



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

January 14, 2014

Flyers-Sabres Preview

By Tom Castro
Associated Press
January 13, 2014

Solid defensive play was a key part of the Philadelphia Flyers' recent hot streak, but they've struggled in their own end while dropping their last two games.

A matchup with the worst offensive team in the league may give them a good chance to get back on track, though the Buffalo Sabres have been surging at home.

The Flyers look to avoid a third consecutive loss Tuesday night when they take on the Sabres, who despite their problems on offense have earned points in three in a row and eight straight at home.

Philadelphia (23-19-4) followed up its last three-game skid by going 10-2-1 from Dec. 12-Jan. 8, allowing 34 goals, but it's been outscored 10-4 in its last two. The Flyers fell behind 3-0 after one period Sunday, allowing two goals in an early 28-second span, and lost 4-1 to the New York Rangers.

Philadelphia held a 38-35 advantage in shots, but managed only Mark Streit's power-play goal 6:49 into the third.

"It's frustrating," said the Flyers' Ray Emery, who stopped 31 shots. "I've got to make some saves, and we've got to come out better. Anytime you put yourself in a hole like that against a team that is playing well like they are, you don't give yourself much of a chance."

Philadelphia didn't help its goaltender with sloppy defensive play and by being short-handed five times in the first two periods.

"In this league you have to work really hard without the puck - especially in this building and we didn't do that," Streit told the team's official website. "Once you are behind by two or three goals it's hard to catch up. You can't (come from behind) in every game in this league. You can do it a few times but we just need to make sure we are ready to go Tuesday and shake this one off by learning from our mistakes."

That means starting strong against the Sabres (13-26-5), who are last in the NHL with a minus-27 goal differential in the first period.

Buffalo, though, has given up one total goal in the opening 20 minutes of its last four games, going 2-0-1 in the past three. Ryan Miller made 28 saves - one a spectacular stop on Mikhail Grabovski late in regulation - and three more in the shootout of a 2-1 victory over Washington on Sunday.

The Sabres, who avoided what would have been a team record-tying 12th straight road loss, have picked up five points in the last three contests despite recording four non-shootout goals. Their 77 goals are by far the fewest in the league.

Despite that, Buffalo has gone 6-0-2 in its last eight at home, giving up two or fewer goals in each contest.

"You see in the home wins and just the way we're playing, we're coming," leading scorer Cody Hodgson told the team's website after netting the shootout winner.

Miller has given up one goal in four of his past six starts. He made 42 saves in a 4-1 road loss to the Flyers on Nov. 21 in the teams' first meeting of the season.

Philadelphia has scored a power-play goal in four of the past five games, while Buffalo has allowed one in 19 short-handed situations over the last six.

The Sabres took the last two home meetings with Philadelphia last season.

Omark moved to point on power plays

By Jay Skurski

Buffalo News

January 14, 2014

The Buffalo Sabres hope a subtle change to their power play will lead to noticeable results.

Sunday against Washington, the Sabres moved forward Linus Omark to the point during the man advantage. He was in the same position during practice Monday in First Niagara Center, working with Brayden McNabb on the second unit.

That's a good indication Omark will find himself in the same role tonight when the Sabres host the Philadelphia Flyers in a nationally televised contest on NBC Sports Network.

"He did pretty well. He has a set of skills that very few have," Sabres interim coach Ted Nolan said of Omark. "We've just got to get him to do less skills and more finish, but he's doing well."

It's because of that skill set that Nolan decided to move Omark back to the point. It's a role the 26-year-old Swede has filled before.

"I've done it a lot. When I was in Edmonton I did it ... so I'm used to it," said Omark, who spent parts of two seasons with the Oilers before joining the Sabres in a trade last month.

The Sabres scored their only goal in regulation Sunday against the Capitals with the man advantage, and although Omark wasn't on the ice for that one, he did help create several other chances.

Any boost is welcome for the offensively-starved Sabres, who rank last in the NHL with only 71 goals - 27 fewer than any other team - and 28th on the power play with a success rate of 13 percent.

Moving Omark back ideally will give the Sabres more options, since he won't be stapled to the blue line.

