



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*October 1, 2014*

## **Reinhart's roster spot not a given at this point**

By Mike Harrington

Buffalo News

September 30, 2014

When it comes to Sam Reinhart, there are the pros and the cons.

There are the nuances with the puck and away from it that provide glimpses of the wondrous talent befitting a No. 2 overall pick in the NHL draft. There's the work ethic that pushes the 18-year-old to stay on the ice working on skills well after practice is over. There's the fact the third periods of exhibition games have been his best, that he's been able to adapt as the night moves on.

There is the bright future. And there are also the middling numbers of the present. One assist in four games of the Traverse City Prospects Tournament. No points in three NHL exhibition games.

At some point, the cold reality is that the Sabres' top choice has to crack the scoresheet if he wants to stay in the NHL this season.

"It's getting a little frustrating," Reinhart admitted after practice Tuesday in First Niagara Center. "I think the biggest thing is I'm getting chances, trying to create. I'm just going to stick with it and focus on the bigger picture. But obviously that's part of my game and I think that's going to have to come."

Reinhart gets his penultimate chance to make an impression tonight when the Sabres play their preseason home finale against the Washington Capitals (7 p.m, MSG, Radio 550 AM). He is also scheduled to play Friday night in Carolina and then it could be decision time for the Buffalo brass.

It's starting to look like Mikhail Grigorenko's outstanding camp could land him in Buffalo rather than his presumed starting point of Rochester. And if Grigorenko starts in the NHL, Reinhart is a good bet to return to junior hockey at some point soon.

The Sabres can play Reinhart for nine regular-season games before kicking in the first year of his entry-level contract, and might want to give him a look in at least a few of those.

And although junior hockey may not be the best option for him this season, Reinhart would also benefit by playing a key role for Team Canada in the World Juniors that will be held during the holidays in Toronto and Montreal. TSN, in fact, has labeled Reinhart as a potential captain for Canada in the event the Sabres eventually send him back.

"No question it would be disappointing," Reinhart said of a return to the Kootenay Ice of the Western Hockey League. "But I'm aware if that does happen, I'm going to do everything I can to take that as a positive and go dominate junior one more year."

"Sam is like any other player except he has the tag of being that first-round pick," said coach Ted Nolan. "As with everybody else, you've got to do it. You can't just hope you're gonna do it. You've got to do it. And that's not putting pressure on him. We say the same thing to all the guys coming in."

Reinhart is averaging 16 minutes, 15 seconds of ice time in the three preseason games in which he's appeared. And while he's made very few mistakes with the puck, especially in the defensive zone, he's not created a whole lot offensively, with just three shot attempts and two on goal in the three games.

"As a younger player switching to this league, back in junior you can do a lot more with the puck," Reinhart said. "Or at least you feel you can do a lot more. At the end of the day, you have to realize that you're playing with smarter and better players and they're going to create room for you. It's not that the room is not there."

An encouraging sign for Reinhart? His third periods have clearly seen him more engaged in the play.

"The biggest thing is getting used to the pace," he said. "I know sooner rather than later I'm going to have to be ready at the start and adapt."

Reinhart has impressed his teammates and coaches with his willingness to stay long after the final whistle has blown for workouts, whether it's to work on puck skills, faceoffs or to simply give the goalies extra reps. But that alone isn't enough, even for an 18-year-old.

"Sam has the benefit of his age," Nolan said. "You give him a little bit of time to adjust. Now he's had some time and now he's got to start doing things that he's really good at. Thinking the game, dishing off the puck, moving around, being a little bit more involved. As the games get going, you want him to get going with the games."

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The Sabres enter today with 30 players on their roster: 17 forwards, 10 defensemen and three goalies (Jhonas Enroth, Michal Neuvirth and injured Matt Hackett).

Among seven players sent to Rochester on Tuesday were goaltenders Nathan Lieuwen and Andrey Makarov, who each played a full game in the preseason. Also sent down were forwards Joel Armia, Matt Ellis and Tim Schaller and defensemen Drew Bagnall and Nick Petrecki. Ellis and Bagnall have to clear waivers.

The Capitals' preliminary travel roster for tonight does not include Alexander Ovechkin or Nicklas Backstrom. Standout defenseman Mike Green is also out with an upper-body injury.

