



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

October 28, 2014

Sabres-Maple Leafs preview

By Staff Report

Associated Press

October 27, 2014

The Toronto Maple Leafs are searching for answers as to why they have been so bad at home.

Phil Kessel's production certainly is at the top of the list.

Kessel and the Maple Leafs look to recover Tuesday night at home against the Buffalo Sabres in a matchup of Atlantic Division rivals struggling on the power play.

Toronto (3-4-1) fell 4-1 to Boston on Saturday in a listless effort that had fans chanting for the NBA's Raptors in the third period. Richard Panik's goal with 5:33 left only helped the Maple Leafs avoid a second shutout in three games as they fell to 1-4-0 at home.

"No explanation. I think we're two different teams on the road and home for some reason," center Nazem Kadri said.

One explanation is the production of Kessel, who has six points in three road games but only two at home. Kessel has been held pointless in all five losses for the Maple Leafs.

The star winger has four points in a three-game run versus Buffalo (2-7-0), with Toronto going 3-1-1 in the 2013-14 season series as the home team won each contest.

The Maple Leafs have conceded the first goal in all four home losses.

"I think the pressure of playing at home when things don't go well, I think that's the difference," coach Randy Carlyle said. "I think the first sign of adversity at home, it seems to multiply."

Carlyle kept the door to the dressing room closed longer than usual Saturday, and Toronto players didn't want to discuss what was said.

"I'm not going to talk about what happened in the room," defenseman Dion Phaneuf said. "I think it's something that's been around the league for a long time in every professional sport, what happens in here, stays in here and that's the way it's going to be in here."

Toronto is 0 for 19 on the power play over its last five games. Those woes pale in comparison to those for Buffalo, which is the only Eastern Conference team yet to score with the man advantage at 0 for 30.

The Sabres are averaging a league-worst 1.1 goals, though they come into this contest with some confidence.

Buffalo will cap a four-game trip after ending a four-game slide Saturday with a 2-1 win at San Jose that followed defeats by 4-1 at Anaheim and 2-0 to Los Angeles.

"The last three games in particular, our work ethic is improving," coach Ted Nolan said. "As a result our play is getting better. One thing we learned, hopefully, is if you work, good things happen. That's the way we're going to have to win this season."

Toronto native Cody Hodgson finally scored his first goal of the season to break a scoreless tie against the Sharks. He was second on the team with 20 a season ago.

"I think I was forcing a bit too much earlier," he said. "I just made sure I was calm and took my time and it worked out."

Buffalo's lack of offense has not helped its defense, which is allowing opponents to shoot a league-high 36.7 shots per game.

Maple Leafs, Sabres look to get offense going

By Jon Lane

NHL.com

October 27, 2014

SABRES (2-7-0) at MAPLE LEAFS (3-4-1)

TV: MSG-B, BELL TV, TSN4

Season series: The Toronto Maple Leafs went 3-1-1 against the Buffalo Sabres last season with the home team winning each game. Maple Leafs forward Phil Kessel had three goals and four points in the series, including a goal and assist in Toronto's 4-3 shootout win on Dec. 27, 2013.

Sabres team scope: Buffalo is averaging 1.11 goals a game, last in the NHL, and is the only Eastern Conference team to not score on the power play (0-for-30). Coach Ted Nolan reshuffled his lines at practice Monday, moving Marcus Foligno from center back to wing with Zemgus Girgensons and Brian Gionta. Foligno had centered Cody Hodgson and Drew Stafford. "We'll mix and match," Nolan told the Sabres website. "That's the most exciting part of about the early season, finding out different formulas and who works best with who. That one there, we tried it and it didn't work very well, so we'll try another one." Chris Stewart skated on the top line with Matt Moulson and Tyler Ennis, and Torrey Mitchell replaced Foligno on the second line. Goalie Michal Neuvirth will start after stopping 29 of 30 shots in a 2-1 win Saturday against the San Jose Sharks. "It's the hot goaltender right now," Nolan said. "You gotta go with him."

