



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

March 18, 2014

Sabres-Flames Preview

Associated Press

March 17, 2014

Jhonas Enroth will not join the Buffalo Sabres on their five-game road swing, and with backup Michal Neuvirth also injured, the league's worst team will likely begin its trip with a No. 1 goaltender who has 22 minutes of NHL game experience under his belt.

Nathan Lieuwen will probably make his first career start Tuesday night when the Sabres take on the Calgary Flames.

Enroth sustained a lower-body injury in Sunday's 2-0 loss to Montreal.

"He's going to get further evaluation and stay behind," coach Ted Nolan said Monday. "Right now it looks at least a little bit better today than it did yesterday."

After the Sabres (19-41-8) flew out of Buffalo on Monday, Enroth posted on his Twitter account a photo of his right leg in an immobilizing device and wrote, "For the next couple weeks ... "

Lieuwen stopped all 10 shots he faced in his NHL debut Sunday after being called up from AHL Rochester earlier in the day. Buffalo also called up Matt Hackett from Rochester on Monday to back up Lieuwen.

Hackett, a former third-round draft pick, played 13 games with Minnesota from 2011-13 before the Sabres traded for him last April 3.

Nolan said Neuvirth will travel with the Sabres, but his status for Tuesday is up in the air. Neuvirth has missed two games with a lower-body injury, but was able to work out on the ice Monday.

"He's a day-to-day-er," Nolan said. "He could wake up (Tuesday) morning fresh as a daisy."

The Sabres have gone through several goalies since trading Ryan Miller to St. Louis on Feb. 28.

In addition to Enroth, Neuvirth and Lieuwen, the Sabres have dressed Jaroslav Halak, who was acquired in the Miller trade and backed up Enroth for one game before being dealt to Washington, and Ryan Vinz, a HarborCenter employee summoned in a pinch as Enroth's backup after Miller's trade was made an hour before the Sabres game against the Sharks.

Neuvirth has started two games since he was acquired for Halak on March 5. He made 51 saves Thursday in a 4-2 loss at Carolina, but complained of soreness during warmups Saturday prior to Buffalo's 4-1 loss at the New York Islanders.

"It was a tough game in Carolina," Neuvirth said. "I can't really tell you what happened because I don't even know. I woke up the next morning and I was sore."

Enroth was hurt after being bowled over by Canadiens forward Brendan Gallagher in the second period Sunday.

He was on the ice for a few minutes before he got up and attempted to stretch his right leg while being examined by a trainer. Enroth then skated to the bench and was escorted into the locker room.

Lieuwen, a former sixth-round draft pick, was forced into action for the third time in three nights after playing Friday and Saturday in the minors.

"Usually after three in three, you're a little more tired and sore, but I actually feel really good," Lieuwen said Monday. "I feel like I have the energy and I feel like the adrenaline's starting to ease off a little bit. I can kind of ease off and get comfortable and do my thing."

The Sabres continue to slide, having lost six straight in regulation - their worst streak since losing seven in a row Dec. 4-19, 2003. They have scored just five goals in the past six games and have a league-low 132 goals on the season.

Buffalo has dropped three in a row in Calgary since a 2-0 win Oct. 18, 2003. The Flames (27-34-7) won 2-1 in overtime at Buffalo on Dec. 14 on Matt Stajan's goal.

Stajan returned to the Flames on Monday and participated in practice after taking an extended personal leave following the death of his infant son March 3.

"We would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for the incredible outpouring of love and support, during this very difficult time," Stajan and his wife Katie said in a statement released by the Flames on Monday.

Calgary went 4-4-0 in Stajan's absence, losing 3-2 at Phoenix on Saturday following consecutive wins. Signed to a four-year extension Jan. 20, Stajan has 10 goals and 13 assists in 52 games.

The Flames are 8-2-0 in their last 10 at home.

Nolan gives Sabres a pop quiz

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

March 17, 2014

When things are at their bleakest for a sports team, the coach needs to do more than juggle lines or design plays. He needs to be a psychologist, support-group leader and illusionist, someone who can make players feel better and distract them from their lowly state.

Ted Nolan knew he needed to expand his job description Monday. The Sabres are as inept and injured as they've been all season. The inevitable arrived over the weekend as Buffalo became the first NHL team eliminated from playoff contention. It was a formality 11 months in the making.

