



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

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Sabres-Ducks Preview

By Nicolino DiBenedetto

Associated Press

November 8, 2013

The Anaheim Ducks have piled up the most points in the NHL, while the Buffalo Sabres have done the exact opposite.

The Ducks will try to maintain their status as the league's only unbeaten team at home Friday when they try to capitalize on another meeting with the cellar-dwelling Sabres.

Anaheim (13-3-1) sits atop the NHL with 27 points following Wednesday's 5-2 win over Phoenix. The Ducks attribute their outstanding start to lessons learned from last season, when they opened 13-2-1.

"We learned a lot from the way we started last year, and we have to continue to do what we did," right wing Corey Perry said.

Last year's early success also included 13 victories in its first 14 home games, and Anaheim is now working on a similar run. The Ducks are off to the franchise's best start at Honda Center, winning six straight while outscoring opponents 27-10.

That streak doesn't appear to be in jeopardy against the Sabres (3-14-1), who have dropped five of six after falling 2-0 at Los Angeles on Thursday.

The Ducks took the most recent meeting 6-3 at Buffalo on Saturday, when Perry and Emerson Etem had two goals apiece.

Perry also scored in each of the following two games, giving him a team-leading 10 on the season. He has six goals in eight career meetings with the Sabers, but has come up empty in the last two at home.

Ryan Getzlaf had one goal while setting up Perry twice versus the Sabres last week. The captain has earned 10 of his team-leading 18 points at home, including six in his past two games in Anaheim.

Jonas Hiller is likely to be in net, and he's won all four of his home starts behind a 1.82 goals-against average. He made 24 saves against the Coyotes, but needed just 14 in Saturday's victory at Buffalo.

The Sabres mustered a mere 19 shots against the Kings two days after a season-high 36 in an unexpected 5-4 shootout win at San Jose that opened a three-game California trip.

"I think we outchanced them in the five-on-five department," captain Steve Ott said of Buffalo's offensive performance against Los Angeles. "I liked our effort. It was the same as in San Jose. Our passion and pride has been way better in the last two games, and that's the way we have to play to have any success in this league."

Production from Matt Moulson would also help after the left wing came up empty on four shots Thursday. Moulson had two goals and four assists in his first four games after being acquired from the Islanders in a trade that sent top scorer Thomas Vanek to New York.

Moulson has eight points in 10 career meetings with Anaheim, including four in the last three.

Cody Hodgson, the team leader with 13 points, has three goals and one assist over his last four meetings with the Ducks - including one of each last weekend.

Jonathan Quick, LA Kings blank Buffalo 2-0

By Greg Beacham

Associated Press

November 8, 2013

LOS ANGELES (AP) — Mike Richards and Anze Kopitar scored power-play goals, and Jonathan Quick earned his first shutout of the season in the Los Angeles Kings' 2-0 victory over the Buffalo Sabres on Thursday night.

Richards had a goal and an assist for the Kings, who returned from a four-day schedule break with their ninth victory in 13 games. Quick made 19 saves, including a handful of exceptional stops in his 26th career shutout.

Jhonas Enroth stopped 26 shots for the NHL-worst Sabres (3-14-1), who couldn't follow up their stunning win at San Jose with another surprise on their three-game California road trip. Buffalo hasn't won consecutive games all season.

Defenseman Christian Ehrhoff left the Buffalo bench early in the third period with a lower-body injury, according to the club.

The Kings had the past few days off to stew after a frustrating week of play that included losses to Phoenix and Nashville.

At 10-6, Los Angeles is off to another good start to the season after back-to-back trips to the Western Conference finals — but good isn't enough in a Pacific Division featuring Anaheim, San Jose, Phoenix and Vancouver.

Quick celebrated his 300th NHL game with his first regular-season shutout since last March 18, punctuating the win with a handful of scrambling saves late in the scoreless third period. Quick even kept his brother-in-law, Buffalo's Matt Moulson, off the scoresheet.

With Quick leading a solid defensive performance, Los Angeles won without two of its top forwards. Jeff Carter, the Kings' top goal-scorer, missed his second straight game with a foot injury, and center Jarret Stoll sat out for the first time this season with an upper-body injury.

Linden Vey made his NHL debut for the Kings in their absence, centering the fourth line with Kyle Clifford and Jordan Nolan. Fellow youngster Tyler Toffoli had an assist for the second straight game since getting called up for the first time this season.

Buffalo controlled the flow of play early on, but the Kings scored in the final minute of the first period on a power play. Richards nimbly redirected Jake Muzzin's shot from the point for his fourth goal in six games.

Kopitar scored during 4-on-3 play midway through the second period, putting a changeup one-timer past Enroth after a slick cross-ice give-and-go with Drew Doughty.

The Sabres, shut out for the fourth time already this season, hadn't visited Staples Center since Jan. 21, 2010. The Kings open a four-game road trip in Buffalo on Tuesday.

NOTES: Moulson and Quick are married to sisters Alicia and Jaclyn Backman. Moulson was in the Kings organization from 2006-09, scoring six goals in 29 games in Los Angeles, but never catching on with the big-league club. Moulson had two goals and four assists in his first four games with the Sabres, who acquired him from the New York Islanders late last month. ... Los Angeles D Robyn Regehr faced Buffalo for the first time since the Sabres traded him to the Kings late last season. ... Enroth was sent to the bench by the officials early in the first period, apparently to get white tape put over the colored tape on the butt end of his stick. ... After Kings F Matt Frattin landed a hard check on Cody McCormick late in the second period, Buffalo's 6-foot-8 Tyler Myers challenged the 6-foot Frattin to a fight. Frattin wrestled Myers to the ice, and Myers got an extra penalty for holding.

Bye-bye good vibrations, Sabres blanked in L.A.

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

November 8, 2013

LOS ANGELES — The fun in the California sun didn't last very long.

Buffalo failed Thursday night in its attempt to build off a big win in San Jose, and the Sabres found themselves back in the loss column. Los Angeles' power play made the Sabres pay for their trips to the penalty box, and the Kings skated to a 2-0 victory in quiet Staples Center.

Both of Los Angeles' goals came with the man advantage as the Sabres gave the potent home team five chances. The Kings rank seventh on the power play and improved to 6 for 17 in the last four games.