Maple Leafs team scope: Like the Sabres, the Maple Leafs are struggling offensively and shook up their lines at practice Monday. Toronto promoted David Clarkson to the top line with Tyler Bozak and James van Riemsdyk, and moved Kessel to the second line with Joffrey Lupul and Nazem Kadri. The Maple Leafs have scored two goals or less in four of their eight games, and Kessel, Bozak and van Riemsdyk have 10 of Toronto's 21 goals. "Obviously we're not playing our best hockey, so change things up a bit and see if it can spark a win," Bozak told the Toronto Star. The Maple Leafs haven't played well at Air Canada Centre, going 1-4-1 while being outscored 19-10, and have only four wins in the past 14 games there since last season. "It's hard to say exactly what it is," Bozak said. "It's unfortunate we haven't played our best at home in front of our fans, so hopefully we can turn that around."

McDavid sweepstakes a 'double-edged sword' for Sabres

By Lance Hornby

Toronto Sun

October 27, 2014

Buffalo Sabres players, already fed up hearing from fans how grand it would be if they only win about one of every five games, want to involve other teams in the Connor McDavid sweepstakes.

That requires beating teams such as the Maple Leafs, nearest to them in the Atlantic Division heading into Tuesday's game (Toronto was tied with Florida). It's the first of two matches between the Leafs and Sabres in the next few weeks. The clubs also meet twice in the final days of the schedule, including April Fools Day at First Niagara Center.

Some Sabres get emails urging them to tank, while forward Patrick Kaleta had a fan tell that to him face-to-face. Such is the attraction of landing the Erie Otters' junior superstar McDavid first overall at the draft next June, even with the perils of the NHL lottery system.

"(Fans) should want to get Connor," Jay McKee, a former Sabres and Erie assistant coach told The Canadian Press when McDavid played an OHL game in Buffalo earlier this month. "But obviously in order to have a chance at drafting Connor, they're probably going to have to have a bad year again. And as a fan, as a player, that's not necessarily what you want, so it's kind of a double-edged sword."

It's not looking good for the Sabres, who have just 11 goals and went almost 200 minutes without a goal. They're giving up a league-worst 36.7 shots against per game and have yet to get a power play goal. Their security blanket, goaltender Ryan Miller, was traded to St. Louis, leaving Jhonas Enroth and Michal Neuvirth to battle it out.

The starting job was supposed to go to Miller's understudy Enroth, but coach Ted Nolan has taken a recent shine to the Czech-born Neuvirth, who at one time was starting for the Washington Capitals. Neuvirth gets the start against the Leafs.

"I said (Enroth) won the right to start the season," coach Ted Nolan told reporters on Monday.

"It's not that we've given up on Jhonas, it's just that the hot goaltender right now you got to go with."

Neuvirth made 29 saves as the Sabres ended a West Coast trip on the right note by edging the San Jose Sharks 2-1.

Two other Sabres bear watching in coming days. Centre Sam Reinhart, the second overall pick, will play his seventh game against the Leafs and soon reach his ninth, when the Sabres must decide if he's better off back in junior. He has played mostly on the fourth line of late, which would hinder long-term development.

Defenceman Tyler Myers, a former rookie of the year, is big-time trade bait with clubs such as Detroit said to be near the front of the line.

Game Day: Sabres at Maple Leafs

By Lance Hornby

Toronto Sun

October 27, 2014

BUFFALO SABRES AT TORONTO MAPLE LEAFS

Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Air Canada Centre

TSN4, 1050 AM

THE BIG MATCHUP

James van Riemsdyk vs. Michal Neuvirth

After Ryan Miller rode into the Pacific sunset with 32 career wins against the Leafs (32-15-3 with a .921 save percentage), Neuvirth has a tough act to follow in the Buffalo cage. He's an inch smaller than Miller, and stockier, which could make van Riemsdyk even bolder with his crease-area creativity.

FIVE KEYS TO THE GAME

1. Home fires

Yes, the Leafs are getting a rough ride from the public, but they have a beatable team that might not have its legs after a west coast road trip ended Saturday. Toronto is 10-1-1 against the Sabres at the ACC since the calendar year 2010 began, though many of those results were close calls.

2. Flickering power

While Toronto is having difficulty with the man advantage, the Sabres are still looking for their first power-play goal after nine games. Elias Sports says the 1970-71 Minnesota North Stars hold the post-expansion NHL record of waiting 12 games before their first extra-man goal.

