuff earlier in the year and obviously we have to be accountable for that. But we've been creating scoring chances and controlling play. We've been a bit snake-bit in the offensive end this season, but we're confident that stuff evens itself out."

Van Riemsdyk is tied for the Leafs' lead in goals (12) and sits tied for third in points (20), while Marner has had his own offensive struggles, with just two goals and 14 assists on the season. Marner has gotten used to the questions about his line's play (and his own), and takes a page from his veteran counterparts in accepting responsibility while remaining optimistic.

"I think all three of us haven't been happy with ourselves," he said. "The thing is it's still early and there's a lot of time to get our game back on track. I think we had it going there for a little bit. We just have to get back to [where we] relax and have fun with each other. That's when we're at our best."

TSN.CA LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086950 Websites

TSN.CA / Skate switch part of Price's rebound

Frank Seravalli

Twenty-three days between starts not only allowed Carey Price's mysterious lower-body injury to heal, but gave the Canadiens' all-world netminder time to reboot and retool his game.

The Habs clawed back into the Eastern Conference playoff picture while Price reverted to his old style of skates and cleaned up his "head trajectory," according to TSN's goaltending gurus Martin Biron and Jamie McLennan.

Gone were the lighter, Bauer player-style skates that Price wore in the beginning of the season, replaced by his usual Graf blade holder with a traditional cowl. The only constant was the same True Hockey boot, worn in both.

"They are a lot heavier, they are a lot bulkier, but they are familiar to him," Biron said. "He fights through screens, gets wide, looks around players, fights for rebounds. He was almost quitting on certain plays before – because maybe he knew he couldn't get to them with his skates. It may just be mental, but he seems much more confident that he can get to any puck. Sometimes, that's all it takes."

A change in skates may have also contributed to a noticeable change in posture for Price, McLennan said. Price worked diligently during his time out of the lineup with goaltending coach Stephane Waite.

Gone are the lighter, player-style skates (left), replaced with his Graf goalie skates with more traditional cowl (right).

"He looks like the old Carey Price," McLennan said. "He is staying down on the puck again. He's at his best when he is almost hovering, crouched down. His body was coming up before when he moved side-to-side, or he would fall over or open up holes. He is fluid now. His head trajectory is the best in the world when he's consistent."

How different has Price been? The proof is in the standings.

Yes, the Habs were trending in the right direction before he returned, but Montreal has won all five of Price's starts since his return, including four in five nights, to pick up 10 points in a span from Saturday to Saturday.

Price has allowed one or fewer goals in four of his five starts since returning Nov. 25, good for a .962 save percentage. The sample size remains small, but Price's save percentage was nearly 10 per cent lower (.877) through his first 11 games of the season.

For perspective, Price has allowed six total goals in five games. Price would have to allow an average of six goals against per game over the next six games to equal his start to the season.

McLennan and Biron each bookmarked a specific example in Price's first two games that makes them believe it won't happen – moments that signalled to them the Vezina-quality Price of old was officially back.

For Biron, who was the Sabres' analyst on MSG Network for Price's re-emergence at the Bell Centre, it was that Price freely played the puck from behind his net.

"Twice against Buffalo, he went behind the net to stop the puck and hit the centre in the low slot with a laser-beam pass," Biron said. "It's a very risky pass in the middle not even a lot of defencemen like making. That was a good sign. He struggled to make plays with his defencemen before."

Bonhomme: Price has rejuvenated the Canadiens

TSN anchor and Olympic Hockey gold medalist Tessa Bonhomme checked in with Andi Petrillo, Mike Weaver and Craig Button to break down the resurgent Montreal Canadiens and the upcoming battle between Team Canada and Team USA ahead of the Olympics.

For McLennan, it was one save in particular against Nick Foligno and the Columbus Blue Jackets on Nov. 27.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

"He moved left to right, his leg strength was there, his edge work was clean and he had the poise to make a difficult toe save," McLennan noted. "The Canadiens went back down the other end and scored quickly. I was thinking 'That's Carey Price.' It told me that if he did have any sort of lower-body injury, it wasn't bothering him."

The best way that McLennan explain the Price he sees now is a netminder who has rebooted like a restored iPhone.

"It was like he hit the reset button. There were a lot of moving parts that needed to calm down and rest," McLennan said. "He just looks clean now. He is fluid. He is at his best when there is an aura about him; he's in a bubble. You notice that immediately. He is rock solid."

Maybe the recommendation now would be to not try and make any drastic changes – equipment or otherwise – unless it is absolutely necessary. Some goaltenders, like Henrik Lundqvist for instance, can transition quickly to new equipment. Lundqvist was one of the first to change to the new style skates and he frequently swaps out his gear.

"It's nice to always be moving forward and trying to get better," Biron said. "Five years from now, you don't want to be a dinosaur. But I think Price is more of a traditionalist. I would say unless he is 100 per cent sure he can do it, why change? He's the best goalie in the world. Stick with what works."

TSN.CA LOADED: 12.06.2017

1086951 Websites

USA TODAY / Winnipeg Jets rebuilt on strength of first-round draft picks

Kevin Allen

6:58 p.m. ET Dec. 5, 2017

Winnipeg Jets coach Paul Maurice understands that if a rebuilding is done the proper way, "it will feel 10 times longer than it takes."

Maurice owns mental scars from the climb the Jets have made to hold the NHL's second-best record at 17-6-4.

"You will look back at it and say that was great. That was easy," Maurice said. "But there are a lot of carcasses on the side of the road, and they usually have whistles around their necks, by the time you get there. We've had six good weeks, but we had two years of pretty defined step-back."

