



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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The News & Observer

Another Hurricanes win, another different lineup. How the Canes make it work

By: Chip Alexander

The Carolina Hurricanes took the ice Saturday against the Buffalo Sabres with a different look — again.

Forwards William Carrier and Eric Robinson were back in the Canes lineup. Defenseman Jalen Chatfield was not, as the Hurricanes took a 6-3 victory at Lenovo Center.

Canes power forward Andrei Svechnikov, the game's first star, blasted a one-timer for a power-play goal in the second period, assisted on Sebastian Aho's goal in the first and stayed in attack mode. Jesperi Kotkaniemi had a goal and assisted on an Eric Robinson score in the third.

For the Canes (10-4-0), the real fun came when rookie defensemen Joel Nystrom and Charles Alexis Legault both picked up their first NHL points. Nystrom assisted on the Kotkaniemi score, and Legault first assisted on Robinson's goal, then scored on an empty-netter for a two-point night in being named the second star of the game.

"You dream of scoring one since being a kid and being able to get one tonight was a great feeling," Legault said.

Was a long empty-net goal in that childhood dream?

"Not really," he said, smiling. "But a goal's a goal."

Who's in, who's out?

In a season that has remained in flux, Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said Saturday that Chatfield would be sidelined indefinitely. Chatfield took a heavy hit from Minnesota's Tyler Pitlick — to the chest and chin — in the first period of Thursday's game.

Pitlick, after a fight with Canes captain Jordan Staal that left him with a bloody nose, was given a game misconduct penalty and ejected but received no further discipline from the NHL.

Brind'Amour said he was not sure if Chatfield suffered a concussion on the play, which had the Canes shuffling five defensemen in the 4-3 victory.

Defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere, who has missed the past four games with a lower-body injury, took part in Saturday's morning skate but did not play. The Canes still are waiting for defenseman Jaccob Slavin (lower-body) to return to practice and games.

Carrier and Robinson each had been out the past six games — Carrier with a lower-body issue and Robinson an upper-

body injury — after leaving the Oct. 23 road game at Colorado. Both were activated off injured reserve Saturday.

"We need those guys in there. Just bigger bodies," Brind'Amour said. "This league is big and strong, and missing those guys, you notice it."

With the two veteran forwards available, the Canes on Friday reassigned rookie forward Bradly Nadeau to the Chicago Wolves of the AHL. Nadeau, 20, had a solid three games with the Canes, averaging 11:30 in ice time, notching his first NHL goal and posting four points.

Carrier was back on Jordan Staal's line Saturday, and Robinson played on a line centered by Jesperi Kotkaniemi.

Patchwork defense

The back end had a rookie paired with a veteran. Defenseman K'Andre Miller was making his second start since coming back from an injury and played with Nystrom. Alexander Nikishin was paired with Sean Walker and Legault with veteran Mike Reilly, who also has stepped in and played well.

Nystrom picked up his first NHL point when he assisted on Kotkaniemi's second-period goal that pushed the Canes to a 3-1 lead. Circling the net with the puck, the Swede found Kotkaniemi open in the left circle.

"It's all about the guys coming in, knowing how we do things," Canes forward Jordan Martinook said of the rookie D-men. "It hasn't just been one or two games but a pretty good sample size now. Obviously they're leaning on the veterans back there, but they've done a great job.

"The big key is they all skate well. You look at Nystrom and he skates well. Charles skates well. If you don't skate well in our system you get exposed pretty quickly."

The two hang out together and ride to the rink together, Legault said. It's been more than they expected, but they're making the most of it.

Legault was on the ice in the final couple of minutes of regulation after Buffalo pulled goalie Alex Lyon for a sixth attacker. The Sabres (5-6-4) had scored twice in the third to make it 4-3 and were after a tying goal.

"Those guys have been solid," Brind'Amour said of Nystrom and Legault. "We've asked a lot of them, thrown them in there so many minutes against top-end players. And Nikishin is in the same boat. They're all new to the league."



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The Athletic

NHL weekend rankings: A tale of two Rangers, plus a bottom-5 shakeup

By: Sean McIndoe

In the hockey world, any no-talent hack can cry about how bad things are. But it takes a true visionary to focus on the positive. And so far this season, there's been a lot of positive stories to talk about. Since I'm known as a big sunshine and optimism type of guy, let's take a few minutes to recognize a very solid first month of the season.

Bonus five: Reasons the first month has been pretty great

5. The kids are taking over – You've probably seen the updating leaderboards all weekend, but just in case, here's one more:

That's just cool. And while the names are fun, the numbers aren't too shabby either. That's because...

4. Scoring is up – Not a ton, and not quite up to the same level it was when it peaked in 2022-23. But after last year's dip, some of us were worried we might be seeing a new trend. So far, it doesn't seem that way (although scoring does tend to drop as the playoffs get closer, so we'll see). More offense makes for a more entertaining league, a universal sports truth understood by every except NHL leadership from 1995 through roughly 2017.

3. The absence of anything (really) bad – I'm hesitant to even bring this up, but ... really, what was the worst story of the first month? There's been just one suspension, and it was from a season opener. We've had injuries, some serious, but nothing catastrophic. And I'm not even sure we've had a true controversy from the officials. Maybe that weird overtime goal with the net knocked off, but that was the right call.

All in all, that's a pretty clean slate. It all makes you wonder what the hockey gods are getting ready to drop on us. You know what, forget I brought any of this up.

2. You can see the season-long stories coming into focus – A fun October is nice and all, but we've still got five months to go. That's why it's nice to see some intriguing season-long storylines starting to form. You've got the Penguins trying to put together one last run with the old guard. The Panthers, proud two-time defending Cup champs, decimated by injury and trying desperately not to fall too far out of the race while they wait for their injured stars to return. The Bruins, staking a claim as a true "nobody believed in us" playoff contender. Utah, Detroit and Seattle all finally looking like they're ready to make an impact. Must-win teams like the Oilers, Wild, Leafs and Canucks who aren't winning enough yet. And of course...

1. We're seeing a change at the top – OK, the Avalanche are opening up a lead on top of the Central. But in the Metro, we've got the finally-putting-it-all-together Devils and the surprising Penguins. The Atlantic, confusing as it may be, has the young Canadiens flexing on the established contenders. And the Pacific might be the best story of all, as the Ducks look like an absolute wagon, scoring their way into first place. Man, anyone who picked them to make the playoffs looks like an absolute genius right now...

Let's get to this week's rankings, where the pressing question might just be in the bottom five...

Only one way to find out. Let's do this.

Road to the Cup

The five teams with the best chances of winning the Stanley Cup.

Nice goal, but they stole this play from one of my go-to moves in NHL '94.

5. Vegas Golden Knights (7-3-4, +5 true goals differential*) – No, I don't have the guts to drop a team like Montreal or Anaheim into this spot ... yet. We're getting there. For now, our commitment to the long-term view means one more week of the established Knights, even as they've lost three of four.

4. Winnipeg Jets (9-6-0, +8) – This week was Hall of Fame time. As part of those conversations, I learned that there are some of you out there who think Connor Hellebuyck doesn't deserve induction because he's not a winner or whatever, and I just want to say you're out of your minds. He has three Vezinas – real ones, not the Bunny Laroque variety. No, he doesn't have as many Cup rings as Antti Niemi or Matt Murray, but come on.

3. Carolina Hurricanes (11-4-0, +16) – If you missed it during the week, be sure to check out Cory's piece on how the Hurricanes are managing to win with a blue line full of rookies. Meanwhile, they absolutely dominated the Leafs last night, far more than the 5-4 final score would indicate.

2. New Jersey Devils (11-4-0, +7) – Saturday's shootout win briefly put them in first place overall, at least in terms of points. It was also their 11th win of the year, a mark they hit before any other team had made it to 10, and they're also near the top of the league in regulation wins and regulation/overtime wins. It's too early to start thinking too hard about potential tie-breakers, but file that away.

1. Colorado Avalanche (10-1-5, +24) – Yep, they're good.



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But with apologies to the Avs, who've been in the top five every week so far and show no signs of leaving any time soon, I'm going to hijack their section this week to talk about the team they blew out on Saturday.

What was that, Edmonton?

I don't have a great answer beyond "nothing good," but Daniel takes a deeper look in the aftermath of disaster. Instead, I'll make the same point I've made a few times on the podcast: Imagine if Connor McDavid hadn't signed yet, and we were doing the whole "Every game is a referendum on the future of the franchise" thing right now. If Oilers fans think this is bad (and it is), that alternative universe is infinitely worse.

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

Not ranked: New York Rangers – There are two teams headed in opposite directions in the Metro. The first is pretty close to unbeatable, sitting at 7-1-1 with a +12 goals differential. That team has beaten some good opponents, including the Canadiens, Penguins, Red Wings and Oilers. That team is really good.

The other team stinks out loud, sitting at 0-6-1 and a horrid -17. Worse, they've been shut out five times in those seven games. They lost to the Sharks and Flames. They got absolutely smoked by the Islanders.

The twist, of course, is that both teams are the Rangers. The first one, the good one, is the Rangers when they're on the road. The second one is those same Rangers on home ice.

Does that make sense? It does not. Then again, this is the same team that went from winning the Presidents' Trophy in 2024 to missing the playoffs in 2025, so maybe the whole duality thing is just kind of their vibe. The New York Rangers: They contain multitudes.

The problem is one of the multitudes is embarrassingly bad. We saw it again on Saturday, when the Rangers welcomed their arch-rival Islanders to Madison Square Garden. And I mean that literally — they were extremely welcoming. Come in, make yourself at home, score a few late goals to run up the score.

That said, the game did give us this thing of beauty:

Tag yourself, I'm a combination of the woman looking at her phone and the Oilers fan who doesn't realize how much worse his day is going to get in a few hours.

Those five home shutouts are close to incomprehensible, especially since the Rangers aren't exactly a team that should have a ton of trouble scoring. Think of it this way: Somewhere in New York, there might be a Rangers fan who's spent a ton of money to go to five different home games this year, and if you asked them what the team's goal song was they'd answer, "You know, it's never actually come up."

So what now? We can probably pencil ourselves in for another two or three J.T. Miller "this isn't good enough" speeches, and that's good because those have obviously been super-effective. Beyond that, the bad news is they're at home tonight against the Predators, so start Juuse Saros in fantasy if you've got him. But after that, they're on the road for seven of their next nine, which means we get the good

Rangers. And Mike Sullivan and friends get a chance to figure out what exactly is going on with one of the league's very weirdest teams.

The bottom five

The five teams headed towards dead last and the best lottery odds for Gavin McKenna.

Wait... is this about the race for Gavin McKenna? The teenage phenom has been the presumptive first pick in the 2026 draft for a few years now, but the early returns on his college career have been merely good instead of historically great. That's led to some muttering about whether someone could catch him in the rankings by next summer. Our prospect guys talked it through on "The Athletic Hockey Show," which you can watch here, and Scott has an article digging deeper.

5. Buffalo Sabres (5-6-4, -9) – They heard us all complaining about how ridiculous it was to have the entire Eastern Conference at .500 or better, and they volunteered as tribute. Ah well, at least their leading scorer is a pending UFA who's apparently going to cost a trillion dollars.

4. Nashville Predators (5-8-4, -16) – This week, we officially hit a pair of important milestones in any nightmare season: Literally finding a brand-new way to lose, and a veteran leader looking like he regrets every life choice that led him to this. The good news is they get a fun trip to Europe this week, followed by a few days off. May I suggest booking a fun team activity? Maybe a concert?

3. St. Louis Blues (5-8-3, -18) – Speaking of bummed-out veterans, Brayden Schenn isn't exactly thrilled with things either. The Blues become the tenth different team to earn bottom five honors so far this season.

2. San Jose Sharks (7-6-3, -2) – Somebody refresh my memory, did any of these guys turn out to be any good?

1. Calgary Flames (4-11-2, -19) – "The big question in the bottom five this year: Will any team other than Chicago or San Jose ever get a chance to hold down the one-spot?" That was me, in the first weekend rankings of the season. Four weeks later, we have our answer. Welcome to the one-spot, Calgary.

They actually had a decent week, at least by their recent standards. But with the Sharks winning three straight, this is as much about them climbing up as it is about the Flames falling. And if you're a Calgary fan who wants to see them fight their way out of this spot, there's good news — their next two come against the two teams we just listed, St. Louis and San Jose.

One last note: RIP to former Flame Mel Bridgman, the first pick of the 1975 draft, a 14-year NHL veteran and the first GM of the Senators, among other achievements. The NHL Alumni Association announced his passing over the weekend.

Not ranked: Chicago Blackhawks – Yeah, it's time.

Specifically, it's time to set the Blackhawks free from their spot in the bottom five. They've been here a while – we'll get to that – and didn't exactly come into the season with sky-high expectations. And to be clear, they're not exactly anybody's idea of a Cup favorite right now. But that's OK, because the process of reemerging as a contender has to



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start somewhere. And in Chicago, it sure looks like it's starting right now.

The big story over the weekend was Connor Bedard, who was briefly the league's leading scorer before being passed by fellow top pick Macklin Celebrini. Seeing those two names on top of the list is great news for the NHL (and maybe also Team Canada), raising the possibility that we could be seeing a true changing-of-the-guard type of season that we haven't really had since the start of the cap era.

That's a big-picture question for down the line. For now, Hawks fans can just enjoy a team that's playing well, and doing it with a non-zero amount of swagger. Mark had more on the mood around the team following their steamrolling of the Flames. They do indeed have some dawgs.

And yes, they deserve a week off from the list of shame. How long has it been? The last time the Hawks weren't in the bottom five was almost three full years ago, in November

2022. That's a streak of 68 straight rankings with the Hawks somewhere in the bottom. Back then, the Bruins were on top of the rankings and a team that no longer exists was on the bottom. It was so long ago that the headline on that week's post was "Who won the Matthew Tkachuk trade?" Yes, children, there really was a time when that felt like an open question. But it was a very, very long time ago, which gives you a sense of how long a slog it's been for Chicago fans.

And of course, they might be back. We said we were setting them free, and you know the old cliché about how that can go. Maybe the Blackhawks will cool off, go back to looking like a rebuild in progress, and decide they want to come home to the familiar embrace of the bottom five. If so, we'll have a spot ready for them, with a blanket and a warm cup of tea.

But until then, they've earned a break. The streak is over. Now let's see where this thing can go.

Canada Olympic bubble watch: What we're hearing about Suzuki, Celebrini, Bedard, more roster hopefuls

By: Pierre LeBrun, Chris Johnston

TORONTO — The goal for Team Canada's decision-makers at the end of two days of meeting here is to come away with a significantly scaled-down list of Olympic roster hopefuls from the original list of about 90 they started with in the summer.

General manager Doug Armstrong told The Athletic in September that he was aiming to reduce his management group's focus to the 35 players who "have percolated to the top" by this stage, leaving about six more weeks of scrutiny and observation before the 25-man roster is finalized heading to the Milano Cortina Games.

That's two more roster spots than they were permitted for the 4 Nations Face-Off earlier this year — although, in Team Canada's case, it wound up using 24 players on the way to winning the 4 Nations because Thomas Harley replaced an injured Shea Theodore on the blue line during the tournament.

If there's a theme to remember in dissecting the roster possibilities for the 14 forwards, eight defensemen and three goalies who will be heading to the 2026 Olympics, it's that Team Canada has put some obvious value in the 4 Nations roster and that championship performance. So Armstrong and company aren't starting from scratch here.

Who's going to make the cut?

Based on conversations with league sources, here's what we're hearing.

The trusted veterans

Brad Marchand and Drew Doughty remain decent bets to make Team Canada despite their age.

Marchand, 37, has had a strong start to the season, leading the Panthers in scoring after a spectacular Stanley Cup playoffs. And Doughty, who turns 36 in December and is still the runaway leader in ice time for the Kings, continues to be

viewed in a very positive light by Team Canada's decision-makers. If anything, there was an internal belief that he played better at 4 Nations coming off a significant ankle injury than some gave him credit for.

Beyond that, there's another critical reason that Marchand and Doughty have added value: their vocal leadership within the group at 4 Nations was felt to be vital to the success of that team. Obviously, Sidney Crosby is one of the greatest captains in the sport's history, but overall there were a lot of quiet, lead-by-example types in that dressing room. Marchand and Doughty were notable exceptions. They were front and center, keeping things light and helping run the room when something needed to be said, while also soaking up an outsized share of the media responsibilities. It left a lasting impression.

Their on-ice performance still has to carry them to the Olympic team. But all things being equal, the intangibles and experience will give each player an inside track to Milan if they can maintain their standard of play.

Forwards

Crosby, Connor McDavid, Nathan MacKinnon, Brayden Point and Sam Reinhart were already named to the Olympic team in June, leaving nine forward spots open.

Mitch Marner is a lock to stay on from the 4 Nations roster. Sam Bennett has struggled out of the gates for the Florida Panthers this season, but Team Canada management is aware of his back-to-back Stanley Cup performances, and he's pretty much a lock, too. Brandon Hagel also earned himself a lot of believers at 4 Nations, leaving him nearly a lock, too. Of course, he already had the support of Team Canada head coach Jon Cooper, his coach with the Tampa Bay Lightning.

Marchand, Mark Stone, Seth Jarvis, Anthony Cirelli and Travis Konecny are the other potential holdovers from the 4 Nations group.



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We addressed above why Marchand has a good shot of making it. Team Canada came away impressed with Stone at 4 Nations, too. He just needs to get healthy again after suffering a wrist injury last month. Jarvis is off to a good start for the Carolina Hurricanes, which has boosted his case to hold onto a roster spot.

That leaves Cirelli and Konecny as real bubble guys, which has more to do with players pushing from the outside than their own performances. And we would put Cirelli ahead of Konecny in that conversation, given his Stanley Cup pedigree and the fact that Cooper has so much trust in him.

So at minimum, there are three forward spots up for grabs in Milan, and it could end up being as many as four or five, depending on Stone's health and where the management group lands on guys like Cirelli and Jarvis.

The bubble forwards we believe have improved their stock the most since being left off the 4 Nations squad are Nick Suzuki, Mark Scheifele, Macklin Celebrini and Tom Wilson.

Suzuki's stock has been skyrocketing since the second half of last season, when he led the Montreal Canadiens to the playoffs, and he's been absolutely on fire again this fall. He has as many points in regular-season games as any NHL player since 4 Nations (57 in 41 games). Beyond that, Suzuki is seen as the total package because of the trust in his 200-foot game and how he relishes the toughest matchups on a nightly basis. While he probably lost points with Hockey Canada by declining another invitation to the IIHF World Championship in the spring, his game has shot up too far for that to be much of a factor now.

Scheifele was probably the most notable offensive option left off the 4 Nations roster, and it seems to always boil down to where the Team Canada brass sees him fitting in lineup-wise. The top-six roles are largely spoken for. Scheifele has taken strides defensively but isn't a consistent penalty killer. However, with him again sitting among the NHL leaders in scoring this season, it might be too hard to pass up his consistent offensive production.

Celebrini opened so many eyes when he fit in like a veteran playing at the World Championship as an 18-year-old last spring. None other than Crosby said he deserved to be in the Olympic conversation after that performance. Celebrini has since doubled down by exploding out of the gates for the San Jose Sharks this season and looking like a mini-Crosby in terms of his 200-foot game. We believe he's playing his way onto this Olympic roster so far. It's going to be extremely difficult to leave him at home.

There was probably some Team Canada regret that Wilson wasn't on the 4 Nations roster, particularly for nine specific seconds of a certain round-robin game. But that's not the most important reason to be looking at him as a possibility now. There won't be any fighting in Milan. Wilson leads the Washington Capitals in goals and points and is a true unicorn in the modern NHL game. The Olympics will be played on NHL ice. He brings a unique package with size, speed and physicality, to be sure. Whether that convinces enough of the Team Canada brain trust to take him remains to be seen.

Connor Bedard, Wyatt Johnston and Robert Thomas currently qualify as the next three roster contenders. Bedard has played extremely well for the up-and-coming Chicago

Blackhawks so far this season — exploding for seven points during a pair of weekend wins — but we just wonder if Team Canada sees fit to have two youngsters in him and Celebrini both on the roster. Management is bracing for a "grown-up's game" in Milan. It feels like one or the other, and right now the Sharks star is in pole position.

