



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*October 9, 2014*

## **Sabres coach becomes better man during time in exile**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

October 8, 2014

Opening night, with its mix of pageantry, anticipation and optimism, is special. Ted Nolan knows it. More than that, he feels it.

"I'm probably as fired up or more fired up than the players are," the Sabres' coach said of tonight's opener against Columbus. "This is what we talked about all summer, prepared for all summer, and all of a sudden opening night is here."

Nolan concluded his thought by saying, "It doesn't get any better," but as the conversation continued, his words proved that isn't true. There are things better than opening night. Nolan realizes it now.

This is just the third opening night in 18 years for the coach, who hasn't experienced the spectacle since 2006. He was bitter while being excluded in the late 1990s, the first years after his unimaginable 1997 breakup with the Sabres. Missing the introductions, camaraderie and ice time got to him.

Not anymore. As he walks through First Niagara Center today, he realizes the absence was for the best. It made him a better man.

"Would I have loved to have been part of the National Hockey League for those 16 years I was gone? Certainly, but I think of the situations that occurred in my life," the 56-year-old said. "If I would have had a crystal ball and say would I do it again this way, I would.

"I would do it this way because I was home. I became a better husband, a better father. Watching my two boys grow up and be with them on a daily basis, I never would have got that back. Then hockey jumped back in my lap and I went to Europe, and all of a sudden I had a chance to coach in the Olympic Games, which I never ever thought I would do.

"Those opportunities would have never happened if I didn't get let go from Buffalo. I think there's a silver lining to everything in life."

There's a silver lining to this rebuilding season largely because of Nolan and his new coaching staff. They exude positivity and optimism. They've created a belief in the dressing room that anything is possible, even from a team that was last in the NHL last year.

"We're in control of our own attitude," Nolan said. "You can either have a good one or a bad one. It's your choice. I choose to have a good one. If you have a good one and you work through some of the crap that is put on your plate once in a while, you become stronger."

Nolan's tale is oft-told, but it's worth repeating because it is helping change the culture in Sabreland. He grew up third-world poor on an alcohol-ravaged First Nations reservation in Ontario. His father died when he was 14, and he lost his mother to a drunk driver in his early 20s. He overcame astronomical odds to play in the NHL and carve out a profession.

"I lost both my parents at a very young age," Nolan said. "Would I have loved to have them around now? Certainly, but I think the biggest honor you can have is living a full life and a good life, and that's how I choose to honor them.

"I talk to the players all the time about dealing with what you got dealt. I think everything in life prepares us for the moment we're in right now."

## **Coaches on same page**

The coaches preparing the players for the drop of the puck all have something to prove. It's partially why they have come together so quickly to form a cohesive staff.

"It's everything I was hoping and thought it could be," Nolan said.

Assistant coach Bryan Trottier skates into the players' stretching circles to share wisdom picked up during a Hall of Fame career. As Danny Flynn designs plays on a whiteboard, the players nod with enlightenment. Fellow assistant Tom Coolen draws on his sport psychology education to instruct players, while goaltending coach Arturs Irbe uses his 20 years in the crease as a teaching tool.

"Everybody brings something different to the table, but we are on the same page," Irbe said.

Nolan spent much of the offseason assembling his staff, and the time was well-spent. The coach seems more comfortable walking the hallways and taking the ice this year. He's alongside guys he knows instead of sharing the bench with strangers, which was the situation he inherited last season.

"Ted's been wonderful making everybody feel like they've got responsibilities with accountability in those jobs," Trottier said. "Everybody shares everything, which is great. Support is really good. Whether it's the system, the power play, the penalty kill, whatever somebody is working on, there's always a helping hand."

There isn't a "yes man" in the group, which is important when starting from scratch.

"We're good friends at the rink," Flynn said. "It doesn't mean that we don't sit down and have long, healthy discussions where everybody voices their opinion. We might agree sometimes, we might disagree sometimes, but that's the strength of a good staff. You find consensus, you ask tough questions and you make decisions that are for the best of the team."

"It's a system of support," Nolan said. "There's going to be some thoughts I have that are maybe not the best thoughts. That's why it's good to have educated guys and guys with experience to talk things through."

## **Flynn returns to NHL**

Nolan has worked with Flynn the longest. They were together with Sault Ste. Marie and Moncton of the Ontario Hockey League, and Flynn was Nolan's assistant with the New York Islanders. Flynn stayed for just one of Nolan's two seasons in New York because his Canadian wife couldn't get a work visa. He spent the past six years as head coach of Moncton.

"The most important team in your life is your family," said Flynn, who is eager to resume his NHL career now that the kids are grown and his wife can travel between Buffalo and Canada. "It's going to be nice in the National League after seven or eight years. Even the last game I coached with the Islanders was in Buffalo in the playoffs. I remember saying, 'This is a great atmosphere. This is a hockey town.'"

Flynn can be considered the voice of the game plan.

"Danny Flynn's tactical ability to teach and to explain is unmatched," Nolan said. "Whether he's been in the National Hockey League for the last 10 years or not, he's a tremendous explainer of drills and the purpose of them."

Coolen, who played collegiately with Flynn and worked with Nolan in the Latvian national program, is the staff's architect.