## **Sabres notebook: Kaleta's injury will cost him a month or more**

By Mike Harrington

Buffalo News

September 30, 2014

Another injury has derailed the comeback of Buffalo Sabres winger Patrick Kaleta.

Kaleta, who has not played since suffering a serious knee injury last November while with the Rochester Amerks, was clearly going to make the Buffalo roster until he was struck in the face by a Morgan Rielly slapshot Sunday night in Toronto.

Without divulging too many details, Sabres coach Ted Nolan said Tuesday Kaleta is going to be out for at least a month and will thus miss the start of the regular season. The team had been fearing the Angola native suffered a broken jaw but that is apparently not the case.

"Kaleta is not as serious as we thought but it's still serious," Nolan said. "Instead of maybe being a three-month thing, it could be down to less than a month so we're very thankful for that."

Center Johan Larsson, who took an elbow to the face from Leafs defenseman Petter Granberg, is going to be out about 10 days. He's believed to have concussion issues. Larsson was likely headed for Rochester.

Nolan said he felt particularly bad for Kaleta, who had been skating strong in camp.

"His effort, his commitment and what he did in the offseason to get back to where he is right now is enough for me to see how much character this young man has and how much he really wants to be a Buffalo Sabre," Nolan said. "It's tough on him I imagine, but rest assured to him he made a really good impression on us and we're looking forward to him healing quick and getting back on the ice."

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The Sabres continue to tinker with their forward lines and Brian Gionta moved to the wing with Tyler Ennis and Matt Moulson in Tuesday's two-hour practice that combined the players into one group for a double session.

"With those two guys, it's great for me," Gionta said. "Tyler is extremely skilled. Crafty. A playmaker. Sees the ice extremely well. And Moulson is a veteran guy that can slow the pace down, find the openings and find goals. It was fun today for sure.

"It's a good thing to have all those options. I think they're trying to feel them out right now, but I know that regardless of how it starts, it often doesn't end up that way."

Nolan said he has moved Gionta around a lot in camp to spread the veteran's leadership through the team but now wants to start locking down some more solid lines.

"It's getting later in camp now so we've got to worry about Brian and help him out," Nolan said. "Putting him with Ennis, we have a legitimate center ice man feeding him the puck and that will be good for him."

Drew Stafford moved off Ennis' wing and joined Cody Hodgson and Mikhail Grigorenko. Sam Reinhart centered Marcus Foligno and Chris Stewart while Zemgus Girgensons was between Nicolas Deslauriers and Torrey Mitchell.

Lines 5-6 had Matt Ellis centering Joel Armia and Tim Schaller, and Cody McCormick between Brian Flynn and Zac Dalpe.

Nolan said the Sabres are still working through their roster and could have some players sent to junior or Rochester today. He also said the team has not yet decided if Jhonas Enroth or former Washington goalie Michal Neuvirth will start in goal in tonight's exhibition game against the Capitals in First Niagara Center.

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Three veterans who spent all of last season with the Sabres have been released from their tryout contracts in the last two days.

Toronto has dropped Henrik Tallinder, Boston released Ville Leino and Arizona said thanks-but-no-thanks to Jamie McBain. Tallinder's tryout essentially ended here Friday night when he suffered a dislocated shoulder in a collision with Mike Weber.

## **Prospect Sam Reinhart running out of time to impress, knows he must score**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
October 1, 2014

BUFFALO – A goal or even a little more assertiveness tonight would greatly boost top prospect Sam Reinhart's chances of making the Sabres right out of junior hockey.

Time could be running out for the 18-year-old, the No. 2 pick in June. Only two exhibition games are left.

Through three appearances, Reinhart has zero points, just two shots on goal and a minus-1 rating while averaging 16 minutes, 16 seconds of ice time. Incredibly, he's only attempted three shots.

"Obviously, it's getting a little frustrating," Reinhart said Tuesday inside the First Niagara Center after the Sabres prepared for tonight's preseason tilt against the Washington Capitals.

Sabres coach Ted Nolan believes Reinhart's last appearance, Friday's 6-4 loss to Toronto, was the slick center's best game. Nolan has said the youngster keeps improving late in contests.

But Reinhart must start scoring to stay in the NHL.

