



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*November 28, 2014*

## **Little, Frolik lead Jets to 2-1 win over Sabres**

By Nick Mendola

Associated Press

November 26, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Winnipeg Jets goalie Ondrej Pavelec was ready for Buffalo's third-period charge.

After a quiet 40 minutes, Pavelec made nine of his 19 saves in the final period as the Jets held on to beat the Sabres 2-1 on Wednesday night.

"Every time the game is like that, something's coming," Pavelec said. "It's never like that for 60 minutes. The guys helped me in the first two periods, and it was up to me to help them in the third."

Brian Little and Michael Frolik scored as the Jets built a 2-0 lead before Chris Stewart scored on a breakaway for Buffalo early in the third.

Pavelec's best work came midway through the final period, when he made two saves on Matt Moulson during a 2-on-1. The late action was robust compared to the first two periods, when Buffalo barely made it into the Winnipeg zone.

"I was trying to stay in the game, doesn't matter how," Pavelec said. "Play the puck, go behind the net. We've been good defensively, so I was just focused on myself to stay in the game."

For the Sabres, it was the end of their season-best, three-game winning streak.

For the Jets and coach Paul Maurice, it was another "ugly" road win.

"It's what we're good at," he said. "That's the kind of people that we have — they're a highly competitive group and we can suffer some adversity over the course of the game and manage to survive."

The Jets won their second road game in two nights and improved to 8-4-2 away from home. They are 4-5-1 at home.

Buffalo was hurt by sloppy play and an ineffective power play that went 0 for 4, including a 5-minute stint late in the second period that included Frolik's short-handed goal.

"That first period and a half or so, I thought our hands were handling that puck like a grenade," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "It just kept bouncing and bouncing. That third period, we played the way we have to in order to be successful."

An early roughing call on Patrick Kaleta gave Winnipeg a power play, and Little used Blake Wheeler's screen to beat Enroth over his left shoulder at 3:41 of the first period.

Little has goals in his last three games.

Tyler Ennis energized a listless crowd in the second period when he flipped the puck through two Winnipeg defensemen to build a breakaway chance that was foiled by Pavelec.

Right afterward, Kaleta was boarded by Adam Lowry. The Sabres center lost some teeth and was bleeding from the mouth, and Lowry was given a 5-minute penalty and a game misconduct.

But Andre Benoit gave the puck away behind his goal, and Frolik put a quick wraparound past Enroth for a short-handed goal with 14:20 gone in the second period.

"I tried to go high there," Frolik said. "I don't even know where I aimed, but I tried to flip it up short side high and it went through him, so it was a good goal."

Stewart made it 2-1 early in the third when he raced to a loose puck and used his backhand to beat Pavelec for a breakaway goal.

Soon after, Pavelec was called upon to stop Moulson.

Buffalo controlled the majority of play in the final period, but Pavelec was up to the challenge.

Nolan complimented the Jets' effort under Maurice.

"I've known Paul for a long time. He's from my hometown and he takes the game very serious, and the way his team plays, they play very hard for him," Nolan said.

NOTES: Sabres defenseman Tyler Myers was a late scratch with a lower-body injury. ... Winnipeg wraps up a three-game road swing Friday in Boston. ... Left wing TJ Galiardi cleared waivers for Winnipeg. ... It was Kaleta's first home game in 14 months after a series of injuries.

## **Canadiens-Sabres preview**

By Jeff Mezydlo

Associated Press

November 27, 2014

A visit to Buffalo might provide the Montreal Canadiens with an ideal opportunity to bounce back from a loss in which they were shut out again.

The Canadiens can do so with a seventh consecutive victory over the lowly Sabres on Friday night in the opener of a home-and-home set.

Montreal (16-6-1) leads the Eastern Conference by a point over Pittsburgh, the New York Islanders and Tampa Bay, so it's understandable that Michel Therrien's team isn't too concerned about losing for the second time in 10 games, 5-0 to the New York Rangers on Sunday.

"A game like this leaves you scratching your head," defenseman P.K. Subban said. "We will be fine. We're still a very positive group. We have to generate more. We just didn't play our game."

The Canadiens, who outscored St. Louis and Boston 6-1 to win their previous two contests, have been blanked in their last three losses and four times this season.

Dustin Tokarski made 29 saves while stepping in for Carey Price, who faced 65 shots over the previous two games and recorded his second shutout in Saturday's hard-fought 2-0 win over the Bruins.

"I don't think we want to use (being tired) as an excuse," Subban told the NHL's official website.

Montreal has hardly needed to justify its play while outscoring the Sabres 17-5 in the last six meetings. P.A. Parenteau had a goal and also scored in the shootout as the Canadiens recorded their fourth straight victory at Buffalo, 2-1 on Nov. 5.