"He's kind of our systems coordinator," Nolan said. "He oversees the whole package, making sure we're working this part, working this part, taking the next step in the opposition and breaking down them for us."

Trottier, of course, is the voice of experience. With a gleaming Cup ring on his finger – he actually has enough to cover seven fingers – there are few things the 58-year-old hasn't seen in hockey.

"What we stress is you've got to stay positive," Trottier said. "Win, lose or draw, you've got to have a short memory because we've got another opponent coming just around the corner."

"You want the players as prepped as possible. That's probably where my focus is. But on a personal level, I'm very proud to be part of the staff, the team, the organization. We want it to be a good reflection on all of us."

The witty, philosophical Irbe competed against the Sabres during Nolan's first stay. The 47-year-old helped Nolan learn the ins and outs of Latvia during the past three years.

"I remember where we shook hands," Irbe said, describing the impact of their initial 2011 meeting in his native country. "I would say it was instant mutual understanding. I had the privilege to see firsthand how Ted builds from zero, the teams and people he's going to work with, in which order he bases his priorities."

"There are a lot of unknowns in our game. The key is it's always important to be surrounded by people who have your back. That's how we want to feel, and that's what we're striving for."

### **GM gets 'Nolan guys'**

There's no denying the Sabres have a feel-good vibe as the season starts. The trick will be to maintain it through the inevitable struggles. The key will be acquiring players who think like the coaches.

"We want players on the team that we know will keep going when it's not easy," Irbe said. "Everybody can be on the bandwagon. There has not been a single team that has won all 82 games in the regular season. I don't think that's going to happen, so there will be some tougher outings and you need those guys to keep marching."

General Manager Tim Murray acquired three "Nolan guys" in Brian Gionta, Josh Gorges and Matt Moulson. It's no coincidence they are the captain and alternates. They are the coach's voice in the room when he's not there.

"His philosophy in hockey and life is you earn everything you get," Moulson said. "That was something my parents instilled in me. You've got to earn everything, no matter what. It's something that I truly believe in as well."

Nolan earned another chance after a long time away. He used the time wisely, building a family and a network of friends. He created a foundation whose mission is to train Aboriginal leaders and educate First Nations women.

Now, with opening night here, he's focused on the Sabres.

"He's overjoyed to be back in Buffalo," Flynn said. "I don't think he expected that he would ever get the chance to return, but the hockey gods smiled at him. He got back here in what could be a great situation."

"He's thinking about today and tomorrow, not yesterday."

## **Sabres' Stafford maintains glass half-full mentality**

By Mike Harrington

Buffalo News

October 8, 2014

Drew Stafford looks around the Buffalo Sabres' dressing room now and doesn't see many faces he grew up with.

Paul Gaustad, Derek Roy and Tim Connolly are long gone. So are his two closest former friends on the team, Clarke MacArthur and Daniel Paille. And within the last two years, Ryan Miller, Jason Pominville and Thomas Vanek were all sent packing.

Stafford said he regularly looks at a team picture in the locker room complex that was taken on warmup day at Ralph Wilson Stadium prior to the 2008 Winter Classic. He's the last remaining player in the shot. The media regularly sees the same picture exiting the press box elevator on the FNC's top level.

"I walk by and see that and I'm like, 'Where is everybody?' Even coaches are gone too," Stafford said Wednesday, following the team's final practice for tonight's opener against Columbus in First Niagara Center. "I'm just about the only guy. It's like Ray Finkle in 'Dumb and Dumber.' He's got the photograph with all the X marks except for the one guy and I'm the one guy."

When he was 21, Stafford was on a Presidents' Trophy team that was picked by most everyone to win the Sabres' first Stanley Cup but didn't. He's been on a couple of playoff teams, a couple others that suffered near-misses. And, of course, last season's disaster that saw the Sabres careen to the bottom of the NHL with their worst record in 42 years.

Stafford is back for more in what very well could be his final season with the team. Now three weeks from age 29 and in the last year of his contract, the senior member in terms of service of the 23-man roster admits it's been a crazy ride since the Sabres tapped him with their No. 1 pick in 2004.

"My first year you're enjoying every second being a part of a run to the conference finals but you just don't realize how significant that was," Stafford said. "You're just enjoying being a part of it. I've pretty much seen it all. There's so much enthusiasm now to pick it up. It can only go up from last year."

Coach Ted Nolan has said several times during training camp how much he felt Stafford became a leader in the room last year after the trade of captain Steve Ott. Stafford was not named an alternate captain to Brian Gionta on Tuesday, largely because of his contract status, but is certainly expected to be a secondary leader.

On the ice, the team would like for him to again be a primary scorer while playing top-line minutes with Tyler Ennis and Matt Moulson. Stafford had 16 goals in 70 games last year, and his production has dropped from the 31-goal campaign he put together in 2010-11 that earned him his four-year, \$16-million deal.

Stafford and fellow Sabres winger Chris Stewart are essentially this year's versions of Moulson. They're expected to produce offense but will likely rank as some of the top assets for the Sabres to deal come trade deadline time.

"I had a great summer building off last year," Stafford said. "When Teddy took over and gave me a first- and second-line role with top minutes, I tried to run with that and I felt my game improved. I want to carry that over."