"We played well at times in the game, but obviously we put them on the power play too much," said coach Ron Rolston, who watched defenseman Tyler Myers take three minors and a fighting major. "It's too many."

The timing of the power-play goals made matters worse. Los Angeles scored in the final minute of the first period and connected again during the second just when it looked like the Sabres might be able to tie the game.

"That's happened too much this year," right wing Brian Flynn said. "We're taking penalties at the wrong times. It seems like we're going well, and then we kill all the momentum we have by taking a penalty."

Buffalo boarded a bus for the quick drive to Anaheim following the game. They visit the Ducks tonight in the final outing of the three-game California trip. The Sabres host the Kings on Tuesday in their return to Buffalo.

Buffalo, which fell to 3-14-1, suffered more bad news in the third period as defenseman Christian Ehrhoff left the game with a lower-body injury.

"It's something that we have to see how it develops overnight," Ehrhoff said. "It was something that started developing in the first period, and then in the third period when I went up the ice it just got bad."

Jonathan Quick, appearing in his 300th game, needed to make only 19 saves to get the shutout for the Kings.

"Their D corps is strong," Sabres captain Steve Ott said. "They've got some big boys out there, big shutdown guys. We obviously gave them one by sending Robyn Regehr to them, so we knew what to expect."

The Sabres opened the game with a textbook road period, controlling play for stretches and not allowing the Kings or their fans to get anything going. The effort went for naught as the Kings struck in the closing seconds.

Myers got nabbed for interference with 2:24 left, and Los Angeles' power play went to work. Mike Richards planted himself in front and reached out to deflect Jake Muzzin's point shot with only 35.9 seconds left.

Despite playing well, the Sabres still allowed the opening goal for the 16th time in 18 games and had their goal differential in first periods worsen to 22-2.

"That one definitely sunk us, but I thought our game overall was pretty solid," Ott said. "Five-on-five, we were by far the better team."

A penalty box parade midway through the second put Buffalo in a bigger hole. The Sabres earned the first power play of the sequence, but it lasted just 26 seconds as the refs whistled Jamie McBain for high-sticking. Drew Stafford departed for slashing 38 seconds later, giving the Kings a four-on-three advantage.

"It's a 1-0 game and we're on the power play, then two minutes later" they have an advantage, Rolston said. "That's not a real good recipe if you want to have a successful night."

Anze Kopitar fanned on his shot after accepting a cross-ice pass, but it helped his cause. Goalie Jhonas Enroth anticipated a point-blank blast, and he couldn't adjust quickly enough to stop the fluttering puck.

"Those shots are pretty tough when they slow down like that," said Enroth, who faced 28 shots. "It was an unfortunate bounce for me and our club."

The Ducks have the longest points streak in the NHL at seven games (6-0-1). One of the victories was a 6-3 defeat of the Sabres last Saturday.

The Ducks also are riding a six-game home winning streak, the most victories to start a season in franchise history. Anaheim has outscored the opposition, 26-10, in Honda Center. The 26 goals match the most through six games in club history, while their 10 goals allowed are the fewest.

Teemu Selanne, who returned early from a mouth injury, will play his 1,400th game to join Nicklas Lidstrom and Jaromir Jagr as the only European-born NHL players to reach the milestone.

"It's frustrating when you don't get the wins," Enroth said. "We played pretty well, so we've got to come back and build on this."

Sabres notebook: Grigorenko getting antsy in press box

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

November 7, 2013

LOS ANGELES — Mikhail Grigorenko understands why he watched from the press box Thursday night as the Sabres played in Los Angeles. Buffalo was coming off a big win over San Jose, so coach Ron Rolston decided to keep the forward lines and defensive pairings intact against the Kings.

“I understand his decision to stick with the roster that won the game,” Grigorenko said in Staples Center. “He’s the coach and guys played well the last game, so I don’t think you have to change anything.

“But I don’t understand why I was scratched in the previous games.”

Grigorenko has been on the sidelines for three straight outings. The 19-year-old insists he learns more from playing than watching, and that was the case during his last appearance.

Grigorenko set a season high with three shots against the New York Rangers on Oct. 31. The center felt he fit in well with wingers Zemgus Girgensons and Brian Flynn, with the line combining for nine of the Sabres’ 29 shots in a 2-0 loss. Grigorenko was also Buffalo’s best faceoff man, winning seven of nine draws while playing 11:32.

“I thought it was one of my better games of the season,” he said. “I was real disappointed when I didn’t play.

“We did good on our line, so I was hoping I was going to get a chance to play against Anaheim or in San Jose, but obviously I didn’t play. I’m just waiting for a chance.”

Rookie defenseman Nikita Zadorov is also biding his time on the sideline. He sat for the second straight game while the Sabres played the Kings in a game that ended too late for this edition.

Rolston has scratched the 18-year-old in three of the last four outings.

“For us young guys, I think it’s good to be watching games upstairs, but we want to play,” Zadorov said. “For sure it’s hard for me. It’s OK for me to just keep practicing, keep working hard and keep my head up. For sure it’s hard to do because I want to play hockey.

“I want to play every game here. I want to help these guys.”

Zadorov has one goal and a minus-3 rating in his six outings. He can play three more times before the Sabres need to decide whether to return him to juniors with London of the Ontario Hockey League or start the clock on his three-year, entry-level contract.

Zadorov said no one has told him what the Sabres plan to do.

“I don’t worry about it,” he said. “I think I can stay here and play all season here. I think I’m ready for NHL.”

It wasn’t known whether either player will be in the lineup tonight when the Sabres finish their California swing with a game in Anaheim.

“I would hope they’re disappointed to not be in the lineup, but it is what it is,” Rolston said. “We won a game last time, so I kept the lineup the same.”

...

John Scott’s suspension is up. The Sabres’ enforcer sat the final game of his seven-game ban for a head shot, and he’s eligible to return against the Ducks. Rolston said Scott’s spot in the lineup would be determined on a game-by-game basis.

“To get this whole debacle over with, it’s nice to move on and hopefully forget about it and start just playing hockey and hopefully get some wins,” Scott said. “It’s my first suspension ever. It’s been real tough. The guys have nice, kind of keeping me involved in the practices. I’m just glad it’s over.”