"I can play the half wall and the point at the same time. I have the responsibility defensively," he said. "Maybe I can shoot it more. That's one of my biggest strengths on the power play. We were pretty close yesterday, hopefully we can bury them."

Center Cody Hodgson, who scored the game-deciding goal in the shootout Sunday, said he liked what Omark brought to the second power-play unit.

“He did awesome. I thought both units were really snapping the puck around and making sure we were crisp,” he said. “We scored the one on it, but I thought we could have had a few more, too. ... He brings a lot to the team with his skill and creativity. It’s great to see him making little saucer passes and things like that that he’s really good at.”

Omark’s creativity was also on display in the shootout Sunday. He went wide to the left and came in on Capitals goalie Philipp Grubauer with a full head of steam. Omark attempted to flip the puck over Grubauer as the goalie slid to his left, but didn’t get enough air on the attempt.

The shot was reminiscent of a shootout goal that Omark scored while playing for the Swedish national team, a play that has been viewed on YouTube more than a million times.

Omark is now 0 for 2 in his Sabres’ career in shootouts, something he’s hungry to change soon.

“My first one I hit the post, I was pretty close,” he said. “Yesterday, I had him, but I missed the flip. I think it was two ‘ok’ attempts, but of course I want to score. Next time if I get the chance, I will bury it.”

Omark has one assist in eight games with the Sabres. He skated on a line in practice with Ville Leino and Brian Flynn on Monday.

Hodgson, meanwhile, was between John Scott and Matt D’Agostini at practice. The Sabres’ leading scorer (eight goals and 12 assists for 20 points) appeared not to miss a beat against Washington after missing eight games because of an upper-body injury.

“Mentally was the toughest part. The adjustment to the quick pace of the game, you can’t replicate that anywhere,” Hodgson said.

“You can feel good and in shape, but until you actually get into the games, you don’t realize how quick the game actually is.”

Hodgson worked with skating coach Dawn Braid during his absence, and credited his time with her and the team’s training staff for keeping him ready to play.

“The way they took care of the injury and what happened, they did a great job with that,” he said.

Stafford could be back by end of week

By Jay Skurski

Buffalo News

January 14, 2014

The Buffalo Sabres could have forward Drew Stafford back in the lineup by the end of the week.

Stafford went through practice Monday morning in First Niagara Center wearing a red non-contact jersey. He said afterward "it's been a good last couple days."

"I think it's more a day-to-day kind of thing," Stafford said about his return to the lineup. "I had a really long day today, a hard-working day, so we'll see how it responds later today and tomorrow morning. That's pretty much where we're at."

Stafford has missed the past three games after suffering an upper-body injury against the Minnesota Wild on Jan. 2.

"It's one of those things where he's coming at me pretty fast, I'm coming at him pretty fast. It's kind of like a car crash. You see those kind of hits every game numerous times," Stafford said. "Just kind of bad luck on that one that I got twisted up a little bit."

Stafford has four goals and nine assists in 41 games this season.

Interim coach Ted Nolan said he hadn't talked to Stafford at the conclusion of Monday's practice, but "I talked to him during practice. He said he was feeling good."

"I'm not 100 percent sure about tomorrow, but he's real close," Nolan said.

The Sabres' other injured players — forwards Cody McCormick and Kevin Porter and defenseman Henrik Tallinder — are not as close to returning. McCormick took part in practice on a non-contact basis.

"All those three guys are about the same," Nolan said.

Captain Steve Ott was given the day off Monday. Nolan said it was unrelated to the shot Ott blocked off his hand Sunday against the Washington Capitals, but was instead a regular "maintenance day."

"He's just one of those guys who competes hard all the time," Nolan said of Ott. "It's just to give him rest. He played big minutes for us last night. He blocks shots all the time. He takes hits. He's not the biggest guy in the league, but he plays very big."

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Nolan reiterated Monday why the organization feels it's best for 19-year-old Mikhail Grigorenko to develop in juniors.