So when the Sabres arrived for a meeting in First Niagara Center, Nolan didn't just roll video or scribble on the whiteboard. He handed each player a piece of paper that featured the following sentence – “Finished files are the result of years of scientific study combined with the experience of years” – and told everyone to count the F's.

Nearly 100 percent said the answer was three. Read it again, he told them. More often than not, the answer was still three.

It's actually six. The brain, Nolan explained, is wired to jump from Point A to Point B as quickly as possible. It misses small things like the word “of,” which is home to the overlooked F's.

It's the small details Nolan wants the players to focus on during the final 14 games of the season, including tonight's visit to Calgary.

“We talked about details, and I told them we're going to do our best and we're going to work as hard as we can every day and try to get better,” the coach said. “We had a little test, and they had a little fun with it, but the big thing is playing together and working together.”

While Nolan hopes the small details help the Sabres improve in the coming years, the big thing for the present is finding out who's healthy enough to face Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Montreal and Nashville on the 11-day journey.

The Sabres vacated their arena to make way for the NCAA Tournament, and they sorted the equipment bags in two piles. One was for the guys making the trip, and the other was for those staying home. Both piles were big.

Jhonas Enroth, Tyler Myers, Zemgus Girgensons, Alexander Sulzer and Chris Stewart are among those who skipped the plane ride. Myers could join the Sabres on the road at some point, but the others will stay in Buffalo.

Goaltender Michal Neuvirth took the flight but remains day-to-day with a lower-body injury, so the team summoned Matt Hackett from Rochester. It was the second straight day the organization called up an Amerks goalie on an emergency basis. Nathan Lieuwen got the call Sunday with Neuvirth unavailable for the game against Montreal, and the rookie's ticket to Calgary was punched when Enroth suffered a leg injury during the loss.

Enroth posted a picture of his right leg in an air cast on Instagram and wrote that he will be in it for the next couple of weeks. Less than four weeks remain in the season.

Neuvirth will be able to play at some point during the longest trip of the year, but it's not clear when. He says he was sore Friday after a 51-save performance Thursday in Carolina, yet he was healthy enough to practice, warm up and back up Saturday on Long Island.

"It's frustrating to be not playing, but I can't wait to get into the net," Neuvirth said. "We didn't want to play one game and get hurt again and be out for even longer. It's up to coaches. When I feel better, I definitely want to play a game."

Lieuwen showed well during his NHL debut, stopping all 10 shots.

"I was really happy for the young guy," Nolan said. "He did himself proud, and I have no hesitation of putting him in."

While the 22-year-old Lieuwen would love to play anywhere, the British Columbia native is relishing the thought of heading to the crease in western Canada.

"I'm not too upset about that," he said with a smile. "If I end up in the net again, I'll play my best and do what I can to earn more."

...

Fans who've been picturing the Sabres picking first in the 2015 NHL draft may need to alter their thinking. The league is considering changes to the draft lottery, according to Elliotte Friedman of CBC's "Hockey Night in Canada."

He reported Monday that the first three or five picks may be subject to the lottery system. As it stands now, the team that finishes 30th selects no worse than second. Under the new proposal, the last-place squad could draft as low as sixth.

Friedman wrote that the lottery odds could change, too. Rather than giving the season's worst team the best chance at selecting first, the NHL could base the odds on the results of the previous five seasons combined. Details are still being discussed, according to the report.

The league is sensitive to teams trying to play poorly on purpose next season because the top draft-eligible prospects for 2015, Connor McDavid and Jack Eichel, have franchise-altering talent.

Sabres' Lieuwen could get first NHL start vs. Flames

By Brian Hunter

NHL.com

March 17, 2014

SABRES (19-41-8) at FLAMES (27-34-7)

TV: MSG-B, BELL TV, SNET-CGY

Last 10: Buffalo 3-7-0; Calgary 5-5-0

Season series: This is the second and final game between the Buffalo Sabres and Calgary Flames. Matt Stajan scored 42 seconds into overtime to give Calgary a 2-1 win in Buffalo on Dec. 14.

Big story: It hasn't been an easy season in Buffalo and now the Sabres are limping to the finish line. In the past three games they've lost goaltenders Michal Neuvirth and Jhonas Enroth to injuries, though Neuvirth did make the trip to Calgary.