Folks around the league were debating Scott’s place in the NHL and the role of fighting in hockey when he went out Oct. 23. Chatter about eliminating fights comes up every year, but the conversations are lasting longer and are more intense this season.

“It’s not seeming to go away,” Scott said. “I don’t think you’ll ever get it out of the game, but I think you’ll see little changes down the road where they tweak the rules and make it a little more harsh for guys doing the staged fighting. The idea to get it out of the game, I just think it’s not the right way to go for hockey, and I hope everyone can see that.”

Ducks, Sabres meet in game of NHL's best, worst

By John Kreiser

NHL.com

November 8, 2013

SABRES (3-14-1) at DUCKS (13-3-1)

TV: MSG B, BELL TV, PRIME

Last 10: Buffalo 2-8-0; Anaheim 7-2-1

Season series: The Anaheim Ducks are looking for a sweep of their two-game series against the Buffalo Sabres. They beat Buffalo 6-3 at First Niagara Center six days ago.

Big story: Two teams at opposite ends of the overall standings meet as the last-place Sabres try to become the first visiting team to win at Honda Center. The Ducks won in Buffalo during their just-concluded eight-game trip and have a 6-0-1 record in their past seven games.

Team Scope:

Sabres: After their best offensive night of the season in a 5-4 shootout win against the San Jose Sharks on Tuesday, the Sabres' offensive struggles resumed against the Los Angeles Kings on Thursday. Buffalo gave up power-play goals to Mike Richards and Anze Kopitar and were limited to 19 shots on goal in a 2-0 loss.

"We played pretty well 5-on-5," forward Matt Moulson said. "We lost the special-teams battle tonight. They had a couple of power-play goals and ours wasn't clicking very well. That was the difference."

Ducks: As if Anaheim wasn't playing well enough, the power play is showing signs of life. The Ducks had scored four times with the extra man in their first 16 games, but they did it twice Wednesday in a 5-2 victory against the Phoenix Coyotes in their return after the marathon road trip.

"I think we can be a lot better," defenseman Cam Fowler said. "We've found ways to win without scoring, basically, any power-play goals. Special teams definitely has been at the top of our list of something we need to correct."

"It was good to get a couple of power-play goals [Wednesday]. They were big goals for us. It's always good to end a tough streak like that."

Who's hot: Sabres center Cody Hodgson has a goal and two assists in his past three games, as well as the shootout winner in San Jose. ... Anaheim captain Ryan Getzlaf has two goals and five points in the Ducks' past three games. Rookie goaltender Frederick Andersen is 4-0-0 with a 1.36 goals-against average.

Injury report: Defenseman Christian Ehrhoff left Buffalo's game in L.A. in the third period with a lower-body injury, but he indicated he may be able to play against Anaheim. Another defenseman, Mike Weber, has been idled with a broken thumb. ... Anaheim is missing center Saku Koivu (head), forwards Jacob Silfverberg (broken hand) and Matt Beleskey (finger), defenseman Sheldon Souray (wrist) and goaltender Viktor Fasth (lower body).

Quick, Kings blank goal-starved Sabres

By Curtis Zupke

NHL.com

November 8, 2013

LOS ANGELES - An anticipated showcase between U.S. Olympic goalie candidates Jonathan Quick and Ryan Miller didn't happen. Judging by Quick's performance, it might not have mattered.

Quick turned in his best game of the season Thursday night when he recorded his first shutout of the season, a 2-0 win against the Buffalo Sabres at Staples Center.

Quick, playing his 300th NHL game, made 19 saves and was part of a great special-teams night by L.A., which got power-play goals from Mike Richards and Anze Kopitar and killed off all four Buffalo power plays. It was the ideal remedy game for the Kings, who had four days off after a loss to the Nashville Predators.

Quick said the rest helped.

"Obviously with the Olympic year, you kind of get run around a little bit, so you miss some days here and there with practice and being able to work on the details," Quick said. "We had a good three practices where we were able to get a lot of work done."

Quick typically shies away from Olympic talk, so it's notable that he even referenced it. He has mostly been under siege this season because of L.A.'s plethora of penalties and hadn't really had a truly dominating game. At least one Sabre could see why he's a good pick to start for the U.S. in the 2014 Sochi Olympics.

"He was very good," Buffalo captain Steve Ott said. "I can think of some grade-A scoring chances we had in the first two periods. He was very solid tonight, very deserving of his shutout. He was excellent."

L.A. continued to see scoring emerge from its centers after it played the first 10 games of the season without goals from any of them. Richards has four goals and four assists in L.A.'s past seven home games, while Kopitar has goals in three straight games.

Buffalo got 26 saves from Jhonas Enroth but was denied winning consecutive games for the first time this season. The Sabres (3-14-1) also saw defenseman Christian Ehrhoff leave the game in the third period with a lower-body injury, but coach Ron Rolston said he was OK.

It really wasn't a bad showing by Buffalo, which came out strong but couldn't put a puck past Quick after winning 5-4 in a shootout against the San Jose Sharks on Tuesday.

"He's one of the best goalies in the world," said former King Matt Moulson, who's also Quick's brother-in-law. "He gets in a zone like that and he's a tough guy to beat. We may not have had a lot of chances, but I thought we had a bunch of quality ones from in close and he obviously played well."

The game seemed to turn on a terrific right-to-left sliding pad save by Quick on Corey Tropp during a Buffalo rush early in the second period. Buffalo then gave L.A. a 4-on-3 power play after Jamie McBain high stucked Jake Muzzin and Drew Stafford slashed Dustin Brown.

"That's not a very good recipe when you want to have a successful night," said Rolston, whose team has scored 29 non-shootout goals in 18 games.

Kopitar set up on the right side and cranked Drew Doughty's feed past Enroth's glove side for a 2-0 lead at 12:18.

Richards got a crafty deflection for a power play goal to give L.A. a 1-0 lead at the first intermission. Muzzin had time to pause and then fire from the point and Richards got his blade on the shot with 36 seconds left in the period as he occupied the top of the crease.