That's a decision Grigorenko at first balked at, making it seem like he would not report to the Quebec Remparts of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. In a since-deleted Facebook post, Grigorenko wrote over the weekend: "I would just ask all of you guys to respect me and the time I'm taking to think about my career. It might be hard to understand, but it is even harder for a teenager."

"We can't control what people do and what they say, but we certainly can control how we're going to try to run this organization and what we feel is necessary for the development of young players," Nolan said Monday. "The tail can't wag the dog. The dog wags the tail."

"We feel as an organization it's best for him to develop in junior hockey. That's not taking anything away from him. He's got some skills and he's got some ability, but in order for him to play at this level, we just need a little bit more."

Grigorenko and his agent, Jay Grossman, agreed to the assignment late Sunday night after talking with members of the Sabres' front office.

"You got to make the best of whatever situation you're in," Nolan said. "If he learns at a young age, it's even better. But you will learn how to adapt and to adjust, and if you don't, someone else is always going to take your job."

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NHL Central Scouting released its midterm rankings Monday on NHL.com. If the Sabres finish the season in their current position of 30th and last in the league, they'll have a 25 percent chance of receiving the first overall pick in the NHL Draft lottery.

Central Scouting ranked center Samuel Bennett of the Ontario Hockey League's Kingston Frontenacs as the No. 1 North American skater. Bennett, 6-foot-0 and 178 pounds, is fourth in the OHL with 66 points (26 goals, 40 assists) in 40 games.

Center Sam Reinhart, who plays for Kootenay of the Western Hockey League, is thought by many to be the likeliest No. 1 overall pick. He's ranked fourth by Central Scouting in its latest rankings.

The top-ranked North American defenseman is 6-3, 216-pounder Aaron Ekblad of Barrie in the OHL.

The top-ranked European skater is Kasper Kapanen, a 6-0, 180-pound right winger from Finland.

Flyers look to bounce back against Sabres

By Adam Kimelman

NHL.com

January 13, 2014

FLYERS (23-19-4) at SABRES (13-26-5)

TV: TSN, NBCSN, CSN-PH

Last 10: Philadelphia 7-3-0; Buffalo 5-3-2

Season series: It's the second of three games this season between the Philadelphia Flyers and Buffalo Sabres. On Nov. 21, Flyers forward Matt Read scored two goals, including the game-winner, in a 4-1 win at First Niagara Center.

Big story: The Sabres are feeling good about themselves after their 2-1 shootout win against the Washington Capitals on Sunday which snapped an 11-game winless skid on the road.

"It was a total game and we haven't seen that in a long time on the road," Sabres captain Steve Ott told the Buffalo News on Sunday.

Now the Sabres look to continue their improved play at home, which has seen them win six of their past eight. They'll face a Flyers team looking to rebound from a lost weekend that saw them swept in a back-to-back set at home against the Tampa Bay Lightning on Saturday (6-3) and at the New York Rangers on Sunday (4-1).

"We allowed 10 goals," forward Jakub Voracek told CSNPhilly.com Sunday. "We didn't play very well defensively. I wouldn't say we lost the games in the first period but we were half a step slower than them. They came out with some jam."

Team scope:

Flyers: The Flyers could have Read back in the lineup Tuesday. Read has missed the past six games with a concussion; the Flyers are 3-3-0 without him.

Read practiced Sunday for about an hour with assistant coach Ian Laperriere prior to the Flyers' game Sunday night against the Rangers but would not comment to reporters.

On Monday, Flyers general manager Paul Holmgren told the Philadelphia Daily News that Read "is getting closer. We will see how he is after the morning skate [Tuesday]."

However, Holmgren showed he might be a bit more confident in Read's return earlier Monday when the team returned forward Tye McGinn to the Adirondack Phantoms of the American Hockey League.

Read has 10 goals and nine assists in 39 games.

Sabres: Drew Stafford wore a non-contact jersey at practice Monday but he's getting close to a return to the lineup. Stafford has missed the past three games with an upper-body injury sustained Jan. 2.

"I think it's more a day-to-day kind of thing," Stafford told the Buffalo News. "I had a really long day [Monday], a hard-working day, so we'll see how it responds later [Monday] and [Tuesday] morning. That's pretty much where we're at."