"I'm going into the season with a glass half-full mentality knowing I've got a lot more in the tank to give and I can be a lot better. I'm excited."

... We have such a different group in here in a good way. It hasn't felt like this in a long time."

In addition to the Ennis line, the Sabres' top three trios figure to be Sam Reinhart between Cody Hodgson and Gionta, and Zemgus Girgensons between Marcus Foligno and Stewart. The feeling in the locker room is there's no way the worst team in the league has three forward lines with six former 20-goal scorers and two recent No. 1 draft picks.

"We always say that randomly at times in practice. Our belief is we've got some good players," Stafford said. "We can shock some teams, surprise teams. It comes to execution and competing. The league is so close and we have players. Last year we didn't necessarily have enough. Now you look and see how we've developed a lineup with established NHL players. And we should be able to control our work ethic."

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Nolan said defenseman Jake McCabe will be sidelined for at least a week with a "middle-body" injury that he aggravated in Friday's preseason finale at Carolina. For now at least, Nikita Zadorov has made the roster but it would seem that he would be a healthy scratch tonight. The top six on defense are Tyler Myers, Josh Gorges, Rasmus Ristolainen, Mike Weber, Andre Benoit and Andrej Meszaros.

In Rochester, Amerks coach Chadd Cassidy announced that defenseman Drew Bagnall will serve as team captain, with forwards Matt Ellis and Phil Varone as alternates.

## **Pegulas expected at tonight's home opener for Sabres**

By Staff Report

Buffalo News

October 8, 2014

There'll be some buzz in Pegulaville tonight.

One day after Terry Pegula won approval to become the new owner of the Buffalo Bills, Pegula's Sabres open their 2014-15 season at home against the Columbus Blue Jackets.

And Terry and Kim Pegula are expected to be at the hockey game tonight, which should make for an especially exciting time for fans.

Puck drop is 7 p.m. But before the game, starting at 4:30 a.m., the team will host its "Party in the Plaza" in Alumni Plaza outside First Niagara Center, with food and beverages for sale along with a live band. Special appearances by Sabres alumni and Sabretooth are also part of the event.

Fans are encouraged to arrive early, and a pregame handout will be distributed.

If you're headed down to the arena for tonight's game, the city's urging fans to park in city-owned facilities.

For on-ice information, check out our [NHL Preview](#).

## **Brian Gionta eager to prove Sabres' critics wrong**

By Kevin Oklobzija

Rochester Democrat & Chronicle

October 9, 2014

BUFFALO – When he was growing up in Greece, Brian Gionta was consumed by hockey.

Skating at Lakeshore Rinks on his youth hockey team. Ball hockey in the street. Enrollment in the annual Buffalo Sabres hockey camp at Lakeshore in the summer.

And a whole lot of the time, he was wearing his Rochester Americans sweater. No. 16.

"That was my number back then," he said.

The funny thing is, even though he went to the Sabres camp and called them his favorite NHL team, he never owned their blue-and-gold sweater.

Until now.

As dusk starts to settle on his career — though he's far from retirement — Gionta opted to come "home" over the summer. He signed a three-year contract with the Sabres on July 1, the day free agency began, and on Tuesday was named team captain. The Sabres open their season at home on Thursday against the Columbus Blue Jackets.

"It's crazy how full-circle it comes," the 35-year-old right winger said.

The one thing about the path of his career: you won't find many non-winning seasons.

Not at Boston College. Not with the New Jersey Devils. Not with the Montreal Canadiens.

You will find championships. An NCAA title with BC in 2001. A Stanley Cup with the Devils in 2002-03. Trips to the Eastern Conference finals with the Canadiens, in 2010 and again last spring.

Thus, he has no intention of buying into the tank-the-season talk that surrounds the rebuilding franchise. Sure, it would be beneficial in the long run if the Sabres could be in position to draft one of the prized prospects in the 2015 NHL draft, Connor McDavid or Jack Eichel.

But the current team plans to win, and the players returning from last season can't possibly endure another 30th-place finish in a 30-team league.

"I think our depth is pretty good; our D-corps is pretty good," Gionta said. "I think we're going to surprise a lot of people.

"A lot of the reasons for coming here was believing in what we have here and debunking what everyone else thinks."

Now in his 14th season of professional hockey, Gionta said this group has the right coach for the situation, Ted Nolan.

"You don't want to be dragging as a team," he said. "The worst thing you can do is continually beat yourself up and lose confidence in yourself. I think Teddy can give a lot of confidence to guys.

"You can't keep tearing it down. You have to build it up and I think he's great at doing that. He's going to give guys confidence and a belief in themselves, and that's contagious."

Nolan, at the same time, says he has the right captain. Gionta wore the "C" in Montreal the past four seasons.

"It was just one of those real obvious choices when Brian signed here," Nolan said.

Over the summer, Gionta didn't worry about how he would fit in on a new team. He was concerned about his kids, though. Not James; he's only 2. But Adam is 9. Leah is 6. During their five years in Montreal they had made friends.

No need to worry, it turns out.

"The kids are settled in; started school, hockey, and all their activities," he said. "It's a big change for them but they've been great, a lot better than we (he and wife Harvest) were expecting."