Team Scope:

Sabres: This is the start of a five-game road trip for Buffalo, which is looking to snap a six-game losing streak. The lowest-scoring offense in the NHL (1.85 goals per game) has produced five goals during the current skid.

Enroth sustained a leg injury in the second period of a 2-0 loss to the Montreal Canadiens on Sunday, leading to the NHL debut of Nathan Lieuwen, called up after Neuvirth woke up sore after facing 54 shots Thursday against the Carolina Hurricanes. Lieuwen stopped all 10 shots he faced and is a good bet to make his first start with Neuvirth possible but not certain to dress.

"I do my best to be calm out there," said Lieuwen, who is from Abbotsford, home of Calgary's American Hockey League affiliate. "I try to be composed and I think that's one of my strong points. And at the same time I rely a lot on my reads, reading the play and seeing what's going to happen before it happens."

Flames: The goaltending tandem in Calgary has seen its share of upheaval in recent weeks, with Reto Berra traded to the Colorado Avalanche and Karri Ramo missing time due to a knee injury. In their place Joni Ortio has come up from the AHL to assume the No. 1 job with veteran Joey MacDonald resurfacing to help hold down the fort.

The Flames could have reinforcements to the lineup on the way, as Stajan returned to practice Monday after having been away in recent weeks due to the death of his newborn son following childbirth. In addition, collegiate forward Kenny Agostino, acquired last season from the Pittsburgh Penguins in the

Jarome Iginla trade, signed a two-year contract Monday and was expected to arrive in Calgary late Monday.

"I'm just excited to get back at it," said Stajan, who along with his wife Katie on Monday released a statement of thanks for the support they've received. He has 10 goals and 23 points this season. He last played March 1.

Who's hot: Sabres forward Tyler Ennis has two goals in the past three games. ... Flames forward Mike Cammalleri (four goals, two assists) and defenseman Mark Giordano (one goal, four assists) have four-game point streaks. Forward Mikael Backlund has three goals in as many games.

Injury report: In addition to Enroth (lower body) and Neuvirth (lower body), Buffalo is dealing with injuries to defensemen Tyler Myers (elbow) and Alexander Sulzer (upper body) and forwards Chris Stewart (ankle), Zemgus Girgensons (lower body) and Torrey Mitchell (foot). Mitchell is on the trip and hopes to play Tuesday. ... Ramo (knee) is sidelined for Calgary along with defenseman Dennis Wideman (upper body) and forwards David Jones (shoulder), Markus Granlund (upper body) and Jiri Hudler (upper body).

Game Day: Buffalo Sabres at Calgary Flames

By Scott Cruickshank

Calgary Herald

March 17, 2014

Calgary (27-34-7) at Buffalo (19-41-8)

7 p.m., Scotiabank Saddledome

TV: Sportsnet Calgary

Radio: The FAN 960

THE FLAMES

Keep an eye on

Ladislav Smid — Gritty defender piles up two blocked shots (fourth in NHL now) Saturday and nine hits (28th in NHL).

The Lineup

- * P. Byron M. Backlund L. Bouma
- * M. Cammalleri S. Monahan J. Colborne
- * C. Glencross M. Stajan B. McGrattan
- * B. Hanowski T. J. Galiardi K. Westgarth
- * M. Giordano T. J. Brodie
- * K. Russell C. Butler
- * L. Smid T. Wotherspoon
- * J. Ortio
- * J. MacDonald

The Injuries

* G Karri Ramo (knee), D Dennis Wideman (upper body), C Markus Granlund (upper body), LW Jiri Hudler (upper body), RW David Jones (shoulder)

THE SABRES

Keep an eye on

Christian Ehrhoff — Veteran blue-liner shouldering the most ice time on the team. Minus-seven in the past seven games.