Parenteau has one point in his last five games, but three goals and eight assists in his last 12 against the Sabres.

Price, who watched Tokarski stop 31 shots Nov. 5, has a 1.00 goals-against average with one shutout during his three-game winning streak against the Sabres (6-14-2).

Buffalo scored 12 goals during a three-game winning streak that ended with Wednesday's 2-1 home loss to Winnipeg. Curtis Stewart scored in the third period, but the Sabres allowed the Jets to score on the power play and short-handed.

"The first period or first period-and-a-half or so, I thought our hands were handling the puck like a grenade," coach Ted Nolan said.

"And then all of a sudden in the third period, we played the way we have to play in order to be successful. I think the biggest message here, we have to play like that for 60 minutes."

Buffalo failed to convert any of its four power-play chances, including a five-minute opportunity in the second period during which the Jets scored the decisive goal. The Sabres are last in the league at 6.3 percent (4 of 64) with the man advantage.

They are 1 for 14 in their last six against Montreal, though that goal was Drew Stafford's tying tally in the third earlier this month. Stafford is second on the team with 12 points, but has none in three games.

Buffalo could be without defenseman Tyler Myers for a second straight game due to a lower-body injury.

"He was feeling good and then all of a sudden the injury just kind of went south on him," Nolan said.

## **A thin blue line hampers Sabres**

By Mike Harrington

Buffalo News

November 26, 2014

The Buffalo Sabres' organization spent the morning doing holiday good deeds collecting turkeys. The evening started with several more in First Niagara Center, as the team honored the memories of Pat Quinn and local snowstorm victims as well as the work of local first responders and the National Guard.

Then the game started. Spirit of the season all the way: Mostly a turkey.

Scoreless and listless for more than 45 minutes, the Sabres saw their three-game winning streak go by the boards in a 2-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets before a crowd of 18,442.

The Sabres were in a pickle right from the warmup, when minutes-hogging defenseman Tyler Myers didn't take the ice and was scratched. Myers took an Alex Ovechkin slapshot to his hand Saturday night in Washington, although the Sabres said the injury was to his lower body and coach Ted Nolan added it was something other than the hand.

The loss of Myers meant Andrej Meszaros and his minus-6 rating were looking at bigger minutes. And it meant that Andre Benoit and his team-worst minus-12 was out of the press box and back in the lineup after sitting as a scratch seven of the last nine games.

It also meant the Sabres' two weakest defensemen played together as a pair, like they did during Buffalo's 1-7 start to the season. It didn't go well again.

From the say-something-nice department is the fact that Benoit and Meszaros at least were accountable for their issues and met the media to discuss their terrible passing and puckhandling, among other issues.

Meszaros didn't move Blake Wheeler out of the way and Jhonas Enroth was screened on Bryan Little's power-play goal at 3:41 of the first period. Benoit's weak backhand pass behind his own net was swiped by Michael Frolik, who turned it into a short-handed goal at 14:20 of the second period.

"It's a play I've got to make," Benoit said. "I can't tell you why. I have to make it for sure. I was trying to get it to my partner and fanned on it. No excuses."

Just 14 seconds earlier, the Sabres had gone on a five-minute power play when Winnipeg's Adam Lowry was banished for the night on a boarding call after he pounded Patrick Kaleta into the end wall from behind.

The first player to come upon Lowry after a play likely to get an NHL review was Meszaros. And in the spirit of Andrej Sekera and Paul Gaustad doing a dance with Milan Lucic three years ago in Boston, Meszaros barely bumped Lowry at all.

It took a group of Sabres, led by burly Chris Stewart, to come from nearly center ice before Lowry had to remotely answer for his misdeed. Kaleta, who suffered multiple facial fractures in preseason and is playing with a full shield, suffered more cuts but returned to the game.

"You want to have an advantage but you want to stand up for your guy," Meszaros said. "Obviously if I had to do it over, I'd probably jump him more and get two minutes or something. I decided to not go that much hard on him but maybe I should have."

"There's going to be times for payback and maybe that's not the correct time to do it," Nolan said. "But the injury itself, when you've got somebody cross-checking somebody from behind that close to the boards, hopefully somebody else will take care of that for us."

Meszaros was signed by General Manager Tim Murray over the summer when the team needed a veteran contract to reach the salary cap floor and he got a one-year, \$4 million deal. But knee injuries have left him a shell of the player that Murray knew from Ottawa's 2007 Stanley Cup final team.

Benoit, who saw plenty of ice time for surprising Colorado last year, was not re-signed by the Avalanche and got a one-year deal for \$800,000.

While Mark Pysyk, Jake McCabe and Chad Ruhwedel have been inconsistent at best in Rochester, it's hard to imagine any of them could be any worse than the two veterans have been. One has to be close to a trip to the AHL.