"Sam's like any other player, except he has a tag of being that first-round pick," Nolan said. "As everybody else, you got to do it. You can't just hope you're going to do it, you got to do it, and that's not putting pressure on anybody. We say the same thing to all the guys coming in."

Nolan expected Reinhart would need time to acclimate. After all, just months removed from junior, he's competing against some men almost double his age.

"You give him a little bit of time to adjust," Nolan said. "Now he's got to start doing things that he's really good at, and that's thinking the game, dishing the puck, moving around, being a little bit more involved. So as the games get going, you want him to get going with the game."

Reinhart said he can't worry about time. The Sabres close the preseason Friday in Carolina. Nolan plans to dress Reinhart both games.

"I'm focusing on getting better every day," said Reinhart, who often stays on the ice long after practice has ended. "I feel I have. It's going to be a process. I'm certainly going to want to produce sooner rather than later."

In a new league surrounded by talented linemates – Reinhart has skated beside Brian Gionta, Cody Hodgson and Chris Stewart – his first instinct has been to dish the puck. Much of the creativity he showcased in junior has vanished.

"At the end of the day, you have to realize you're playing with smarter and better players," Reinhart said. "They're going to create room for you. It's not like the room's not there. It's just that I got to get that confidence."

Reinhart said "getting used to the pace" has been the biggest NHL adjustment.

"Sooner than later I'm going to have to be ready at the start and adapt," he said. "I feel comfortable. I feel like I'm preparing to do that. I think that's a good sign."

Reinhart thinks he has generated chances.

"I'm just going to stick with it and try to focus on the bigger picture," he said. "That's part of my game, and I feel like that's going to have to come."

Of course, that bigger picture could include a return to the Western Hockey League, where he dominated two seasons with the Kootenay Ice.

"It would be disappointing," Reinhart said about going back. "But I'm aware. If that does happen, I'll do everything I can to take it as a positive and go down and dominate."

Remember, the Sabres can play Reinhart nine times before his entry-level contract kicks in. They might keep him for a trial. Reinhart's an extremely intelligent player. He could develop rapidly.

Many had Reinhart penciled in as Buffalo's third center. Right now, however, that job could belong to 20-year-old Mikhail Grigorenko, training camp's biggest surprise.

Two years ago, without the benefit of watching him over a full training camp, the Sabres' old regime forced Grigorenko onto the roster during the lockout-shortened campaign, burning a year of his contract.

Grigorenko, the No. 12 pick in 2012, wasn't ready then or last season, when the Sabres gave him another roster spot before Nolan took over. Now, he finally looks like an NHL player.

It's highly unlikely Nolan, who dislikes playing teenagers, and general manager Tim Murray will keep Reinhart for long if they believe he hasn't earned a spot.

## **Patrick Kaleta and Johan Larsson could be back in Sabres lineup soon**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
October 1, 2014

BUFFALO – Patrick Kaleta's facial injury isn't as bad the Sabres originally feared, and the winger could miss as little as a month, coach Ted Nolan said Tuesday.

"It's still serious," Nolan said inside the First Niagara Center. "It's not going to be a three-month thing. It's could be a less-than-month type of thing. So we're thankful for that."

Kaleta and forward Johan Larsson were injured early in Sunday's 3-2 shootout exhibition loss in Toronto. Larsson, Nolan said, is out about 10 days after Petter Granberg elbowed him in the face. Morgan Rielly's slap shot hit Kaleta in the jaw area.

"Larsson's is a serious issue, but not as real serious as it could have been," Nolan said.

Nolan doesn't think Granberg hit Larsson intentionally.

"I don't know the real history of that player, but he doesn't look like that type of player," he said. "He just kind of turned around in an awkward situation."

Officially, Kaleta and Larsson have upper-body injuries.

"We know what the upper body is," Nolan said.

Nolan feels badly for the oft-injured Kaleta, a tenacious agitator who's returning from a torn ACL. Clearly, he would've made the Sabres. The Angola native made a strong impression.

"His effort and his commitment and what he did in the offseason to get back to where he is right now is enough for me to see how much character this young man has and how much he really wants to be a Buffalo Sabre," Nolan said.

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Forward Matt Ellis was among seven players the Sabres sent to Rochester on Tuesday.