Johnston has improved his stock since the second half of last season, and could make it on, while Thomas was viewed as the bubble player who improved his standing the most after 4 Nations last year. While he hasn't been helped this season by his NHL team's struggles in St. Louis and his own part in them, we still think Team Canada loves his overall game and views him as a guy who can be trusted in different spots in the lineup.

Quinton Byfield and John Tavares comprise the next tier of forwards on the bubble. Tavares, in particular, has made a strong statement with his play during the first month of the season.

Defensemen

Cale Makar was named in June, leaving seven defensemen to add on Dec. 31.

We've got Thomas Harley, Devon Toews and Josh Morrissey as locks at this point in things. Subject to change, of course, but that's how we see it in the second week of November.

We touched on Doughty above and why he still has a strong chance. Team Canada was impressed by Colton Parayko and Travis Sanheim at the 4 Nations. Sanheim was probably the biggest unknown to Team Canada brass before the event, and he won a lot of people over with his steady performance. He is also a left shot who can play on either side of the ice — an important piece of flexibility in a short-term tournament — and showed support for the program by going to the World Championship in the spring.

That leaves the talented Shea Theodore as perhaps the only true bubble guy right now.

There's no guarantee there will be any turnover. Team Canada really liked the group at 4 Nations. But there certainly are players pushing to make it in.

Evan Bouchard, Noah Dobson, Aaron Ekblad, Brandon Montour, Morgan Rielly, MacKenzie Weegar and Matthew Schaefer comprise the list of outside candidates.

There is no more polarizing player on the roster than Bouchard. His greatest attribute, his power-play acumen, is diminished on Team Canada with Makar taking up 90 seconds of every power-play opportunity. On the other hand, as we saw with Makar missing a game at 4 Nations due to illness, would it be prudent to bring him as insurance? The eighth roster spot for the Olympics affords that luxury, maybe? There's also a strong connection there with Bouchard's Edmonton Oilers teammate McDavid. We're not sure where Team Canada will ultimately fall on this debate, but they're having it.

Dobson has been so steady for Montreal this season that his stock has improved. The same can be said for Montour, who has Stanley Cup pedigree and delivered a strong performance at the World Championship in the spring. He's



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also a dynamic skater, making him an under-the-radar name to watch.

Ekblad's recent championship rings with Florida put him in the conversation, as well. We don't think Rielly and Weegar have done enough this season to significantly improve their chances.

And then there's Schaefer, the electrifying New York Islanders rookie who has been simply dazzling out of the gates this season. We don't believe Team Canada even had him on its IOC long list of players, but just like Patrice Bergeron years ago, Hockey Canada can add him if it chooses to.

People want to compare this decision to when Doughty made the Olympic team in 2010, but there are some key differences. Doughty was 20 then, not 18. He was also in his second NHL season, not playing as a rookie, and had already starred in a World Championship before then-GM Steve Yzerman took him for Vancouver 2010. There's no doubt Schaefer has opened some eyes, but at this point, we still feel like it's a stretch for Team Canada to take him over a more proven option.

It's a fun thought, to be sure. What a talent. And hey, if he keeps this up for the next six weeks, you never know.

Goalies

Jordan Binnington, Adin Hill and Sam Montembeault are the 4 Nations holdovers and were the only goalies invited to the orientation camp in August.

However, outside of Binnington, that should not have been viewed as a sign that they held a huge advantage over the rest of the competition. Quite the opposite, in fact.

Armstrong told The Athletic in September that the only reason they brought only those three to camp was that the competition was "so wide open."

"The other option would have been to invite 10 goalies, which wasn't conducive to what we were doing at camp," Armstrong said.

Despite his early-season struggles, we believe Binnington remains a lock to make it based on his body of work and his outstanding performance at 4 Nations. He's not a lock for the No. 1 job in Milan, but he's a lock to be among the three goalies chosen by Dec. 31.

Hill's injury and Montembeault's early-season struggles, though, certainly open the door to others.

If only there were a long line of Canadian goalies in the NHL to push that door wide open! Yeesh. Canada has a mini goalie crisis on its hands, but that's a story for another day.

The goalies who could play their way on are Logan Thompson, Darcy Kuemper, Stuart Skinner and MacKenzie Blackwood.

There is no better goalie in the NHL right now with a Canadian passport than Thompson, who many people felt should have been on the 4 Nations roster. He's been excellent so far and made 23 saves in a 6-1 victory over Binnington's Blues on Nov. 5. His coach, Spencer Carbery, called it a "statement game" in the dressing room afterward.

Kuemper was third in Vezina trophy voting last year and feels like a safe option, too. Nothing fancy, but he has a floor you can trust. Skinner has gone to back-to-back Cup Finals, but the volatility in his game probably scares decision-makers. Blackwood is just now back and getting his season going. His stock rose last year after 4 Nations, to be sure.

This will be the position on the roster that Team Canada brass will probably deliberate the longest — right up until Dec. 31. Whoever is making saves most consistently over the next six weeks will get a hard look.

But as it stands, it feels like Binnington with Thompson and then either Hill or Kuemper. That's obviously subject to change!

One player from each NHL team's history with the best Hockey Hall of Fame case

By: Scott Powers, James Mirtle, Aaron Portzline, Max Bultman, Arpon Basu, Michael Russo, Jonas Siegel, Jeremy Rutherford, Kevin Kurz, Josh Yohe, Shayna Goldman, Fluto Shinzawa, Eric Stephens, Matthew Fairburn, Daniel Nugent-Bowman, Sean McIndoe, Mark Lazerus, Jesse Granger, Harman Dayal, Sean Gentile, Peter Baugh, Joe Rexrode, Thomas Drance, Julian McKenzie, Cory Lavalette, Vincent Z. Mercogliano

It's almost time for one of the most special annual occasions on the hockey calendar, with a new group of stars set for induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame.

On the men's side, the class of 2025 includes former NHLers Zdeno Chara, Joe Thornton, Duncan Keith and Alexander Mogilny.

All these players took different paths to becoming Hall of Famers and built unique cases along their journeys in the NHL.

Which brings us to another tradition at this time of year: debating the merits of those who have yet to receive the call.

To join in on the Hall of Fame spirit, The Athletic asked its NHL staff to name one not-yet-inducted player from each team's history with the best Hall of Fame case.

We waived the mandatory three-year waiting period for this exercise, so players can be active or inactive, but we did set a couple ground rules.

Players must have played a minimum of 200 regular-season games with the team in question.

Goalies must have played 100 regular-season games with the team.



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Players were permitted to be chosen for multiple teams, provided the minimum-game thresholds were met for each franchise.

The Seattle Kraken, as the league's newest expansion team, were given a lower bar of 50 NHL regular-season games.

Since the move to Utah was so recent, players who once represented the Arizona Coyotes were considered as honorary Mammoth for this exercise. Other relocated franchises were not taken into account.

When the picks were in, we recruited Hockey Hall of Fame expert Sean McIndoe to react to the choices.

Here's who we picked — from current superstars who already look like future Hall of Fame locks to former franchise cornerstones who have been snubbed for years.

Anaheim Ducks

Ryan Getzlaf

The franchise's all-time leading scorer with 1,019 points also has the most assists (737) and played in the most games (1,157). Getzlaf has an interesting case in that he racked up his totals in just 17 seasons — compared to others who played for longer — and did it all with one team. He has a Stanley Cup and two Olympic gold medals, along with gold in the World Juniors and World Cup. No one has more goals, assists and points in Anaheim's playoff history. It's an easy choice. — Eric Stephens

McIndoe: I think he's going to fall just short, but he's an interesting case who's closer than some fans might think. (And I'll applaud Eric for not going with Corey Perry, whose case isn't as strong as some seem to think.)

Boston Bruins

Patrice Bergeron

Bergeron is the NHL's best defensive center ever by the measurement of his record-setting six Selke Trophy wins. He evolved into a power-play specialist toward the conclusion of his career. He did all this by playing 1,294 career games, all with the team that drafted him in the second round in 2003. Bergeron is a guaranteed first-ballot entry. — Fluto Shinzawa

McIndoe: Slam dunk.

Buffalo Sabres

Ryan Miller

Miller is already a member of the U.S. Hockey Hall of Fame and has a case for the Hockey Hall of Fame. His 391 wins are the second-most ever by an American-born goalie. He was twice an All-Star and won the Vezina once. He also won the Olympic MVP in 2010 with a 5-1-0 record, .946 save percentage and 1.35 goals-against average while leading Team USA to a silver medal. He's not a lock, but he has a case. — Matthew Fairburn

McIndoe: I've given up on trying to figure out what the Hall will do with goalies. For years, they didn't induct enough, then they put in Mike Vernon and Tom Barrasso, two borderline picks with similar credentials to Miller. I wonder if Jonathan Quick's strong finish pushes Miller down the list.

Calgary Flames

Miikka Kiprusoff

Kiprusoff is a Flames franchise legend who can lay claim to being one of the NHL's best goaltenders of the 2000s, thanks to the Vezina and William M. Jennings trophies in his name from 2005-06 (even a Hart Trophy nomination) and his performance during the 2004 Stanley Cup run. The Finnish netminder even has an Olympic bronze medal in his trophy case. While not on the same level as Henrik Lundqvist or his contemporaries, an argument could be made for Kiprusoff because of what he accomplished at his peak. — Julian McKenzie

McIndoe: He wouldn't have my vote for the Hall due to his shorter career, but at his peak, he was absolutely a Hall-worthy player.

Carolina Hurricanes

Brent Burns

While coach Rod Brind'Amour's candidacy is a hot-button topic — and let's be honest, he should receive induction as well — Burns should be a lock for the Hockey Hall of Fame. With more than 1,500 games played, over 900 points and three top-three finishes in Norris Trophy voting — including his win following the 2016-17 season — Burns shouldn't take long to get voted in once (if?) he retires. While he was past the peak of his game during his time in Raleigh, Burns has the resume to be enshrined even without a thus-far-elusive Stanley Cup championship. — Cory Lavalette

McIndoe: Nice try slipping the Brind'Amour induction in there, Cory, but we can have that debate another day. Burns isn't quite a lock, but he's trending to being a safe pick.

Chicago Blackhawks

Patrick Kane

The Blackhawks already have a few players from their most recent Stanley Cup championship teams headed to the Hall of Fame. Duncan Keith is the latest. Following him will undoubtedly be Kane and Jonathan Toews. Which player goes first depends on who retires first. Toews, 37, reset his clock by re-entering the NHL this season. Kane, 36, has been playing on one-year deals since leaving the Blackhawks. — Scott Powers

McIndoe: No argument here.

Colorado Avalanche

Nathan MacKinnon

When accounting for only Colorado years, MacKinnon has already passed Avalanche Hall of Famers Joe Sakic, Peter Forsberg and Milan Hejduk on his way to becoming Colorado's all-time points leader, and he's only 30 years old. He's currently playing in his 13th season with the Avs — the same number Sakic played — and he needs just 14 more goals to pass him for the most goals in franchise history. Along with his Calder Trophy in 2014 and a Lady Byng Trophy in 2020, MacKinnon won the Cup in 2022, a Hart Trophy in 2024 and looks poised to add to both this season. — Jesse Granger

McIndoe: There might be a "Has he done enough if he retired today?" debate to be had here, but it's moot because he's not going anywhere. In fact, MacKinnon will probably



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play another decade, then celebrate his retirement by eating a single grain of white rice. He's in.

Columbus Blue Jackets

Sergei Bobrovsky

Bobrovsky had a messy ending in Columbus, but there's no question he established himself as a bona fide Hall of Fame-level player with the Blue Jackets from 2012-19. Bobrovsky won the Vezina Trophy, awarded to the NHL's top goaltender, in 2013 and 2017, and guided the franchise to its only playoff series win in 2019. In 370 starts with the Blue Jackets, Bobrovsky went 213-130-27 with a .921 save percentage and 33 shutouts. He owns every major goaltending record with the franchise. Bobrovsky has since cemented his credentials by winning the Stanley Cup twice with Florida. — Aaron Portzline

McIndoe: I was borderline two years ago, but the two Cup championships in Florida moved him into the virtual lock tier.

Dallas Stars

Jere Lehtinen

There are other Stars luminaries with more points than Lehtinen, but none that were better all-around players. Lehtinen was such a fabulous two-way player that he won three Selke trophies (and was in the top 10 of Selke voting six other times) despite being a winger, something all but unheard of since. He was the model Finnish player — dynamic enough offensively (seven seasons of at least 20 goals, including two 30-goal campaigns in the dead-puck era, plus 10 goals in Dallas' run to the Cup in 1999) without ever sacrificing defense. — Mark Lazerus

McIndoe: He was a great and criminally underrated player. He's not going to the Hall of Fame.

Detroit Red Wings

Henrik Zetterberg

Zetterberg was, above all, a winner. He is a member of the Triple Gold Club and won the Conn Smythe in 2008. He has had to wait because of counting stats — 960 points in 1,082 games — and awards, but he was one of the NHL's premier two-way forwards for more than a decade, with five top-10 Selke finishes. His low-scoring era surely played a role in the numbers component. In the years that spanned Zetterberg's career — 2002 through 2018 — only five players had more points. Everyone ahead of him (who has retired) is in the Hall of Fame, and so are the next two behind him. He deserves it. — Max Bultman

McIndoe: I've always been a no on Zetterberg, but it's close. Put it this way: He's better than at least a few guys who are already in.

Edmonton Oilers

Connor McDavid

McDavid has one of the most crowded trophy cases of any player in league history — and he's not even 29 yet. He's won the Art Ross Trophy five times, the Ted Lindsay Award four times, the Hart Trophy three times and the Rocket Richard and Conn Smythe trophies once each. McDavid's already in the GOAT conversation. He might be the guy by the time he retires if he leads the Oilers to a Stanley Cup

title. He's got three more chances to do that before his next contract is up. — Daniel Nugent-Bowman

McIndoe: Never heard of him.

Florida Panthers

Sergei Bobrovsky

Jaromír Jágr is under our games cutoff, as is Brad Marchand. But Bobrovsky is a no-brainer and currently — along with Andrei Vasilevskiy — the active goalie with the closest thing to a slam dunk Hockey Hall of Fame case. In addition to winning the Stanley Cup twice as a Panther, Bobrovsky has two Vezinas, was a Hart finalist in 2016-17, and sits 10th on the career wins list — with a chance to get into the top six this season. There's no way he doesn't get in at this point, especially after back-to-back postseason wins. Honorable mention: Aleksander Barkov. — James Mirtle

McIndoe: As I said under Columbus, he's in. But here's a fun question: If the Hockey Hall worked like baseball's used to and forced each player to go in wearing the "cap" of one team, is Bobrovsky a Panther or a Blue Jacket? Seven seasons each, with two Cups vs. two Vezinas. Hmm ...

Los Angeles Kings

Anže Kopitar

When you figure that he and Jonathan Quick, the franchise's greatest goalie, present compelling cases, it is hard to pick one without feeling the other is slighted. But Kopitar is more of a shoo-in given that he's the Kings' greatest player — Wayne Gretzky is the greatest to play for the team — and is one of the finest two-way centers of his generation. Kopitar has two Selke trophies and three Lady Byng trophies. And he's a two-time Stanley Cup champion who, barring injury, will have more than 1,300 points and become the franchise's scoring leader. Case closed. — Eric Stephens

McIndoe: He was such a good two-way player that I'm always prepared to check his career totals and see that he's barely at 1,000 points. Instead, he's going to blow past 1,300. Start working on the speech, Anže.

Minnesota Wild

Marc-Andre Fleury

Assuming he doesn't make a comeback when the calendar turns 2026, Fleury should be a first ballot Hall of Famer in 2028. The Hall of Fame human being and world-class prankster ended his career with the second-most games (1,051) and wins (575) in NHL history, three Stanley Cup wins, a Vezina Trophy and a William M. Jennings Trophy. Fleury was a beloved teammate and made life fun on the ice with entertaining glove saves and an affectionate relationship with his posts whenever an opponent shot a puck off of one. — Michael Russo

McIndoe: The "first ballot" part could be debatable for some, but Fleury is getting in. There was probably a debate to be had about him being a compiler on a great team when he left Pittsburgh — think of a modern-day Chris Osgood — but the Vegas years and subsequent Vezina ended that line of attack.

Montreal Canadiens

J.C. Tremblay



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In 1972, with the Canadiens on the cusp of their last dynasty, Tremblay left the team to play for the Québec Nordiques of the new WHA. He was 33 and had just had his two most productive seasons on the Canadiens' blue line with 120 points in 152 games. He went on to play seven seasons for the Nordiques, putting up 424 points in 454 games. When you combine his NHL and WHL numbers, Tremblay had 787 points in 1,250 games. He won the Stanley Cup five times. He was one of the best defensemen of his generation. He should be in. — Arpon Basu

McIndoe: Finally, some HHOF representation for the 1970s Habs! I kid, and Tremblay's a solid candidate. You'd assume that he's a no based on how long he's waited, although with this committee, you're never quite sure.

Nashville Predators

Roman Josi

Josi should be the first Nashville Predator who spent all (or most, depending on how things finish) of his career with the franchise to make the Hockey Hall of Fame. The 2020 Norris Trophy winner is 29th all-time in scoring among defensemen and should end up comfortably in the top 20. He's the highest-scoring Swiss player of all time and was the NHL's second-fastest defenseman to reach 600 points. — Joe Rexrode

McIndoe: It's rare for anyone to win a Norris and not make the Hall; only Randy Carlyle can say that among eligible players, although Mark Giordano and P.K. Subban are likely to join him. Josi's a solid step above all of those players, and I think he gets in.

New Jersey Devils

Patrik Eliáš

Jaromír Jágr would be the answer if he reached the 200-game threshold, but with him just short, the debate came down to Eliáš or Ilya Kovalchuk, who has a long international resume to go along with his NHL achievements. I'm going with Eliáš, though, who has two Stanley Cups and is the Devils' franchise leader in goals and points and has an Olympic bronze to boot. He also has a higher MVP finish (six in 2000-01) than Kovalchuk ever did. — Peter Baugh

McIndoe: I've always had Eliáš slotted in as a very good player (with gusts up to great) who fell just short of the Hall standard. Still, if he did get in someday, it wouldn't be indefensible.

New York Islanders

John Tavares

The Islanders already have an elite class of names in the Hall of Fame from their championship era. So I think this pick has to come from more recent times. While I think Ilya Sorokin has the ceiling to be one of the best goaltenders in the world, and could easily be a Hall of Famer, it may be too soon to pick him. Instead, the honors belong to a more bittersweet pick: Tavares, whose skill and leadership helped guide the Islanders for nine seasons. — Shayna Goldman

McIndoe: I'm sure Islanders fans will be cool about this. Now that he's at 500 goals, Tavares already has a strong case and can spend the next few years moving it to the sure-thing tier.

New York Rangers

Mike Richter

Jaromír Jágr is the biggest shoo-in among players with ties to the Rangers, but as far as candidates who spent the majority of their careers in New York, the pick is Richter. Modest career numbers (301-258-73 record, .904 save percentage, 2.89 goals-against average) have held Richter back, but he's right there with Hall of Famers Ed Giacomin and Henrik Lundqvist among the greatest goalies in franchise history. He accomplished something neither of those icons did — winning the Stanley Cup in 1994 — and was stellar with a .921 save percentage and 2.07 goals-against average on that playoff run. The Rangers' championship drought would still be going if not for Richter, who was also a three-time All-Star and top-eight finisher for the Vezina Trophy five times. — Vincent Z. Mercogliano

McIndoe: I'm thoroughly enjoying the fact that every second team has to mention Jágr, even as he wasn't the final pick for any of them. (My brave take is that he gets in, by the way.) As for Richter, he wouldn't have my vote, but I'm not sure he's that far off from the Mike Vernon case, and that one eventually came through.