3. But seriously, folks

The Leafs, as they should, dismiss any talk of taking the Sabres lightly, despite their start of 2-7. "I look at the Sabres going into San Jose and beating them (2-1), then I watch San Jose go in and beat Anaheim 4-1," coach Randy Carlyle said. "Those are the ebbs and flows in the game, but we aren't in any position to take anyone lightly. We have to muster all the inner strength we have to put on a performance we can be proud of."

4. Use the fourth

The Leafs dropped defenceman Stu Percy to go back to a full fourth line. After Richard Panik had a late goal against the Bruins, the unit must keep that up, no matter what combination of Panik, Peter Holland, Carter Ashton and Matt Frattin is used.

5. Bring out the knives

Buffalo shooters won't be silent all season. Despite getting just 11 goals so far. If they push the Leaf defence hard enough, some chances will present themselves.

SPECIAL TEAMS

LEAFS -- PP 16.1% (21st), PK 84.4% (10th)

SABRES -- PP 0% (T-29th), PK 84.8% (9th)

SICK BAY

LEAFS -- F David Booth (foot); RW Brandon Kozun (ankle)

SABRES -- F Patrick Kaleta (facial)

Buffalo Sabres at Toronto Maple Leafs: Tuesday NHL game preview

By Mark Zwolinski

Toronto Star

October 27, 2014

The Toronto Maple Leafs (3-4-1) host the Buffalo Sabres (2-7-0) Tuesday night (TSN4/TSN radio 1050, 7:30 p.m.). Here's what you need to know about the Sabres:

SAN JOSE SURPRISE

Buffalo broke a four-game losing streak with a 2-1 win Saturday in San Jose, their first regulation victory of the season.

BLUE-COLLAR WORK

The Sabres won't blow away the competition with skill. They know the route to success is through hard work, something coach Ted Nolan has stressed daily. "Everybody works their butt off, and that's the thing about this group," said forward Nicolas Deslauriers, who scored the winning goal in San Jose. "We know we don't have all the skills to win 7-0 or something like that, but I think all the boys want to work, and we want to change something for the team and the city."

GOALIE TANDEM

Nolan has used a goalie rotation. If it continues, Jhonas Enroth will start against the Leafs. Ex-Capital Michal Neuvirth beat the Sharks, his first win in five starts for the Sabres. He's 1-2 with a goals-against average of 3.02 and .916 save percentage. Enroth is 1-5, 3.13, .914. "Every game so far, we could never blame the goaltending," Nolan said. "They've played well for us. Right now we'll keep somewhat of a rotation going and pretty soon the No. 1 will spurt out."

SECOND-LINE SHUFFLE

Nolan has also tried different second-line centres, starting out with Cody Hodgson between Marcus Foligno and Drew Stafford, then switching Hodgson back to his natural left wing and parking Foligno in the middle vs. San Jose.

NOT FAR OFF

The last-place Sabres sit three points behind the Leafs, who are coming off one of their worst games against Boston on Saturday.

Sabres' Josh Gorges knows his heart wasn't in Toronto

By Bill Hoppe
Olean Times Herald
October 28, 2014

TORONTO – Take away the character, take away the tenacity, and Buffalo Sabres veteran Josh Gorges becomes a run-of-the-mill defenseman.

The undrafted Gorges has built an unlikely 10-year NHL career by showcasing passion – on and off the ice.

"I have to play with my heart," Gorges, whose Sabres play the Maple Leafs tonight, said Monday. "I have to play everything I got every shift."

The 30-year-old believes he couldn't do either of those wearing the blue-and-white of the hated Toronto Maple Leafs.

Four months ago, the Montreal Canadiens decided to trade the popular heart-and-soul player to create salary flexibility. The Leafs, their fiercest rival for decades, wanted Gorges badly.

The Canadiens had a deal ready. But having experienced hockey's biggest grudge match up close for seven years, Gorges knew he wouldn't be the same player with the Leafs.

So Gorges, who was devastated to be leaving Montreal for any team, nixed the trade, refusing to remove Toronto from his 15-team no-trade list.

"Playing seven and a half, eight years in Montreal, playing against Toronto all those Saturday nights, talking about the history, talking about the rivalry, being a part of it for so long, I didn't feel like it would've been fair to Toronto," Gorges said inside the First Niagara Center. "Could I have been that same player? Would I have been that same player for them that I was for Montreal?"

"I didn't think I could give ... them what I could."