At first, his Sabres sweater No. 12 did shock him a little. After all, he'd never worn one.

"It's a cool feeling but at the same time it was weird at first," he said. "You become accustomed to the jersey you're wearing. But you're also aware of what's going on in your community. This is Sabreland, so it was pretty special."

In coming to Buffalo, he leaves behind one of the most iconic logos in sports, the hallowed CH of the Canadiens. He also leaves behind a city where hockey is a round-the-clock obsession.

"The markets are similar in that they have passionate fans and they love hockey," he said. "But it's not scrutinized (in Buffalo) in the same fashion."

"When you're at the rink or away from the rink, it's 'on' all the time there. Here, you can decompress away from the rink."

He's a hockey player but he's also a parent of three. The last thing he wants is for his kids to believe is that the family is "above" anyone else.

"You don't want them to grow up with a sense of entitlement," he said. "People are wanting to be a part of you or the make you think your something special. So you're trying to shape your kids and shield them from some things."

He does, however, want them to enjoy how special it will be to watch their father play at home.

## **Sabres rookie Reinhart to play with veterans**

By Joe Yerdon

NHL.com

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**BUFFALO** – It all starts for real Thursday for Sam Reinhart.

The Buffalo Sabres' first-round pick and the second player taken in the 2014 NHL Draft will make his debut against the Columbus Blue Jackets. After a busy summer with development camp and training camp, he's ready to make an impact.

"I came in with the mentality that I was going to soak everything in and I feel I've learned more than I could ever imagine from all the veteran guys here," Reinhart said. "I'm going to keep trying to learn every day from them and get better with their help."

Reinhart won't be the only young player on the Sabres' opening-night roster; 19-year-old defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen and Nikita Zadorov were first-round picks in 2013. But he'll be on a line between two more-experienced players, Cody Hodgson and captain Brian Gionta.

"They're obviously very smart players and good players," Reinhart said of his linemates. "I feel if I move the puck to them and get myself open, we're going to create a lot of chances. I feel comfortable on that line."

Reinhart playing alongside Gionta shouldn't come as a surprise. The Sabres' youngest player being on a line with its oldest makes sense at first glance, but it's logical in other areas too.

"We looked throughout the whole lineup which combination would suit [Reinhart] the best, especially early," coach Ted Nolan said. "And Gionta, he's not wearing the captain's 'C' for no reason; he's a true leader. And if you have a guy like him flanking your wing, hopefully it'll be more of a settling influence on a kid than not."

Having two players with varying levels of experience should help Reinhart when it comes to the kind of spotlight he'll face in his first game.

"The advice comes as mistakes happen or you see things, but he's the type of kid away from the rink, off the ice – he's got a good head on his shoulders," said Gionta, who was drafted by the New Jersey Devils in the third round (No. 82) in 1998. "You're not going to have to try to babysit him off the ice. It's [about] letting him mature as a player on the ice and learning the NHL game. That just comes as it comes."

At 24, Hodgson is 11 years younger than Gionta. As the Vancouver Canucks' first-round pick (No. 10) in 2008, he knows what it's like to have the eyes of a hockey-crazed city watching you.

"I know when I was younger it was a different situation, different team, different organization and different players, but the biggest adjustment, I think, from junior hockey to professional is really off the ice," Hodgson said. "That's the biggest thing I've seen transition-wise is eating right, getting your rest and not worrying about things once you're away from the rink. You've done all you can do, so just relax and enjoy it and don't sit at home and worry about what could happen. There's a lot of things that could happen. You just have to take things one day at a time. Every day you're here it's nice to be here, and you've got to be grateful for that."

As for Reinhart on the ice, he's gotten the attention of his linemates.

"Every day his confidence is rising," Hodgson said. "You can see it in the way he's skating and the way he's communicating and that stuff. You can tell on the ice he's getting more comfortable and that's a huge bonus for our team. He's going to be a great hockey player."

Reinhart being comfortable on the ice is an important factor because his future with the Sabres is undecided. Should he play in nine games, the Sabres will have to decide whether to keep him and officially start the first year of his entry-level contract or send him back to his junior team, the Kootenay Ice of the Western Hockey League.

"I'm always going to be trying to prove myself," Reinhart said. "No matter what the situation is, no matter what game it is in the season. Here, I'm just focusing day by day, and my focus right now is on the next however many [games] I have to make a statement."

If there's something the Sabres don't want Reinhart to feel right away, it's pressure.

"We know what he has to offer now," Nolan said. "He has to deliver it in a big man's game. He can't afford to be nervous. He's got to go right in and play as best as he can and, of course, the vets will help him get through those early jitters in the first shift. He's playing his first NHL game. He's going to be nervous. You get through those types of things and hopefully he settles in and plays the way he's capable of playing."

Expectations may be high at the moment for Reinhart, but if the excitement and nerves of playing in the NHL are getting to him, he's not letting it show.

"Obviously the pace of play is a little bit different," Reinhart said. "I felt that the style of game I play, as I start to adjust to that, I'm going to feel more comfortable and start to adapt. I feel great going into the season and competing every day to try and earn my spot."

## **Want bacon on a stick? Then a Sabres game may be the ticket for you**

By James Fink

Buffalo Business First

October 8, 2014

Fans of the Buffalo Sabres will face more than a new-look team when the 2014-2015 National Hockey League season begins this week.