The Sabres also assigned: forwards Joel Armia and Tim Schaller; defensemen Drew Bagnall and Nick Petricki; goalies Nathan Lieuwen and Andrey Makarov.

Ellis and Bagnall must clear waivers to reach the AHL Americans. The 33-year-old Ellis captained Rochester late in 2012-13 and last season before earning a 50-game recall.

The Sabres have 30 players left in training camp. They host the Washington Capitals tonight.

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The Sabres mixed up some lines Tuesday, putting Brian Gionta on the right wing beside center Tyler Ennis and Matt Moulson. Drew Stafford moved to the right wing with center Mikhail Grigorenko and Cody Hodgson.

Nolan said he wanted to spread Gionta's leadership around for a bit on different lines.

"Now we got to worry about Brian and see how we can help him out," he said. "By putting him with Ennis, we got a legitimate center ice man that can feed him the puck."

## **Kaleta out a month or so**

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

September 30, 2014

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- Before Pat Kaleta got checked out, Ted Nolan thought he might be without his tough winger until after the holidays. Johan Larsson is also going to miss some time. Kaleta, who missed most of last season with a knee injury, is actually not going to miss that much time. Nolan said, "They're both going to be out for a little while. It's upper body and we all know where the upper body is, (head) Kaleta is not as serious as we thought, but he's still serious. It started off as maybe a three month thing, but it could be down to less than a month and we're very thankful for that."

Kaleta is a player you knew would impress Nolan, He said the winger will not lose his job, "His effort and his commitment he had in the off season has him where he is right now. It was enough for me to see how much character this young man has. Hopefully he can rest assured that he made a really good impression on us and we're looking forward to him healing quick and getting back on the ice."

As far as Larsson goes, Nolan said, His is a serious issue, but not real serious as it could've been, so anywhere to 10 days, maybe a little less or maybe a little bit more."

The team still has to cut around 13 players depending on injuries. Nolan said, "We're working through that process right now. There's a lot of guys still here, so Tim and I will meet and probably we'll do something within the next 24 hours.

## **The Sabres trim their roster**

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

September 30, 2014

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- The Sabres have sent seven players to Rochester. Heading to Amerks training camp are Andrey Makarov, Nathan Lieuwen, Joel Armia, Matt Ellis, Tim Schaller, Drew Bagnall and Nick Petrecki.

Ellis and Bagnall must pass through waivers.

That leaves Buffalo with three goalies, 17 forwards and 10 defensemen.

G Jhonas Enroth  
G Michal Neuvirth  
G Matt Hackett (Inj)

D Josh Gorges  
D Tyler Myers  
D Andre Benoit  
D Rasmus Ristolainen  
D Mike Weber  
D Andrej Meszaros  
D Jake McCabe  
D Mark Pysyk (Inj)  
D Nikita Zadorov  
D Tyson Strachan

F Matt Moulson  
F Tyler Ennis  
F Drew Stafford  
F Marcus Foligno  
F Sam Reinhart  
F Chris Stewart  
F Brian Gionta  
F Zemgus Girgensons  
F Nic Deslauriers  
F Cody McCormick  
F Cody Hodgson  
F Pat Kaleta (Inj)  
F Brian Flynn  
F Torrey Mitchell  
F Johan Larsson (Inj)  
F Zac Dalpe  
F Mikhail Grigorenko

## **Sabres' Grigorenko is getting his chance**

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

September 30, 2014

**Buffalo, NY (WGR 550)** -- Ted Nolan has been preaching for two weeks now that any ice time that a player gets, he'll earn.

Mikhail Grigorenko has had some very good practices during training camp and played well in Washington and Toronto. He scored a nice goal against the Leafs and put away a sick move against Jonathan Bernier during the shootout.

Grigorenko has been centering a 5th line all through camp practices, but on Tuesday Nolan put him with Drew Stafford and Cody Hodgson. The young Russian center said, "Since the beginning of the camp, I've had the mindset that I just have to do my best and just leave everything on the ice. I need to be the best version of myself and have no regrets after camp and that's what I'm trying to do. I'm just trying to have fun every day."

Grigorenko played in Toronto with Hodgson and Chris Stewart. The kid absolutely loved playing with those two, "That was one of the best games that I ever played and it also was like the best players I've ever played with, it was unreal to play with those guys."