Does Gorges expect the fans inside the Air Canada Centre will boo him tonight, his first visit this season?

"Yup," he replied before a reporter could finish the question.

Gorges can also expect a throng of cameras following the skate this morning.

"I'm sure they'll be a few people wanting to know a few questions," he said.

Gorges maintains shunning the Leafs was nothing personal against the team, city or fans.

"That's a great hockey city," he said. "But as a competitor like I am, would I have been able to be a good player for that team? Would I have been able to give my heart like I need to to be successful to help my team? I just don't know if I could. So I don't think I would've been doing them any favors."

Gorges eventually accepted a trade to the Sabres on July 1, becoming the first of five veterans the rebuilding club added that day.

But for three days, Gorges endured "a lot of unknown."

"A lot of sticking in limbo would be the best way to explain it," he said. "You get told they want to trade you, first of all to Toronto. Then I was told from my agent (to) take some time to think about it. ..."

"You got a million different things running through your head. 'Why am I getting traded? What did I do? Where am I going? Who am I getting traded for? What's the reason behind it? If I do go to Toronto, where do I fit in?"

Gorges has fit in well with the Sabres, a team that sorely needed a steady veteran to stabilize the defense.

The British Columbia native has been skating beside Tyler Myers, averaging 21 minutes, 36 seconds of ice time through nine games. Sabres coach Ted Nolan named Gorges an alternate captain earlier this month.

Gorges has an NHL-high 41 blocked shots, 12 more than Calgary's Kris Russell.

"Josh's impact has been exactly what we expected," Nolan said. "He certainly adds a competitive element to us. You hear him in practice yelling all the time, you hear him during games, and he doesn't like to lose. Sooner or later, that attitude rubs off on everyone else. He's been great for us."

Did Gorges envision this role when he agreed to join a team coming off a 30th-place finish?

"I don't think you ever really know what you're getting into until you get there and get a feel for how things actually are," he said. "I knew coming in that I'd be counted on to be a leader, especially with the young defensemen, and (to) be a role model. That's been what I thought it would be, and now it's just a matter of that I take care of my job on the ice as well. I can't just focus on trying to teach. I have a job to do as well."

Sabres notes: Michal Neuvirth set to start again in net; Nikita Zadorov could play soon

By Bill Hoppe
Olean Times Herald
October 28, 2014

TORONTO – Goalie Michal Neuvirth, once thought to be the Buffalo Sabres' backup, will make his second consecutive start tonight in Toronto, coach Ted Nolan said.

What's going on? Wasn't Jhonas Enroth supposed to be the No. 1 goalie?

Tonight's contest will be Neuvirth's third nod in the last four games.

Nolan said Monday he never anointed Enroth, who's played six contests, the starting netminder.

"I said he won the right to start the season," Nolan said inside the First Niagara Center. "There's a difference between starting goaltenders and starting the season. He certainly earned the right to start the season. Jhonas, he played well throughout the training camp ... and he's continued to play well."

Both goalies have one win and similar numbers. Enroth has a 3.13 goals-against average and .914 save percentage. Neuvirth, meanwhile, has a 3.01 goals-against average and .916 save percentage.

Neuvirth played well in Saturday's 2-1 win in San Jose, stopping 29 shots.

"It's not that we've given up on Jhonas, it's just that the hot goaltender right now you got to go with," Nolan said.

Enroth was the hot goaltender during the preseason as Neuvirth struggled. Now, it appears the two have become the tandem many expected they would be this season.

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Nolan said 19-year-old defenseman Nikita Zadorov, a healthy scratch all but one game this season, could play again soon.

The Sabres are essentially stashing the rookie because he doesn't have a release to play in junior from the Russian club that owns his rights.

Zadorov played six minutes, 12 seconds in his season debut Thursday, a 2-0 loss in Los Angeles.

"It's day-to-day with Nikita, what we're going to do," Nolan said. "We'll re-adjust that again. ... I thought he played well in the game he played in L.A. He's getting better and better in practice. We still got to remember he's a real young player in this league. If he stays around here, he'll get in some more games."

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Nolan said rookie center Sam Reinhart will make his eighth NHL appearance tonight. The 18-year-old can play nine times before his contract kicks in.

Reinhart earned his first NHL point, an assist, on Nick Deslauriers' goal Saturday.