Stafford has four goals and nine assists in 41 games.

Sabres interim coach Ted Nolan said he wasn't sure if Stafford could play as soon as Tuesday against the Flyers.

"I talked to him during practice," Nolan told the Buffalo News. "He said he was feeling good. I'm not 100 percent sure about [Tuesday] but he's real close."

Who's hot: Flyers forward Wayne Simmonds has 10 goals in his past 13 games. ... Sabres goalie Ryan Miller is 6-1-1 in his past eight games, and has allowed two goals or fewer in six of those games.

Injury report: Flyers forwards Zac Rinaldo (ankle) and Read (concussion) are questionable. ... Sabres forwards Cody McCormick (upper body) and Kevin Porter (undisclosed), along with defenseman Henrik Tallinder (upper body), are out. Stafford (upper body) is questionable.

Matt Moulson open to staying with Sabres, not worried about getting traded again

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

January 14, 2014

BUFFALO – Thirty games into what could be a very short Sabres career, Matt Moulson said he's given a lot of thought to a future he can't control yet.

The winger, quietly one of the NHL's top goal scorers for years, would be coveted as an unrestricted free agent this summer. But before that, if the Sabres want to deal the 30-year-old, he'd be in high demand as a rental prior to the March 5 trade deadline.

Moulson said he can't worry about getting traded for the second time this season.

"People told me I was going to get traded since the first day I got here, I think," Moulson said Monday inside the First Niagara Center. "It's not something new. I've expressed how much I enjoy playing with Buffalo."

"Again, it's sports. These things happen. If I'm worried about that every time, I'd probably drive myself nuts. I'm just going to try to play hockey."

Moulson has played some pretty good hockey for the Sabres, compiling eight goals and 18 points since arriving from the New York Islanders in the Oct. 27 Thomas Vanek deal. On a team lacking elite talent, Moulson's probably the only true star other than franchise goalie Ryan Miller.

He would fetch a long-term deal worth possibly \$6 million a season on the open market. With the salary cap going up to about \$72 million, the Sabres will almost certainly have the space to re-sign him.

Moulson said he's open to returning. He spoke to president of hockey operations Pat LaFontaine "a little bit a little while ago." He hasn't chatted with new general manager Tim Murray yet.

"I've definitely enjoyed my time in Buffalo," Moulson said after the Sabres prepared for tonight's home tilt against the Philadelphia Flyers. "Definitely great owners. The Pegulas are first class. I love playing for Teddy (Nolan) and the coaching staff. So I think the team's heading in the right direction with Pat and Tim and Craig (Patrick, an advisor). ... We'll have to wait and see what they think."

Nolan awarded him a temporary assistant captaincy for Sunday's 2-1 shootout win in Washington, a gesture Moulson appreciated.

The interim coach compared Moulson to hardworking Sabres captain Steve Ott.

“He competes and he works,” Nolan said about Moulson. “He’s a great character guy. He demonstrates great leadership skills in our dressing room. So everything you want from a player and from a human being is top notch. He’s right up there with the most valuable guy we have on this team.”

Moulson enjoys playing for Nolan, a “players’ coach.”

“I think he’s a great motivator, a great leader,” Moulson said. “He’s going to make you work, but it’s also an enjoyable atmosphere to be in at the same time. It’s fun to come to the rink every day and work for a coach like that every day.”

Moulson has 14 goals and 27 points in 41 total games this season, a 28-score, 54-point pace over a full campaign. He had three straight 30-goal seasons from 2009 to 2012, including a career-high 36 two years ago. His 126 goals since 2009-10 rank him 14th in NHL scoring over that period. That’s as many as Chicago star Patrick Kane.

Like most of his teammates, Moulson has struggled offensively at times this season. Remember, the Sabres have only 71 goals, a pace that would make them the lowest-scoring team ever.

Moulson endured an 11-game drought after scoring twice in his Sabres debut. He has one goal and one point in his last six contests.

“I think I can always be better,” Moulson said. “I don’t think I’ve played my best hockey. I think sometimes, for myself, especially once I get to feel more comfortable I start to play better.”