Buffalo and L.A. rank 23rd and 25th in the NHL, respectively, in 5-on-5 scoring, so special teams were critical. The Kings improved to 6-for-17 on the power play in their past four games, and their leaky penalty-killer bounced back after allowing nine goals in L.A.'s six previous games.

"We played pretty well 5-on-5," Moulson said. "We lost the special-teams battle tonight. They had a couple of power-play goals and ours wasn't clicking very well. That was the difference."

The first 20 minutes were a lost opportunity for Buffalo, which came out with a strong road start and produced several quality chances while it limited L.A.'s shots before the Kings took back the momentum late.

"We played well in the first period," Rolston said. "We had some good chances, probably to get up 2-0. We had some looks in front of their goal but we didn't finish on them and they ended up finishing later in the period on the power play to make it 1-0 coming out of the first period."

The Sabres have been outscored 22-2 in the first period this season.

Center Linden Vey made his NHL debut for L.A. and played on both special teams units.

It was the first game between the teams since they played in the NHL Premiere series in Berlin, on Oct. 8, 2011.

Kings, Quick shut out Sabres

By Dennis Bernstein
The Sports Xchange
November 8, 2013

LOS ANGELES -- During the four off days after a Saturday night loss to the Nashville Predators, the Los Angeles Kings had a number of things to correct.

While their performance against the overmatched Buffalo Sabres wasn't overwhelming Thursday, the Kings showed that the time away did wonders for their sub-par special teams.

Center Mike Richards had a goal and an assist, and goaltender Jonathan Quick recorded his first shutout of the season with a 19-save performance as the Kings defeated the Sabres 2-0 at Staples Center.

Richards turned in one of his stronger performance of the season, as his six shots on goal were a season high.

Due to injuries to right winger Jeff Carter and center Jarret Stoll, Richards was paired with winger Dwight King and rookie center Tyler Toffoli. The unlikely trio didn't hit the scoreboard but was dangerous all night, with Toffoli getting two shots on goal. The rookie is getting top-six forward minutes in Carter's absence and is hoping to stick with the big club when the high-scoring winger returns.

The victory was the fourth in the last six games for the Kings (10-6-0). Buffalo (3-14-1) failed in its bid for consecutive wins, something it has yet to accomplish this season.

"With the Olympic year, you miss some days here and there with practice and being able to work on the details, so we had a good three practices where we were able to get some work done," said Quick who appeared in his 300th game in a Los Angeles uniform.

Quick's play was subpar in the early season, with his save percentage entering the game was below .900. A result is that he may not be the starter for the United States in the 2014 Winter Olympics. His return to form is essential for his Olympic hopes and for the Kings to keep pace in the highly competitive Western Conference.

Los Angeles won the battle of special teams, scoring two power-play goals while its 21st-ranked penalty-killing unit held Buffalo scoreless on four power plays.

The Kings opened the scoring at 19:24 of the first period when Richards tipped in defenseman Jake Muzzin's shot from the point. Richards' goal was his fourth of the season, and it came with Sabres defenseman Tyler Myers in the box for interference.

Los Angeles doubled its lead at 12:18 of the second period. With the Kings holding four-on-three advantage, center Anze Kopitar batted home a cross-ice feed from defenseman Drew Doughty. Richards recorded his second point of the game with the secondary assist.

Buffalo had little offensive flow through the first two periods, managing only 12 shots against Quick despite having three power-play opportunities.

"I think that five-on-five we were solid. I believe we out-chanced them when we were five-on-five," Buffalo center Steve Ott said. "They got two good power-play goals and were able to hang onto it."

The Sabres' best chance to score came late in the second period, but Quick stopped forward Corey Tropp from in close with less than six minutes remaining.

Buffalo goalie Jhonas Enroth made 26 saves.

"I didn't think we played that bad of the game," Enroth said. "There wasn't much I could have done differently on either goal."

Myers' season long struggles continued, as he drew three minor penalties as well as a five-minute major for a fight with Los Angeles right winger Matt Frattin.

The Kings limited the Sabres to seven shots on goal in a scoreless final period for a win that helped them keep pace with the Vancouver Canucks and the Dallas Stars, both winners Thursday evening.

NOTES: Los Angeles D Drew Doughty has seven points in his past eight games. ... Buffalo finishes up its three game California road trip with a game against the Ducks in Anaheim on Friday evening. ... Buffalo and Los Angeles have played 114 regular-season games since 1970 without either team being shut out at home. ... Kings G Jonathan Quick, a Vezina Trophy finalist in 2012, entered the game with a .896 save percentage that ranked him 53rd among NHL goaltenders. ... The injury list is growing for Los Angeles. In addition C Jarret Stoll and RW Jeff Carter, D Matt Greene missed his first game of the season with an undisclosed injury. ... C Linden Vey, recalled this past Saturday from the Kings' AHL Manchester affiliate, made his NHL debut. Veteran C Colin Fraser was a healthy scratch

Just how does Regier survive with Sabres?

By Chuck Pollock
Olean Times Herald
November 7, 2013

So what do we make of the current Sabres ... other than continuing to wonder how general manager Darcy Regier has retained his job through three ownerships and an appalling lack of recent success?

Last night, I watched the third period, overtime and shootout of Buffalo's game at San Jose.

Much to my amazement, the Sabres played with effort and intensity, though occasionally without much direction or purpose.

And when it was over, despite blowing both a 2- and 1-goal third-period lead, it's fair to say Buffalo earned that 5-4 shootout victory ... even though a blown call in overtime cost the Sharks a win.

The Sabres got an impressive triumph against an elite NHL team in one of the league's toughest buildings.

And, get this, that victory improved Buffalo to a 3-5 record on the road this season, almost acceptable, except for the Sabres' singular lack of success at the First Niagara Center where they're a galling 0-8-1.

Hence, with 20 percent of Buffalo's schedule in the books, playoff hopes are already a pipe dream.

WHICH brings us to Regier.

Sabres' fans know the mantra ... this team has missed the playoffs four of the past six seasons and seven of the last 11.

Yet when Buffalo lost in seven games to Philadelphia during the opening round of the 2011 playoffs, rebuilding was hardly in the forefront of Sabres fans' minds.