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Nolan on the 2-7 Sabres needing time to mesh since they have so many new faces: "Sometimes it takes more than a month, more than two months, more than three months. Sometimes it takes a little while to adapt a whole culture change. You don't do those things overnight."

He said the Sabres are "doing it the old-fashioned way."

"Nice and slow and methodical and thought out and developing, and changing the culture goes with that," Nolan said.

He added: "I'm not saying it's going to take a long, long time, but it's going to take longer than a month."

The Sabres turn to Neuvirth

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

October 27, 2014

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- After training camp ended, I had gotten the impression that Jhonas Enroth had won the starting goalie competition. Enroth played in five of the first six games and didn't play poorly, but Michal Neuvirth has started two of the last three games and he'll get the call Tuesday in Toronto. Ted Nolan said, "I don't know if I said he won the starting job (Enroth), I said he won the right to start the season. There's a difference between starting goaltenders and starting the season. He certainly earned the right to start the season and Jhonas has played well throughout training camp and has continued to play well."

OK, makes sense, so why the change? Nolan said, "Last game we put in Neuvirth, it was back to back games and all of a sudden he came out and had a great game so, it's not that we've given up on Jhonas, it's just it's the hot goaltender right now so you've got to go with him."

Another change in practice is Marcus Foligno went back to wing and Torrey Mitchell is now playing center. Nolan said Mitchell can do many things for the team, "He's pretty versatile for us and that's one of the things we tried to do in training camp is try him up the middle and he's had experience there, he's skating very well for us and maybe he can get in on the forecheck a lot better for Cody and open up some ice for him." Nolan added, "Foligno's line had some trouble, so we'll mix and match, we tried it, it didn't work very well so we'll try another one."

The lines were:

Moulson-Ennis-Stewart

Hodgson-Mitchell-Stafford

Foligno-Girgensons-Gionta

Deslauriers-Reinhart-McCormick (Flynn and Kaleta)

The Sabres still aren't saying what they're going to do with Nikita Zadorov. He's only played one game so far and Nolan said, "It's day to day with Nikita in what we're going to do, I thought he played well in L.A., he's getting better and better in practice and if he stays around, he'll get into more games."

After spending just one day at home, the team left after practice on Monday for Toronto to wrap up its four game road trip.

Neuvirth to start against Leafs

By Stu Boyar

WGRZ

October 27, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y.-Sabres head coach Ted Nolan said Monday that Michall Neuvirth will start in goal against the Maple Leafs in Toronto Tuesday night.

Neuvirth stopped 29 of 30 San Jose shots on goal in the Sabres 2-1 win against the Sharks Saturday. It was the Sabres first win in regulation this season and just their second of the year.

Neuviirth will have played three of the last four games for the Sabres. He and Jhonas Enroth appear to be locked in a battle for the job as starting goaltedner. Enroth had it won coming out of training camp.

Neuvirth earns another start for Sabres

By Staff Report

TWC Sports

October 27, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. - The Sabres earned their first regulation win of the season in San Jose to close their trip out west.

A big part of that was goalie Michal Neuvirth - he stopped 29 of 30 shots Saturday to earn his first win with the Blue and Gold, as the Sabres ended their four-game losing streak.

Head coach Ted Nolan says Neuvirth will start again Tuesday night in Toronto.

"Last game we put in Neuvirth because we just felt back-to-back games, and all of a sudden he came out and had a great game," Nolan said. "So it's not that we've given up on Jhonas, it's just the hot goaltender right now, you got to go with him."

Nolan said Monday that he saw progress during the trip, and the players agree.

"Our trip, obviously, wasn't very successful, but we were in games and that's what we're trying to build to be," defenseman Mike Weber said. "We're trying to build to be in a position like we were in San Jose where we were able to take it to them and able to get ahead in the third period and keep a lead and get the win."

"Anytime you win a game, it's a good feeling and that was a big win for us," defenseman Josh Gorges said. "I think we started to play better in Anaheim. Even in LA, we had some spurts and some moments where we were playing as a team and showing some life. Unfortunately we weren't able to produce offensively the way we'd like to, but those things will come if we keep sticking to what works."

Faceoff with the border rival Maple Leafs is slated for 7:30 Tuesday night.