Ottawa Senators

Erik Karlsson

Karlsson's resume is Hall of Fame-worthy, having established himself as one of the best offensive defensemen of his era (if not the best during his prime). Two of his three Norris trophies, five of his seven All-Star Game appearances and four of his NHL First All-Star Team mentions came as a member of the Senators. The elite Swede should be bound for the Hockey Hall of Fame as soon as he's eligible. — Julian McKenzie

McIndoe: No multiple-time Norris winners have ever failed to get the Hall invite. Karlsson will not be the first.

Philadelphia Flyers

John LeClair

LeClair posted three consecutive 50-goal seasons from 1995-98, as the embodiment of a power forward who could score in a few different ways. The Flyers were a perennial playoff team throughout LeClair's tenure, sparked after they acquired him in February 1995. He won the Stanley Cup — not with the Flyers, of course, but with the Montreal Canadiens in 1993. (I also owned his jersey as a kid. That counts for something, right?) — Kevin Kurz

McIndoe: Great pick by Kevin here. I'm not completely convinced LeClair deserves a Hall call, but his case absolutely deserves more attention than it seems to get. Anyone who was the best player at their position for a five-year stretch has to be worth serious consideration, no?

Pittsburgh Penguins

Sidney Crosby

Apologies in advance to Jaromír Jágr, who may well be one of the five greatest players who ever lived. Jágr, in fact, was perhaps more physically gifted than Crosby. If he ever decides to retire, I think he may just get in. But still, the answer is Crosby. He's top-five all-time. He scored perhaps



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the most famous goal in Olympic hockey history. His longevity his perhaps incomparable. So was his precociousness when he was a teenager. Crosby may also be the greatest captain in hockey history. I think his accomplishments speak for themselves. — Josh Yohe

McIndoe: I was a “no” heading into this, but Josh has convinced me.

San Jose Sharks

Patrick Marleau

It is no surprise that Marleau, who'll be in his third year of eligibility next year, has been quite a debated case. He is the definition of sustained productivity at a high level without having that single monstrous season or loaded trophy case outside of the gold he won with Team Canada. The versatile forward's 566 goals and 1,197 points, while passing Gordie Howe and becoming the record holder for most NHL games played, are nothing to sniff at. — Eric Stephens

McIndoe: He's a divisive pick who rarely, if ever, “felt” like a Hall of Famer, but whose career numbers are hard to argue. I'd be a no, but really, his legacy might be as the Hall's all-time “peak vs. longevity” poster child.

Seattle Kraken

Mark Giordano

Giordano was a member of the Kraken's inaugural roster, playing 55 games for the startup franchise prior to a pre-deadline deal that sent him to Toronto, where he finished his illustrious and unlikely career. One of the greatest undrafted players in NHL history, Giordano played over 1,000 games and won the Norris Trophy in 2019. Typically, Norris winners end up becoming Hall of Famers, with only Randy Carlyle standing out as a historic exception to that rule. — Thomas Drance

McIndoe: It's a solid case. I don't think it's enough, but he'll make for an interesting discussion when his name comes up.

St. Louis Blues

Keith Tkachuk

Tkachuk was arguably the best power forward of his era. In 1996-97, he scored 52 goals, becoming the first American-born player to lead the NHL in goals. In a two-year span, his 102 goals (50 and 52) ranked No. 3 behind Mario Lemieux (119) and Jaromír Jágr (109). He finished with 538, which ranks No. 35 all-time. The only players ahead of him not the Hall of Fame are Alex Ovechkin, Sidney Crosby and Steven Stamkos, who will be in the Hall, and Patrick Marleau, who may be one day. Tkachuk is also No. 15 all-time in power-play goals (212) and No. 41 in penalty minutes (2,219). — Jeremy Rutherford

McIndoe: Over the years, I've shifted from having Tkachuk as a borderline yes to thinking he's an outright snub. Maybe not quite in the Mogilny level of “what's taking so long?” but not far off. Put him in already.

Tampa Bay Lightning

Victor Hedman

Any member of Tampa Bay's core makes sense here — Nikita Kucherov, Andrei Vasilevskiy and even former

members such as Steven Stamkos. These are all future Hall of Famers and cornerstones of the organization. But to start, let's go with Hedman, whose all-around elite presence on the back end transformed the franchise into a contender and helped lead them to two Stanley Cup titles. He isn't just one of the best players to wear a Lightning jersey, but has been one of the premier defensemen in the world through most of his career. — Shayna Goldman

McIndoe: The Lightning have an embarrassment of riches in this debate, many of whom are locks. Hedman included, obviously.

Toronto Maple Leafs

Auston Matthews

With apologies to John Tavares, who will have a strong case for the Hall of Fame when his career eventually wraps up, Matthews might already be a lock. He's won three Rocket Richard trophies, an MVP and a Calder as the league's top rookie. He is one of only nine players with at least two 60-goal seasons. His combination of all-time-great scoring and elite defending has arguably never been seen before. Matthews will soon become the top goal scorer for one of the NHL's Original Six franchises, and while playoff success would obviously boost his legacy, what he's accomplished already is the stuff of legends. — Jonas Siegel

McIndoe: Justice for Curtis Joseph! But yes, Matthews is certainly on track, barring a plummet when he hits his 30s.

Utah Mammoth/Arizona Coyotes

Phil Kessel

Kessel's stint in Arizona wasn't that special, but his overall NHL career was excellent. Kessel scored 992 career NHL points and has won the Stanley Cup three times. Even more impressive than that, however, is that Kessel is the only player in league history with an ironman streak that eclipsed 1,000 games. Kessel's lack of individual hardware is the only thing holding him back from being more of a slam-dunk inclusion. — Harman Dayal

McIndoe: The career numbers just aren't there, but if there was a Hall of Fame for guys who were never boring, Kessel would be a first-ballot inductee. Honestly, while I'd bet Coyotes fans would disagree, I'd vote for Kessel ahead of Shane Doan.

Vancouver Canucks

Markus Naslund

Naslund didn't win the Stanley Cup or hit 1,000 points, so he's probably not going to be strongly considered for induction into the Hockey Hall of Fame. There was an apex four-year stretch from 2001-2005, however, when he led the NHL in goals and points (besting Jaromír Jágr and Joe Sakic in their primes) and won the Ted Lindsay Award as the league's most outstanding player, as voted on by the players. Naslund, Carey Price and Mike Liut are the only Ted Lindsay winners in the 55-year history of the award not to be inducted into the Hall of Fame (and Price surely will be). — Thomas Drance

McIndoe: Another guy whose peak felt absolutely Hall-ish even as his career totals mean he's unlikely to get the call.



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Vegas Golden Knights

Marc-Andre Fleury

This was an easy choice for the Golden Knights. There weren't a ton of options with Vegas' brief history as a franchise, but Fleury should be an easy first-ballot Hall of Famer when he becomes eligible in 2028. His 575 wins are the second-most in NHL history. His 92 playoff wins are tied for the third-most all-time. He hoisted the Stanley Cup three times and was one of the most legendary goalies of his generation. — Jesse Granger

McIndoe: Oh weird, Jesse picked a goalie. And he's right, because Fleury is in.

Washington Capitals

Alex Ovechkin

Sometimes, these questions are difficult. This is not one of those times. — Sean Gentile

McIndoe: I miss when the Hall would occasionally waive the waiting period and induct guys right away. It was a cool way of separating certain guys as true legends. Ovechkin would deserve that treatment if the rule still existed. Alas.

Winnipeg Jets

Connor Hellebuyck

Hellebuyck's third Vezina Trophy clinched it — every goalie who's won it three times (in the eras when it was awarded to the top goalie) is already in. A more interesting question might be whether teammate Mark Scheifele can rack up enough points to join him someday. That one's iffy, but Hellebuyck is a first-ballot lock. — Sean McIndoe

McIndoe: First of all, great writing here. Some real A+ prose, this guy is going somewhere. So is Hellebuyck, who clinched his induction with last year's monster season.



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NORTH STATE JOURNAL

Svechnikov sets tone, 2 rookie D get first points in Hurricanes win | The North State Journal

By: Cory Lavalette

RALEIGH — Andrei Svechnikov got the Hurricanes started off on the right foot. Charles Alexis Legault finished it off.

Svechnikov factored in on Carolina's first two goals, and Legault assisted on the game-winning goal for his first career NHL point and then got his first goal on an empty-netter as the Hurricanes beat the visiting Sabres 6-3 Saturday at Lenovo Center.

Svechnikov went eight games without a point to start the season, but he never let negativity creep into his game.

"If you see me break a stick, then there is frustration," Svechnikov said in the midst of his slump. "You stay positive. If you go negative, then it's going to get worse and worse."

It not only didn't get worse — it got way better. Svechnikov scored the next game and has been hot since. Against Buffalo, he helped Carolina get on the board early, bumping Sabres forward Noah Ostlund off the puck in the defensive zone and leading a rush the other way. A quick head fake fooled Josh Doan, allowing him to slide a pass over to Sebastian Aho for his fifth goal of the season and a 1-0 lead.

He then helped Carolina reclaim the lead in the second period, one-timing a K'Andre Miller pass past Alex Lyon (29 saves) on the power play to make it 2-1 at 4:34 of the middle frame.

"Sometimes when it doesn't go your way, obviously there's lots of negativity," Svechnikov said after Saturday's win. "But you've got to stay positive and sometimes maybe don't care. Because I know what kind of player I am and what I can do and just waiting for that moment."

Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour praised Svechnikov for being able to turn around his season.

"In the last little while here, he's certainly, if not been our best player, he's been right there," Brind'Amour said. "He's looking Svech-like, so hopefully that continues."

Brind'Amour has also liked what he's seen from the rookie defensemen who have been pressed into action with all of Carolina's blue line injuries. And two of them got rewarded Saturday with their first career points.

The Hurricanes doubled their lead just past the midway point of regulation when the team executed a full line change in the Sabres zone and continued to pressure. Rookie defenseman Joel Nystrom, playing his eighth career game, got his first NHL point when his pass to Jesperi Kotkaniemi was one-timed into the net for a 3-1 lead at 11:39.

"I saw I got a little space there, so I tried to beat my forward," said Nystrom, a seventh round pick in 2021 who is in his first full season in North America. "And I saw KK coming from the blue line, and then he did a really good shot. So I have to thank him too."

While Carolina's defense is still in flux, its forwards got a boost when William Carrier and Eric Robinson returned to the lineup after missing six games.

Robinson picked up where he left off, scoring off a Kotkaniemi pass on the rush 29 seconds into the third period for his fourth goal of the year and a 4-1 lead. Legault got his first career point with a secondary assist.

Carolina needed the cushion after Buffalo scored twice in 3:26 to cut the lead to one at 4-3 with more than 13 minutes remaining.

But Pyotr Kochetkov (19 saves), who made his second start of the season after posting a shutout Tuesday at the Rangers, made a toe save on Sabres defenseman Mattias Samuelsson with an extra attacker on the ice for Buffalo. Nine seconds later, Seth Jarvis scored his ninth goal of the season into an empty net.

The Sabres pulled Lyon again, hoping for a miracle with just over two minutes left. But Legault had the puck come to him in the left faceoff circle in the Carolina end and slapped it nearly the full length of the ice and into the net for his first career goal with 88 seconds remaining.

"You dream of scoring one since being a kid, so being able to get one tonight was a great feeling," said Legault, who was playing in the seventh game of his career.

Both he and Nystrom were expected to help anchor the Chicago Wolves' defense in the American Hockey League this season, but they've instead experienced their first taste of the NHL together.



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"We've been kind of living it together, being two young guys," Legault said, "and we drive to the rink together every day. So being able to get it with him, it's a great feeling."

Notes: Jalen Chatfield missed the game while in the concussion protocol. Shayne Gostisbehere and Jaccob Slavin also remained out. ... Mark Jankowski, Brandon Bussi and recent call-up Gavin Bayreuther were healthy scratches.

... Sabres defenseman Rasmus Dahlin is away from the team after returning to Sweden to be with his fiancée, who underwent a heart transplant in the summer. ... Kotkaniemi and Aho also had two-point games. ... Alexander Nikishin was plus 2 and is tied for the league lead in plus/minus at plus 13. ... The Hurricanes reclaimed goalie Cayden Primeau off waivers from Toronto and assigned him to AHL Chicago.



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Recap: Canes Battle Back To Topple Toronto

By: Walt Ruff & Peter Dewar

TORONTO - Trailing by two with just under half the game remaining, the Carolina Hurricanes bagged three unanswered goals to knock off the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-4 at Scotiabank Arena on Sunday.

As both sides hit the ice for the second straight night, their offenses came out firing with a combined five goals in the first period. William Nylander's first of two goals opened the scoring at the five-minute mark, before Carolina pushed back and struck twice in a span of 5:57 - a power-play blast by Sebastian Aho to level the score, then a well-played rush chance finished off by Seth Jarvis to take the lead.

Before the horn sounded to end the period, though, Toronto's talent tallied two more of its own to take the lead heading into the second, and another Leafs goal then stretched that lead to two just past the midway mark of the contest. A string of shots off the post and missed breakaway bids threatened to further frustrate the visitors, but Sean Walker's seeing-eye shot late in the frame calmed the waters and halved the deficit, bringing the Hurricanes to within a goal as they entered the third.

Riding the momentum from Walker's late goal, the Canes upped their pressure and produced a dominant third period, outshooting the Leafs 22-2. They were first rewarded when Taylor Hall tapped home a rebound at 3:20 to tie things up for the third time, and with wind in their sails, ultimately completed the comeback nine minutes later. After a Toronto faceoff win, Nikolaj Ehlers forced a turnover and dished to K'Andre Miller, who set up Logan Stankoven for a one-timer from the left circle that became the game-winning goal.

Making his fifth career start, Brandon Bussi made 16 saves on 20 shots to move to 4-1-0 on the year.

Stats & Standouts

Forward Nikolaj Ehlers posted his first multi-point game as a Hurricane to stretch his point streak to four games (2G, 3A). Ehlers leads the Hurricanes with nine points in the club's last 10 games.

Forward Sebastian Aho scored the 69th power-play goal of his career and surpassed Sylvain Turgeon for the fifth-most in franchise history. Scoring for the second straight night, Aho pushed his point streak to four games (2G, 3A) as well.

Forward Seth Jarvis also extended his point streak to four games with a goal in the first period. Finding twine for the

10th time in 15 games to start the season, Jarvis became the second-fastest Hurricanes player in the last 15 years to reach the 10-goal mark, trailing only Andrei Svechnikov (14 GP in 2022-23).

Speaking of forward Andrei Svechnikov, the 25-year-old logged an assist for his third straight game with a point. Netting four points (2G, 2A) in that span, it's his longest streak of the season.

Defenseman K'Andre Miller bagged two assists, moving his point streak to three games. Miller has found the scoresheet in five of his nine outings this year, and his eight points (2G, 6A) in that span are the most he's posted through the first nine games of a season in his career.

Carolina fired 22 shots on net in the third period. It's the first time the Canes have recorded 20+ shots in a single period on the road since Oct. 19, 2023, at Seattle. The team's 47 total shots on goal also mark a season high.

The Hurricanes scored on the power play for the second straight game on Sunday, marking the first time this season they have tallied a PPG in consecutive contests.

They Said It...

Rod Brind'Amour on the group finding a way to get it done despite the adversity...

"I think we knew we were playing pretty well. We were getting opportunities in the second period. We had a few breakaways and lots of posts, (the game) was right there. We did have a couple of mistakes where we left their better players alone, which you can't do, and then they were little tap-ins. But aside from that, I thought we played a really solid game."

Taylor Hall at what makes the group so good at sticking with it...

"There's a bit of confidence that it can be done. We have the horses to do it if we play our game. If it's close, on the road, going into the third period, we're not going to panic. We're obviously going to play our game and let the chips fall where they may. You take some solace in that, that you just have to do your job and work. (If you do), good things will happen. I know that's cliché, but that's really how we feel, and that's how we went out and played in the third."

Seth Jarvis discussing the group's ability to find ways to get it done...



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"We've done a great job of doing it by committee. All facets of our game are really going right now, even if guys aren't getting on the scoresheet, they're making impacts in different ways. I think that's what's really pushing our team to win.

Obviously, we got down to five defensemen again. You never want to see a guy get hurt, especially the way Charles did... The way our guys stepped up back there and were able to grind another one out for us was special."

Projected Lineup: November 9 at Toronto

By: Walt Ruff & Peter Dewar

TORONTO - The Carolina Hurricanes will try for a fourth consecutive win tonight when they take on the Toronto Maple Leafs at Scotiabank Arena.

The team had key pieces William Carrier and Eric Robinson return to the lineup last night in the team's 6-3 win over Buffalo, with Robinson netting the game-winning goal in the third period. Although the two started the night on the same line, flanking Jesperi Kotkaniemi, Carrier was moved mid-game back alongside Jordan Staal and Jordan Martinook, a position he'd frequently operated in before being injured on Oct. 23.

As for the rest of the forwards, Andrei Svechnikov enters tonight's contest with six points in his last six games, including four goals. He was one of four Hurricanes who had multiple points last night, joining Sebastian Aho, Kotkaniemi, and Charles Alexis Legault.

The cast of skaters will operate in front of Brandon Bussi tonight, who will make his fifth NHL start. It will be his first action since Oct. 30, when he turned in an impressive 26-save win over the New York Islanders.

Today's Projected Lineup...

Forwards

Svechnikov - Aho - Jarvis

Ehlers - Stankoven - Blake

Carrier - Staal - Martinook

Hall - Kotkaniemi - Robinson

Defense

Nikishin - Walker

Miller - Nystrom

Reilly - Legault

Starting Goaltender

Bussi

Injuries

Jalen Chatfield (Upper-Body Injury | No Timetable For Return)

Shayne Gostisbehere (Midsection Injury | No Timetable For Return)

Jacob Slavin (Lower-Body Injury | "Out For A While" as of Oct. 14)

Scratches

Gavin Bayreuther

Mark Jankowski

PP1: Aho, Ehlers, Jarvis, and Svechnikov with Miller

PP2: Blake, Hall, and Stankoven with Nikishin and Walker

Preview: November 9 at Toronto

By: Walt Ruff & Peter Dewar

TORONTO - The Carolina Hurricanes will try to move their win streak to four on Sunday when they take on the Toronto Maple Leafs.

When: Sunday, Nov. 9

Puck Drop: 7:00 p.m. ET

Watch: FanDuel Sports Network South, FanDuel Sports Network App | Learn More

Listen: 99.9 The Fan, Hurricanes App

Canes Record: 10-4-0 (20 Points, 3rd - Metropolitan Division)

Canes Last Game: 4-3 Win over the Buffalo Sabres on Saturday, Nov. 8

Maple Leafs Record: 8-6-1 (17 Points, T-5th - Atlantic Division)

Maple Leafs Last Game: 5-3 Loss to the Boston Bruins on Saturday, Nov. 8



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Last Time Out...

Multi-point efforts (1G, 1A each) from Sebastian Aho, Jesperi Kotkaniemi, Charles Alexis Legault, and Andrei Svechnikov led the Canes to a 6-3 victory in Raleigh last night.

For Legault, it was his first two NHL points, and he was joined by Joel Nystrom, who recorded his first with a second-period helper.

Goaltender Pyotr Kochetkov stopped 19 of 22 in his second start of the season, moving him to 2-0-0.

Svech's Starting To Heat Up...

After starting the season with no points in his first eight games, Andrei Svechnikov has come alive in a major way.

He now has six points in his last six games, including four goals.

In Net...

With Pyotr Kochetkov getting the start on Saturday, the Canes will turn to either Frederik Andersen or Brandon Bussi in net tonight.

Andersen earned the win over Minnesota on Thursday night, turning away 21 to improve to 5-3-0 this season.

Bussi has not started since Oct. 30, when he earned a 26-save win over the New York Islanders. He is 3-1 in his first four NHL starts.

On The Other Side...

Toronto also played last night, having its three-game win streak snapped in a 5-3 loss to the Boston Bruins.

Despite losing Mitch Marner to the Vegas Golden Knights this summer, the Leafs remain one of the best scoring teams in the league. Entering Sunday's play, they've produced 55 goals, tied for the third-most in the NHL. What makes that even more impressive is that their power play sits 27th in the league, converting on just 15.8% of their tries.

William Nylander is among the league's leading scorers with 20 points in 11 games.

Injury Updates...