The Lineup

- * C. Conacher T. Ennis D. Stafford
- * M. Foligno C. Hodgson M.D'Agostini
- * N. Deslaurier B. Flynn V. Leino
- * J. Scott Z. Konopka M. Ellis
- * R. Ristolainen C. Ehrhoff
- * C. Ruhwedel H. Tallinder
- * J. McBain M. Weber
- * N. Lieuwen
- * M. Neuvirth

The Injuries

* G Jhonas Enroth (lower body), D Alexander Sulzer (upper body), D Tyler Myers (elbow), C Kevin Porter (lower body), C Torrey Mitchell (foot), LW Zemgus Girgensons (lower body), RW Chris Stewart (ankle)

FIVE THINGS TO WATCH

1. REMEMBERING MICKEY RENAUD . . . Recent events — Rich Peverley's cardiac event, Terry Trafford's death — had New Jersey C Adam Henrique remembering his OHL Windsor Spitfires teammate Mickey Renaud, who died six years ago because of a heart condition. Henrique, who wears a No. 18 pendant (and tattoo) as a tribute to Renaud, told The Record in New Jersey: "It kind of just brought all of that back up." Flames drafted Renaud in the fifth round in 2007. "I think he probably would have been playing in the NHL," said Henrique.

“To be that long ago, 2008, and then something like this happens, and it feels like it was just the other day.”

2. ABOUT THE SABRES . . . Sabres are 7-21-3 on the road . . . Blanked Sunday by Montreal, they have now been shut out the most of any team, nine times . . . C Tyler Ennis, product of WHL Medicine Hat, leads club with 36 points . . . Offensively, 30th. Defensively, 24th . . . Power play, 27th. Penalty killing, 15th.

3. KNUCKLING UNDER . . . Ottawa LW Clarke MacArthur returned to the lineup Saturday, having recovered from a hand injury suffered in a fight with Calgary D Chris Butler (immediately after he'd belted LW Jiri Hudler). “If it's Brian McGrattan (I hit), he gets up and throws me over the glass, probably,” MacArthur told Ottawa reporters. “I'm not mad at Butler . . . I just wish I could have hit him on the nose, not the helmet.”

4. FLAMES LIKE KULAK . . . Flames have made a contract offer to D Brett Kulak, fourth-round pick in 2012. “They like me to be a good puck-moving D-man,” Kulak told the Vancouver Province. The 19-year-old has 60 points in 69 games for the WHL Vancouver Giants.

5. INS, OUTS, WHAT-HAVE-YOUS . . . G Joni Ortio (3-4-0, 2.32 GAA, .904) gets the nod . . . D Mark Giordano is 12th in scoring for defencemen. For point-per-game average, only Ottawa D Erik Karlsson (. 91) and Chicago D Duncan Keith (. 79) are more productive than Giordano (. 78) . . . Four teams have more one-goal wins than Flames' 20 — no team has more one-goal losses than their 14.

Sabres' goalie situation unclear with injuries; rookie Nathan Lieuwen could start against Flames

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

March 18, 2014

BUFFALO – A day after his surprising NHL debut, everything had settled down a bit for Sabres rookie Nathan Lieuwen.

Lieuwen said his body felt OK after playing three games in three days, a rarity for a goalie. He even remembered some of the action he faced Sunday. Memories were a blur following his 22-minute, 10-save relief appearance in the Sabres' 2-0 loss to Montreal.

"I could remember a few more things this morning," a smiling Lieuwen said Monday inside the First Niagara Center.

With starting goalie Jhonas Enroth sidelined by a right leg injury and backup Michal Neuvirth day-to-day with a lower-body ailment, Lieuwen accompanied the Sabres to Calgary for tonight's contest against the Flames, the start of a season-long five-game road trip. So did goalie Matt Hackett, who was recalled from Rochester on Monday.

The Sabres, losers of six straight games, have two healthy goalies with 14 combined games of NHL experience. Hackett has three wins. Lieuwen, of course, has zero.

Interim Sabres coach Ted Nolan said Enroth's injury looked better Monday than it had a night earlier. Enroth, who behind in Buffalo, tweeted a picture of himself wearing an air cast around his right leg. The Swede was hurt when teammate Jamie McBain knocked Brendan Gallagher into him.

Neuvirth, meanwhile, skated Monday and said he's getting better.

"Hopefully, I'll play soon," said the Czech, who's on the road trip.

Nolan added: "He could wake up tomorrow morning fresh as a daisy."

Neuvirth made 51 saves in Thursday's 4-2 loss to Carolina and backed up Enroth on Saturday. The Sabres recalled Lieuwen early Sunday because Neuvirth couldn't even dress.

What happened?