Neuvirth earns another start

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

October 27, 2014

After winning his first game as a member of the Buffalo Sabres on Saturday, Michal Neuvirth has earned another start between the pipes.

Sabres coach Ted Nolan said that Neuvirth will play Tuesday night when the Sabres take on the Toronto Maple Leafs at 7:30 p.m. at Air Canada Centre.

Jhonas Enroth came out of training camp as the No. 1 goalie, but the competition never ended and Buffalo will ride the hot hand.

"He certainly earned the right to start the season. Jhonas played well throughout the whole training camp and certainly deserved that right. And he's continued to play well," Nolan said. "The [Anaheim] game [on Wednesday], we put in Neuvirth because we just felt back-to-back games and then all of a sudden, he came out and had a great game.

"It's not like we've given up on Jhonas. It's just the hot goaltender right now, you've got to go with him."

Enroth is 1-5-0 this season with a .914 save percentage and a 3.13 goals against average. Neuvirth, acquired in a trade with Washington in March, is 1-2-0 with a .916 save percentage and a 3.02 goals against average this year.

Neuvirth stopped 29 shots in that win against the Sharks and became the 35th goaltender to record a victory for the Sabres. He has a .927 save percentage in five games with the team.

Playing in Toronto means Neuvirth will have played three of the past four games.

GOOD NEWS FROM COLUMBUS

Marcus Foligno moved back to wing after playing center for the game against San Jose on Saturday. Before practice, however, his mind was focused on a more personal matter.

Foligno's brother Nick, a forward for the Columbus Blue Jackets, was injured Sunday night in Los Angeles when his head collided with the hip of the linesman along the bench. The training staff called for a stretcher and he was carted off the ice.

Nick flew back home with the team after the game. He told reporters Monday morning that he felt some numbness after the hit but he had an MRI performed in Columbus and everything has been cleared with the medical staff.

Foligno said he was watching the game with family when the incident occurred and he was able to talk to some of Columbus' training staff to receive more information on his brother's condition. He spoke with Nick after the game.

"Obviously you never want to see that. You see it with other players, but it's different when it's a family member and your brother," Foligno said. "I'm happy he's OK and going to make a full recover, so it's all good."

During the Sabres' practice at First Niagara Center on Monday, Foligno almost had a scary incident of his own. Going down on a 2-on-1 drill with Chris Stewart, Foligno went hard to the net and crashed into goaltender Michal Neuvirth, dislodging the net from its moorings. He got up without any trouble.

"It was a tough practice. It's one of those things you've just got to get back into it. I drove hard to the net, Neuvy put a body check on me and I dodged the post," Foligno said. "It was a close call."

MONDAY'S PRACTICE LINEUP

26 Matt Moulson – 63 Tyler Ennis – 80 Chris Stewart

82 Marcus Foligno – 28 Zemgus Girgensons – 12 Brian Gionta

19 Cody Hodgson – 17 Torrey Mitchell – 21 Drew Stafford

44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 23 Sam Reinhart – 8 Cody McCormick – 65 Brian Flynn – 36 Patrick Kaleta

4 Josh Gorges – 57 Tyler Myers

6 Mike Weber – 41 Andrej Meszaros

61 Andre Benoit – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen

51 Nikita Zadorov – 24 Tyson Strachan

Patrick Kaleta practiced for the first time since sustaining a face injury on Sept. 28 without a red, non-contact injury. He was a full participant, skating with the fourth line while still wearing a full-face shield. He won't make the trip to Toronto, but is getting closer to returning to action.

Nolan said that rookie Sam Reinhart will play against Toronto. He's played in seven games this season and recorded his first point – an assist – on Saturday in San Jose.

Torrey Mitchell moved to center with the hopes that he'll help Cody Hodgson create more offense. Hodgson scored his first goal of the season against the Sharks.

"He's had experience there and he's skating very well for us. Maybe he can get out on the forecheck a lot better and a lot quicker for Cody to open the ice for him."

Power Play Units

First Unit

Moulson-Ennis-Stewart

Myers-Benoit

Second Unit

Stafford-Hodgson-Gionta

Ristolainen-Meszaros

GROWING AS A TEAM

The week-long West Coast trip allowed the players to spend some time together away from the rink and those moments can go a long way toward building chemistry. Buffalo started the season with 10 players who weren't on the roster for the team's final game last year. Nolan said that forging that bond can take time.