Defenseman Jalen Chatfield (upper-body injury) left Nov. 6's win during the first period. Rod Brind'Amour did not have an update post-game.

Defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere (lower-body injury) left the game on Oct. 28 with an injury that was unrelated to the one that kept him out of three games on the Canes' extended road trip. Rod Brind'Amour said on Oct. 29 that the blueliner is "not going to be [out just] day-to-day, I don't think, but hopefully it's not too long."

Defenseman Jaccob Slavin (lower-body injury) will be "out for a while," as of Oct. 14. He was placed on IR on Oct. 21 and, as of Oct. 27, was "still a ways away" from returning.

What Are We Wearing?

The Canes will wear their white uniforms for tonight's contest. To view the team's full 2025-26 uniform schedule, [click here](#).

What's Next After This Game?

The Canes will fly back to Raleigh post-game and are scheduled to practice on Monday. They'll return to game action on Tuesday, hosting the Capitals at Lenovo Center.

Recap: Canes Hold Off Sabres For Third Straight Win

By: Walt Ruff & Peter Dewar

RALEIGH, N.C. - A quartet of multi-point performances paced the Carolina Hurricanes' 10th win of the campaign on Saturday, a 6-3 victory over the Buffalo Sabres at Lenovo Center.

It took exactly five minutes for the Hurricanes to open the scoring, as Andrei Svechnikov forced a turnover in the defensive zone, called his own number through the neutral zone, then deftly dished to Sebastian Aho for a one-time finish past Alex Lyon.

The Sabres found an answer before the first intermission, but Carolina responded with two more tallies in the second stanza. Svechnikov broke the deadlock with his second point of the night, denting Buffalo's league-leading penalty kill with a one-time blast at 4:34. Jesperi Kotkaniemi then doubled the lead seven minutes later, wiring home a slick setup from Joel Nystrom, who posted his first career point on the play.

The Canes continued to pour it on with a breakaway marker from Eric Robinson just 29 seconds into the third, a goal that

would prove crucial as the Sabres gradually chopped Carolina's three-goal lead down to just one with more than half the period to play. But the hosts buckled down, and back-to-back empty-net daggers - one from Seth Jarvis and one from Charles Alexis Legault for his first NHL goal and second point of the night - secured the Hurricanes' third straight trip to the win column.

In net, Pyotr Kochetkov moved to 2-0-0 on the year with 19 saves on 22 shots.

[BUF at CAR | Recap](#)

Stats & Standouts

After being held off the scoresheet for eight games to start the season, forward Andrei Svechnikov has now posted a team-leading four goals and six points in the club's last six outings.

With Sebastian Aho's goal at the five-minute mark of the first period, the Hurricanes have now scored eight times in



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the first five minutes of a game this season - the most among all teams.

Forward Nikolaj Ehlers notched his 300th career assist on Svechnikov's second-period strike, joining Frans Nielsen as just the second Danish player in NHL history to reach that milestone.

Defenseman K'Andre Miller also earned a milestone on Svechnikov's strike, picking up his 100th career assist with the primary helper. The 25-year-old has found the scoresheet in four of his eight games played this season.

Rookie defensemen Joel Nystrom (1A) and Charles Alexis Legault (1G, 1A) each logged their first NHL points on Saturday, becoming the first pair of Hurricanes teammates to do so in the same game since Andrew Poturalski and Jack Drury on Dec. 16, 2021.

Forwards Eric Robinson and William Carrier each returned from IR on Saturday, suiting up for the first time since they both left the Oct. 23 game in Colorado with upper- and lower-body injuries, respectively. Robinson notched the game-winning goal and skated 12:22, while Carrier co-led the team in hits (3) during 13:20 TOI.

They Said It...

Rod Brind'Amour on the game and seeing his team finish strong despite Buffalo's late push...

"I thought it was a solid first two periods, we were really playing well. We didn't really give up a ton, and then their talent [came through] eventually. It was kind of like you were waiting for it to happen. They're down a few, they can just start winging it, and I think that's when they get real

dangerous as you see. There's some really high-end players over there. But I did like our last couple of shifts, I thought that was good shutdown [play], and obviously great play by Jarvy to seal it."

Charles Alexis Legault on scoring his first NHL goal...

"Feels great. You dream of scoring one since being a kid, so being able to get one tonight was a great feeling."

Joel Nystrom describing the play that led to his first career point...

"I saw I got a little bit of space there, so I tried to beat my forward. I saw KK coming from the blue line, and then he did a really good shot, so I have to thank him too."

Rod Brind'Amour on Legault and Nystrom's first points, and rookie contributions throughout the season...

"We don't judge their games based on that, but those are nice little bonuses for them. Both guys have been solid, right? Like I've said, we've asked a lot of them, throwing them in there for so many minutes against top, top-end players, and I think all three of them - Nikishin's in the same boat for me - they're all new to the league, and they're hanging in there."

Andrei Svechnikov on staying positive after struggling to score in the early portion of the season...

"Sometimes when it doesn't go your way, there's lots of negativity, but you've got to stay positive and sometimes, maybe, don't care. Because I know what kind of player I am and what I can do, just waiting for that moment."



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NHL Status Report: Chatfield out indefinitely for Hurricanes

By: NHL.com

Welcome to the NHL Status Report. Here is the latest lineup/injury news around the NHL.

Carolina Hurricanes

Jalen Chatfield was placed on injured reserve by the Hurricanes on Saturday and is out indefinitely because of an upper-body injury. The defenseman left in the first period of a 4-3 win against the Minnesota Wild on Thursday after a hit to the head by Tyler Pitlick. "Obviously, he got a hit to the head and [the training staff] always takes precaution on that," coach Rod Brind'Amour said Saturday before a 6-3 win against the Buffalo Sabres.

Seattle Kraken

Joey Daccord is being evaluated for an upper-body injury and did not travel with the Kraken for their 4-3 overtime win at the St. Louis Blues on Saturday. The goalie allowed five goals on 20 shots before he was pulled in the third period of a 6-1 loss to the San Jose Sharks on Wednesday. Daccord is 6-2-3 with a 2.83 GAA and .900 save percentage in 11 games. Matt Murray started in a 2-1 loss to the Dallas Stars on Sunday after Philipp Grubauer played Saturday.

Los Angeles Kings

Warren Foegele returned from an upper-body injury for the Kings against the Pittsburgh Penguins on Sunday. The forward, who missed five games, was on the fourth line with Alex Turcotte and Corey Perry.

Toronto Maple Leafs

Chris Tanev skated on his own prior to the Maple Leafs' optional morning skate Saturday, but there is no timeline for the defenseman's return. It was the first time Tanev skated since being taken from the ice on a stretcher in the third period of a 5-2 win against the Philadelphia Flyers on Nov. 1. He remained in a Philadelphia hospital overnight before being discharged the following day. "Just progressing in the right direction, I'd say, more than anything," Toronto coach

Craig Berube said. "First time on the ice. Just by himself." Tanev, who was placed on injured reserve retroactive to Nov. 1, missed his fourth straight game for the Maple Leafs in a 5-4 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes on Sunday.

Florida Panthers

Jonah Gadjovich (upper body) will have surgery Tuesday and is expected to be out three months, Panthers coach Paul Maurice said before their 3-1 loss at the San Jose Sharks on Saturday. The forward was injured during a 3-0 win against the Vegas Golden Knights on Oct. 25. He has three assists in 10 games this season.

Edmonton Oilers

Zach Hyman could make his season debut this week, Oilers coach Kris Knoblauch said Friday. The forward has not played since dislocating his wrist during Game 4 of the Western Conference Final against the Stars on May 27 last season. Edmonton hosts the Columbus Blue Jackets on Monday (8:30 p.m. ET; Prime, FDSNOH). "Whether he gets back in on Monday or later on, on that (seven-game) road trip ... we expect him back within one week," Knoblauch said. Hyman, who had 44 points (27 goals, 17 assists) in 73 regular-season games last season, has been practicing with the Oilers since Oct. 22. ... Knoblauch also said Mattias Janmark is expected to return "within the next couple of days." The forward has yet to play this season because of an undisclosed injury.

New Jersey Devils

Dougie Hamilton will be out at least a week for the Devils because of a lower-body injury. The defenseman was injured in the second period of a 4-3 overtime win against the Montreal Canadiens on Thursday. "Minor injury, it will be probably a minimum of a week for him, and then from that point it will just be a matter of how he's feeling in terms of when he will come back," Devils coach Sheldon Keefe said prior to their 2-1 shootout win against the Pittsburgh Penguins on Saturday.



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Hurricanes score 3 straight, rally past Maple Leafs for 4th win in row

By: Dave McCarthy

Stankoven breaks tie in 3rd for Carolina; Hildeby makes 42 saves for Toronto

TORONTO -- Logan Stankoven broke a tie at 12:13 of the third period, and the Carolina Hurricanes rallied with three straight goals to defeat the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-4 at Scotiabank Arena on Sunday.

Toronto defenseman Jake McCabe turned the puck over to Nikolaj Ehlers, who found K'Andre Miller in the slot. Miller then slid a short pass to Stankoven for a shot from the left face-off dot for the go-ahead goal for the Hurricanes.

"We knew we were playing pretty well," Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We were getting opportunities. Second period we had a few breakaways, off the post a few times. It was right there. We had a couple mistakes where we left their better players alone, which you can't do, and they were little tap-ins, but aside from that, I thought we played a solid, solid game."

Sebastian Aho, Seth Jarvis, Sean Walker and Taylor Hall scored, and Brandon Bussi made 16 saves for the Hurricanes (11-4-0), who have won four in a row.

William Nylander scored twice, and Auston Matthews and John Tavares each had a goal and an assist for the Maple Leafs (8-7-1), who have lost two in a row. Dennis Hildeby made 42 saves.

"Could be immaturity, not a willingness to make the easy play," Toronto coach Craig Berube said. "Turnover after turnover cost us the game tonight. We didn't check anybody tonight, we didn't win any battles tonight. That's two games in a row."

Walker brought Carolina to within 4-3 at 16:51 of the second period when he shot past Hildeby's blocker from the blue line.

Hall tied it 4-4 at 3:20 of the third period, driving to the net and chopping the rebound of Jackson Blake's shot past Hildeby's left pad. The play began when Philippe Myers, and then Nylander, were unable to clear the puck, with Joel Nystrom ultimately keeping it in at the blue line and sending it behind the net, leading to Blake's initial shot.

"We are a forechecking team, but I just think we work and we have structure within that forechecking system that allows you to make reads here and there, but it's really about effort," Hall said.

The Hurricanes outshot the Maple Leafs 22-2 in the third period.

"We were really able to establish our forecheck," Jarvis said. "When they struggle getting pucks out of the zone, that feeds

into our play. We were doing a good job staying above it, creating turnovers like you saw on Stankoven's goal ... Just being able to keep pressure on them, make them either high flip it out or struggle to get the puck out, that's what our game thrives on."

Nylander put the Maple Leafs ahead 1-0 at 5:00 of the first period when he took a pass from Matthew Knies in the slot and made a backhand deke past a sprawling Bussi.

Aho tied it 1-1 at 8:34, one-timing a pass from Ehlers from the right dot on the power play.

Jarvis put the Hurricanes in front 2-1 at 14:31, taking a pass from Andrei Svechnikov in the slot and scoring glove side.

Tavares, who was playing his 1,200th NHL game, tied it 2-2 at 15:31. After his initial shot on the rush was stopped, Bussi made another save on Nicholas Robertson. But on the ensuing rebound, Bobby McMann got to the loose puck and fed Tavares at the top of the crease, where he put it into an open net.

Nylander gave the Maple Leafs a 3-2 lead at 19:01 of the first period with a one-timer from the left face-off dot off a pass from Tavares on the power play.

Matthews stretched the lead to 4-2 at 11:03 of the second period when he took a pass from McCabe at the side of the net and jammed it in with Bussi out of position.

"We were fortunate to have a lead after two," Matthews said. "If it wasn't for [Hildeby], three, four breakaways there we gave up he made big saves. Just details. We didn't win enough puck battles, and just the repetitive stuff we can't seem to get right or have a consistency over a full 60 minutes. There will be times where there is momentum shifts, but you have to break that momentum as quickly as possible and get back on the right side of things. We're not doing that quick enough."

NOTES: Hurricanes defenseman Charles Alexis Legault left the game at the end of the first period after his arm appeared to be cut during a scrum along the boards. "He went to the hospital," Brind'Amour said. "I think he's coming back with us, so that part is good. It's not a good injury though from what I'm hearing, so I don't want to say too much because I don't know, but that's tough to see. I don't know what happened. All of a sudden he was just bleeding profusely and that doesn't look good... He'll have to get looked at tomorrow." ... Nylander extended his personal point streak to 10 games (seven goals, 12 assists) and has at least one point in 12 of the 13 games he has played this season. ... Maple Leafs defenseman Morgan Rielly extended his point streak to five games (seven assists).



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AP

ASSOCIATED PRESS

Taylor Hall, Logan Stankoven score in 3rd period to rally Hurricanes to 5-4 win over Maple Leafs | AP News

TORONTO (AP) — Taylor Hall and Logan Stankoven scored in the third period, and the Carolina Hurricanes rallied to beat the Toronto Maple Leafs 5-4 on Sunday night for their fourth straight win.

Sebastian Aho, Seth Jarvis, and Shawn Walker also scored for Carolina, which trailed by two midway through the second period. Brandon Bussi had 16 saves.

William Nylander scored twice, and John Tavares and Auston Matthews each had a goal and an assist for Toronto. Matthew Knies had two assists and Dennis Hildeby stopped 41 shots.

The matchup was this year's Hall of Fame game with the class of 2025 honored before puck drop ahead of Monday's induction ceremony. Zdeno Chara, Joe Thornton, Duncan Keith, Alexander Mogilny, Jennifer Botterill and Brianna Decker will be enshrined in the player category. Jack Parker and Danièle Sauvageau are set to enter as builders.

Hall tied the score 4-4 at 3:20 of the third on a rebound on the right side of the net.

Stankoven gave the Hurricanes their first lead of the night with 7:47 left as he finished off a pretty passing play with K'Andre Miller and Nikolaj Ehlers.

Nylander got his second of the night to give the Maple Leafs a 3-2 lead on a power play with 59 seconds remaining in the first period.

Matthews pushed Toronto's lead to 4-2 at 11:03 of the second with his ninth of the season.

Walker scored on a long shot from the right point through traffic to pull the Hurricanes within one with 3:09 remaining in the middle period.

Tavares played the 1,200th regular-season game of his NHL career. He joined former Toronto captain Mats Sundin, who was on hand for the Hockey Hall of Fame festivities, as the second player in franchise history to register a point when skating in the milestone contest.

Carolina rookies Legault, Nystrom make team history by scoring 1st NHL points in win over Sabres | AP News

By: Bob Sutton

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — The injury-ravaged Carolina Hurricanes found new sources of offense from two rookie defensemen, and the pair made team history in the process.

Charles Alexis Legault and Joel Nystrom picked up their first NHL points in Saturday night's 6-3 win over the Buffalo Sabres.

Their performance marked the first time in the Hurricanes' team history that two defensemen posted their first points in the same game. And, it was the fourth time in Carolina history — since the relocation from Hartford — that any two players recorded their first points in a game.

Legault had an assist and an empty-net goal, and Nystrom assisted on a goal early in the third period as Carolina extended its winning streak to three games.

"We don't judge their game based on that," Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "But those are nice little bonuses for them. Both guys have been solid. We ask a lot of them."

Legault scored by sending the puck nearly the length of the ice into the unattended net with 1:28 remaining in the game. But, his first point came when he assisted on Eric Robinson's

"You dream of scoring one since you've been a kid, so being able to get one tonight is a great feeling," Legault said.

Nystrom's assist came on Jesperi Kotkaniemi's score 29 seconds into the third that extended Carolina's lead to 3-1.

"Today I got my first point and I'm real happy for that," Nystrom said. "... (Kotkaniemi) he did a really good shot. I have to thank him, too."

In franchise history combining Hartford and Carolina, Mark Howe and Charles Luksa were the last defensive pair to get their first career points in the same game, in October 1979.



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Legault and Nystrom have been living together since their somewhat unexpected additions to the NHL team this fall.

"We spent a lot of time together the last couple of weeks," Nystrom said.

Carolina played without defenseman Jalen Chatfield for the first time this season. He left Thursday night's game with an upper-body injury after a blow to the head from Minnesota's Tyler Pitlick, who was assessed a match penalty.

The Hurricanes have been without defensemen Jacob Slavin and Shayne Gostisbehere for more than a week. That twosome, plus Chatfield, all played in 70 or more games last season.

The Hurricanes also recalled defenseman Gavin Bayreuther from Chicago of the AHL earlier Saturday, but he was a healthy scratch.



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SPORTSNET™

'Right off the rails': Berube blasts Leafs' defensive commitment after latest loss

By: Canadian Press

TORONTO — Craig Berube has a front-row seat to what is quickly becoming a horror show.

The Maple Leafs head coach thought his team was coming out of a defensive fog that plagued the group in the early part of the NHL schedule as it pivoted to the weekend.

After consecutive home losses accentuated by more breakdowns and egregious turnovers, Berube and his staff are going back to the drawing board — again.

Toronto blew a 4-2 lead in Sunday's second period as part of a 5-4 loss to the Carolina Hurricanes, some 24 hours after a 5-3 defeat to the Boston Bruins.

"It's just a mindset," Berube said after his team surrendered 46 shots and fell to 8-7-1. "If you want to be a good defensive team, you gotta check, you gotta have good sticks, you gotta be hard, you gotta win battles, and you've gotta have good structure.

"We don't have any of that right now."

The veteran bench boss saw encouraging signs in the Leafs' approach without the puck ahead of the Boston contest thanks to three straight wins, but there remain clear deficiencies that must be rectified.

Toronto has allowed an average of 3.75 goals against per game — good for an ugly 31st in the 32-team league — after giving up a solid 2.79 per outing in 2024-25.

"I just keep working at it," said Berube, who hoisted the Stanley Cup with the St. Louis Blues in 2019. "You look at video, we gotta have discussions with players, with the team ... we're scoring enough goals every game to win games, but we're letting in too many goals.

"Pretty much the season is, we don't value the defensive side of the puck enough."

Depth defenceman Philippe Myers, who's in the lineup with shutdown option Chris Tanev out with an upper-body injury, had a second straight rough night, with his worst moment coming on a giveaway that paved the way for Carolina's fourth goal. The usually steady Jake McCabe then made a similar blue-line gaffe in the lead-up to Sunday's winner.

That came after the Leafs hung third-string goaltender Dennis Hildeby out to dry in the second with chance after chance, including a string of breakaways.

"Stuff that we just can't seem to get right or we can't seem to have a consistency over a full 60 minutes," said Toronto captain Auston Matthews, who finished with a goal and an assist. "There's gonna be times where there's momentum shifts and stuff like that, but to break that momentum as quickly as possible and get back on the right side of things, we're not doing that quick enough."

Leafs centre John Tavares said the club is making errors that simply can't happen in the NHL.

"At times we did some really good things, earned opportunities and were able to give ourselves the lead," said Tavares, who had a goal and an assist. "And then our game, just for whatever reason, becomes really immature and we don't manage the game very well."

"We have a lot of very good hockey players," he added. "We have a very veteran team, so it's just the decision to do it shift after shift."

Toronto winger William Nylander had two goals to round out the offence, but was guilty of giving the puck away for one of the second-period breakaways.

"We've just got to focus on that aspect and really bear down," he said of finding consistency. "Just comes down to simplifying and not trying to make another play."

Tavares said the Leafs aren't panicking, but after their league-high 12th home game, the road is only going to get more difficult if the standard of work, commitment and attention to detail isn't met.

"We gain some traction and then we shoot ourselves in the foot again and just put ourselves in a tough spot," he said. "There's a ton of hockey left to be played. We've just gotta pick ourselves back up and get ready for the next opportunity, and build from there."

A disappointed Berube said Toronto, which is finally getting production from its power play, has to show a lot more when the opposition is on the attack.

"We were really trending in the right direction without the puck," he said. "We're scoring goals, but now we just went right off the rails the last two games defensively ... it's caused by puck play, costly turnovers.