But, according to Regier's revisionist history, when he traded Paul Gaustad to Nashville the following season, it was the first step in his plan to return Buffalo to the NHL's upper echelon.

And who would question that?

We're told that there are members of the team's upper management who consider the Teflon GM a "genius."

Unfortunately, new owner Terry Pegula — full disclosure, a friend of mine since the early 1980s when his business had offices in Allegany — has relied on those voices for guidance.

A fan first, Terry knows what he doesn't know and thus has trusted that his hockey advisers will supply the right direction to his franchise.

But their affection for Regier has caused them to blindly accept his version of progress and flawed plan to escape the current morass ... of which he's the architect.

That Buffalo has become an NHL laughingstock — fewest wins and points though tied for the most games played this season— and Regier is the Sabres' version of Tom Donahoe with no sign of change is beyond distressing.

“Hockey heaven,” indeed.

Buffalo is actually Purgatory ... and headed south.

There are league teams which have won ... rebuilt ... and won again while Regier's club staggers along as he tries to conjure scenarios that leave him standing and employed.

His success is missing, but the arrogance remains.

THE GALL it took — after the Sabres' team he built was going down like dishwater in a drain — to tell their fans to prepare for more “suffering” was more insensitive and insulting than any pro sports executive has a right to be.

But here's what's bothersome.

There are members of the Buffalo faithful who are buying Regier's snake oil.

All of a sudden there are pockets of support for his “plan” ... you've got to be really bad before you get good.

FNC continues to be soldout, albeit with some empty seats, and the “Fire Regier” chants have become fewer and less enthusiastic.

And even the most frustrated fans, it's been suggested, won't give up their season tickets on the off chance the team becomes good again.

WHAT'S CERTAIN is Regier's Sabres' “plan” for improvement is based on two flawed premises.

The first has already been debunked.

“Buffalo is lousy because (fill in the blank, the Rigases or Tom Golisano) won’t spend the money to make the team competitive.”

Well, here comes a guy with some of the deepest pockets in the nation — and a huge Sabres’ fan — to whom the financial investment in this team is irrelevant.

And, guess what?

The club is still lousy and the only seeming change is a new lockerroom with a logo on the floor on which nobody is allowed to step.

Premise No. 2?

If the Sabres finish last in the league — which they’re clearly on track to do — Buffalo gets the first overall pick and the improvement begins immediately.

The first problem is that Regier is making the draft selection.

But beyond that, drafting is a crapshoot. Some franchises in the NHL, NBA and NFL, have high picks every year and are still also-rans.

Yeah, O.J. Simpson and Bruce Smith were no-brainers for the Bills — both are in the Hall of Fame — but Walt Patulski, another No. 1 overall pick, was a bust, and so were other high choices like Mike Williams (No. 4 overall) and Al Cowlings (No.5).

In short, picking high in the draft is no guarantee.

Especially for the Sabres when the GM making the decision has such dubious credentials.

Good luck on that improvement.

Sabres shutout 2-0 in LA

By Pat Malacaro

WGR 550

November 8, 2013

Los Angeles (WGR 550) -- A pair of power play goals by the Los Angeles Kings were the difference in their 2-0 win over the Buffalo Sabres on Thursday night at STAPLES Center.

Mike Richards scored the only goal of the first period. The goal came on the power play with just thirty-six seconds to go in the frame, with the forward camped in front of the net for a tip. Jake Muzzin took the shot that was tipped home, and received an assist along with Tyler Toffoli. Tyler Myers was in the penalty box serving an interference minor when the goal was scored.

Buffalo went 0-for-1 on the man advantage when Muzzin was in the penalty box for holding. Jonathan Quick stopped all 7 shots by the blue and gold, while Jhonas Enroth stopped 7 of 8 shots by LA.

Los Angeles struck again on the power play, this time in the second period, to take a 2-0 lead over the Sabres. Anze Kopitar picked up his fourth goal of the year on the man advantage. He was able to sneak a wrist shot underneath the left arm of Enroth.

Myers picked up a fighting major penalty when he dropped the gloves with Matt Frattin. The defenseman was standing up for teammate Cody McCormick after Frattin delivered a questionable hit to the Buffalo forward.

Christian Ehrhoff suffered a lower body injury and missed the third period. There were very few whistles early in the final frame. Neither team was able to score over the final twenty minutes, despite fifteen combined shots. Each side had a power play in the third as well.

Goal Summary

First Period

BUF: none

LA: 19:24 - Mike Richards (4) PPG (Jake Muzzin, Tyler Toffoli)

Second Period

BUF: none

LA: 12:18 - Anze Kopitar (4) PPG (Drew Doughty, Mike Richards)

Third Period

BUF: none

LA: none

Penalty Summary

First Period

BUF: 17:36 - Tyler Myers (2 min., interference)

LA: 7:52 - Jake Muzzin (2 min., holding)

Second Period

BUF: 11:00 - Jamie McBain (2 min., high sticking). 11:45 - Drew Stafford (2 min., slashing). 18:50 - Tyler Myers (2 min., holding). 18:50 - Tyler Myers (5 min., fighting).

LA: 4:35 - Daniel Carcillo (2 min., hooking). 10:34 - Robyn Regehr (2 min., hooking). 18:50 - Matt Frattin (5 min., fighting).

Third Period

BUF: 13:01 - Tyler Myers (2 min., high sticking)

LA: 10:10 - Anze Kopitar (2 min., slashing)

Shots on Goal

BUF - 19 (7, 5, 7)

LA - 28 (8, 12, 8)

Sabres winning battles with third and fourth lines

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

November 8, 2013

Los Angeles, CA (WGR 550) -- The Sabres trailed after one period 1-0 thanks to a power play goal by Mike Richards, but I'm not going to jump on Tyler Myers for his penalty. He was being physical and got an interference penalty.

Before the penalty Buffalo had the better of the play led by the Johan Larsson line and the Cody McCormick line. The Marcus Foligno line was physical early in the period. The Cody Hodgson line had way too many turnovers.

Myers was being physical and got an interference penalty that isn't always called. On the goal, Jamie McBain had good coverage on Richards, but Jake Muzzin's shot hit him and got by Jhonas Enroth.