“I can’t really tell you what happened because I don’t even know,” Neuvirth said. “I woke up (Friday) morning and I was sore.”

Neuvirth said he could’ve played Saturday, although his injury hurt on the ice.

If he can’t start tonight, Lieuwen, who recently supplanted Hackett as the Americans’ No. 1 netminder, could get his first nod.

“I have no hesitation of putting him in,” Nolan said.

The 22-year-old’s not worn out from the wild weekend.

“It’s not too bad, actually,” he said about his body. “Usually after three in three you’re a little more tired and sore. But I actually feel really good.”

In a forgettable season full of turmoil, Lieuwen’s a feel-good story. Concussions nearly cost him his career as a junior player. He was bypassed twice in the draft before the Sabres selected him 167th overall in 2011.

“That definitely took my career sideways for a while,” he said about the concussions. “(I) started to get back on track when I was 19. That’s when I was drafted here to the Sabres. Things have been up ever since.”

Lieuwen spent time in the ECHL last season before earning a regular AHL gig this year. With Hackett struggling badly – he’s 13-17-2 with a 3.07 goals-against average and .898 save percentage in 33 games – Lieuwen earned the top job. His AHL numbers – 17-11-2, 2.34 and .922 in 32 appearances – are strong.

“What’s really helped me is my mental game, and I think it’s really improved,” Lieuwen said. “I’ve been able to overcome a lot of things, whether they happen in a game or in practice or whatever’s going on.”

Lieuwen should stay on the Sabres’ 10-day road trip. They play Sunday in Vancouver, meaning he could experience an “extra special” homecoming.

“It was kind of funny because last year when I got called up to Rochester they were going to Abbotsford (suburban Vancouver), which is where I’m from,” he said. “Now I’m here and they’re going to Vancouver, so I’m not too upset.”

Playing a little more than an NHL period opened Lieuwen’s eyes.

“Everything’s just faster,” he said. “Everything’s harder. Everything’s better. You got someone like (Thomas) Vanek bearing down on you, that’s different than if you have someone from the AHL.”

Since the Sabres summoned both of Rochester’s goalies, the Amerks recalled Connor Knapp and Andrey Makarov from the ECHL.

The Sabres recalled Hackett briefly in October, although he didn't play.

xxx

Winger Torrey Mitchell, acquired from Minnesota before the NHL trade deadline, should return from a six-game absence tonight after blocking a shot in his Sabres debut March 6.

"My speed's a big part of my game," Mitchell said. "I like to use my speed, get in on the forecheck. I'll probably have a pretty big role on the penalty kill as well."

Nolan said Mitchell adds a "fresh body."

"He has some moxie to his game," he said. "He has some speed to his game. He has some maturity. He's played some playoff games in this league. Certainly he can add some experience to a very young team."

Meanwhile, defenseman Tyler Myers, out the last two games with an arm injury, stayed in Buffalo. He could meet the Sabres later in the trip, Nolan said.

xxx

Nolan has been using the struggling Cody Hodgson, a regular center, on the wing.

Why?

"Try to spring him," Nolan said. "If you look at the breakaway chance he had (Sunday), he had a chance to put it in. That's what we need to create for Cody, some opportunities for him to score some goals."

Hodgson has two goals and six points in the last 16 games and just one assist in the last six contests.

xxx

The Sabres canceled Monday's practice and did off-ice work, although a few players still skated.

Sabres on the road, Enroth staying home

WGR 550

March 17, 2014

Sabres coach Ted Nolan had plenty of injury updates to make before his team set out for Western Canada. First off, goaltender Jhonas Enroth is not making the trip with the team after being injured against Montreal. Despite the goalie staying behind, Nolan says, "It looks a little bit better." Michal Neuvirth is a little banged up but he will make the trip along with Nathan Lieuwen who made his NHL debut against the Canadiens.

A couple of skaters will miss the trip, as well. Zemgus Girgensons is "still quite a ways from getting back" according to Nolan, so the Latvian forward will stay home. Nolan also says defenseman Tyler Myers will not be on the trip to start, but he could join the team on the road at some point.

The Sabres are at the Calgary Flames Tuesday at 9. Pregame on WGR begins at 8.