"And the urgency that's needed to defend."

Hurricanes claim G Cayden Primeau off waivers from Maple Leafs

By: Sportsnet Staff

After spending the pre-season in Raleigh, Cayden Primeau is on his way back.



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Carolina later announced that he would be assigned to the Chicago Wolves of the American Hockey League.

Primeau suited up for three games with the Maple Leafs, putting up a 2-1 record with a 4.30 goals-against average and a .838 save percentage.

He served as the team's backup goaltender while Joseph Woll began the season away from the team on a leave of absence due to personal reasons.

The Hurricanes waived Primeau before the start of the regular season after the team acquired his rights from the

Montreal Canadiens for a 2026 seventh-round pick in the off-season.

Last year, Primeau had a 2-3-1 record, with an .836 save percentage and a 4.70 goals-against average in 11 games with the Canadiens. He also had a 21-2-2 record, a .927 save percentage, and a 1.96 goals-against average in 26 AHL games with the Laval Rocket.

Over his seven-year NHL career, the Farmington Hills, Mich., native has a 15-25-7 record in 58 appearances, most of which came with the Canadiens.



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SB NATION
CANES COUNTRY

Hurricanes storm back, defeat Toronto 5-4

By: Al Hood

Why is it always the Leafs?

Whenever the Carolina Hurricanes and the Toronto Maple Leafs play each other, the chances that the game will be insane shoot through the roof for some reason. All you have to do is check the history of Steve Dangle Glynn with the Canes to see some of his best reactions. Sunday night was no exception as the Canes came back from a 4-2 deficit to beat the Leafs on Hockey Hall of Fame Night 5-4.

The first period was about as bonkers as was expected. After both teams witnessed the Hockey Hall of Fame Ceremony, there was a question about what sort of start you'd see. That was answered five minutes in when William Nylander converted on the rush. It started when Morgan Rielly started behind his own net and whipped a great pass off the wall in front of the team benches, Matthew Knies took the puck and fed a streaking Nylander. Nylander had beaten Mike Reilly and was able to get the puck past Brandon Bussi for the 1-0 lead.

Carolina would answer quickly with their second power play goal in a row thanks to an outstanding feed from Nikolaj Ehlers. Sebastian Aho won the faceoff to start the Power Play, and the Canes were able to quickly cycle it around for Aho to blast it past Dennis Hildeby to knot it at one.

Six minutes later the top line for the Canes converted thanks to another outstanding pass, this one from a red hot Andrei Svechnikov, who fed a streaking Seth Jarvis for Jarvis' tenth on the season.

The Canes were unable to enjoy the lead for long, though, as the superstars for Toronto exerted themselves quickly. First John Tavares converted on another rush for the Leafs, as the Canes got a little too focused on the puck and staring goalie Brandon Bussi was unable to stop a rebound that went right to Tavares. Then near the end of the period, the Canes penalty kill gave up a rare power play goal as they were unable to clear the zone, and Tavares fed Nylander for the one-timer that was blasted past Bussi.

The first period ended with a 3-2 score, the Canes putting more shots on goal with 12-10 but the stars for the Leafs being the stars. It also ended with a scrum that resulted in Charles Alexis Legault getting a pretty serious cut on his hand, bad enough to where he was ruled out for the rest of the game. Once again, and for way too many times this early in the season, the Canes had to skate with just five defensemen.

Being short a defenseman showed for the Canes as the craziness continued into the second period, even though for the first few minutes it didn't result in any goals. Carolina tried to make it three straight Power Play conversions but were unable to convert, and before the first TV timeout the Canes had several breakways, and hit the post or crossbar on each of them. That would prove costly for the Canes as Toronto was able to convert with the defensive miscommunications. The other star for the Leafs Austin Matthews got in on the action with yet another breakdown where Bussi couldn't corral the puck. Matthews was all alone next to the net and was able to tap it in. Toronto led 4-2, but the Canes were able to get it back to one thanks to a goal from the Staal line.

It was fitting that this line was the one to convert, as instead of trying to do something fancy to beat Hildeby, they just grinded and put the puck on net. In this case, Will Carrier was able to get the puck in deep allowing the Canes to set up, and dished it off to Sean Walker. Walker blasted it by Hildeby to get the Canes out of the second period down just 4-3.

With an intermission to calm down and discuss how to play the rest of the game with just five defensemen, the Canes completely locked the Leafs down in the third. After giving up 18 total shots in the first two periods the Canes would just give up two in the third, and that was with the Leafs having a Power Play. In the meantime on offense the Canes got back to the style of hockey they wanted to play—putting pucks on net and it paid dividends. Three minutes into the third, the Canes stormed the net on a partial change. Joel Nystrom saved the puck from going out of the zone and got it to the net. Logan Stankoven fed it to Jackson Blake, who put on a shot, and Taylor Hall was able to cash in on the rebound.

The Canes continued to pressure the Leafs, and the air seemed to go out of the arena once it was tied. Sure enough, with eight minutes left Ehlers made a wonderful defensive play, stealing the puck, and fed K'Andre Miller, who dropped to an open Stankoven. Stankoven buried the shot and the Canes were up 5-4.

The Canes continued to lock down Toronto for the rest of the period, and the Leafs got very little empty net time. The one chance the Leafs had in the period may have exemplified just how bonkers the night was. On their Power Play with a chance to seize momentum, Nylander missed a wide open net. Toronto wouldn't get close again the rest of the night.



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The Canes outshot Toronto 22-2 in the third period. That is not a typo. Toronto was unable to establish the rush they had gotten in the first two periods because the Canes just kept putting the puck on the net.

Carolina now improves to 11-4-0 on the season, and play again Tuesday Night against the Capitals, where Freddie Andersen is expected to start between the pipes.

Game Preview: Hurricanes at Maple Leafs

By: briandaguanno

The Canes are headed north for a quick trip to Scotiabank Arena to take on the Toronto Maple Leafs tonight at 7 p.m., hoping to extend the winning streak to four.

Last night against the Sabres, Carolina's offense was on fire, netting six goals en route to a 6-3 win on home ice. While Buffalo wasn't the hardest test, the Canes were still able to impress. Four players recorded multi-point games, including Sebastian Aho, who is now the leading scorer on Carolina with 15 points in 14 games this season. Eric Robinson, who returned from injury last night, added a goal in his first game back since Oct. 23.

Despite the strong offensive performance, goaltender Pyotr Kochetkov didn't have the best showing, letting in three goals on 22 shots for an .864 save percentage.

As for the Maple Leafs, they will be playing a back-to-back tonight also after losing 5-3 to the Bruins last night. After a slow start to the season, Toronto has been stellar as of late, winning five of their last seven games. The Leafs are 8-6-1 and rank fifth in the Atlantic division. Even after starting out the season slow, they will be a tough matchup especially playing on home ice. This season at Scotiabank, the Leafs are 7-3-1 while the Canes are 5-3 on the road.

Toronto boasts some of the best top-end talent in the league in its forward group, led this season by William Nylander, who has tallied 21 points in 12 games — tied for 7th most in the league. John Tavares has put up 19 points in 15 games

and Matthew Knies has tallied 18 points in 15 games. You can't forget about Auston Matthews, one of the most prolific goal scorers in the NHL. This year, Matthews hasn't been on fire, but he has still notched 8 goals in 15 games.

Even after losing Mitch Marner to the Las Vegas Knights in the offseason, the Leafs have one of the most talented forwards groups in the league, which could pose problems for a banged up Carolina defensive core.

The Maple Leafs have struggled to find consistent goaltending this season though, with starter Anthony Stolarz posting a 6-5 record with a 3.35 GAA and .889 save percentage. Last night against Boston, Stolarz was replaced after allowing four goals on 19 shots by Dennis Hildeby. After replacing Stolarz, Hildeby let in only one goal on 20 shots.

Don't be surprised if the Leafs slot in Hildeby to make his seventh career start and first this season following his performance against the Bruins last night.

Tonight will be a good test for the Canes who are still looking to climb in the Metropolitan division standings. A win could tie the Canes with the New Jersey Devils for first place in the Metro.

It's a toss-up game tonight, especially with all the injuries on the back end for Carolina and the amount of forward talent the Leafs have. But if the Canes can get some strong goaltending, they will have a solid chance to extend the winning streak on the road tonight.

Hurricanes 6, Sabres 3

By: Bob Wage

The Carolina Hurricanes improved their record to 10-4-0 with a 6-3 win against the Buffalo Sabres on Saturday night at the Lenovo Center.

The victory gave the team three wins in a row and pushed them to a 5-1-0 record at home.

Once again the Canes spread out the scoring as they had six different goal scorers and 11 different players with points.

The first line opened up the scoring five minutes into the game when Andrei Svechnikov made a pretty pass to Sebastian Aho, who made no mistake.

Buffalo tied the game before the end of the period but the Hurricanes came out roaring in the second.

Svechnikov rifled in a powerplay goal to make it 2-1, then Jesperi Kotkaniemi scored his second of the season off a nice pass by Joel Nystrom. It was Nystrom's first point of his NHL career.

Nystrom has been put into service because of Carolina's injuries on the blueline and he has improved each game.

Just 29 seconds into the third, Eric Robinson made it 4-1, but then the Hurricanes took a breath.

Alex Tuch and Tage Thompson each scored to tighten things up but the home team tightened up the defense and scored two empty-netters to end the scoring.

Seth Jarvis scored the first one, his ninth of the season.

Charles Alexis Legault scored the next, a long one from his own end for his first career NHL goal.



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Legault finished with a +2 and had two hits.

Carolina outshot Buffalo 35-22, led by Aho who had six shots.

Alexander Nikishin seemed to have a quiet game but led the team with 21:39 of ice time. He also had a team high four

hits. The rookie had a +2 on the night pushing his season total to +13, which ties him for the league lead.

The Canes will quickly travel to Toronto for a match against the Leafs Sunday night.

Game Preview: Sabres versus Hurricanes

By: briandaguanno

The Canes are back at Lenovo Center tonight for the second of a two-game homestand with tonight's matchup against Buffalo.

On Thursday, Carolina was able to notch their second straight win, coming against the Wild courtesy of three first period goals. Nikolaj Ehlers recorded his second goal of the season, and the marquee free agent signing finally looks to be finding his footing. Sophomore Jackson Blake impressed as well, adding a goal and an assist, giving him 10 points in 13 games, good for the third leading scorer on Carolina this season.

Currently, the Canes currently sit at third in the Metropolitan division with a 9-4-0 record through 13 games. The two teams ahead of them, the Devils and Penguins, have both played more games but have 20 points apiece.

As for Buffalo, their season has been quite the opposite of Carolina's. The Sabres are, once again, one of the NHL's bottom feeders. It looks like their 14 year playoff drought, tied for the longest active one in the big four North American leagues, will extend another year this season.

On the offensive end, Alex Tuch and Tage Thompson lead the team with five goals each. Buffalo also has Josh Doan, the son of former Arizona Coyotes captain Shane Doan, who has quietly been enjoying a breakout season with four goals and five assists through 14 games this season.

But there's not much else to get excited about this season for the Sabres in terms of their forward group which lacks both top-level talent and the necessary depth to compete.

As for Buffalo's defensive core, they will be without star defenseman Rasmus Dahlin, who recently took a leave absence from the team. Without Dahlin, expect Owen Power and Bowen Byram to take on increased roles tonight.

Despite the lack of team success so far, Sabres goaltender Alex Lyon has performed well relative to the situation, posting a .915 save percentage in 10 games so far.

As for tonight's game, the Canes may be getting a couple players back from injury. Per Carolina's Walt Ruff both William Carrier and Eric Robinson have a chance to return to the lineup. It doesn't look like defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere will suit up against the Sabres though.

For who's starting in net, it appears Pyotr Kochetkov will get the nod tonight. Kochetkov's last start was a 26-save shutout against the Rangers on Tuesday.

With all that being said, this is a game the Canes should come out on top. Buffalo has lost five out of their last six games, making it a prime opportunity for Carolina to extend their winning streak to three and climb up the division standings.



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Hurricanes hold off Sabres' third-period surge, secure 6-3 victory

By: Daniel Susann

Carolina Hurricanes forward Sebastian Aho skates after a goal during the game against the Minnesota Wild at the Lenovo Center on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025. Aho had one assist, one block and two shots on goal. Carolina beat Minnesota 4-3.

Carolina Hurricanes forward Sebastian Aho skates after a goal during the game against the Minnesota Wild at the Lenovo Center on Thursday, Nov. 6, 2025. Aho had one assist, one block and two shots on goal. Carolina beat Minnesota 4-3.

Breakaway after breakaway. It seemed like the ice was extra slick Saturday night at the Lenovo Center, with players flying around on both sides. Whether it was an odd man rush, a nifty cross-ice pass or a full on sprint for the crease, points were there for the taking.

The Hurricanes (10-4-0) seemed to have dominated the Sabres (5-6-4) 6-3, but the scoreboard does not tell the full story. Before two Canes empty netters, the Sabres were a goal away late in the third period, having clawed away at the Canes' three-goal lead. But producing too many chances for Buffalo to follow, the Canes kept in front.

The first of these opportunities came early — five minutes into the first period. Right winger Andrei Svechnikov raced down the ice with center Sebastian Aho at his flank in a 2-on-1, feeding him a tape-to-tape pass that Aho didn't squander. The first-line center fired it off the netminder's blocker and in to put the Hurricanes up early.

This was the first of many odd-man rushes for the Canes, but those would come later. First they would let in an equalizer after getting caught sleeping in a corner scrum, with the puck sent out between the circles, and Buffalo defenseman Owen Power made them pay. Next, the Canes endured a grueling

stretch after their first powerplay — a disjointed effort that killed all momentum. No one on the ice was on the same page. Passes were errant, and giveaways were plentiful.

The ineptitude of that power play blended into their even-strength play to close out the first frame. But quickly at the start of the second period, the Canes had their chance at redemption. The power play came through, and who else but the assist man on the first goal, Svechnikov, to bury the puck home and push the Canes back in front.

"Winning the 50/50 battles and playing the long game, that's what we did," Svechnikov said. "We just tried to play long and fast."

Svechnikov was slow out the gate to start the season, not recording a point in the first eight games. With six points in the last six games, including two tonight, he is turning things around.

"[As] one of your best players — [Svechnikov] doesn't have to score but he needs to look good," said head coach Rod Brind'Amour. "In the last while here, if he hasn't been our best player, he's been right there."

Two Hurricanes players recorded their first career points — defensemen Charles-Alexis Legault and Joel Nystrom — rookies who recently were called up from the AHL. Legault scored an empty netter and Nystrom was the assist man for the third Canes goal. Nystrom took the puck from the point and skated around the goal, firing back to center Jesperi Kotkaniemi, who sent a one-timer into the net.

The game-winner found the back of the net off the stick of left winger Eric Robinson, who received a hail mary from Kotkaniemi that trickled just into the right spot for him to have a 1-on-0 chance.



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The Hockey News

Hurricanes Pull Off Triumphant Comeback Victory In Toronto

Ryan Henkel

Down two goals and short a defenseman, the Hurricanes staged a stunning third-period rally, dominating play to snatch victory from Toronto.

The Carolina Hurricanes pulled off an impressive 5-4 comeback win over the Toronto Maple Leafs on Saturday, as the team found a way to overcome a two-goal deficit, even despite losing another blueliner and having played the night before.

The Hurricanes really did deserve to win, outshooting the Leafs 47-20 overall and outchancing them 68-25 at 5v5, but they almost threw away what was overall a really strong performance.

Despite an early 1-0 (Sebastian Aho one-timer power play goal) and then 2-1 lead (Seth Jarvis from the slot for his 10th of the year), Carolina eventually found themselves in a 4-2 hole halfway through the game.

The Hurricanes looked so dangerous, with five breakaways in the second period alone, but they just couldn't score on any of those chances.

Pair that with the Maple Leafs converting on the few egregious Carolina defensive breakdowns and there was plenty of room to be frustrated.

I mean, when you're missing as many talented defensemen as the Hurricanes are, and they lost another one tonight as rookie Charles Alexis Legault exited the game due to a bad cut to his hand, things are gonna get a bit squirrely.

But credit to the Hurricanes for finding a way to crawl back into the game, especially with a dominant third period effort.

The Canes outshot Toronto 20-2 in the final frame and found the back of the net twice — Taylor Hall scored his third of the year, jamming home a rebound in front, and then Logan Stankoven got the eventual game-winner — to boost them to a fourth straight win and an 11-4-0 record.

Carolina's forecheck was on point all night and when the game came down to those critical moments, it was those key shifts that made the difference.

The Hurricanes now return home, where they'll host the Washington Capitals on Tuesday.

Hurricanes Rookie Defenseman Charles Alexis Legault Exits Game Against Maple Leafs With Gruesome Looking Hand Injury

By: Ryan Henkel

Rookie defenseman suffers gruesome hand injury, becoming the fifth blueliner sidelined for the Hurricanes this season.

UPDATE: Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour stated that Legault was admitted to a local hospital during the game, but is expected to travel back with the team.

"He went to the hospital," Brind'Amour said following the game. "I think he's coming back with us, so that part's good. It's not a good injury though from what I'm hearing, so I don't want to say too much because I don't know. That was tough to see."

ORIGINAL: The Carolina Hurricanes just can't avoid injuries to their blueline at this point.

At the end of the first period of the team's Sunday night game against the Toronto Maple Leafs, rookie defenseman

Charles Alexis Legault appeared to cut his hand open on the skate of Nicolas Robertson.

The Canes' blueliner laid a hit on Robertson to end the period, but Bobby McMann came over to stand up for his teammates and as the two grappled, Legault fell to the ice and his hand looked to make contact with Robertson's skate.

The cut looked to be a deep one and Legault has already been ruled out for the remainder of the game.

There is a video of the apparent injury, but I'd recommend that those who are squeamish avoid watching it.

Legault is the fifth Canes defenseman to be injured this season, joining Jaccob Slavin, Jalen Chatfield and Shayne Gostisbehere, who are all currently missing from the team's lineup and K'Andre Miller who missed four games but has since returned.



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Did Hurricanes Top Prospect Brady Nadeau Do Enough On His Recall?

By: Ryan Henkel

Nadeau's brief NHL stint included his first goal, but it wasn't enough to solidify a spot. Assessing his impact and future potential.

Carolina Hurricanes' top prospect, Brady Nadeau, appeared in six games this season while Eric Robinson and William Carrier were sidelined with injuries.

Now that both are back, Nadeau is headed back down to the Chicago Wolves in the AHL, so how did he do?

Most notably, the rookie scored his first career goal during this callup, rifling home a nice wrister for the opening goal of the Canes' game against the New York Islanders.

Nadeau's biggest asset is his scoring and while he had a few chances, 15 individual shot attempts, he only managed to get four on net.

It's not like the winger was playing with world beaters, the 20-year-old was averaging just 11:30 TOI per game on the Canes' fourth line, but you'd have hoped to see a little more volume on net from the kid, especially with getting some power play time.

I will also say though, he had a few nice setups too that his teammates just weren't able to find the finish on, so take that six-game point total with a grain of salt.

"It's a tough spot to throw him in," said Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour. "We'd have loved to see him on the power play more, but we didn't really have any. envision him ripping one-timers and we just hadn't had the opportunities yet. The 5v5 stuff, he's playing on the fourth line and it's tough to get him minutes, but he scored a nice goal, had the one off the post the one night. He's been around it."

If the Canes had had an injury to a top-six player, than perhaps Nadeau would have been able to get a better chance to showoff his skillset, but I actually liked how he carried himself in a bottom-six role.

I thought Nadeau acclimated himself very well to the checking game that was being asked of him as a fourth liner and he was never afraid to use his body or go to the tough areas.

The 5-foot-11, 180-pound winger isn't the biggest kid, but I was thoroughly impressed by his commitment to forechecking and his upped physicality (four hits, four blocks).

Multiple times, I saw him laying the body on the forecheck or taking a hit along the wall/at the blueline to make a play or get a clear and those are all the little things that one has to do to be a successful NHL player.

The physical side of the game was a big area of concern for me regarding Nadeau, but this stretch was really promising in that regard.