They will also be confronted with a wide array of new food offerings, regardless of whether they are buying items at one of First Niagara Center's concession stands or purchasing something in the Harbour or Lexus Club or sitting in one of the suites.

Try shrimp and crab lobster rolls in the Lexus Club or maple bacon on a stick inside the Harbour Club. Then there's Italian sausage flatbread pizza and fried banana pepper rings from the concession stands.

And, for suite holders, there's a shellfish platter with lobster tails, king crab legs, shrimp and oysters on the half shell or a poutine potato bar.

It's all part of an extensive menu revamp overseen by Delaware North Cos. Sportservice, which provides food service at the downtown Buffalo sports and entertainment venue. Much like what Delaware North did this year at Ralph Wilson Stadium, it has upgraded its menu offerings to provide trendy foods.

"It is a showcase for a lot of new food," said Scott Green, Delaware North executive chef.

Sabres officials are more than pleased with the menu.

"They're fantastic and go right up the scale from concession stands to the suites," said Ted Black, Sabres' president.

Green said the menu items were crafted after polling other Delaware North venues, especially sports arenas, as well as working internally with staff from the Buffalo-based company. Green said more than 100 items were considered before whittling down the list.

One key factor was making sure Delaware North could purchase the items from local vendors. Delaware North puts a premium on buying local.

The seven new menu items for suites, running the gamut from tomato mozzarella pizza dip to seafood spoons and a beef tenderloin sandwich, will go along with others already available, like chicken wings, pizza and beef on weck sandwiches.

The same is true with the Harbour Club and Lexus Club menu additions. Old favorites remain, but they are now joined by the likes of an apple bacon salad and Reuben burger.

"We live in a very diverse community," Green said. "We tried to hit on something that would appeal to almost all diverse groups and interests."

## **Sabres' Tyler Myers ready for new season: 'I'm back to my normal self'**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
October 9, 2014

BUFFALO – Before the defensemen became Sabres teammates, they met about nine years ago, as Tyler Myers was beginning his junior career and Josh Gorges was leaving the Kelowna Rockets for professional hockey.

Gorges couldn't believe the teenager's lanky frame.

"He was 6-5, 6-6, but probably only 180 pounds," Gorges, who will skate beside Myers in tonight's season opener, recalled earlier this week. "I'm thinking, 'They're really high on this kid, he better fill out. He's pretty skinny.'"

Myers' talent intrigued Gorges. He frequently asked one of Kelowna's assistant coaches, a good friend, for reports on Myers.

"Wait 'til you see this kid, wait 'til you see this kid," the friend told Gorges. "He's 6-6. He shouldn't be able to skate like this. If you're 6-6, you should be a bad skater. You can't have both."

Gorges went back and watched the Rockets at the 2009 Memorial Cup. By then, Myers had grown to 6-foot-8 and packed on weight.

"He was a dominant player," Gorges said. "He just controlled the game. You knew he was going to be a special player."

But NHL superstardom has eluded the 24-year-old Myers, whose sixth campaign will begin tonight against the Columbus Blue Jackets inside the First Niagara Center.

His story has been well-documented. Shortly after winning the 2009-10 Calder Trophy, Myers suffered a stunning regression, losing his aggressiveness while becoming a mess defensively.

It's been a slow climb back. By late last year, however, before broken ribs ended Myers' season, he began to regain his old form, dominating some shifts each game by moving the puck all over the ice.

"I think he's back," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said Wednesday. "I'm looking forward to him going forward even better. I don't think he's reached his potential."

How does Myers feel today compared to a year ago?

"Oh, way better," he said. "I mean, it's night and day mentally, physically. It feels like I'm back to my normal self, so it's a good feeling."

Myers believes he's on track again because he "just stopped worrying."

"I just wanted to play well so bad I ended up, theoretically, gripping my stick too hard," he said. "I just got in my own head. I had a lot of help getting out of my own head. Just basically matured."

Nolan chose Gorges, a respected 30-year-old the Sabres acquired from Montreal on July 1, as Myers' partner.

"When I found out we were getting him, I knew what type of guy was coming into the room," Myers said.

The move makes sense. Gorges, as a stay-at-home defender, can be an anchor.

"That leaves Tyler to be able to rush a little bit more, get involved but not a total green light," Nolan said. "He can pick and choose. Josh is going to be there right with him to help us make him even a better player."

Myers said he and Gorges are already communicating well.

"I don't think it matters who your D partner is, if you're communicating well, you're going to have some chemistry," he said.

To Gorges, playing with someone as talented as Myers is an "honor."

"He's a great hockey player," he said. "Being able to spend some time close with him in practice and games, to watch what he does, how efficient he is in the game, how he can really make my job easy, he's a fun player to watch."

Myers was the most fun to watch five years ago, when he compiled 11 goals and 48 points. But he doesn't use that season – "Everyone talks about my rookie year," he said – as a measuring stick.

"I don't necessarily look at the points but how I was as an all-around defenseman," he said. "I feel I'm way ahead of the defensive part of the game right now."

Nolan isn't interested in that old version of Myers, either.