Ted Nolan wants ‘a little bit more’ from Sabres prospect Mikhail Grigorenko; Drew Stafford nearing return

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

January 14, 2014

BUFFALO – Interim Sabres coach Ted Nolan spoke bluntly Monday about 19-year-old prospect Mikhail Grigorenko, who refused an assignment to junior Saturday before accepting it a day later.

“We can’t control what people do and what they say, but we can certainly control how we’re going to run this organization and what we feel is necessary for the development of young players,” Nolan said after the Sabres prepared for tonight’s game against the Philadelphia Flyers inside the First Niagara Center. “The tail can’t wag the dog; the dog wags the tail.

“We feel as an organization it’s best for him to develop in junior hockey. That’s not taking anything away from him. He’s got some skills and he’s got some ability. But in order to play at this level we just need a little bit more.”

Grigorenko’s agent, Jay Grossman, told the Times Herald on Sunday “there were some real serious concerns about the development process” for the center, who’s playing for his seventh coach in a year.

“I certainly have not seen that or experienced that,” Grossman said.

Can Nolan appreciate what Grigorenko’s going through?

“You got to make the best of whatever situation you’re in,” he said. “If he learns at a young age, it’s even better. But you will learn to adapt and to adjust, and if you don’t, someone else is always going to take your job.”

Grigorenko’s supposed to report to the Quebec Remparts today.

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Sabres winger Drew Stafford (upper body) and forward Cody McCormick (hand) practiced Monday in a non-contact role.

Stafford, who hadn’t practiced since hitting Minnesota’s Matt Cooke on Jan. 2, is closer to returning than McCormick, however. Stafford said he’s day-to-day.

Even though he’s practicing again, Nolan said McCormick’s in the same group with forward Kevin Porter (lower body) and defenseman Henrik Tallinder (upper body), who aren’t practicing.

“Everything feels fine,” McCormick said. “They just want a little more healing in it.”

He added: “Just feels good to be around the guys again. I got a bit of time ahead of me. But everything’s kind of progressing the way it wants to.”

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Nolan on how he would describe goalie Ryan Miller’s recent play: “Out of this world maybe.”

Miller’s .950 save percentage over his last 10 appearances is the best of any 10-game stretch in his career. He made 28 stops in Sunday’s 2-1 shootout win in Washington, including an incredible stick save on Mikhail Grabovski.

“His last two starts and every game he’s played since I’ve been here has been outstanding,” Nolan said. “That save he did (Sunday) night was one for the ages. But he’s been rock solid in the net. He makes difficult saves look very easy. So he’s been very, very good.”

Sunday’s road triumph, the Sabres’ first under Nolan, ended a 0-9-2 stretch. They hadn’t won an away game since a 5-4 shootout victory Nov. 5 in San Jose.

“I didn’t realize we didn’t win on the road for that long,” Nolan said. “But the guys really sure knew. But not so much where we won, it’s how we won. I thought it was a real total team effort from the 20th guy to our goaltender right through the whole lineup. Everybody contributes. Since I’ve been here it’s probably the best as a team that we have (played).”

The Sabres have a point in eight straight home games (6-0-2) entering tonight.

New Sabres brass tested early

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

January 13, 2014

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- When new people come in to run teams and organizations they're going to be challenged.

Tim Murray, Pat LaFontaine and Ted Nolan got one early when Mikhail Grigorenko refused to report to junior on Saturday. The three men stood firm because it's their belief that sending the Russian there is what's best for his development. Ted Nolan said, "We can't control what people do and what they say, but we certainly can control how we're going to try to run this organization and what we feel is necessary for the development of young players. The tail can't wag the dog, the dog wags the tail, so we feel as an organization it's best for him to develop in junior hockey." Nolan added, "That's not taking anything away from him. He's got some skills and he's got some ability, but in order to play at this level, we just need a little bit more."

Cody Hodgson had problems in Vancouver when the head coach questioned his willingness to play hurt or if he was hurt as bad as he said. It's different than Grigorenko, but he thinks his teammate will be fine, "Everybody knows he's going to be a great hockey player. You want to see what's best for him and his development and what's going to help the team, so all of us wish Mikhail all the best and we want to see him do really well and then be back here."