Right off the bat Buffalo got pucks to the paint. Foligno found Corey Tropp alone in front. Tropp had two opportunities, but was foiled by Jonathan Quick.

Larsson, Zemgus Girgensons and Brian Flynn got on the forecheck early and it produced opportunities. Larsson got a pass to Christian Ehrhoff in the slot and Quick stopped that. Right before that, Flynn set up Girgensons, but another save.

Drew Stafford has had four good periods in a row. He got pucks to the paint three times thanks to hard work behind the net. Ville Leino was alone in front and was stopped, and he just barely missed getting to another puck.

Quick stopped his brother in law Matt Moulson in front. Henrik Tallinder jumped on the rebound, took a shot tipped by Moulson, but stopped once again.

All Buffalo has to do is capitalize on its opportunities like it did in San Jose, then the Myers penalty won't matter.

Enroth and Quick both made seven saves in the first period.

Five on five the Sabres have done just fine. If you want to know what a good passing NHL team looks like watch the Kings power play. It's like they have the puck on a string.

Right at the start of the period, Tyler Ennis won a battle on the wall and found Moulson in front. Quick stopped him.

On their next shift, Hodgson and Moulson took the puck to the crease and Quick stopped them both.

Buffalo did get a good passing breaking out which led to a three-on-two for the Foligno line. Tropp popped free on the right wing side, but couldn't beat Quick. The line stayed with it and set Ehrhoff up for two point blank chances that were blocked, both possibly by Sabres.

After falling behind 2-0 with consecutive penalties to McBain and Stafford, McBain was set up alone down the slot. That's why he's here is for offense, but he couldn't beat Quick either. Moulson scooped the rebound and was stopped again. After two periods Moulson only had three shots, but has many more scoring chances.

At the end of the period it looked like Matt Frattin hit Cody McCormick high and in the end. He sent him sprawling and Tyler Myers showed up. He immediately dropped the gloves and forced Frattin into the fight.

Early in the third Steve Ott showed some of the spunk we saw from him last season. In one shift he had three big hits in the defensive zone disrupting the Kings.

Larsson and Flynn had another great shift on the offensive zone where they dominated the forecheck.

Midway through the third, Buffalo worked another three-on-two. Tropp got the puck and half an open net. Kopitar slashed his hands knocking the puck away. That's what's called a good penalty.

Win, lose or draw this is a game that I can take. Buffalo did work hard and it did compete. Enroth rebounded with a real strong game after having his first poor one last Saturday.

Sabres Moulson is getting settled

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

November 7, 2013

Los Angeles, CA (WGR 550) -- Matt Moulson came to Buffalo from the Islanders, but he started his NHL career with the Kings. Moulson still likes coming back, "Yes, it's always fun to come out to L.A. I still know a lot of guys on the team. Obviously, I'm closer to the Quick's so it's always fun to come back.

What is Moulson's relationship to Jonathan Quick you ask? I'll let him tell you, "We're family, we're, married. Jonathan and I married two sisters, so we're a pretty close knit group."

Moulson's first day as a Sabre was October 28th. He says he's adjusting both in and outside of the locker room, "It's been great. Everyone within the organization and the city of Buffalo have been very welcoming both to myself and my family and it's been a great bunch of guys here. As players we get treated extremely well from the organization."

Moulson has already tried a restaurant that was featured on The Food Network. The winger said, "My brother told me about that, he's a big Guy Fieri fan so he told me about the Lake Effect Diner."

Just like Thomas Vanek, the man he was traded for, Moulson is an unrestricted free agent after the season. He realizes he could move again and really isn't thinking about it. He's more concerned about his wife and new born baby back in New York.

Sabres Enroth gets second start in three games

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

November 7, 2013

Los Angeles, CA (WGR 550) -- As I looked at the schedule I always assumed this was going to be a Jhonas Enroth game. Where I missed my guess was Enroth playing at home last Saturday against the Ducks. Ron Rolston said Ryan Miller facing 51 shots in San Jose on Tuesday had nothing to do with it, "No it didn't, we try to map things out and this was his game." Rolston said Enroth playing poorly against the Ducks and not wanting to put him in against them Friday had nothing to do with it.

As you would assume, the rest of the lineup will be the same that beat the Sharks. That means Mikhail Grigorenko and Nikita Zadorov are scratches. When asked how they were taking it, Rolston became terse, "I would hope they're disappointed not to be in the lineup, but it is what it is. We won a game last time so we kept the lineup the same." I pressed on asking if he gets a sense from them and if they're working hard I simply got a glare and a yes.

Enroth let in six goals on 29 shots in a loss to the Ducks. Overall this season he's 1-3-1 with a 2.99 goals against and .907 save percentage.

The second period against the Sharks was probably Buffalo's best of the season. It stayed on the puck and worked relentlessly causing many Shark turnovers.

Zemgus Girgensons is starting to get scoring chances and had two assists on Tuesday. He said it's feeling like last year in Rochester, "I talked to my Dad about it, it's kind of like déjà vu, the same like last year making the jump from junior to the AHL. It takes time and patience, so I stick with it."

Matt Moulson also had two assists on Tuesday and has two goals in four assists for six points in his four games as a Sabre. Thomas Vanek has one goal and two assists for three points in four games with the Islanders.

Cody Hodgson has points in six out of eight games scoring four goals and three assists. The problem is he's been a minus player in his last three games.

Drew Stafford had gone 10 games without a goal, but he had a goal and an assist Tuesday.

Buffalo generated 36 shots in San Jose. It's not often the Sabres do that. They had 34 shots in Long Island and 35 against Ottawa.

Los Angeles is 9-6-0 which has it 5th in the Pacific Division, four points behind Vancouver.

The Kings have lost two of three. This is a stretch of eight games in nine at home. The only road game was a 3-1 loss in Phoenix. Overall L.A. is 5-3-0 at home.

Jonathan Quick gets the call in goal. He's 8-5-0 with a 2.68 goals against and .896 save percentage. Obviously with him struggling, it's hurt this team.

Anze Kopitar has 15 points in 15 games, while Mike Richards and Justin Williams have 11 points.

Richards has three goals in five games. Kopitar has three goals and four assists in five games.