"That was a first-year kid playing better than all the first-year kids," he said. "But he's in a position where he can really take his game to the next level. Those type of guys don't come around too often. You're 6-8 and you skate like you're 5-8, and the spins and the turns and the hockey sense.

"All those things combined, we got a special guy back there. So I'm looking forward to even better."

## **Opening night in Buffalo will be extra special for Sabres' Ted Nolan**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
October 9, 2014

BUFFALO – Whether you've been in the NHL for 50 years or this is your first season, Sabres coach Ted Nolan said, "opening night's always exciting."

"Butterflies floating around like crazy," Nolan said Wednesday after the Sabres prepared for tonight's season opener against the Columbus Blue Jackets. "If it doesn't happen, something's going to be wrong."

Tonight will be extra special for Nolan, who's beginning his first full season as Sabres coach since 1996-97. He hasn't coached an NHL team on opening night since 2007 with the New York Islanders.

His last Sabres home opener was Oct. 12, 1996, the first game at what was then called the Marine Midland Arena.

"My body left, but my heart and soul has always stayed here," Nolan said. "To coach the Buffalo Sabres once again opening night, it's pretty special, pretty exciting."

Nolan hadn't thought about how special the opener would be until his wife, Sandra, mentioned it Tuesday night.

"My thought process was getting this team ready and making sure we thought of everything to get them ready," he said. "I never thought about myself, which is a good thing. We'll get this team ready. So now I get asked that twice. I'll be nervous like everyone else."

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Understandably, Nolan hasn't heard much owner Terry Pegula recently. But Pegula and his wife, Kim, plan to attend tonight's game after the NFL finalized their purchase of the Buffalo Bills on Wednesday.

Imagine the rousing ovation the Pegulas will receive if the First Niagara Center video boards show them.

"It's been pretty busy for Terry and Kim, for sure, to do what they've done acquiring the Bills," Nolan said. "I'm quite sure it's not like buying the corner store down the street. It's a lot of work. His heart's here. He's been calling in and checking in."

Nolan said Terry Pegula made sure he flew in for a recent team barbecue.

"It just shows you the type of ownership we have here," he said. "They really care about their teams. We said 'team.' Now they care about their 'teams.'"

xxx

Nolan said defenseman Jake McCabe's injury is worse than the Sabres originally thought. The rookie had two maintenance days before he was placed on injured reserve Tuesday.

"It went from a questionable rest day to something just a little bit more serious than a day," Nolan said.

Does McCabe have an upper- or lower-body injury?

"Right in the middle," Nolan joked.

xxx

Jhonas Enroth doesn't think he's the Sabres' No. 1 goalie yet. Enroth, who will start tonight, beat out Michal Neuvirth during the preseason.

"It's only for one game, I think," Enroth said. "Obviously, I have to stay humble and keep performing well, otherwise Michal's going to take over. So I know it's a tough competition. I'm sure (there's) going to be a couple games that Michal's going to play well, and you guys are probably going to call him the starter."

xxx

Rochester has named defenseman Drew Bagnall, not forward Matt Ellis, its captain. Ellis wore the 'C' at the end of 2012-13 and last season before a 50-game recall.

According to reports, Americans coach Chadd Cassidy believes Ellis could be summoned again, so he named Ellis an alternate captain with forward Phil Varone.

## **Ted Nolan on Sabres owner Terry Pegula: 'His heart's here'**

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

October 8, 2014

BUFFALO – Understandably, Sabres coach Ted Nolan hasn't heard much owner Terry Pegula recently. But Pegula and his wife, Kim, plan to attend Thursday's season opener after the NFL finalized their purchase of the Buffalo Bills today.

Imagine the rousing ovation the Pegulas will receive if the First Niagara Center video boards show them.

"It's been pretty busy for Terry and Kim, for sure, to do what they've done acquiring the Bills," Nolan said this morning inside the First Niagara Center. "I'm quite sure it's not like buying the corner store down the street. It's a lot of work. His heart's here. He's been calling in and checking in."

Nolan said Terry Pegula made sure he flew in for a recent team barbecue.

"It just shows you the type of ownership we have here," he said. "They really care about their teams. We said 'team.' Now they care about their 'teams.'"

In other news, Nolan said defenseman Jake McCabe's injury is worse than the Sabres originally thought. The rookie had two maintenance days before he was placed on injured reserve.

"It went from a questionable rest day to something just a little bit more serious than a day," Nolan said.

Does McCabe have an upper- or lower-body injury?

"Right in the middle," Nolan joked.

## **Jeremy: Sabres preview – I want two marshmallows**

By Jeremy White

WGR 550

October 9, 2014

I Want Two Marshmallows

The Buffalo Sabres opened play in the NHL 44 years ago, as the calendar read 1970. That same year, Stanford University conducted a world famous study on deferred gratification. What's now known as "the Stanford Marshmallow study" perfectly showcases what it's like to be a Sabres fan this year. The question is: Do you want two marshmallows?

Perhaps you're familiar with this famous study on delayed/deferred gratification from Walter Mischel and Ebbe B Ebbesen.