Both Murray and LaFontaine have been unavailable to comment on this situation and may not since it has been resolved and Grigorenko decided to report.

Sabres may get Stafford back soon

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

January 13, 2014

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- Drew Stafford and Cody McCormick were back on the ice with their teammates Monday morning.

McCormick is still a ways away, but Stafford may be closer. Ted Nolan said, "I spoke to him during practice and he said he was feeling good. We're going to push him a little bit more and see how he feels." Nolan added, "I'm not 100 percent sure about tomorrow, but he's real close." From Stafford's perspective he said, "I think it's more day to day. I had a really long day today, a hard working day so we'll see how it responds later today and tomorrow morning."

Nolan said McCormick, Kevin Porter and Henrik Tallinder are still not close to being ready.

Stafford, hurt himself against Minnesota with a body check. He said, "Pretty good, it's been a good last couple of days, so just slowly trying to get back into it in the normal routine of things."

Stafford hit Matt Cooke and then on the way to the bench was speared by Cooke. Stafford said, "It was the hit. The guys were saying he gave me a good whack, he was probably pissed about the hit, but I honestly didn't feel that. When I turned, I could tell something was off, so I went to the bench."

Stafford is close to being one of the guys that's been here the longest. He's seen ownership, coaching and now GM changes. Stafford said he likes where the franchise is headed, "Yes definitely. With all the changes that have been happening and with the losses piling up as well, it was pretty tough and pretty challenging here, so it was definitely a clean slate with Ted and Patty coming in. There was some sort of direction, I felt like our game was improving, but we still didn't have the true General Manager yet and now that we do, we'll see what happens."

As far as how he sees Tim Murray Stafford said, "There's no point in speculating or thinking what Tim's going to do, for us we just have to make sure we're ready to go and keep trying to get those wins."

Cody Hodgson missed eight games before returning against Washington. He looked like he was in good shape and ready to skate. Hodgson said he put a lot of work in while he was injured, "I think working with the skating coach Dawn Braid really helped. The way the trainers took care of the injury I was able to keep practicing and play with pucks, so I thought it was a good job by the whole training staff." Hodgson added that other things were harder than conditioning, "Mentally was the toughest part, the adjustment to the quick pace of the game, you can't replicate that anywhere else. You can feel good and in shape, but until you actually get into the games, you don't realize what the pace is."

STAFFORD RETURNS TO PRACTICE

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

January 13, 2014

After Ville Leino and Cody Hodgson made their returns to the Buffalo Sabres lineup on Sunday, at least one more player is close to making a comeback.

Drew Stafford skated with the team Monday morning at First Niagara Center for the first time since sustaining an upper-body injury against the Minnesota Wild on New Year's Day. He skated in a red non-contact jersey but thinks he might be able to play soon.

"It's more [of a] day-to-day kind of thing. I've been feeling really good the last couple days," Stafford said. "I had a really long day today, hard working day today. We'll see how it responds later today and tomorrow morning. That's pretty much where we're at."

Cody McCormick, also in a red non-contact jersey, isn't as close to coming off injured reserve as Stafford may be, but is happy to be back on the ice as a part of a team practice. He's missed 11 games with an upper-body injury. He made his return to practice on Saturday.

"There's still time, but getting back with the guys and being able to participate in practices, it's a welcome change to what I was doing," McCormick said. "You want to practice with the guys, you want to be around the guys and when you're hurt, you're doing the things on the side and working to get back into practice. It feels good to get out there."

Henrik Tallinder and Kevin Porter, who are also on injured reserve, have been skating on their own and interim coach Ted Nolan said that they, like McCormick, will still be out for a little while longer.

Steve Ott was given a maintenance day and did not practice. John Scott, a healthy scratch in the team's 2-1 shootout win in Washington on Sunday, took Ott's spot on a line with Cody Hodgson and Matt D'Agostini.