SABRES SET OUT FOR ROAD TRIP HAMPERED BY INJURIES

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

March 17, 2014

Most members of the Buffalo Sabres will board a plane on Monday as the team departs for a five-game, 11-day road trip. Some injured players will be staying behind and there's a chance at least one of those injured players could meet the team on the road.

Jhonas Enroth, who sustained a lower-body injury Sunday night against the Canadiens, will not go on the trip. Forwards Zemgus Girgensons (undisclosed), Chris Stewart (lower-body injury) and defenseman Alexander Sulzer (upper-body injury) aren't going either.

Sabres interim coach Ted Nolan said that defenseman Tyler Myers, who sustained an upper-body injury Thursday night, will not be with the team right away either.

"Tyler's going to stay back. He'll have better treatment here and better care here but he could join us on the road trip at some point also," Nolan said.

Sabres goaltenders have had some bad luck recently when it comes to injuries. Michal Neuvirth is day-to-day with a lower-body injury that forced him to miss the game on Sunday against Montreal. So when Enroth went down late in the second period, emergency recall Nathan Lieuwen was called up to go in and make his NHL debut.

While Enroth will not make the 7,000-plus-mile trip that sees the Sabres heading to (in order) Calgary, Edmonton, Vancouver, Montreal and Nashville, he may not miss as much time as the team initially thought.

"It looks a little bit better but we'll see. He's going to get further evaluation," Nolan said. "He's going to stay behind but right now it looks a little bit better today than it did yesterday."

Neuvirth said he may be ready to play if the team needs him Tuesday night. He skated on his own Monday morning but his status would depend on how he feels Tuesday morning.

Nolan didn't rule out the possibility of traveling with a third goaltender (possibly Matt Hackett of the American Hockey League's Rochester Americans), but if Neuvirth is unable to play, Lieuwen would be looking at making his first start in the NHL.

“For me, it’s just do my thing and whatever happens, happens,” Lieuwen said. “If I end up in the net again, I’ll play my best and I’ll do what I can and do what I can to earn more.”

Lieuwen, 22, is 6-foot-5, 186 pounds and had played three nights in a row. He started for Rochester on Friday and Saturday before being called upon on Sunday. He stopped 31 shots on Friday, 38 on Saturday and all 10 he faced on Sunday.

“Usually after three-in-three you’re a little more tired and sore, but I actually feel really good,” he said. “I feel like I have energy and I feel like the adrenaline’s starting to kind of ease off a little bit. I can get comfortable and do my thing.”

The Sabres have been battling so many injuries as of late that it may actually be easier to list the players that are healthy. One player that will look to make his return to the lineup is forward Torrey Mitchell.

“The last couple weeks with all the trades and injuries, it’s been a whirlwind for sure,” Mitchell said. “But these are opportunities for everyone to step up. There’s 14 games left and everyone’s trying to make an impression for next season. We’ve got to stick together. We’re going to be playing some good teams and try to play spoiler.”

Mitchell, whom the Sabres acquired at the NHL Trade Deadline on March 5 from the Minnesota Wild, has been out with a lower-body injury since blocking a shot against the Tampa Bay Lightning on March 6. He’ll be on the road with the team and expects to be ready by the team’s first game on Tuesday against the Calgary Flames.

“He adds a fresh body. He has some moxie to his game, he has some speed to his game,” Nolan said. “He has some maturity. He’s played a lot of playoff games in this League so certainly he can add some experience to a very young team.”

The Sabres and Flames are set to faceoff at 9 p.m. EST from Scotiabank Saddledome in Calgary.

SABRES PROSPECTS REPORT

By Kris Baker

Sabres.com

March 17, 2014

The regular season schedules are all but wrapped up for CHL and NCAA prospects, setting up a full load of postseason action starting this Thursday.

OHL

Nicholas Baptiste (2013, third round) notched five points in two games last week, including a two-goal performance Saturday as Sudbury lost 7-4 in Belleville. Baptiste, who sat out the Wolves' Sunday finale, finished the regular season with 45 goals and 89 points, including 26 goals in 29 games since Jan. 1. Sudbury will take on Barrie in the opening round of the Eastern Conference playoffs beginning Thursday.

Justin Kea (2012, third round) scored twice Friday and recorded his fifth fighting major of the year as Saginaw came up short in a 6-5 loss at Sault Ste. Marie. Kea added an assist on Saturday in the Spirit's 6-2 loss to London, boosting his season totals to 21 goals and 47 points through 57 games.