"Sometimes it takes more than a month, more than two months, more than three months. Sometimes it takes a little while to adapt a whole culture change. You don't do those things overnight," Nolan said. "You look at the Pittsburgh Penguins, what they went through. You look at the Chicago Blackhawks, what they went through."

"Every organization, when you're going through a transitional period, it's not going to be last to first overnight in too many cases. Here, we're doing it the old-fashioned way – nice and slow and methodical and developing. Changing the culture goes with that – and how we practice."

"We talk about guys like Josh Gorges. You bring in people like that and they slowly start turning the attitude and the culture around. I'm not saying it's going to take a long, long time, but it's going to take longer than a month."

The team held onto a 2-1 lead Saturday against San Jose. Gorges said that sticking with a good effort allowed them to stay in games against the Ducks and Kings and helped them find a way to win against San Jose.

"We have to be comfortable in those one-goal games," he said. "There aren't too many games where you see 6-1, 5-0 games. They're usually one, two-goal games so when we have that lead in the last 10 minutes, last five, last two minutes, we've got to be comfortable in that situation and know that we can still go out there and play."

Sabres prospects report

By Kris Baker

Sabres.com

October 27, 2014

Nick Baptiste (2013, third round) made his season debut Friday, picking a corner and tipping a point shot to record two late goals as Sudbury lost to Peterborough 6-4 in Ontario Hockey League action. The speedy winger, who was unable to get going as the Wolves were thrashed by Erie 8-1 on Saturday, missed the Wolves' first 11 games while recovering from a shoulder injury sustained in the preseason.

With just one win in their first 13 contests, the Wolves are elated to get their reigning MVP back in the lineup. Baptiste cashed 45 goals a season ago, and with Hockey Canada evaluating prospects for this winter's IIHF World Junior Championship, he'll be motivated to shine nightly despite the lackluster cast.

Wearing the Team Canada jersey is one of Baptiste's goals for the season. He produced three points (1+2) in August at Canada's National Junior Team Summer Development Camp, and he'll get another chance to impress on Thursday, Nov. 13 when Team OHL battles Team Russia in Game 3 of the 2014 Subway Super Series. Until then, though, Baptiste will be relied on heavily to revive an anemic offense that averages less than two goals per game.

OHL

Justin Bailey (2013, second round) saw his career-best nine-game point streak snapped in Kitchener's 5-4 loss to Owen Sound on Friday. Bailey bounced back Saturday with one assist in the Rangers' 5-3 win at Plymouth, and then connected for the game-winning goal Sunday in a 6-2 victory over Ottawa. The developing winger enters November with team highs of nine goals and 16 points through his first dozen games.

Brendan Lemieux (2014, second round) scored a shorthanded goal Wednesday as Barrie was smoked by Owen Sound 6-1. The fiery forward was ejected from Friday's 5-4 victory over Kingston after being assessed a match penalty late in the second period. The penalty, stemming from a fight with 2015 draft prospect Lawson Crouse, earned Lemieux an automatic suspension pending league review. Through 11 outings, Lemieux has collected seven goals, 12 points (7+5) and 33 PIM.

Eric Cornel (2014, second round) amassed two assists and his third career fighting major Friday as Peterborough snapped a seven-game losing skid with the 6-4 victory in Sudbury. On Saturday, Cornel logged a minus-two rating as Peterborough was doubled by Sault Ste. Marie 4-2. Through 11 games, Cornel has four goals and five assists.

OMJHL

Vaclav Karabacek (2014, second round) picked up a goal and an assist Friday for his fourth two-point effort of the season as Gatineau was outgunned in a 9-6 loss at Halifax. The Czech winger converted a shootout attempt in a 4-3 loss at Shawinigan on Saturday, and completed the week with a helper in Sunday's 6-4 triumph over Sherbrooke. Karabacek has four goals and eight assists through 15 contests.

WHL

Brycen Martin (2014, third round) snapped a five-game point drought Friday with two assists as Swift Current defeated Regina 3-1. The double-helping was Martin's first multiple-point effort of the season, and gives him six points (0+6) through 16 games.