In summation it worked like this (from Wikipedia):

*"The children could eat the marshmallow, the researchers said, but if they waited for fifteen minutes without giving in to the temptation, they would be rewarded with a second marshmallow. Walter Mischel observed as some would "cover their eyes with their hands or turn around so that they can't see the tray, others start kicking the desk, or tug on their pigtails, or stroke the marshmallow as if it were a tiny stuffed animal", while others would simply eat the marshmallow as soon as the researchers left."*

If you're a Sabres fan, you're waiting for a Stanley Cup. Last year's team was downright terrible and the Sabres were given a reward for that horribleness, in the form of a top pick. Part of the problem with this franchise, is that it hasn't had enough truly great players. Great players are often taken at the top of the draft. This is indisputable\*

\*Despite the efforts of a few of you in the comments section no doubt.

The Sabres are not in a position to win the Stanley Cup. Perhaps you think that growth, and movement up the standings would be a good thing this year. Maybe you're more lined up with my line of thinking which is, simply described, "Dead last or bust".

So here's the deal:

I'll do my best to stay friends with those of you that only want to eat your marshmallow, and enjoy it's wonderful goodness.

I'd ask that you do the same for those of us that want two marshmallows.

Maybe you're the kid that eats the marshmallow.

Maybe you're the kid that has to try SOOOOOO hard to wait for that second marshmallow. You find crazy temptation buckles you. You think about nibbling on it (a push for the playoffs, or young upstart underdogs)...or hiding it from sight (ignoring the team outright). You'll do anything you can to try to avoid eating that first marshmallow.

Where am I?

(WHINER LINE VOICE - "Talking about MARSHMALLOWS cause you're soft!")

I'm a kid in a leather jacket, smoking a cigarette, telling the administrator to take her time. I'm ready for that second marshmallow. I'm that kid in the green shirt telling his sister to wait because it'll be worth the wait. Word around town is that this second marshmallow is the shmallow to end shmallows. This year's crop of marshmallows is a bit different.

I'm in. I'm ready. I'll get back to hockey next year.

You want to eat your marshmallow? Enjoy it.

I want two marshmallows.

## **Sabres' players excited for Bills' future under Pegulas**

By Matthew Coller

WGR 550

October 9, 2014

The Buffalo Sabres skated in blue, red, teal and yellow jerseys on the ice at First Niagara Center on Wednesday morning as their owners stood in front of a throng of media, dressed well enough to attend a wedding.

As the Sabres' skates clacked through the hallway to the locker room, Terry and Kim Pegula were illuminated by camera flashes and the bright NFL Network lights. Terry Pegula grinned, quipped and laughed with excitement during his short statement, while his hockey team took off drenched gear and chatted with a few media members – ones not selected for the special New York City assignment.

On Wednesday, the Sabres' owners were unanimously approved as the new owners of the Buffalo Bills, putting them in rare air in a few different ways: There are only a handful of owners who control multiple teams in the same market – one of them being the Washington Capitals' owner Ted Leonsis. And Kim Pegula went from being known as the Sabres' owner's wife to one of the most powerful women in sports.

Pretty cool stuff, for a Wednesday.

In the still-qualifies-as-new Sabres locker room – the one with the logo you're not allowed to step on, with the photo of the Stanley cup just before you exit and the adjoining hallway paying homage to the team's history; all of which came via the Pegulas – the team was as talkative as you'll ever find them.

With the season opener tomorrow night at First Niagara Center, it is finally time to get rolling on games that matter. Time to start showing that all their talk of improvement wasn't lip service. A chance for young players like Zemgus Girgensons and Rasmus Ristolainen to show the fans there is a great future to believe in.

Their giddiness was accented by the news of their owner purchasing the Bills. They're Bills fans, too. And if some weren't, they are now.

"Even before (the Pegulas bought the Bills), I see Buffalo as a tight knit community where people support the teams," forward Matt Moulson said. "Growing up in Mississauga, the Bills were the closest we had for an NFL team. So when I found out Terry was buying the Bills, knowing the Pegula family and all they've done for us, the Bills are in great hands."

Moulson grew up watching the Bills during the good ole days (can you believe it's been that long?), cheering on Kelly, Thomas and Reed. When the team faded, his interest did too outside of attending a few games at Ralph Wilson Stadium. The 30-year-old forward's love for the NFL was rekindled by his time at Cornell University, where there were football fans from all over the country talking about America's game.

Now, he tweets about the Bills. He posts photos of himself in team garb and posts videos of Marquise Goodwin running the 40-yard dash.

In his short time as a Sabre, Moulson has not yet made pals with Bills players as some of the more tenured Bills fans in the locker room like Patrick Kaleta.

"I follow them on Twitter," he said. "I had a Twitter conversation with Thurman Thomas – that was pretty neat."

Like Moulson, center Zemgus Girgensons enjoys posting a selfie now and then of himself and fellow Sabres at The Ralph. The Latvian native has taken quickly to the NFL and the Bills.

"Both teams are a family now," Girgensons said. "Everyone loves the team around here, so it's nice that it is one common owner now. Seeing what he's done with this organization, he'll do great things there."

The second-year NHL'er said he, like Moulson, does not know many of the players in Orchard Park, but added that "that wouldn't be a bad thing."

Maybe when there's a downtown stadium it will be easier to....