Another area of concern was the defensive side of his game, and while I saw improvements, there's still plenty of room to grow there.

Nadeau finished out the six-game stretch with a 53.64 CF%, meaning he generated more chances at 5v5 than his opponents did, but he struggled a bit with the quality that his line was giving up as he had just a 46.43 expected goals for percentage and a 38.89 high-danger chances for percentage.

It might not have seemed like things were that bad for him, but he was also propped up by fifth highest on-ice save percentage on the team at 0.957.

I think Nadeau has a bright future, but this is just a 20 year old kid we're talking about that was being asked to take on some tough assignments.

I believe it's for the best for Nadeau in the long run to get back to playing top minutes in Chicago, where he can continue to build his confidence and focus on the areas of the game that will make him an impact player.

If there was a spot for him, I think Nadeau would find his way more and more in the NHL, but that just isn't the case right now.

Carrier and Robinson are much bigger, more physical and fit the Hurricanes' ideal bottom-six, while Nadeau is a top-six score and he isn't better than any of the players ahead of him there.

He's in a bit of a limbo when it comes to the NHL, but I still think playing top minutes and dominating at the AHL level will be better for him than grinding away 10 minutes a night on the fourth line.

And if he keeps performing there like he's been known to, I think it won't be long before we see him again.

"I think the more games he gets under his belt, the more comfortable and more impactful he'll be," Brind'Amour said.

Carolina Hurricanes @ Toronto Maple Leafs: Lineups, Game Preview and How to Watch

By: Ryan Henkel

Canes chase a fourth straight win up north against a struggling Maple Leafs squad tonight. Key matchups and projected lineups revealed.

What - Game 15 (10-4-0)

When - 7 p.m., Sunday, Nov. 9

Where - Scotiabank Arena; Toronto, ON, Canada



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How to Watch - FanDuel Sports Network South, TVAS, TSN4

Carolina Hurricanes injury updates (11/8/25)

The Carolina Hurricanes are up north for their first trip to Canada as they take on the Toronto Maple Leafs tonight on the second half of a back-to-back.

The Canes are winners of their last three games in a row, most recently defeating the Buffalo Sabres 6-3 Saturday night at Lenovo Center.

The Hurricanes are inching back to full health, getting back both Eric Robinson and William Carrier on Saturday, and Shayne Gostisbehere looks to be just around the corner too.

Toronto is heading into tonight's game also on the second half of a back-to-back, most recently falling 5-3 to the Boston Bruins.

The Maple Leafs have struggled with consistency a bit this season and currently sit outside of the playoff picture after capturing the Atlantic Division crown last season.

Streaks

Sebastian Aho (1g, 3a), Seth Jarvis (2g, 1a) and Nikolaj Ehlers (2g, 1a) have points in three straight games.

Andrei Svechnikov (2g, 1a) and K'Andre Miller (2a) have points in back-to-back games

Milestone Watch

Jesper Kotkaniemi is one point shy of 200 career points.

Shayne Gostisbehere is one game shy of 100 games played as a Hurricane.

Jordan Martinook is three goals shy of 100 career goals.

Eric Robinson is four games away from 400 career games played.

Sean Walker is four games away from 100 games played as a Hurricane

Charles Alexis Legault scored his first NHL goal Saturday night against the Buffalo Sabres.

Joel Nystrom also registered his first NHL point Saturday night against the Buffalo Sabres.

K'Andre Miller earned his 100th career assist Saturday night against the Buffalo Sabres.

Nikolaj Ehlers earned his 300th career assist Saturday night against the Buffalo Sabres.

Game Notes

Carolina is 72-47-11-6 all-time against Toronto and last year went 1-2-0 against the Maple Leafs.

Former Leafs in the Canes' lineup include Frederik Andersen (2016-22)

Former Hurricanes in the Leaf's lineup include Max Domi (2022), Steven Lorentz (2020-22) and Nicolas Roy (2017-19).

Key Matchups

Projected Starting Goalies

Frederik Andersen: 5-3-0; 0.892 Sv%; 2.97 GAA

Anthony Stolarz: 6-5-1; 0.889 Sv%; 3.35 GAA

Leading Scorers

Goals - Seth Jarvis (9) / Auston Matthews & John Tavares (8)

Points - Sebastian Aho (15) / William Nylander (21)

Power Play

Carolina - 12.8% (30th)

Toronto - 15.8% (27th)

Penalty Kill

Carolina - 83.0% (10th)

Toronto - 81.4% (13th)

Hurricanes Projected Lineup

Andrei Svechnikov - Sebastian Aho - Seth Jarvis

Nikolaj Ehlers - Logan Stankoven - Jackson Blake

Jordan Martinook - Jordan Staal - William Carrier

Taylor Hall - Jesperi Kotkaniemi - Eric Robinson

K'Andre Miller - Sean Walker

Alexander Nikishin - Joel Nystrom

Mike Reilly - Charles Alexis Legault

Frederik Andersen

Brandon Bussi

Injuries and Scratches: Mark Jankowski, Gavin Bayreuther, Pyotr Kochetkov, Jaccob Slavin (LBI), Shayne Gostisbehere (midsection), Jalen Chatfield (LBI)

Maple Leafs Projected Lineup

Matthew Knies - Auston Matthews - William Nylander

Nicholas Robertson - John Tavares - Bobby McMann

Dakota Joshua - Nicolas Roy - Matias Maccelli

Max Domi - Sammy Blais - Steven Lorentz

Morgan Rielly - Brandon Carlo

Oliver Ekman-Larsson - Jake McCabe

Simon Benoit - Philippe Myers

Anthony Stolarz

Dennis Hildeby

Injuries and Scratches: Calle Jarnkrok, Dakota Mermis, Scott Laughton (undisclosed), Joseph Woll (personal), Chris Tanev (UBI)



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'You Dream Of Scoring Since Being A Kid': Charles Alexis Legault, Joel Nystrom, Andrei Svechnikov, Rod Brind'Amour On First Points, Win Over Sabres

By: Ryan Henkel

Rookies Legault and Nystrom notch first career points, Svechnikov shines as Hurricanes extend winning streak with a dynamic offensive outburst.

The Carolina Hurricanes defeated the Buffalo Sabres 6-3 Saturday night at Lenovo Center for their third win in a row.

Rookie defensemen Joel Nystrom and Charles Alexis Legault each registered their first career points in the win and Legault, Andrei Svechnikov, Sebastian Aho and Jesperi Kotkaniemi all had multi-point outings.

After the game, Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour along with Legault, Nystrom and Svechnikov spoke with the media. Here's what they had to say:

Rod Brind'Amour

On the rookie defensemen picking up their first career points: We don't judge their game based on that, but it's still nice little bonuses for them. Those guys have been solid. We ask a lot of them and they're having to play so many minutes against top-end players. All three of them, Nikishin is in the same boat for me, they're all new to the league, but they're hanging in there.

On the third period: I thought it was a solid first two periods. We were really playing well, didn't really give up a ton and then their talent showed up. It was kind of like you were waiting for it to happen. They were down a few so they could just start winging it and that's when they get really dangerous as you saw. That's some really high-end players over there. But I did like the last couple of shifts. Thought that was good shutdown play, obviously a great play by Jarvy to seal the win.

On Andrei Svechnikov: He was impactful right from the get go. We need that. One of your best players, doesn't have to score, but he needs to look good and this last little while here, if he's not been our best player, he's been right there. He's looking Svech-like, so hopefully that continues.

On getting Eric Robinson and William Carrier back: We need those guys in there. Just bigger bodies. Robbie's been scoring goals and he just has underrated, I think, ability and speed. He just gets behind D and he can score. We've seen that. And Will, again, heavy. This league is big and strong and missing those guys, you notice it.

On Pyotr Kochetkov refocusing after a potentially tough goal against: Listen, I thought both goalies played well. We had how many breakaways there and we could have put the game away and their goalie did a great job keeping them in the game. And he'd probably like to have one back too. That levels out. And that [second goal] is an elite shot too. If you look at it, it's off the inside of the post. Not a lot of room and those guys can make it go in.

Charles Alexis Legault

On scoring his first NHL goal: It feels great. You dream of scoring one since being a kid, so being able to get one tonight was a great feeling.

On it being exactly like he dreamed about too: Not really. I mean, hey, a goal's a goal.

On contributing offensively: It's nice, but as you said, it's not really what I focus on. I try to just keep it simple and play my game.

On Joel Nystrom: We've been kind of living together, being two young guys, we drive to the rink together everyday so being able to get it with him is a great feeling.

On his NHL opportunity: It feels great to be here, honestly. You take every moment in and you try to enjoy it as much as you can.

On the coaching staff trusting him enough to have him out there in empty-net situations: It's a great nod, I think, but you just have to keep on working.

On celebrating his milestone with the team: The guys are great. It's a great group to be a part of and they're super welcoming.

On if he feels he's improving with each game: I mean, there's little details you try to pick up on. There's stuff I'd like to do better, but just focusing in on the day-to-day and try to get better every day.

Joel Nystrom

On picking up his first career point: I try to do my best in the defensive game and give the forwards a good opportunity to go on the offense, but today I got my first point and I'm really happy about that.

On his play to set up the Jesperi Kotkaniemi goal: I saw I had a little bit of space there so I tried to beat my forward. I saw KK coming through the blueline and then he made a really good shot. I have to thank him too.

On Charles Alexis Legault: We've spent a lot of time together over the last couple of weeks so I'm very happy for him.

On if he feels his game is growing as he gets more and more NHL experience: Yeah, I think so. As I said before, I've gotten really good help from my teammates. They talk a lot with me and tell me what to do. I'm thankful for that.

On taking another puck to the face: I got one on my nose today. I don't know what's going on.

Andrei Svechnikov

On if he's feeling it right now: Yeah, good question. Probably. I'm just trying to play my game, win the battles, the 50/50s.

On staying positive despite his early slump: Sometimes when it doesn't go your way, obviously there's lots of negativity, but you have to stay positive and sometimes maybe don't care because I know what kind of player I am and what I can do. Just had to wait for that moment.

On his line: Like I said, it's just about winning the battles and the 50/50s and play long. I think that's what we did, even on the first goal that Fishy scored. Just tried to play long and fast. That's what we're trying to do.



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On what's different on the power play when it's scoring: Maybe just playing simple a little bit and trying to shoot some pucks more and look for those pucks.

On Nystrom/Legault getting their first points: It's huge. I remember my first goal. That was a very special night.

They'll never forget this night and that was exciting for them, for sure.

On if he remembers his first goal: Yeah, against the Rangers. I tipped it. That was so lucky too.

Hurricanes Reclaim Cayden Primeau From Maple Leafs; Goaltender Assigned To AHL

By: Ryan Henkel

Hurricanes reclaim goalie Cayden Primeau after brief Maple Leafs stint. He's assigned to the AHL, bringing needed support to the Wolves.

The Carolina Hurricanes have reclaimed goaltender Cayden Primeau off of waivers from the Toronto Maple Leafs just over one month after placing him on waivers initially.

The Hurricanes tried to send Primeau to the Chicago Wolves in the AHL on Oct. 5, but Toronto ended up claiming the 26 year old netminder at the time.

Cayden Primeau is back and headed to Chicago

Since then, Primeau appeared in three games with the Maple Leafs, going 2-1-0 with a 0.838 save percentage, but now that Joseph Woll is returning, they had no need to carry an extra netminder.

It's been a funny turn of events for Carolina who wound up losing their third-string netminder only to seemingly find a diamond in the rough in Brandon Bussi off of the waiver wire.

The Canes claimed the netminder off of waivers from the Florida Panthers the day after Primeau was placed on waivers as a sort of backup plan and it's worked out really well for Carolina as Bussi has posted a 3-1-0 record with a 0.916 save percentage in his first four NHL starts.

Now, Primeau is finally headed to the Wolves (Carolina was the only team to put a claim in so Primeau can be directly assigned to the AHL) just one month after initially planned, where he'll be a big boost to a team struggling in net.

Jalen Chatfield Placed On Injured Reserve, Defenseman Gavin Bayreuther Recalled By Carolina

By: Ryan Henkel

Headshot sidelines key defenseman Jalen Chatfield. Gavin Bayreuther called up as Hurricanes face more defensive injury woes.

The Carolina Hurricanes have placed defenseman Jalen Chatfield on injured reserve today.

That means that the blueliner is out for at least the team's next four games as any player placed on IR must be there for a minimum of seven days.

Carolina Hurricanes injury updates (11/8/25)

Chatfield, 29, absorbed a headshot from Minnesota Wild forward Tyler Pitlick in the the first period of Thursday's game and did not return.

"I don't know if they've diagnosed it yet," said Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour on Saturday when asked if Chatfield

was dealing with a concussion. "I don't know really what's going on. Obviously he's out. I'm not really sure yet if they've said, 'Hey, this is what it is.' We know obviously he got hit to the head, so they always take precautions with that."

The loss of another one of the team's top-four defensemen is just a huge blow for a team already struggling to get guys healthy.

Chatfield is the fourth blueline regular to miss time due to injury and it's an integral piece to lose as he's played north of 19 minutes in every game of the season.

In his place, the team has recalled defenseman Gavin Bayreuther from the Chicago Wolves.

Bayreuther, 31, has three goals and six points in nine games with the Wolves this season.



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'It Feels Good To Be Back With The Team': William Carrier Antsy To Return To Action After Strong Start Interrupted By Injury

Carrier's ready to rejoin the Hurricanes' lineup tonight. The gritty winger aims to reignite his strong early-season performance after a nagging injury.

Carolina Hurricanes forward William Carrier is expected to be back in the lineup tonight after missing the team's last six games due to a lower-body injury.

Carrier took part in his first practice with the team since his injury, but according to him and Carolina coach Rod Brind'Amour, he's already in line to play against his former team the Buffalo Sabres.

William Carrier one of three players who are back practicing following injuries.

"It was a quick turnaround," Carrier said. "Didn't lose much. Me and Robbie had been working to get back out there, so it feels good to be back with the team."

The veteran forward said he "tweaked" something in the first period against the Colorado Avalanche back in October and has just been working hard to get back onto the ice with the team.

"You work your ass off for a month there in training camp, you get your game good, you're playing well, your line's

playing pretty well and then you tweak something and now have to do it all over again," Carrier told The Hockey News.

The physical winger had been off to a strong start in his second season in Carolina — with a goal, three points and 14 hits in seven games — and he had once again formed a dominant trio with Jordan Staal and Jordan Martinook.

The trio controlled the flow of 5v5 almost every game they played, with a 59.38 Corsi For percentage (a measure of how many more chances you generate than your opponents), a 56.89 expected goals for percentage and a 58.33 high-danger chances for percentage.

In fact, they outscored opponents 4-0 in their 58+ minutes of 5v5 ice time together.

Tonight though, Carrier looks to be suiting up alongside Jesperi Kotkaniemi and Eric Robinson, who was also injured in the same game as Carrier and is also in line to return, at least to start the game.

There might be a bit of rust given how long he's been off, but with the simple and straight forward game that Carrier brings, I feel that he'll be just fine.

"It starts with tonight," Carrier said. "Just working on my game every shift, trying to get the details back."

Carolina Hurricanes vs. Buffalo Sabres: Lineups, Game Preview and How to Watch

By: Ryan Henkel

Hurricanes seek third straight win. Sabres battle injuries and a snapped point streak. Key matchups and projected lineups await.

What - Game 14 (9-4-0)

When - 7 p.m., Saturday, Nov. 8

Where - Lenovo Center; Raleigh, NC

How to Watch - FanDuel Sports Network South, MSG-B

A trio of injured players return to practice, two expected to suit up.

The Carolina Hurricanes will look to make it three wins in a row as they take on the Buffalo Sabres tonight in Raleigh.

The Hurricanes look to trending the right way on the injury front as a trio of players took to the ice for the team's morning skate on Saturday.

Eric Robinson, William Carrier and Shayne Gostisbehere all were participants at practice and the two forwards are expected to play tonight while Gostisbehere is expected to be a few more days away.

Buffalo enters tonight's game having seen their seven game point streak snapped after getting shutout by the St. Louis Blues on Thursday.

However, while the Sabres were collecting points, they have won just one game in their last six outings.

It's been an up and down season for Buffalo already as the team is also dealing with a myriad of injuries and most recently learned that they're going to be without captain and star defenseman Rasmus Dahlin, as he returns to Sweden to be with his fiancée who had to undergo a heart transplant over the summer.

Streaks

Sean Walker (2g, 2a) has goals and multiple points in back-to-back games.

Nikolaj Ehlers (2g) has goals in back-to-back games.

Sebastian Aho (2a) and Seth Jarvis (1g, 1a) have points in back-to-back games.

Milestone Watch

Nikolaj Ehlers is one assist away from 300 career assists.

K'Andre Miller is one assist shy of 100 career assists.

Jesperi Kotkaniemi is three points shy of 200 career points.

Jordan Martinook is three goals shy of 100 career goals.

Eric Robinson is five games away from 400 career games played.



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Sean Walker is five games away from 100 games played as a Hurricane.

Jordan Staal set the team record for games played (910) on Thursday, passing his brother Eric.

Game Notes

Carolina is 92-100-18-7 all-time against Buffalo and last season, went 1-2-0.

Sebastian Aho (16g, 29pts in 22gp) and Andrei Svechnikov (2g, 14pts in 14gp) are point-per-game players for their careers against the Sabres.

Former Sabres in the Hurricanes lineup include William Carrier (2016-17), Taylor Hall (2020-21), Eric Robinson (2023-24) and Mark Jankowski (2021-22).

Alex Lyon is the lone former Hurricane in the Sabres lineup. The goaltender appeared in two games for Carolina in the 2021-22 season.

Sabres general manager Kevyn Adams (2002-2007) and special advisor Eric Staal (2003-2016) are former Carolina Hurricanes Stanley Cup champions.

Jordan Staal sets a new team record, embodying unparalleled consistency and leadership. His enduring impact transcends numbers, defining Hurricanes' resilience.

thehockeynews.comJordan Staal: The Longest Serving Carolina HurricaneJordan Staal sets a new team record, embodying unparalleled consistency and leadership. His enduring impact transcends numbers, defining Hurricanes' resilience.

Key Matchups

Projected Starting Goalies

Pyotr Kochetkov: 1-0-0; 1.000 Sv%; 0.00 GAA

Alex Lyon: 3-4-3; 0.915 Sv%; 2.81 GAA

Leading Scorers

Goals - Seth Jarvis (8) / Tage Thompson & Alex Tuch (5)

Points - Seth Jarvis & Sebastian Aho (13) / Alex Tuch (12)

Power Play

Carolina - 10.8% (32nd)

Buffalo - 17.8 (20th)

Penalty Kill

Carolina - 82.6% (12th)

Buffalo - 91.3% (1st)

Hurricanes Projected Lineup

Andrei Svechnikov - Sebastian Aho - Seth Jarvis

Nikolaj Ehlers - Logan Stankoven - Jackson Blake

Taylor Hall - Jordan Staal - Jordan Martinook

William Carrier - Jesperi Kotkaniemi - Eric Robinson

Alexander Nikishin - Sean Walker

K'Andre Miller - Joel Nystrom

Mike Reilly - Charles Alexis Legault

Pyotr Kochetkov

Frederik Andersen

Injuries and Scratches: Mark Jankowski, Brandon Bussi, Shayne Gostisbehere, Jaccob Slavin (LBI), Jalen Chatfield (UBI)

A brutal headshot sidelines defenseman Jalen Chatfield, marking the Hurricanes' fourth blueline regular injured this season.

thehockeynews.comHurricanes Defenseman Jalen Chatfield Exits Game With Injury Following HeadshotA brutal headshot sidelines defenseman Jalen Chatfield, marking the Hurricanes' fourth blueline regular injured this season.

Sabres Projected Lineup

Isak Rosen - Noah Ostlund - Tage Thompson

Josh Doan - Ryan McLeod - Alex Tuch

Jordan Greenway - Tyson Kozak - Jack Quinn

Josh Dunne - Peyton Krebs - Beck Malenstyn

Owen Power - Conor Timmins

Mattias Samuelsson - Michael Kesselring

Bowen Byram - Jacob Bryson

Alex Lyon

Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen

Injuries and Scratches: Colton Ellis, Zac Jones, Josh Norris (UBI), Justin Danforth (LBI), Jiri Kulich (Ear), Zach Benson (LBI), Jason Zucker (Illness), Rasmus Dahlin (Personal)

Stay updated with the most interesting Carolina Hurricanes stories, analysis, breaking news and more! Tap the star to add us to your favorites on Google News to never miss a story.