NCAA

Freshman pivot Connor Hurley (2013, second round) scored his first collegiate goal Saturday and added a pair of assists as Notre Dame blanked Niagara 7-0. The night before, Hurley earned two assists for the first multiple-point game of his NCAA career in a 6-3 triumph over the Purple Eagles. The Minnesota native has recorded points in three straight contests for a total of six (1+5) through his first five appearances.

Cal Petersen (2013, fifth round) made 23 saves for his first collegiate shutout as Notre Dame earned the weekend sweep with a 7-0 shellacking of Niagara. Petersen improves to 2-1 with a 1.34 GAA and .950 save% in his first semester of duty. Notre Dame remains at home next weekend to open the Hockey East schedule versus Vermont.

In Saturday action, Judd Peterson (2012, seventh round) assisted on the game-winning goal at 8:18 of the third period as No. 9 St. Cloud State earned the weekend split with a 3-2 victory at No. 2 Union. The helper was Peterson's first collegiate point. He logged a minus-one rating the night before in a loss to the reigning NCAA champs.

Hudson Fasching scored his third goal in as many games Friday as No. 1 Minnesota cruised to a 5-2 victory over Bemidji State. Fasching, who continued to plant at the edge of the crease on the power play, got the payoff at 9:18 of the third period when he deflected a Mike Reilly (CBJ) point shot into the back of the Bemidji net. The sophomore saw his three-game goal streak snapped on Saturday as the Gophers closed out the weekend with a 5-3 triumph of the Beavers.

Minnesota senior forward Christian Isackson (2010, seventh round) finished the weekend with an even rating for the Gophers, who move on to face former WCHA rival St. Cloud State on Friday.

J.T. Compher (2013, second round) registered an assist Friday as visiting No. 14 Michigan doubled up No. 8 UMass-Lowell 8-4. Compher was blanked the next night in a 3-2 loss at No. 11 Boston University. The sophomore winger has collected three points (0+3) through his first five games. He didn't score his first goal until his ninth game a season ago. Michigan travels to Michigan Tech on Friday.

Anthony Florentino (2013, fifth round) saw his two-game point-streak snapped as No. 5 Providence lost 6-1 at No. 3 North Dakota. Florentino resumed production Saturday with a power-play assist as the Friars and North Dakota battled to a 2-2 tie. The helper, which came during a five-on-three advantage, gives the sophomore rearguard three assists in the Friars' four games.

Providence defenseman Mark Adams (2009, fifth round) netted three shots on goal and a minus-one rating in the weekend set versus North Dakota. The Friars begin the Hockey East schedule this weekend with a home-and-home series against 2015 draft prospect Jack Eichel and the Boston University Terriers.

Max Willman (2014, fifth round) kicked off his freshman campaign Sunday with an empty-net goal as Brown won at Dartmouth 3-1. Willman added two shots on goal from his left wing spot on the Bears' second offensive line. The Bears visit Army on Friday to open regular season play.

USHL

Christopher Brown (2014, sixth round) was held scoreless over the weekend as Green Bay dropped 2-0 and 4-2 decisions at Muskegon. Brown ranks second on the Gamblers with five points (3+2) in the club's eight games.

SWEDEN

MODO goaltender Linus Ullmark (2012, sixth round) bounced back with wins in each of his two starts last week. Following a 28-save performance in Wednesday's 3-2 shootout win at Farjestads BK, Ullmark stopped 37 of 39 shots Friday as MODO held on for a 3-2 victory over Lulea HF. The 21-year old improves to 3-4 with a 3.75 GAA and .879 save% through eight starts.

Gustav Possler (2013, fifth round) notched three points last week as MODO won twice in three tries. The top-line winger was kept off the score sheet Wednesday, but got it going Friday with a pair of secondary helpers in the win over Lulea HF. Possler kept it going the following day with his third goal of the season in a 4-3 loss to Frolunda HC.

On Wednesday, Victor Olofsson (2014, seventh round) scored the game-winning goal in the shootout as MODO edged Farjestads BK 3-2. The 19-year old has continued to produce in a limited role, collecting five goals and seven points in 15 games while averaging just 9:15 of icetime per game.

In Swedish junior action, Jonas Johansson (2014, third round) made 39 saves in his season debut as Brynas downed AIK 4-2. Johansson, who allowed one of the goals to top 2016 prospect Alexander Nylander, battled an

infection for the past month and a half, but seems set to regain his spot on the top club roster following a superb showing in his victorious tune-up.