On his goal, Grigorenko came up through the right wing circle and beat Bernier far side. To me, he looks faster. Grigorenko said, "I can't really know if I'm faster or not, but if you think I'm faster, than I guess I am."

Once Grigorenko was done with the playoffs in Rochester, he had a sit-down with Nolan. Nolan told him it's a different game in North America than in Russia and the only way for him to make it would be adapt. Grigorenko said he was all ears when his coach spoke, "He made me realize that he's going to give me opportunities and it's up to me, everything is on me." The Russian added, "It's all about hard work, confidence and focus and I just realized it."

Grigorenko used to sulk when he was on the 4th line getting very little ice-time with players like John Scott. Now, he doesn't give that any thought, "I don't really care who I'm playing with or which line. Even if I only play five minutes, if I do really good, Ted, who's a great coach is going to see it. Now, everything I do, even in practice if I score or make great passes, coaches are going to see it and give me a better chance."

The other lines on Tuesday were:

Moulson-Ennis-Gionta

Foligno-Reinhart-Stewart

Deslauriers-Girgensons-Mitchell

Dalpe-McCormick-Flynn

Ellis-Schaller-Armia

The Sabres host Washington on Wednesday.

## **Reinhart, Grigorenko expected to play final two preseason games**

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

September 30, 2014

While the lineup for the Buffalo Sabres' final two preseason games hasn't been officially set, coach Ted Nolan expects two centers with high expectations to play.

Look for Sam Reinhart and Mikhail Grigorenko to dress in those games, the first coming Wednesday night when the Sabres host the Washington Capitals at 7 p.m. at First Niagara Center.

Nolan said an announcement on roster cuts will also be made soon. Thirty-six players are currently in camp. Buffalo must trim its active roster to 23 before the season begins.

Reinhart, the second-overall selection in year's draft, is doing everything he can to make the team. He's ineligible to play in the American Hockey League this season, so he either has to be in the NHL or go back to his junior team, the Kootenay Ice of the Western Hockey League.

He is allowed to play nine NHL games before a decision has to be made as to whether or not he will be loaned back to Kootenay.

Reinhart understands the situation.

"There's no question it would be disappointing. But I'm aware if that does happen, I'm going to do everything I can to take it as a positive and go dominate junior one more year," he said.

He's yet to score in the preseason and for a player that put up 105 points in 60 games in Kootenay last season, not having a point through three games can be a little daunting.

"It's gotten a little frustrating. The biggest thing for me is I've been getting chances, trying to create," he said. "I'm just going to stick with it and focus on the bigger picture. That's part of my game. I feel it's going to have to come."

Grigorenko, a first-round pick in 2012, has had a great camp and in addition to the coaching staff, his teammates have noticed the growth he's shown in the last year.

"He's gotten better and better. They're definitely giving him a fair shot and it's up to him to take advantage of it," Drew Stafford said. "If I had to pick one guy, he's definitely improved from last year. There are a few other guys as well. Honestly, this camp's been great in that aspect. There's been a lot of competition."

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Two players who will definitely not be in the mix for the next two games are Patrick Kaleta and Johan Larsson.

In Sunday's game against the Toronto Maple Leafs, both players sustained upper-body injuries that will keep them out for some time.

A slap shot hit Kaleta in the head and Nolan said Tuesday that he could miss about a month. The injury, however, isn't as bad as they first feared.

Though he was only about to show what we could do on the ice in practice and in limited preseason playing time, Kaleta's work ethic off the ice while recovering from a knee injury sustained last year impressed Nolan.

"His effort and his commitment and what he did in the offseason to get back to where he is right now were enough for me to see how much character this young man has and how much he wants to be a Buffalo Sabre," Nolan said.

"Right now, it's tough on him, I imagine, but hopefully he can rest assured that he made a really good impression on us. We're looking forward to him healing quick and getting back on the ice."

Larsson, was elbowed in the face by Petter Granberg near the end of the first period, is expected to miss about 10 days. Nolan said the injury is serious, but, like Kaleta's, is not as serious as it could have been.

Mark Pysyk has not skated with the team since leaving the preseason game on Sept. 23 with an upper-body injury. He's expected to miss at least the rest of this week.