Jeff Carter has struggled early this season. He was the first King to miss a game due to injury last time out. So far he has five goals and four assists in 14 games.

Former Sabre Robyn Reher is playing just under 20 minutes per game for the Kings.

NO HOLLYWOOD ENDING

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 8, 2013

LOS ANGELES – During even strength play, the Buffalo Sabres stayed right with the Los Angeles Kings.

However, the Kings scored twice on the power play and that was all they needed to defeat Buffalo 2-0 at Staples Center on Thursday. Mike Richards and Anze Kopitar scored for the Kings.

“That’s the difference. Their power play beat our penalty kill tonight. Five-on-five, I liked our play but we didn’t get the job done,” Sabres captain Steve Ott said.

Jonathan Quick was strong in net for Los Angeles, stopping 19 shots to earn the shutout, the 26th of his career. The game was Quick’s 300th in the NHL. He made his NHL debut against the Sabres on Dec. 6, 2007.

Sabres goaltender Jhonas Enroth rebounded from a tough night in his last start, in which he surrendered six goals. He made 26 saves against the Kings on Thursday.

The Kings were tied for the eighth-best power play in the NHL heading into the slate of games on Thursday and took advantage of two of their five opportunities against Buffalo. With the pair of goals in the game, Los Angeles is now 6-for-17 on the power play in their past four games (35.3 percent).

A late first-period goal by Richards gave Los Angeles the lead. During their only man-advantage opportunity of the first period, with Tyler Myers in the box for interference, the Kings went to work. Richards deflected in a point shot by Jake Muzzin in front of the net through Enroth’s five hole to put the Kings up 1-0 with 35.9 remaining in the first period.

“I think I bounced back and played a very solid game,” Enroth said. “I don’t think I made any big mistakes. I think I could’ve maybe done something else on the first goal, but it was a deflection in front of me so it’s a tough break for us, too with [35.9] seconds left in the period.”

Los Angeles went ahead 2-0 on a 4-on-3 power play with 7:42 remaining in the second period. Kopitar one-timed a cross-ice pass from Drew Doughty in. Kopitar partially fanned on the shot and he puck fluttered into a hole between Enroth’s left arm and his body.

“They’ve been together for a long time so they have continuity in their power play. It’s a 1-0 game and we’re on the power play and two minutes later, they have

a [4-on-3]. So that's not a real good recipe if you want to have a successful night," Sabres coach Ron Rolston said.

The Sabres had the man-advantage in that situation before Jamie McBain took a high-sticking penalty 26 seconds into the power play. Forty-four seconds, later Drew Stafford was sent to the box for slashing, setting up the Kings for the second goal.

"We need to get a kill at that right moment when it feels like we're going to start losing momentum in the game," Sabres forward Brian Flynn said.

Tyler Myers racked up 11 penalty minutes in the game as he was whistled for three minor penalties in addition to his five-minute major for fighting Matt Frattin.

"It's too many," Rolston said of the number of penalties Myers committed.

Christian Ehrhoff left the game 2:04 into the third period and did not return. Rolston said he should be fine for the team's game against the Anaheim Ducks on Friday.

The Sabres hoped to build on a shootout win over the San Jose Sharks on Tuesday, but despite their efforts, came up short. However, Ott said that the team is showing some good signs they need to continue building on.

"It was the same as San Jose. Our passion and pride's been way better in the last two games," he said. "That's the way we have to play to have any success in this League and we need to continue to do so. If we play the other way, it's going to get ugly in a hurry so we need to work, a continued work ethic and we need to drop this game and bring it again tomorrow night."

The Sabres will try to collect more points in the final game of their California road trip against the Ducks on Friday at 7 p.m. (10 p.m. in Buffalo) at Honda Center.

SABRES LOOK TO BUILD OFF ROAD WIN

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 7, 2013

LOS ANGELES – Coming off a big win against one of the NHL's best teams in the San Jose Sharks, the Buffalo Sabres hope to keep the good vibes going.

The Sabres take the ice against the Los Angeles Kings at 7:30 p.m. (10:30 p.m. in Buffalo) at Staples Center on Thursday.

Sabres forward Drew Stafford had a goal and an assist in the Sabres' 5-4 shootout win against the Sharks and looks to continue rolling.

"The main word is 'building.' We want to continue to try and take the positives out of things," Stafford said. "Obviously winning a game helps. Taking the positives off after losing so many in a row, it gets hard. It's a challenge. To finally get a big win like that definitely lightens the mood around here. At the same time, it gives us a little bit of a boost to have a good one against a very good team.

Sabres coach Ron Rolston stressed the importance of using that win to propel them into a good start against the Kings.

"I liked a lot of things about last game and now it's our job to build off of that and try to gain some momentum from that game," he said. "We're playing another team tonight that's similar in terms of their style of play. They're heavy so our compete's going to have to be up there right off the bat."

Defenseman Tyler Myers played 21:36 against the Sharks and said he had one of his most aggressive games of the season, particularly in the offensive zone. He said that strong play from the forwards will allow more opportunities for the defense to jump into the play.

"I think that was by far our best game as a team," he said. "...I think for me, it's trying not to force something that's not there. I think, especially last [game], it's seeing the opportunity and trying to take advantage of that.

"Last [game], it was probably one of my more aggressive offensive games so far but I think a lot of that had to do with how well our forwards controlled the puck and got after the puck on the forecheck, especially. When they're doing their job as well as they did last game, it makes the back end's job a whole lot easier to try and help them offensively."

Rolston said that Myers strong play stems mostly from the confidence he has in his game right now.

"I think he's building his game and these couple, I think he's done more offensively for us, which again build off of how he's feeling about his game," Rolston said. "I think he

feels good about it and from there, from that foundation, I think he's gaining confidence at the offensive end."

Rookie Johan Larsson got into his first career fight against the Sharks. He was an aggressor and agitator for most of the night and dropped the gloves with Tyler Kennedy early in the second period. The fight started with a scrum in the corner as he and Kennedy exchanged words and a few crosschecks.

"It's a part of the game so everything's good. It happened very very quickly so you just have to be prepared for that," Larsson said.