Trio Of Injured Players Return For Carolina Hurricanes

By: Ryan Henkel

Key forwards and a defenseman rejoin Hurricanes practice. Get the latest on who's back and their potential impact before Saturday's game.

Things look to be heading in a positive direction for the Carolina Hurricanes on the injury front as three players returned to practice for the first time in weeks.

Forwards Eric Robinson and William Carrier along with defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere all rejoined the team for practice on Saturday before the team's game against the Buffalo Sabres.



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A trio of injured players return to practice, two expected to suit up.

While Carrier and Robinson both looked to be slotting in on the fourth line alongside Jesperi Kotkaniemi, Gostisbehere is still perhaps a day or so away as he looked to be skating as an extra.

It's really good news for the Hurricanes who were thought to be without the trio for a long time moving forward given the way Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour discussed the injuries.

Robinson and Carrier were each injured against the Colorado Avalanche on Oct. 23 and Gostisbehere suffered a new injury on Oct. 28 after missing four games before then with a lower-body injury.

This would leave Carolina with just two injuries remaining, Jaccob Slavin who is dealing with a lower-body injury and has missed the team's last 11 games, and Jalen Chatfield who took a blow to the head on Thursday.

Brind'Amour will speak to the media following Saturday's skate where updates on the three will be provided.

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SportScan

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

1367517 Carolina Hurricanes

Another Hurricanes win, another different lineup. How the Canes make it work

Chip Alexander8-10 minutes 09/11/2025

The Carolina Hurricanes took the ice Saturday against the Buffalo Sabres with a different look — again.

Forwards William Carrier and Eric Robinson were back in the Canes lineup. Defenseman Jalen Chatfield was not, as the Hurricanes took a 6-3 victory at Lenovo Center.

Canes power forward Andrei Svechnikov, the game's first star, blasted a one-timer for a power-play goal in the second period, assisted on Sebastian Aho's goal in the first and stayed in attack mode. Jesperi Kotkaniemi had a goal and assisted on an Eric Robinson score in the third.

For the Canes (10-4-0), the real fun came when rookie defensemen Joel Nystrom and Charles Alexis Legault both picked up their first NHL points. Nystrom assisted on the Kotkaniemi score, and Legault first assisted on Robinson's goal, then scored on an empty-netter for a two-point night in being named the second star of the game.

"You dream of scoring one since being a kid and being able to get one tonight was a great feeling," Legault said.

Was a long empty-net goal in that childhood dream?

"Not really," he said, smiling. "But a goal's a goal."

Who's in, who's out?

In a season that has remained in flux, Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said Saturday that Chatfield would be sidelined indefinitely. Chatfield took a heavy hit from Minnesota's Tyler Pitlick — to the chest and chin — in the first period of Thursday's game.

Pitlick, after a fight with Canes captain Jordan Staal that left him with a bloody nose, was given a game misconduct penalty and ejected but received no further discipline from the NHL.

Brind'Amour said he was not sure if Chatfield suffered a concussion on the play, which had the Canes shuffling five defensemen in the 4-3 victory.

Defenseman Shayne Gostisbehere, who has missed the past four games with a lower-body injury, took part in Saturday's morning skate but did not play. The Canes still are waiting for defenseman Jaccob Slavin (lower-body) to return to practice and games.

Carrier and Robinson each had been out the past six games — Carrier with a lower-body issue and Robinson an upper-body injury — after

leaving the Oct. 23 road game at Colorado. Both were activated off injured reserve Saturday.

"We need those guys in there. Just bigger bodies," Brind'Amour said. "This league is big and strong, and missing those guys, you notice it."

With the two veteran forwards available, the Canes on Friday reassigned rookie forward Bradley Nadeau to the Chicago Wolves of the AHL. Nadeau, 20, had a solid three games with the Canes, averaging 11:30 in ice time, notching his first NHL goal and posting four points.

Carrier was back on Jordan Staal's line Saturday, and Robinson played on a line centered by Jesperi Kotkaniemi.

Eric Robinson of the Carolina Hurricanes carries the puck against the Los Angeles Kings at Crypto.com Arena on Oct. 18, 2025 in Los Angeles, California. Robinson returned to the lineup Saturday against the Buffalo Sabres.

Eric Robinson of the Carolina Hurricanes carries the puck against the Los Angeles Kings at Crypto.com Arena on Oct. 18, 2025 in Los Angeles, California. Robinson returned to the lineup Saturday against the Buffalo Sabres. Luke Hales Getty Images

Patchwork defense

The back end had a rookie paired with a veteran. Defenseman K'Andre Miller was making his second start since coming back from an injury and played with Nystrom. Alexander Nikishin was paired with Sean Walker and Legault with veteran Mike Reilly, who also has stepped in and played well.

Nystrom picked up his first NHL point when he assisted on Kotkaniemi's second-period goal that pushed the Canes to a 3-1 lead. Circling the net with the puck, the Swede found Kotkaniemi open in the left circle.

"It's all about the guys coming in, knowing how we do things," Canes forward Jordan Martinook said of the rookie D-men. "It hasn't just been one or two games but a pretty good sample size now. Obviously they're leaning on the veterans back there, but they've done a great job.

"The big key is they all skate well. You look at Nystrom and he skates well. Charles skates well. If you don't skate well in our system you get exposed pretty quickly."

The two hang out together and ride to the rink together, Legault said. It's been more than they expected, but they're making the most of it.

Legault was on the ice in the final couple of minutes of regulation after Buffalo pulled goalie Alex Lyon for a sixth attacker. The Sabres (5-6-4) had scored twice in the third to make it 4-3 and were after a tying goal.

"Those guys have been solid," Brind'Amour said of Nystrom and Legault. "We've asked a lot of them, thrown them in there so many minutes against top-end players. And Nikishin is in the same boat. They're all new to the league."

Profile Image of Chip Alexander

In more than 40 years at The N&O, Chip Alexander has covered the N.C. State, UNC, Duke and East Carolina beats, and now is in his 15th



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season on the Carolina Hurricanes beat. Alexander, who has won numerous writing awards at the state and national level, covered the Hurricanes' move to North Carolina in 1997 and was a part of The N&O's coverage of the Canes' 2006 Stanley Cup run. Support my work with a digital subscription

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The path to 1,000 NHL games for Wild's Marcus Johansson: 'I feel I have more in me'

Joe Smith

8-10 minutes 09/11/2025

When Marcus Johansson showed up at Olympic Hills Golf Club in Eden Prairie last year to play a round, his Minnesota Wild teammates had no idea what they were in for.

Sure, Johansson, 35, is known as a top golfer among NHLers, his handicap a plus-1. But the smooth-skating Swede showed up having not swung a club in a few months, and he rented clubs, according to Vinni Lettieri. The foursome included club members Lettieri, Matt Boldy, Matt Dumba and Johansson. Johansson's front nine wasn't much to brag about, at least for most of us, but he got on a tear on the back nine.

At one point, Johansson birdied six straight holes to finish with a 69, two off his best round.

"It was absolutely unheard of," Lettieri said. "If you birdie 6-7 holes in a row anywhere, it's out of this world, but at Olympic, it was like, 'Holy Christ.'"

Johansson's biggest passion besides hockey and his family is golf, a sport he's gotten into more in the past several years.

"His swing is like a Wii character — it's just perfect," Lettieri said. "It's just perfect up and back, perfect plane, effortless. It's like 'JoJo' entering the zone on a power play. He just coasts and just gets there. It's honestly his hockey game. He's that skilled and rides right on his edges and goes right through people all day."

"JoJo," Boldy says, "Is good at pretty much everything."

And, it turns out, Johansson has plenty of hockey left.

Marcus Johansson is set to play in the 1,000th game of his NHL career when the #mnwild hosts Calgary tomorrow night.

He enters the game with an eight-game point streak (5-5=10), a career-long run that is also tied for the longest active streak in the NHL.

Johansson will appear in his 1,000th NHL game Sunday against the Calgary Flames, and he just so happens to be playing some of the best hockey of his career. He's coming off a career-long eight-game points streak (five goals, five assists) with 14 points in 16 games. Johansson re-signing at one year, \$800,000 over the summer didn't make many waves, and even the veteran winger was expecting to play any role up and down the lineup. Now he's one of the league's best bargains.

Where would the struggling Wild be without him?

"He's been awesome," Wild president of hockey operations and general manager Bill Guerin said. "Honestly, he's been one of our, maybe our most consistent performer. He's not played poorly yet this season. He

voiced his desire to play in Minnesota again and did what it took to stay here. He's been great.

"It looks like he's having fun."

Johansson is in a very good place. He went into last offseason with the chance to return home and play for a Swedish pro team like Färjestad, where his older brother Martin had played for years. But Johansson's "No. 1 priority" was to remain in Minnesota. The longtime former Washington Capital has moved around enough in his career, bouncing from five different teams over a three-season span (2018-22). His wife, Amelia, likes it here, and so do their two daughters, Mia, 9, and Elize, 5.

"It's not about money, it's not about anything else," Johansson said. "I wanted to play here and have another crack at it. I want to be somewhere where I know my family likes it and kids like their schools. Great team, great city to play in.

"It was a no-brainer."

Johansson is happy his daughters and his wife, whom he met 16 years ago in Sweden, will be able to see his milestone moment celebrated by the Wild at Grand Casino Arena before Tuesday's game against the San Jose Sharks. Johansson said his brother, Martin, an idol of his, should be able to make it, too. Johansson said he grew up wanting to be like Martin, 38, and Swedish superstar Peter Forsberg. The NHL was on his mind, of course.

"But I don't know if you thought it was possible," Johansson said. "I dreamt of playing in Färjestad back home, and for sure the NHL. But I don't think you saw it as a realistic dream.

"It's kind of wild."

Johansson, who felt he was better at soccer than hockey until he made the full-time switch at age 12, said he didn't start to think the NHL was in the cards until he played some junior tournaments for the Swedish national team. "There were scouts watching and you heard all of that and was like, 'Oh,'" he said. "But I don't think it was until I got drafted that it was like, 'OK, this might happen.'"

Johansson, picked in the first round (24th overall) by the Capitals in 2009, spent his first seven years in Washington. He called it their "second home." He still has a photo of his first NHL goal, scored on Boston Bruins goalie Tim Thomas, sliding a shot through an extremely tiny hole between Thomas' skate and the post.

Johansson enjoyed his time playing with Alex Ovechkin, good friend Nicklas Backstrom, T.J. Oshie and John Carlson. He was part of the core that would eventually go on to win the Stanley Cup, even though he wasn't there for it, as the cap-strapped Capitals dealt Johansson to the New Jersey Devils the summer of 2017.

"It's kind of where I grew up a little bit," Johansson said. "We loved that place, loved that team. Great players to have as mentors. It was very special for us, something we'll always remember."

Johansson reached the Stanley Cup Final with the Bruins in 2019 after being a deadline addition. That was after Johansson played parts of two seasons with coach John Hynes, who has a unique perspective on coaching him twice in different stages of his career. What's stood out to Hynes in Johansson is his skating ability, how much he understands playing both sides of the puck, which is why "you feel very comfortable (with him) in any situation."

"The thing that's unique about Johansson is he can play with a lot of different style of players," Hynes said. "He can play with some high-end thinkers offensively, but he can also play with some guys that are north-south, maybe they simplify their game a little more. He's such a versatile guy."

Johansson's first taste of hockey in Minnesota came when he was acquired in the Eric Staal trade in September 2020. Johansson returned



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at the 2023 deadline and didn't want last season to be the end. So while Johansson initially wanted a two-year deal last offseason, Guerin laid it out for him, including that they didn't have much money to allocate.

"I just want to be in Minnesota," Johansson told Guerin.

Johansson said he didn't care what spot in the lineup he played in, and there were some younger prospects in camp eager to jump in, from Liam Ohgren and Danila Yurov to Hunter Haight. But with Mats Zuccarello sidelined for the first month of the season, it's been Johansson who has been the reliable staple in the top six, providing much-needed secondary scoring. Johansson's six goals and 13 points trail only Boldy and Kirill Kaprizov on the team.

"He's just so good, such a good skater," Boldy said. "He's very offensively-minded. A very gifted player, he's played forever. He's gone through some tough times. For him to get (1,000 games) is pretty special. Everyone is super, super excited."

"It's a huge milestone," said Guerin, who played in 1,263 career NHL games. "Longevity in your career means you did something right. Jojo has done a lot of right in this game. He's battled through a lot of adversity with injuries, especially the concussions. There's a lot of adversity you have to fight through to get there. It's never smooth sailing. So 1,000 games is an amazing milestone."

Johansson didn't want to talk about the 1,000 leading up, not wanting to jinx it, but said, "It's exciting, not something everybody gets to do. So I'm proud of it, for sure." He said he isn't sure if this will be his last year or not, planning to take it day by day. Johansson is enjoying spending time with his daughters, who are into dance, gymnastics, swimming and soccer. "No hockey yet," he said, smiling.

Johansson hasn't thought about what he wants to do after his playing career is over. He knows playing overseas for his hometown team is always an option at some point, but there's some unfinished business in the NHL — including the Stanley Cup.

"I feel like I'm still good enough to play here," Johansson said. "And I feel I can play as good of hockey as I ever have. I feel like I have more in me."

The Athletic LOADED: 11.10.2025

1367616 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / 'Immature' Maple Leafs prove offence is not enough

Luke Fox

TORONTO — Immature.

An unusual word to describe the play of one of the NHL's oldest rosters.

And yet, it's an adjective that could not be more appropriate after the Toronto Maple Leafs blew another lead, gave up another five-spot, and wasted another decent offensive performance.

John Tavares, 35, used the word immature after his team fumbled a 4-2 lead into a 5-4 regulation loss at home to a depleted Carolina Hurricanes squad.

And he was bang-on.

"We have a lot of very good hockey players. We have a very veteran team, so it's just a decision to do it shift after shift," Tavares said.

"We gain some traction, and then we shoot ourselves in the foot again."

Remember when the grave concern in Leafland was how in the world could they possibly make up the offence lost by a 102-point player?

The Maple Leafs, so coach-pleasingly low-event last season, have been a highwire act through the first 16 games in this one.

And that means goals. Gobs of them. Flooding in at both ends, like a men's room at intermission.

When the dust settled on Sunday's Hall of Fame game, the Leafs had both scored (59) and surrendered (60) more goals than any team in the conference.

Crazy thing is, that tally that should have been gaudier were it not for all the pinged posts and unsuccessful breakaways by the Hurricanes, who outshot the Leafs 47-20, out-chanced them 43-21, and out-attempted them 89-36, per NaturalStatTrick.com.

Yikes.

"Same stuff. Just details and execution. We were fortunate to have a lead after two," captain Auston Matthews said. "Repetitive stuff that we just can't seem to get right."

Both sides, which consider themselves contenders, were missing their best pure defender for this one, Carolina down Jacob Slavin and Toronto down Chris Tanev.

So, it should have come as no shock when five more pucks found their way through a couple of low-pedigree goaltenders, Carolina callup Brandon Bussi and Toronto third-stringer Dennis Hildeby, before the contest was 20 minutes old.

No question, the Leafs must tighten the reins defensively reins, and mixing in a few more saves won't hurt either. (Tanev, who is already healthy enough to attend games, eventually subbing out Philippe Myers will help some.)

"Turnover after turnover cost us the game," coach Craig Berube said. "We didn't check anybody tonight. We didn't win any battles tonight. For me, it's just a mindset."

The players' mindset seems to be something along the lines of this: Yeah, we need to be more consistent, but it's fixable. And when we really try, we'll be fine.

"I'm not really worried," William Nylander said. "I mean, we can score. Without the puck, we need to be better."

Correct, on both counts.

A power play in disarray cashed in thrice this weekend, and the Leafs remain atop the Eastern Conference heap in 5-on-5 goals (43).

In what is often referred to as a 3-2 league, run-and-gun Toronto has reached three in nine consecutive contests and has only been held to two on three occasions — never lower. (They've kept their opponent under two just thrice as well.)

Ten Leafs are averaging at least a half point per game, and three of them — Nylander, Tavares, and Matthew Knies, all of whom splashed the scoresheet again Sunday — are soaring at well over a point-per-game. Matthews is just a hair off.

Nylander's current 10-game point streak is tops in the NHL. He's hanging around the Art Ross race, despite missing three games to a lower-body injury.

Veteran defencemen Morgan Rielly (13 points) and Oliver Ekman-Larsson (10) are both on pace to crush last season's totals.

And the tenacious Nick Robertson, who is loving the top-six life, should have no issue producing a career year if his minutes maintain.



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The disjointed Maple Leafs have 99 problems to iron out — but a goal ain't one.

Berube wanted his squad to build off its first win streak this weekend. Instead, his Leafs slid "right off the rails defensively."

With Tanev out, too many skaters coughing up pucks or neglecting assignments, and the goalies not coming to the rescue, how exactly can the high-scoring Leafs keep the puck out of their own net?

"My job as a coach is to get them back on track, and that's what I'm gonna keep trying to do. Keep banging away at it," Berube said.

"We're scoring enough goals every game to win games, but we're letting in too many goals. Pretty much the season is, we don't value the defensive side of the puck enough."

Amen.

Fox's Fast Five: Hall of Fame Edition

- Turns out, Joe Thornton invited rookie (and fellow Californian) Nick Robertson to live with him at the outset of the 2020-21 season. An opportunity of a lifetime.

A book full of un-lived stories that, sadly, will never be written, because Robertson got sent down to the Marlies.

"Well, the schedules would have been off, right? It was kind of weird," Robertson recalls. "I don't think Joe's family was there yet. But he asked me to live with him, and I was all packed up. Then I got sent down. That would've been cool."

- That COVID All or Nothing season in Toronto was Thornton's penultimate. He played one more as a Florida Panther. But that didn't stop him from popping into the Leafs' dressing room whenever the Atlantic rivals played each other.

"He was one of those guys who could get away with that stuff," Morgan Rielly smiles. "We welcomed him. He was just a great guy and a great teammate, and he just cared a lot about everyone and treated everyone with a lot of respect."

"When you think about where he was in his career when he was here, and all the things that he had accomplished, you wouldn't have known that when you spent time with him. He had time for everyone."

- Brandon Carlo's Leafs teammates have noted how loud he is on the penalty kill, directing traffic and bellowing instructions.

That's because the lanky defenceman is applying a lesson drilled into him early in Boston by Zdeno Chara.

"I wasn't talking enough in practice. And he turned toward me and he's basically like, 'If you don't start talking to me, you're not going to be here on this penalty kill,'" Carlo recalls.

"That was a great lesson for me. He wanted me to be his eyes in that situation. He was very competitive from Day 1, even in practice. Those habits have carried over for me."

- Fun fact: Berube was teammates for half a season with a young Chara on Long Island. He knew in 2000 that the unpolished Slovakian was something special.

"Just watching him daily, how he went about things on the ice, in the gym, how dedicated he was, how hard he worked, and that size and strength he had," Berube remembers.

"As a forward, he just smothered you with his reach, strength, size. He could fight. He had the ability to shoot a puck and score a goal from the point. He could control a game as a defenceman. You think about all the great defencemen who played in the National Hockey League, most of them could control a game. Nick Lidstrom controls in a different way than

Chara, but they all had the ability to control the game. And he could definitely do that."

- Here's Rielly, a fellow lefty Western Canadian defenceman, on what he most appreciated about Duncan Keith:

"When I was a young player watching him, it was his skating. Not because of the reasons why (another lefty westerner Scott) Niedermayer stood out because of that, but just because of the way he was able to move around the ice. Played lots of minutes. And he was a competitor, and then obviously being able to up his game in the playoffs those years where (the Blackhawks) were winning Cups. He was just the epitome of a Number 1 D-man."