The Sabres announced late Sunday night that 19-year-old center Mikhail Grigorenko had decided to accept his assignment to the Quebec Remparts of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

"We can't control what people do and what they say, but we certainly can control how we're going to try to run this organization and what we feel is necessary for the development of young players," Nolan said. "The tail can't wag the dog. The dog wags the tail."

“So we feel as an organization, it’s best for him to develop in junior hockey and that’s not taking anything away from him. He’s got some skills and he’s got some ability, but in order for him to play at this level, we just need a little bit more.”

With Tallinder out with an upper-body injury and Tyler Myers serving a three-game suspension, the Sabres coaching staff has been rotating the second “A.” Mike Weber served as an alternate captain on Thursday against Florida and the letter was given to Matt Moulson for the game on Sunday.

“It’s an honor to have a letter on your jersey,” Mouslon said. “I don’t think it changes the way you act or the things I would do. Who knows how long I’ll have it for, but it is always an honor to be looked upon as a leader.”

In his last 10 games, Ryan Miller has a save percentage of .950. That’s the best save percentage he’s posted in any 10-game stretch of his career.

He made a highlight-reel save with the blade of his stick on Mikhail Grabovski with 2:14 to play in the third period that Nolan called “one for the ages.”

After the game, Nolan said he was looking down to see which line to call out next and had to watch the save on replay.

“I was looking down at my papers for the next line combination and the guys said I missed the save of the year,” Nolan said Sunday night.

How would Nolan describe Miller’s play of late?

“Out of this world, maybe,” he said. “I don’t know. His last two starts and every game he’s played here since I’ve been here have been outstanding.”

Miller’s teammates have noticed his strong play all season.

“He’s one of the best goalies in the world and sometimes when you do have breakdowns, he’s obviously there to bail you out much like he’s done all year,” Moulson said. “You have a world-class goalie like that, I think it instills a little more confidence in the team. He’s been playing tremendous.”

The win over the Capitals marked the team’s first win on the road since Nov. 5 in San Jose. They snapped an 11-game losing streak away from First Niagara Center.

“It’s nice to win any time, but I didn’t realize we didn’t win on the road for that long,” Nolan, who was hired on Nov. 13, said. “The guys sure knew. It’s not where we won, but how we won last night.

“I thought it was a real total team effort from the 20th guy to our goaltenders, right through the lineup, everybody contributed. Since I’ve been here, it was probably the best win as a team that we had.”

The Sabres next take on the Philadelphia Flyers at home on Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. The game will be broadcast on NBCSN. After the game, Buffalo will travel to Toronto for a Wednesday night match against the Maple Leafs at 7:30 p.m.

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SABRES PROSPECTS REPORT

By Kris Baker

Sabres.com

January 13, 2014

OHL

Nick Baptiste (2013, third round) posted five points in three games last week, including a one-goal and two-assist effort Saturday to earn the number one star as Sudbury skated to a 4-2 victory over Belleville. The night before, the speedy winger notched a short-handed marker plus and a helper in a 4-2 doubling of Mississauga. The productive efforts boost Baptiste's point total to 51 (23+28) through 40 games, surpassing the 48 points he collected in 66 games last season.

Eric Locke (2013, seventh round) extended his point streak to six games with a power play tally and an assist on Friday, and then scoring his 13th goal of the year Saturday as Saginaw pushed their winning streak to four with victories over Ottawa and London. Locke has points in six of seven outings since returning from a six-week shoulder injury for a total of 30 (13+70) in 22 games. Just as important has been Locke's hard work and leadership in both ends of the rink.

Justin Kea (2012, third round) snapped a four-game goal drought Friday with his 15th of the year in Saginaw's 10-5 hammering of Ottawa. The power forward has recorded one point in his last five games, his quietest five-game block of the season. Kea remains among the Spirit's offensive leaders with 34 points in 42 games.

Justin Bailey (2013, second round) scored with 3:17 left in regulation to force overtime on Friday, but Kitchener was defeated 6-5 by Niagara. The Williamsville, NY-native, who has 13 points (8+5) in his last 12 games, has lit the lamp 17 times in 42 games this year, equaling the 17 goals posted in 57 games last season. Bailey enters the week as the Rangers' second-leading scorer with 32 points.