The Sabres will stick with the same combination of forwards and defensemen as they did against San Jose. The only change will come in net as Jhonas Enroth will start in goal. Rolston said that the team planned to give Enroth this game all along.

Keeping the same lineup means rookies Mikhail Grigorenko and Nikita Zadorov will be once again be healthy scratches.

"I would hope they're disappointed to not be in the lineup, but it is what is. We won a game last time, so we kept the lineup the same," Rolston said.

Forward John Scott will serve the last game of his seven-game suspension on Thursday. He's eligible to return on Friday against the Anaheim Ducks.

Rolston said that he and the coaching staff will make lineup decisions on a game-by-game basis but also said that Scott, Grigorenko and Zadorov have been working hard.

26 Matt Moulson – 19 Cody Hodgson – 63 Tyler Ennis
9 Steve Ott – 82 Marcus Foligno – 78 Corey Tropp
28 Zemgus Girgensons – 22 Johan Larsson – 65 Brian Flynn
23 Ville Leino – 8 Cody McCormick – 21 Drew Stafford

10 Christian Ehrhoff – 3 Mark Pysyk
20 Henrik Tallinder – 57 Tyler Myers
4 Jamie McBain – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen

1 Jhonas Enroth
30 Ryan Miller

Scratched: 25 Mikhail Grigorenko, 61 Nikita Zadorov
Suspended: 32 John Scott

Kings take advantage of lowly Sabres in 2-0 win

By Lisa Dillman

Los Angeles Times

November 7, 2013

They are hockey's equivalent of a quick cleaning, a sure-fire way to spiff up the place before getting to the serious stuff later.

Yes, things often look a lot better after a game against the struggling Buffalo Sabres.

The Kings have been struggling on the penalty kill, dealing with injuries to forwards Jeff Carter and Jarret Stoll and defenseman Matt Greene and inconsistency. Those concerns eased Thursday night after the Kings beat Buffalo, 2-0, sparked by power-play goals from centers Mike Richards and Anze Kopitar at Staples Center.

For Kings goalie Jonathan Quick, his first shutout of the season and the 26th of his career came on a milestone night, marking his 300th regular-season game. This was the second shutout of the season for the Kings as Ben Scrivens had the other, on Oct. 13 at Florida.

The milestone caught Quick by surprise.

"I didn't know it was 300 until they announced it in the second period," he said. "We got two points out of it. It's what we were looking for.

"It was the first time in awhile that we didn't give up a power-play goal. So that's a positive, something to build on."

Typically, he wasn't basking in the glow of the shutout, saying: "6-5, 1-0, it's all the same. Two points."

Quick faced 19 shots and was tested early and often in the first period by the Sabres, who have won three of 18 games this season. Later, one of Quick's best saves seemed to take the fight out of the Sabres. With the Kings holding a 1-0 lead, Quick made a sliding stop on Buffalo forward Corey Tropp with 10:32 left in the second period.

Then came a series of penalties resulting in the Kings going on a four-on-three man advantage. They took advantage of the extra space, converting on a slick passing play with defenseman Drew Doughty finding Kopitar in the right circle.

Kopitar also spoke of not allowing a power-play goal for the first time in seven games as Buffalo went 0 for 4. "Quickie definitely made a couple of good saves at

the start of the game and kept us even," he said. "After that, we got our legs underneath us."

Richards, whose deflection of defenseman Jake Muzzin's shot led to the first goal at 19:24 of the first period, had the second assist on Kopitar's goal.

In the last seven games, Richards has eight points, including four goals.

In 2009, Richards had a career-high five points in a game against the Sabres when he was with the Philadelphia Flyers.

The Kings' injuries led to the NHL debut of rookie center Linden Vey, who was called up last week. Vey played 11:28. Getting back into the lineup for the first time since Oct. 17 was defenseman Alec Martinez because of the injury to Greene.

Quick had spoken earlier about the importance of getting in the extra work during the mini-break in the schedule. His game almost always benefits and it did again.

"Obviously, with the Olympic year, you kind of get running around a little bit," he said. "You miss some days here and there with practice and being able to work on the details and things like that. We had three good days of practice and were able to prepare for this game."

Kings' Quick blanks Sabres in 300th NHL game

By Elliott Teaford

Torrance Daily Breeze

November 7, 2013

Kings goaltender Jonathan Quick had no idea until the announcement came over the Staples Center sound system during the second period Thursday night. He didn't know he played in his 300th game in the NHL, a rather ho-hum 2-0 victory over the Buffalo Sabres.

Quick stopped 19 shots for his first shutout of the season and the 26th of his career. Power-play goals from centers Mike Richards and Anze Kopitar eased his burden and the Kings dispatched the Sabres, the NHL's last-place team, with relative ease.

"It's just another game," Quick said in his customary monotone delivery after facing only token pressure at times from the Sabres, who fell to 3-14-1. "It's two points. We've got another game against the Canucks in two days and that's the focus now."

The Kings' four-day layoff was history and it was time to put what they gained from their longest break between games in 2013-14 to good use against a Sabres team that has struggled to get anything right during a disastrous opening month-plus of the season.

For Quick, three days of practice plus a day off Monday gave him a chance to get back to basics after the Kings' 4-3 loss Saturday to the Nashville Predators. He was sharp from the start against the Sabres, who were coming off a 5-4 shootout win Tuesday over the San Jose Sharks.

"Obviously, with the Olympics, you kind of get running around a little bit and you miss some days here and there with practice," Quick said. "I've been able to get to work on the details and things like that. We were able to get a lot of work done and prepare for this game."

Above all, the Kings improved their special teams, especially their penalty-killing unit. The Kings went into the game having given up at least one power-play goal in six consecutive games, including two in the first period Saturday against the Predators.

Not only did the Kings click twice on the power play against Buffalo, but they also killed off all four Sabres chances with the man-advantage. The Kings' power-play has been successful six times in 17 chances over the last four games for a sizzling 35.3 percent success rate.

"First time in a while we didn't give up a power-play goal, so that's something to build on," Quick said.

The Kings conclude a stretch in which they played eight of nine games at home when they host Vancouver on Saturday. Then they hit the road for a four-game trip to play the Sabres, New York Islanders, New Jersey Devils and New York Rangers.