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 11.10.2025

1367617 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Sunday Overreactions: McDavid, Crosby poised to reach 2,000 points

Michael Amato

Just about every hockey fan has built a Mount Rushmore of the four players they believe are the greatest to ever play the game. Maybe you've had this conversation with friends, family, co-workers or other fans you've met in the hockey world, and the debates can get heated. Choices can vary greatly depending on what era you grew up watching or what impact you feel certain players have made.

Lately, though, Connor McDavid and Sidney Crosby are making a push for near-unanimous inclusion. Both hit major milestones recently, inching closer to joining Wayne Gretzky as the only players to ever reach 2,000 points.

Crosby and McDavid will finish their careers with at least 2,000 points

Exceeding the 2,000-point mark is no easy accomplishment to achieve, but both Crosby and McDavid have at least put themselves in the conversation to join The Great One. Crosby got to 1,700 points late last month, and earlier this week, McDavid crossed 1,100. The Edmonton Oilers superstar is further away from the mark, but has a lot more runway left, while Crosby now has less than 300 points to go, although at age 38, it's unclear how many more years he'll continue playing. Given how talented both players are, would you put it past them to get to 2,000?

Overreaction? No

I think barring something unforeseen, both Crosby and McDavid have a legitimate chance to reach the milestone. Let's start with Crosby, who continues to produce at an elite level despite his age. He's tallied more than 90 points in each of the past three seasons on some very mediocre Pittsburgh Penguins squads. It doesn't really seem to matter who Crosby plays with, as he continues to rack up the points year after year.

This season, Crosby is on an even better pace, currently trending towards a 100-point campaign. Let's be conservative and assume he finishes with 90 points, which would put him at 1,777 for his career. He'd still need 223 points, and it's unrealistic, even for Crosby, to assume he could get there in two more seasons. That means he'd need three more seasons at an average of 75 points per year to clear 2,000. That does seem very doable, even if you account for some regression from where he's at now, and especially if his circumstances change.



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The Penguins have had a decent start to the season, which has quieted down the trade chatter around Crosby, but if Pittsburgh ultimately does become a seller and goes through a full rebuild, there's always a chance he may decide to conclude his career elsewhere. That potential landing spot should be on a much stronger team because Crosby's only real reason for leaving would likely be to chase one last Cup, meaning he'd have more talent around him to help his numbers.

We don't know how long Crosby wants to play, though he certainly isn't showing any signs of slowing down, and he's given no indication that retirement is on the horizon. He continues to keep himself in tremendous shape, so there's no reason to believe right now he couldn't be a very productive player into his early 40s.

When it comes to McDavid, he's almost 900 points away and still in his prime. In every full season McDavid has played, he's scored at least 100 points, and in three of the previous four years, he's hit 120 points. So, if McDavid plays nine more seasons, one would assume he could get to 2,000 fairly easily. He'll turn 29 in January, so another nine years would put him at 38 years old, the age Crosby is now. McDavid is also in a unique spot with his contract situation, as he'll pretty much be able to dictate where he goes and the term for the remainder of his career, and he'll make sure he's in the best spot possible to compete for a Cup every year. That means talented teams that will help him continue to put up big numbers wherever he goes.

You never know what the future holds, and health will be a big factor, but as long as they want to continue playing, it seems inevitable that they'll reach 2,000 points. The only thing that could stop Crosby and McDavid may be themselves.

There's a logjam near the top of the NHL's goal-scoring leaderboard after the first month of the season, and Cole Caufield is right in the thick of it. The Montreal Canadiens forward is enjoying a hot start with 12 goals in 15 games, which puts him on pace for 65 goals. That pace will drop as the season goes along, but Caufield looks dangerous enough to at least set a new career high in goals. He's playing on a great line with Nick Suzuki, who is averaging more than an assist per game while setting up Caufield with regularity. Caufield could very well win the Rocket Richard Trophy this season if he continues to fill the back of the net with ease.

Overreaction? Yes

While I do think Caufield is in for a career year, I don't think he'll finish with enough goals to claim the award. Right now, he's battling with the likes of Nathan MacKinnon, Jack Hughes, Crosby, Leon Draisaitl and others for top spot, and all four have a higher goal-scoring pedigree than Caufield. He's only had one 30-plus goal campaign to his credit, and Caufield has never scored 40 before, so expecting him to jump all the way up to at least 50 or so, which is likely what it's going to take to win the award, is a big ask.

Now, 11 of Caufield's goals have come at even strength even, but it's a little deceiving. Three of those tallies came in sudden-death overtime in 3-on-3 situations. Those goals are a little less sustainable than 5-on-5 tallies, and I don't think you can count on Caufield getting 25 per cent of his goals all season in overtime. I'd trust players like MacKinnon, Draisaitl and Crosby a lot more at 5-on-5, where the bulk of the game is played.

Caufield may very well lead the Canadiens to the playoffs and earn a spot on Team USA at the Olympics, but I think he'll fall just short of the Rocket.

Ducks can win the Pacific Division

Don't look now, but the Anaheim Ducks are sitting atop the Pacific Division. Some thought the Ducks might be ready to push for a playoff spot this season, but they've already exceeded expectations and have vaulted up the standings with six straight wins and eight victories in their past nine games. Anaheim hasn't just taken advantage of an easy schedule either. The Ducks have wins over Detroit and New Jersey and

have beaten the two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Florida Panthers twice. Plus, they knocked off division rival Vegas on Saturday night. Joel Quenneville has this team clicking, and Anaheim has a good balance of young talent and contributing veterans. Can the Ducks keep this going all year and push for a division title?

Overreaction? No

I don't think this is a mirage. Anaheim has five players averaging at least a point per game, including Cutter Gauthier, who is pushing for the league lead in goals with 11. Leo Carlsson is blossoming into a star with 23 points in 14 games, and Chris Kreider has been a seamless fit, scoring nine times in 10 outings. The defensive corps is also really balanced, with a really nice blend of talented youngsters like Jackson LaCombe and Olen Zellweger, and veterans like Radko Gudas and Jacob Trouba. We haven't even mentioned the goaltending yet, as Lukas Dostal has taken his game to another level and sits fourth in goals saved above expected with 8.7.

Anaheim's biggest competition is likely going to be Vegas, Edmonton and Los Angeles, with the Ducks having the best goal differential out of the group by a mile right now at plus-14. You could argue Dostal might give the Ducks the advantage in goal, but the other three could boast more high-end talent. The Oilers have started the season in a malaise and can't seem to hold a lead, and Vegas is already dealing with key injuries to Adin Hill and Mark Stone. If Anaheim can take advantage and bank a few points here, it could really help them the rest of the way. It wouldn't shock me if they take home the division crown come April.

Maybe all Trevor Zegras needed was a change of scenery. He sure looks comfortable in his new surroundings, notching 16 points in 15 games so far with the Philadelphia Flyers. Zegras looks like a different player in Philly and has already become a very important piece for his new team, averaging 20:12 a night in November while holding down a spot on the first line. He's on pace for more than 80 points, and perhaps this is finally the breakout season from Zegras that everybody has been waiting for.

Overreaction? Yes

It's been a tremendous start for Zegras, though I do think we should pump the brakes a little bit and temper expectations the rest of the way. Zegras shot 25 per cent in October and that number is already starting to come down. He's also currently playing with Christian Dvorak, who doesn't have even a 40-point season to his name, and Owen Tippett, who has struggled with consistency. I think it will be challenging for Zegras to put up points on a nightly basis with that deployment.

Zegras is also a minus-six over his past five games. If that keeps up, I'd expect Rick Tocchet to cut his ice time at some point and maybe move him down the lineup. Zegras is far from a perfect player, and his limitations at the defensive end of the ice will likely clash with Tocchet sooner or later. This isn't to say things are going to become disastrous in Philly for Zegras because I think it's ultimately a good landing spot for him, but a 60-point season seems more of an attainable goal than 80 points to me.

It's no secret that Canada no longer possesses an embarrassment of riches between the pipes, so general manager Doug Armstrong may have to expand his search for quality netminders. That could include Columbus Blue Jackets goalie Jet Greaves, who has been punching above his weight this season. Greaves owns a .907 save percentage and sits in the top 10 in the NHL in goals saved above expected with 6.3. He's still only played 28 career games, but Greaves is starting to be a model of consistency for the Blue Jackets. The 24-year-old nearly dragged Columbus into the playoffs himself late last season, going 5-0-0 with two shutouts and a .975 save percentage down the stretch. If he's not already on Team Canada's radar at this point, he probably should be.

Overreaction? No



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What's working in Greaves' favour here is not just his play, but the fact that other Canadian netminders have really struggled out of the gate. Jordan Binnington has just three wins this season and a mark of .859, Adin Hill has battled injuries amid a slow start and Samuel Montembeault may be losing his No. 1 job in Montreal to Jakub Dobs. That could open the door for someone like Greaves or Logan Thompson to crack the squad. I think Binnington probably gets some benefit of the doubt because of his performance at the 4 Nations Face-Off, and Greaves probably isn't ready to start for Canada, but why shouldn't he be in the mix for the third goalie?

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1367618 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Maple Leafs officially have a goaltending problem

Luke Fox

TORONTO — The Toronto Maple Leafs have a goaltending issue, and they can no longer hide from it.

Anthony Stolarz — he of the juicy new contract extension and league's best save percentage in 2024-25 — was pulled against the Boston Bruins Saturday night for the first time in his Leafs tenure due to poor performance.

Craig Berube has shown patience when it comes to his men in pads, and yanking a starter in the first half of a back-to-back is a rarity in the modern NHL.

So, it wasn't just notable, it was a message when the head coach called Stolarz to the bench after he allowed two goals on the first two shots and four on the first 19 in a 5-3 home loss to a bitter rival.

"We all got to be better, including the goalie," Berube said postgame, responding to a question that was not about the goalie. "For me, we caused all them goals ourselves.

"It's frustrating. It is."

The coaching staff is frustrated, watching 2024-25's fourth-best save percentage team shrink to the bottom five. So stingy last season, Toronto now ranks 30th in goals allowed per game (3.7).

Management is frustrated, trying and giving up on depth options James Reimer and Cayden Primeau while patiently supporting Joseph Woll during his absence.

And Stolarz must be frustrated after seeing his record even out at 6-5-1 and watching his sparkling 2024-25 .926 save percentage tumble to .889.

"I got to bear down, make a save. I mean, giving up the first two shots? Not a good way to start the game," said Stolarz, owning the rough moment. "When you give a team like that a couple freebies, it's gonna be a tough hill to climb back from."

After getting beat by David Pastrnak — who absolutely posterized defenceman Simon Benoit en route to Stolarz's crease — Stolarz apologized to recently recalled backup Dennis Hildeby for the surprise action.

"He was awesome. I mean, I put him in a s--- situation," Stolarz said. "But he came in and handled it like a true pro and played well."

Hildeby gave the Leafs a chance, but also let former teammate Fraser Minten snipe one past him for the insurance.

"Nerve-wracking to begin with. I had to battle with my breathing there and all that. But once I got into it, I had a lot of fun," Hildeby said.

He could be in for more fun in less than 24 hours, as the Leafs host the contending Carolina Hurricanes.

Berube said he didn't know Sunday's starter yet.

Regardless, Toronto will now be leaning on a tired netminder. And, likely, one that will be tested due to the club's penchant for neutral-zone turnovers and troublesome D-zone coverage.

John Tavares believes all these mistakes are "self-inflicted."

Pick your punching bag.

The goalies are bailing the scorers out enough. Or the skaters aren't defending an overworked Stolarz enough.

"I don't feel we're as tight defensively as we were last year. I do feel that. I think there's good stretches of it. Not enough," Berube said. "(Minten's) goal is just a turnover. I mean, I don't know what you want the goalie to do on that play?"

Toronto designed its crease to be shared, and the 1A/1B plan served the Leafs well last winter. Berube believes Stolarz's lopsided workload has contributed to his inconsistency. That fatigue has set in.

The eye test would concur.

Stolarz himself denies it. He says he trained hard all summer, aiming for a career-high in games played and feels strong physically.

Yes, with both the timeline and quality of Woll's return still uncertain, and the Olympics-truncated schedule relentless, the Maple Leafs have a goalie issue.

"As the goalie, you're the last line of defence, and your job is to step up and make a save. I didn't do that tonight," Stolarz said. He vowed to regroup and respond.

"It's obviously not up to par. I mean, it seems like every night I'm giving up one or two you want back. But for me, it's just life of a goalie. You have to put it behind you and just focus on the next game."

Which may or may not be Sunday.

Fox's Fast Five

- Good on Bobby McMann (6-foot-2, 217 pounds) sticking up for teammate Scott Laughton, who got absolutely trucked by Nikita Zadorov (6-foot-7, 255 pounds) coming down the wall.

Poor Laughton left the game — just his second since getting off IR with a foot injury — and suffered an upper-body injury. He won't play Sunday, as the severity of his injury is unknown.

"I thought it was a head shot," Berube said. "I mean, I got to take a closer look at it, but I will."

McMann said he "didn't love the hit" and that throwing down with a bigger foe is just part of the job.

"Sucks because you hate that side of the game," McMann said of Laughton. "I hope he's back soon."

- Considering the sickening scene one week ago today — when Chris Tanev got stretchered off the ice in Philadelphia and spent one night in hospital due to a head/neck injury — it was surprising to see the defenceman back on the ice Saturday morning.



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Just a solo twirl and no timeline for return, but an encouraging development.

"Every time I've talked to him since, he's seemed just like himself," Carlo said. "That's what you like to see. He's got bright eyes and a bushy tail in the morning."

Tanev's injury flashed Laughton back to when he got stretchered off in 2016 following a hard crash into the boards. Because Laughton didn't dress in Philly last Saturday, he made sure to spend time with his teammate before Tanev was taken to the hospital.

"Give him a little bit of support. But it's scary," Laughton recalled. "It's not a fun feeling when you're off like that. So, I hope it's a speedy recovery. He's an amazing, amazing guy — and a guy you want to go to battle for and battle with every night."

Toronto's D-zone play against Boston was screaming for a Tanev type.

- Boston's Morgan Geekie has already piled 11 goals and is tied for second place in the Rocket race, behind Cole Caufield, with Sidney Crosby and Cutter Gauthier.

Last season, Geekie didn't pot his 11th until Jan. 18.

- Cayden Primeau, we hardly knew you.

The depth goaltender's tenure in Toronto ended Saturday, when he was claimed off waivers by the Hurricanes (a team Dad Keith once captained) and sent to AHL Chicago. The 26-year-old leaves the Maple Leafs with a winning record (2-1) and an .838 save percentage.

Enter prospect Hildeby, who is 2-2-1 with an .890 save percentage for the Marlies this year.

He'll help hold the fort until Woll feels ready for NHL action.

Woll was removed in his first conditioning start with the Marlies after 36 minutes of work against the Lehigh Valley Phantoms. That was planned. He stopped 21 of 24 shots (.875) and took a 3-2 loss.

- With Casey Mittlestadt going down to injury, call-up Alex Steeves made his Bruins debut in familiar territory.

Concerned about flight cancellations, the Bruins hired a car service to drive Steeves to Toronto from Cleveland, where the AHL Providence Bruins are playing this weekend. Must've been pricey.

"I'm not paying for it," Steeves chuckled.

Steeves spent the past four seasons with the Marlies but popped up for 16 Leafs games, scored a goal in the show, and realized his NHL dream in this barn.

"Some of the best years of my life, honestly," the 25-year-old said. "I still text with some of my buddies, mainly from the Marlies, every day. I never expected to get so close with guys."

"Four years on one team is a long time at this level, and really made some unbelievable friends and teammates, staff members. I love this city. Good food, good people, and all that stuff. I absolutely loved being a Marlie and loved being a Leaf, and it's good to be back. It feels weird going back to the hotel and not my apartment right now."

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1367619 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Dach, Canadiens keep reaping rewards of strong process with win over Mammoth

Eric Engels

Sure, it was a goal in garbage time, scored 1:23 after Nick Suzuki drove a spike through the Utah Mammoth's casket and made it 5-2 Montreal Canadiens in the 58th minute of play.

But Dach deserved this one. He deserved it for stripping Olli Maata of the puck and steaming his way through the 140 feet to Karel Vejmelka's net before finishing a beautiful move. He deserved it for the same dogged effort he put in through his 17 shifts before that. And he definitely deserved it for the way he played 10 of his 11 games prior to this one against Utah — with attention to detail, with full effort, and with a mindset that is helping him finally fulfill the promise he held as a former third-overall draft pick.

"I'm not really focused on end results or goals or anything like that," said Dach after scoring his fourth goal in the last three games and helping the Canadiens to their 10th win of the season.

"I'm just focused on my daily process of what I need to do just mentally and physically to be ready to play the game," Dach added, displaying the maturity you'd expect him to possess at 24, with 280 games of experience under his belt, and with all the painful lessons banked after debuting six years ago with the Chicago Blackhawks.

In some ways, his development mirrors that of the Canadiens.

They came into last season expecting results and ignoring the process, flashing their immaturity through the first 15 games to crater their way to the NHL's basement, where they found themselves locked in a three-way tie for last place in the NHL with San Jose and Anaheim. Dach, coming off ACL and MCL reconstruction in his right knee, focused on scoring goals and racking up points to re-establish himself in the Canadiens' pecking order, but ended up knocking himself down several pegs.

After 15 games, the Fort Saskatchewan, Alta., native had just one goal and four assists, but he had fully earned his minus-14 rating by neglecting the process.

But Dach now has five goals, seven points, and a plus-2 rating for a Canadiens team that's tied for first in the NHL with New Jersey. He's played 12 games, they've played 15, and everything looks markedly different for all of them for a reason.

"As young as we are, we're still all maturing on and off the ice and away from the rink, and you just learn what you need to do better as a pro each and every year, and I think that kind of shows in the way we've kind of started the year," Dach said. "I think every guy kind of looked themselves in the mirror after the playoff run last year and understood that, for where we want to go, we need to come to camp ready and have a good start."

Standards were set, and they were to be met.

Dach knew his needed to be set much higher following his second ACL surgery.

At the opening of training camp, he detailed to us what he put himself through to raise the bar over the summer. And he reached for that bar through each of the first five games of this season.

Then Dach missed three games with a lower-body injury before playing a bad one in his home province against the Edmonton Oilers.

To see him immediately respond to that game with a strong one in Vancouver was evidence of his maturity. Playing better and better with each game that followed provided more evidence.

The Canadiens had to prove themselves, too, after playing their worst game of the season Tuesday. They lost it to the Philadelphia Flyers in a



CAROLINA HURRICANES

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shootout and responded to it with a strong defensive effort in a 4-3 overtime loss to the New Jersey Devils Thursday.

For a fifth time this season, they surrendered a third-period lead in that game.

But the Canadiens played differently with the lead against the Devils. They were stifling, responsible, practically infallible, and then ultimately unlucky when Mike Matheson was hobbled by a shot to turn a New Jersey six-on-five advantage into a six-on-four advantage.

Up 3-2 against Utah after Samuel Montembeault made 15 saves to thwart the Mammoth in the second period Saturday, the Canadiens built on that third period in New Jersey with one coach Martin St. Louis referred to as their best third period of the season.

They took the lead Alex Newhook gave them in the second and built on it, with Cole Caufield's insurance marker in the 54th minute of play the product of some dominant play.

Suzuki got out his hammer, and then Dach borrowed it to drive one more spike through the coffin.

But that was a just reward.

"I was really happy he scored at the end," said St. Louis. "He's another guy who I feel like is really trying to play with the right intentions, in terms of on the other side of the puck, and he's getting rewarded. It's so nice when a player's really bought in, and working at it, and asking questions, and looking at video, and his actions are actually matching what he's saying when he's talking... His habits are matching what he says that he wants. It's rare (those habits) don't get rewarded, especially with the tools that he has. The game almost becomes a little bit easier. Not that it's easy, but easier in the sense that you're always in the right spots, and when you do that, you're going to touch the puck more. You're not just working hard, you're not just sweating, you're actually playing with a lot of purpose on the ice. And that's what he's doing. And you want those players to get rewarded."

Dach hasn't been perfect. Nor have the Canadiens.

But both he and the team are getting what they've earned so far this season.