London defenseman Nikita Zadorov (2013, first round) returned to the OHL Friday from his stint with Team Russia, posting an assist as the Knights were defeated 5-3 by Guelph. Zadorov, who was blanked in weekend losses to Saginaw and Sault Ste. Marie, has seven points (2+5) and a plus-five rating in 11 games since being returned from Buffalo.

Brady Austin (2012, seventh round) notched his sixth goal of the year as London dropped a 5-3 decision at Guelph. The shutdown defender has 18 points (6+12) this season, while his plus-25 rating is good for 16th in the OHL.

WHL

Logan Nelson (2012, fifth round) was placed back on the injured list after re-aggravating an upper-body injury. The scoring line forward has produced 12 goals and 32 points in 35 games.

NCAA

Jake McCabe (2012, second round) picked up an assist Friday as No. 14 Wisconsin won a 5-2 decision over No. 9 Michigan. The junior defender, who was kept off the scoresheet as the Badgers earned the sweep with a 3-1 victory on Saturday, has five goals and 16 points at the 20-game mark.

Brad Navin (2011, seventh round) produced three shots on goal in Wisconsin's sweep of the Wolverines. The third-year man has collected six points (3+3) this season, while his plus-nine rating ranks second among the Badger forwards.

Michigan forward J.T. Compher (2013, second round) was blanked over the weekend as the Wolverines started the 2014 portion of their schedule with a pair losses at Wisconsin. The fiery freshman appeared to score in the final minute with the extra attacker in Saturday's defeat, but teammate Andrew Copp (WPG) was in the crease and the goal was waved off. Compher remains second on the team with 15 points (6+9) after 18 games.

Sean Malone (2013, sixth round) was unable to point last week as Harvard tied Quinnipiac 2-2, and lost to Yale 5-1 in a game played at Madison Square Garden on Saturday. Malone ranks third in team scoring with nine points (3+6) after his first 16 collegiate contests.

Defenseman Anthony Florentino (2013, fifth round) did not play Friday as No. 6 Providence was defeated 5-2 by No. 4 Boston College. The freshman rearguard has collected eight points (3+5) and a plus-14 rating in 18 games, but has recorded just one point - a goal - in his last 10 games.

Providence defenseman Mark Adams (2009, fifth round) remained out of action last week with a lower-body injury. The fourth-year player has appeared in just five games this, collecting one goal and a plus-four rating.

Christian Isackson (2010, seventh round) was scratched Sunday as No. 1 Minnesota edged Penn State 3-2. The junior forward has four points (1+3) in nine appearances for the Gophers.

USHL

Cal Petersen (2013, fifth round) stopped 20 of 21 shots to earn his eighth-straight victory as Waterloo defeated Des Moines 3-1. The Notre Dame commit, who

made 27 saves Friday in an 8-3 throttling of Sioux Falls, improves to 19-2-1 this season with a 2.43 GAA (5th in league) and .918 save% (5th).

Connor Hurley (2013, second round) picked up two assists last week to extend his point streak to four games as Green Bay defeated Sioux City and lost at Dubuque. The skilled centerman has points in five of six games since being traded from Muskegon over the holiday break, giving him 19 (6+13) on the year.

Judd Peterson (2012, seventh round) logged a minus-three rating as Cedar Rapids lost at Omaha 5-3. The second-year man has gone a season-high four games without a point, but still leads all RoughRiders skaters with 12 goals through 30 games.

Swedish Hockey League (SHL)

Linus Ullmark (2012, sixth round) made 35 saves Wednesday as MODO posted a 3-2 win over HV 71. On Friday, Ullmark came on in relief late in the second period, allowing two goals on eight shots in less than 23 minutes of work as MODO was blown out by 8-2 by Linkopings. Ullmark has won 10 of 20 starts this season, compiling a 2.05 GAA (4th in league) and a league-best .932 save%.

For more on all the youngsters in the Sabres pipeline, check out Kris Baker's web site - sabresprospects.com. You can also follow him on Twitter @sabresprospects for in-game updates throughout the week on any Buffalo prospects that are in action.