Eric Locke (2013, seventh round) added two assists in the week's two games to give him 58 points (24+34) in 47 outings. Saginaw enters Monday's regular season finale versus Sault Ste. Marie holding down the seventh position in the Western Conference standings. A victory would vault them into the sixth seed, setting up a first round series with Erie. If they remain in seventh, they'll take on Sault Ste. Marie.

Nikita Zadorov (2013, first round) picked up an assist Friday as London doubled up Owen Sound 4-2. Zadorov posted 30 points (11+19) in 36 games, but finished the year with an eight-game goal drought. London locked up a fourth-place finish in the Western Conference, setting up a first round series with Windsor starting Friday.

London defenseman Brady Austin (2012, seventh round) was held off the scoresheet last week as the Knights closed out the schedule with two wins in three tries. Austin, who along with Zadorov sat out of the Knights' final game of the season on Sunday, set career bests this season with 33 points (9+24) and a plus-51 rating.

Justin Bailey (2013, second round) watched as his Kitchener Rangers teammates close out the regular season without gaining a postseason berth. The 6-foot-3 winger scored 25 goals and 43 points before missing the final 14 games with an upper body injury.

QMJHL

In Friday action, Mikhail Grigorenko (2012, first round) extended his multiple-points streak to six games with a pair of assists as Quebec was defeated 4-3 by Rimouski in overtime. On Saturday, Grigorenko saw the streak end as Quebec

completed regular season play with a 2-0 blanking of the Oceanic. Grigorenko posted 15 goals and 39 points in 23 junior games for the Remparts, who finished in the seventh position in the league standings. They'll have home ice advantage for their first round playoffs series against Rouyn-Noranda.

William Carrier continued his productive ways Friday, connecting for two goals and an assist to lead Drummondville to a 4-1 win over Rouyn-Noranda. On Saturday, Carrier notched an assist as Drummondville finished the regular season schedule with a 7-2 drubbing of Victoriaville in a preview of an opening round playoff series. Carrier enters the postseason on a roll with five goals in his last six games. The Voltigeurs finished as the sixth playoff seed, giving them home ice advantage for their series with the Tigres.

WHL

In Saturday action, Logan Nelson (2012, fifth round) tied a career high with his 23rd goal as Victoria closed out the schedule with a 3-2 loss at Everett. The Royals end the season as the No. 3 seed in the Western Conference, setting up a first-round playoff series against Spokane.

NCAA

J.T. Compher (2013, second round) recorded two assists Saturday as No. 13 Michigan finished off the conference schedule with a 6-2 victory over No. 1 Minnesota. Compher, who on Friday was blanked in a 3-2 loss to the Gophers, enters Thursday's B1G quarterfinal contest versus Penn State as Michigan's leading point-getter with 31 (11+20) in 34 games.

Hudson Fasching used his big body down low to earn an assist on the overtime winner Friday as No. 1 Minnesota edged No. 13 Michigan 3-2 to capture the B1G regular season title. On Saturday, Fasching produced a game-high five shots on goal as the Gophers ended the conference schedule with a 6-2 loss to the Wolverines. Next up for Minnesota is a Saturday date with the winner of Ohio State-Michigan State in a B1G semifinal.

Minnesota forward Christian Isackson (2010, seventh round) was scratched Friday and inserted into the lineup Saturday in the Gophers' split with Michigan. The third-year forward has four points (1+3) in 19 appearances this season.

In Hockey East, Anthony Florentino (2013, fifth round) picked up an assist Saturday as Providence doubled Maine 4-2 to win the best-of-three Hockey East quarterfinal series in two games. The Friars have won their last six games heading into Friday's Hockey East semifinal versus New Hampshire.

Wisconsin defenseman Jake McCabe (2012, second round) left Friday's game after being injured while blocking a shot. McCabe received stitches to close a deep

laceration behind his ear, and did not play on Saturday as the Badgers downed Michigan State 4-3.

Brad Navin (2011, seventh round) was unable to connect in the weekend split at Michigan State. The Badgers will square off with the winner of Thursday's Michigan-Penn State winner in a B1G semifinal tilt on Saturday.