Ranked fifth in both goals per game (3.44) and goals-against average (2.63), the Jets are the toast of the NHL, mostly because of the quality drafting done while they've missed the playoffs five of the six years they have been in Winnipeg.

"It's not a fun experience, but we've been fortunate because from the first time the young guys stepped on the ice, we knew they were going to get better," Maurice said.

'Forbes': Rangers again NHL's most valuable team

What could have been: What would Team USA look like with NHL players?

The Auston Matthews-led Toronto Maple Leafs are rightfully exalted for their rapid rebuild. But the Jets' rebuild blueprint might be more fascinating because key foundation blocks for this strong effort are their first-round draft picks from six consecutive years (2011-16). This team has been slow-cooked, not microwaved.

Center Mark Scheifele (2011, No. 7), defenseman Jacob Trouba (2012, No. 9), defenseman Josh Morrissey (2013, No. 13), winger Nikolaj Ehlers

(2014, No. 9), left wing Kyle Connor (2015, No. 17) and right wing Patrik Laine (2016, No. 2) are all playing key roles.

The Jets, with Kevin Cheveldayoff as general manager, have made their first pick count every year. No mistakes have been made.

In fact, they have made picks from other rounds count as well. Forward Adam Lowry was the No. 67 pick in 2011. No. 1 goalie Connor Hellebuyck was picked 130th in 2012. Forward Andrew Copp went 104th in 2013.

Winnipeg fans have watched these Jets grow into an exceptional team. The offense came first, and this season they have figured out how to keep the puck out of their net.

The Jets' ability to own the puck plays a factor in their defensive improvement, as does improved goaltending.

"I think it's a little bit of everything," Scheifele told USA TODAY Sports. "I think it's also our maturity coming out, guys learning and wanting to play better."

Last season, the Jets ranked 27th with a goals-against average of 3.11.

"Our focus has been on trying to eliminate some of the glaring 2-on-1 breakaways," Jets leading scorer Blake Wheeler said. "Goalies are no different than other players. If they are taking too many 2-on-1s and backdoor tap-ins, they are human and their confidence will be a struggle. We are trying to eliminate that stuff and help our goalies be confident."

Hellebuyck's save percentage has risen from .908 to .925 and his goals-against average has dropped from 2.89 to 2.31. His backup Steve Mason also has some quality moments.

"They have been outstanding this year," Wheeler said. "To me, that's the biggest reason for the turnaround."

It has helped that younger defensemen Trouba and Morrissey have tightened up their defensive play.

"We know our forwards are going to score goals so we can play safer and smarter, knowing you don't have to push to create offense," Trouba said. "They are going to create offense, (and we know) our power play is going to score a couple of goals when we need them."

Everyone is doing their job now to give the Jets the best record in the Western Conference. But their winning formula starts on draft days. In the salary cap era, your scouts have to be among your star performers now more than ever. That's what the Jets' success is showing.

USA TODAY LOADED: 12.06.2017



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • Dec. 6, 2017

1086883 San Jose Sharks

Lack of composure costs Sharks on end of road trip

By Marcus White December 05, 2017 11:15 AM

Monday night's Sharks-Capitals game changed when Joe Thornton fought Tom Wilson. Not because the dust-up, a response to Thornton's hit that ended T.J. Oshie's night, gave the Capitals "momentum," or "fired up the boys," or whatever hockey cliché you find most fitting, but because of what came after.

Timo Meier picked up not one, but two roughing penalties after Thornton and Wilson dropped the gloves. Barclay Goodrow caught John Carlson with a high-stick on the forecheck, and answered for it in a fight of his own.

Brenden Dillon picked up an elbowing penalty, and then in the final five seconds of the game, a five-minute slashing penalty and a 10-minute misconduct. He may face supplemental discipline from the league for the slash, too.

Meier told reporters (via The Athletic) that the Sharks "showed [Monday] that [they] can push back." That may be the case, but the display undoubtedly cost the Sharks the game.

At the time of Thornton's fight, San Jose trailed by two goals, but controlled the pace of play. They were out-attempting the Capitals 46-39 in all situations, and 40-32 at even strength.

Following the fight, Washington held a slight edge in five-on-five shot attempts (8-6), as San Jose effectively took themselves out of the game thanks to their parade to the penalty box. The Capitals all but sealed the game with Jakub Vrana's power play tally while Kevin Labanc served Goodrow's high-sticking penalty.

Thornton's major was set to expire with 12:46 remaining in the third period. That would have been plenty of time to possibly mount a comeback, even for the scoring-starved Sharks.

Meier picked up his first roughing penalty 39 seconds after Thornton fought. 3:14 after his penalty expired, Goodrow went to the box.

There's no guarantee that the Sharks would have come back successfully, but they never even gave themselves a chance.

It was the second straight game that lost composure cost the Sharks. At the end of the second period of Saturday's loss to the Lightning, Thornton slashed Tyler Johnson, and Tampa Bay scored on the ensuing power play to take their first lead of the game.

They would never relinquish it.

Hockey is an intense, high-collision sport. Emotion undoubtedly plays a role, and a vital one, as long as it's kept in check and focused in the right direction.

In the last two games, the Sharks did not do that, and lost. It's not the only reason behind their losing streak, and may not even be the main one. However, their lack of composure cost them in critical moments.

The Sharks may have demonstrated they won't get pushed around on Monday, but all they have to show for it is a loss.

Comcast SportsNet.com LOADED: 12.06.2017