Anyway, the nervousness of Game No. 1 combined with the Pegulas' big news was on the mind of Ted Nolan as well. Though the Sabres' coach said he has not seen his bosses around much since they began the long process of bidding for the Bills.

"They've been pretty busy," he joked. "To do what they've done in acquiring the Bills, I'm pretty sure it isn't like acquiring a corner store."

Nolan said – maybe as a way to indicate a feeling that the old toy is still just as shiny as the new one – that Terry Pegula flew to Buffalo for the team's offseason barbeque.

"They really care about their teams," he said. "We're excited."

Terry and Kim said they will attend the Sabres' opener on Thursday night.

## **Sabres ready to open season at home vs. Blue Jackets**

By Staff Report

TWC Sports

October 8, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- The Buffalo Sabres are set to open the NHL regular season on Thursday as they play host to the Columbus Blue Jackets.

It will mark a new beginning for the Sabres after they finished last season with the worst record in the league.

General Manager Tim Murray continues to replenish the talent pool from prospects on up, and Head Coach Ted Nolan hopes that will change the results this season.

"Every team's different from year to year, but we feel we have a better group of guys assembled and a better team, so we're hoping for better results," said Nolan, who took over partway through the 2013-14 season.

"The bottom line is if you have better effort - if you have a better effort, you'll have better results. I think the effort's been there so we just have to go about our business and see what happens."

The puck drops shortly after 7 p.m. at First Niagara Center in Buffalo.

## **Sabres looking forward to opening night**

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

October 8, 2014

As it had been for much of training camp, the focus of practice on Wednesday continued to be on systems and getting the little details right. It wasn't until the end of the session that Buffalo Sabres coach Ted Nolan addressed something that's likely been on the players' minds – that opening night is only a day away.

The Sabres will take on the Columbus Blue Jackets on Thursday at 7 p.m. at First Niagara Center and it means a definitive fresh start.

"The way we've been talking in the last week, we can tell it's a different feeling coming into this year," defenseman Tyler Myers said. "It's always exciting getting the season going, but we know we have a lot of work ahead of us."

Nolan said his wife asked him Tuesday night about how he felt going into his first opening night as a coach since 2007.

Nolan said it was the first time he'd really put much thought into it being his first season opener in that long because he'd been so busy trying to prepare the team for the upcoming season.

"I'll be nervous like everybody else," he said. "I thought about it today on the ice and mentioned to the players, whether you're on the ice for 50 years or it's your first time, opening night is always exciting. There are always butterflies floating around like crazy. If it doesn't happen then something's going to be wrong."

It'll also be Nolan's first home opener for the Sabres since 1996. He re-joined the organization after 20 games had already been played last season.

"As I mentioned when I first got here, my body left, but my heart and soul's always stayed here, so to coach the Buffalo Sabres once again on opening night is pretty special and pretty exciting," he said.

One of the players who will be experiencing opening night for the first time will be Sam Reinhart. The second-overall pick in the 2014 NHL Draft is set to play on a line with Cody Hodgson and captain Brian Gionta. Nolan hopes that putting Gionta on his right wing will ease some of the nerves Reinhart will inevitably have.

"We know what he has to offer and now he has to deliver it in a big man's game. He can't afford to be nervous," Nolan said. "He's got to go right in and play as best as he can. I'm quite sure the vets will help him get through those early jitters."

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### **ENROTH MEETING HIS GOALS**

The last time Jhonas Enroth started an opening night, he was in goal for the Portland Pirates of the American Hockey League back in 2010. He'll be between the pipes Thursday night for the Sabres' first game of the 2014-15 season after a stellar training camp.

He's been looking forward to starting Thursday's game since last season ended.

"That was my goal going into training camp," he said. "I'm a little bit more excited and ready to go."

He entered training camp in a goaltending battle with Michal Neuvirth. Enroth shined in the preseason, winning both games he played and allowing only one goal on 58 shots.

However, he knows the healthy competition is still open and Neuvirth will eventually get another chance to play.

"It's only for one game, I think. I have to stay humble and keep performing well. Otherwise Michal's going to take it over," he said. "I know it's a tough competition and I'm sure it's going to be a couple games that Michal's going to play well and you guys are probably going to call him the starter."

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### **WEDNESDAY'S PRACTICE**

26 Matt Moulson – 63 Tyler Ennis – 21 Drew Stafford

82 Marcus Foligno – 28 Zemgus Girgensons – 80 Chris Stewart

19 Cody Hodgson – 23 Sam Reinhart – 12 Brian Gionta

44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 8 Cody McCormick – 65 Brian Flynn – 17 Torrey Mitchell

4 Josh Gorges – 57 Tyler Myers

61 Andre Benoit – 41 Andrej Meszaros

6 Mike Weber – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen

51 Nikita Zadorov – 24 Tyson Strachan

1 Jhonas Enroth

34 Michal Neuvirth

On Tuesday, the Sabres announced that five players were placed on injured reserve. Mark Pysyk, Jake McCabe, Patrick Kaleta, Johan Larsson and Matt Hackett will not start the season on the active roster.

Pysyk could start practicing again sometime this week while McCabe, who has missed the last two days with a lingering injury, could be out for another week. McCabe's injury was first thought to just be a day-to-day injury.