USHL

Connor Hurley (2013, second round) earned an assist Friday in Green Bay's 5-2 loss to Indiana, and was blanked Saturday as the Gamblers dropped a 2-0 decision to the Ice. Green Bay is in a three-way tie for the final Eastern Conference playoff spot with Chicago and Muskegon with seven games left to play.

Cal Petersen (2013, fifth round) made 39 stops through 65 minutes of action as Waterloo was defeated in a shootout 5-4 by Sioux City. Petersen has won just two of his last eight starts on the heels of his impressive 12-game winning streak. The Black Hawks sit atop the Western Conference with eight games remaining.

Judd Peterson (2012, seventh round) remained out of action as Cedar Rapids won two of the week's three games. Peterson, who has been out with an injury since early February, has 15 goals and 29 points in 40 games.

Swedish Hockey League (SHL)

Linus Ullmark (2012, sixth round) made 45 saves Wednesday as MODO saw their season come to an end with a 5-4 overtime loss to Linkopings HC. MODO held a 4-0 lead midway through the second period before surrendering four unanswered goals, including a pair of power play markers 14 seconds apart in the third to send the game to extra time. Another MODO penalty would see Linkopings forward and former Michigan Wolverine Chad Kolarik strike with the man advantage in the 67th minute to close the curtain in game two of the best-of-three play-in round series.

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.

Scouting Report: Buffalo Sabres

By Aaron Vickers

Flames.com

March 17, 2014

CALGARY, AB -- The Buffalo Sabres are hoping a meeting with the Calgary Flames can help right the ship.

The Sabres, currently 30th in the National Hockey League with just 46 points this season, enter Scotiabank Saddledome losers of six straight contests and 11 points behind the Edmonton Oilers for 29th. The Sabres, who are starting a five-game road trip in Calgary, also have the league's worst goals for/against differential with a minus-70 mark.

A rash of injuries that feature seven regulars out of the lineup haven't helped Buffalo, either, as they look to play out the stretch.

This Season: 19-41-8, 46 points (16th in East)

Last season: 21-21-6, 48 points (12th in East)

Notable Injuries: Goaltenders Jonas Enroth (lower body) and Michal Neuvirth (lower body) are both absent from Buffalo's lineup. Defencemen Tyler Myers (elbow) and Alexander Sulzer (upper body) and forwards Chris Stewart (ankle), Zemgus Girgensons (lower body) and Torrey Mitchell (foot) are also injured for the Sabres, though Mitchell is on the trip to Calgary and hopes to play Tuesday.

SEASON SERIES

Flames Season Series Record: 1-0-0

WHO'S HOT

TYLER ENNIS

Though he was held pointless in Buffalo's 2-0 loss to the Montreal Canadiens on Sunday, Ennis has been the Sabres' top offensive threat of late. The 24-year-old previously had points in four straight games, including goals in back-to-back contests. In all, the former Medicine Hat Tigers standout leads Buffalo with 18 goals and 36 points.

WHO'S NOT

CODY HODGSON

Hodgson, second on the Sabres with 16 goals and 35 points, has slumped of late. The 24-year-old has just one assist in the past six games following a span that saw the Toronto, ON native record four points in five contests.

THREE PLAYERS TO WATCH

NATHAN LIEUWEN

Lieuwen stopped all 10 shots faced in his NHL debut in Sunday's loss to the Canadiens after coming into the game in relief of the injured Enroth. With Neuvirth already out, the 22-year-old former Kootenay Ice goaltender could mark Tuesday's game against the Flames with his first career start. In 32 games with the Rochester Americans of the AHL, Lieuwen has a 17-11-2 record with a 2.34 goals against and .922 save percentage.

CORY CONACHER

Plucked off waivers from the Ottawa Senators at the NHL Trade Deadline, Conacher is getting plenty of opportunity in Buffalo. The 24-year-old is seeing upwards of 19 minutes of ice time a game, recording a pair of assists in five games with the Sabres. Overall, Conacher has four goals and 22 points in 65 games.

RASMUS RISTOLAINEN

Ristolainen has had an impressive year for his first in North America. Though he has just one goal in 21 games with the Sabres this season, the 19-year-old has been impressive with Rochester, amassing six goals and 18 points in 30 games. Currently up with Buffalo, the 6-foot-4, 219-pound rookie is averaging 17:26 of ice time this season.