Pressed on the point, Nolan said, "We'll have discussions about that, I guess."

The hockey gods rewarded Stewart's deed as he scored the Sabres' only goal on a breakaway at 5:30 of the third period, a neat backhand under Ondrej Pavelec after Marcus Foligno blocked a shot near the Buffalo line. It was Stewart's second goal of the season and first in nine games.

The Sabres were much better from that point as they pressed for the equalizer and collected 10 of their 20 shots on goal over the game's final 17 minutes. But they could not score again.

"All of a sudden in the third period, we played the way we have to play in order to be successful," Nolan said. "The biggest message here tonight is we have to play like that for 60 minutes. If we do, we'll be OK. If we don't, we know how it's going to turn out."

## **Sabres' Kaleta shakes off the pain with a smile**

By Amy Moritz

Buffalo News

November 26, 2014

Patrick Kaleta could not adequately express how much it meant for him to be back in a Buffalo Sabres uniform, playing at First Niagara Center.

It meant everything to him to be back in the lineup as the Sabres hosted the Winnipeg Jets on Wednesday night.

But like a moth to a flame, Kaleta seems attracted to injury. Fortunately for the Angola native, getting crosschecked face-first into the boards wasn't game-ending.

It was just par for the Kaleta course.

"That's the way it happens sometimes," Kaleta said. "If you've followed my career you'll notice I'm attracted to that sort of stuff. It is what it is. I'll be fine."

With 5:45 left in the second period, he was drilled face-first into the boards behind his own net by Adam Lowry.

Kaleta left the ice bleeding from the mouth while Lowry was given a boarding major and a game misconduct. Kaleta returned for the third period and was on the ice when the Sabres scored their only goal in a 2-1 loss to the Jets.

Kaleta had a cut on his lip but didn't lose any teeth.

"Still all there," he said. "I can't feel them, but they're still all there."

Wednesday's game was Kaleta's first at home in nearly 14 months. He last dressed for the Sabres at First Niagara Center on Oct. 10, 2013, when he took the final shift of a 4-1 loss to Columbus. Kaleta hit the Blue Jackets' Jack Johnson in the head during that game and got suspended 10 games by the NHL.

It was his second league-mandated sitdown in 21 games and the fourth of his career, so then-General Manager Darcy Regier banished Kaleta to the minors.

While playing in Rochester, he suffered a torn anterior cruciate ligament.

Kaleta literally broke his face during the preseason, again delaying his return. He was overmatched during eight minutes of ice time Nov. 13 in Minnesota, but the 28-year-old is starting to feel better physically. Wednesday he logged 7:30 of ice time and tied Marcus Foligno for the team lead in hits with six.

"Whatever I need to do to get in the lineup and help my team is what I'm going to have to do," Kaleta said. "Hopefully once I get the base of my game down I can expand and maybe down the road help out in the penalty kill area and all that kind of fun stuff."

And his conditioning is also starting to feel better.

"Especially with my knee," he said. "I'm starting to feel I'm getting my jump in my legs back. It's almost been a year so hopefully it will keep getting better every practice and every game."

Ted Nolan was happy with Kaleta's performance, particularly since he threw Kaleta into the center position on the fourth line. Kaleta hasn't played in the middle since his youth hockey days in West Seneca.

"I liked his enthusiasm," Nolan said. "His skating was much better. He's working at it in practice. To throw a player like that after he played one game in 13 months in a position that he's never played before ... for him to step up and do what he did, hat's off to him."

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Terry Pegula famously said that if he needed money, he'd just drill another well. It turns out owning a hockey team isn't a bad way to make a few bucks, either.

According to Forbes, which released its 16th annual NHL valuations, the Sabres are worth \$288 million. Pegula bought the team for \$189 million in 2011, giving him a \$99 million boost in three years.

Forbes, whose numbers have been disputed by sports leagues and owners, said the Sabres had revenue of \$103 million and operating income of \$4.4 million.

Buffalo's value ranks 23rd in the 30-team league. Toronto holds the top spot at \$1.3 billion. The New York Rangers (\$1.1 billion) and Montreal (\$1 billion) are also members of the 10-figure club.

The average NHL team, according to Forbes, is worth an all-time high of \$490 million. That's an increase of 18.6 percent over last year. The jump is due to the league's television deal with Rogers Communications. They are in the first season of a 12-year, \$4.6 billion agreement.

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The Sabres and their fans have combined to feed a lot of hungry people in Western New York.

The Sabres' annual Thanksgiving food drive Wednesday morning brought in 2,220 turkeys weighing more than 44,000 pounds. The turkeys will be donated to the Buffalo City Mission and the Food Bank of Western New York.

Fans received two tickets to an upcoming game for each 20-pound turkey they donated.

"For the second year in a row, we are amazed by the generosity of Western New Yorkers," said Sabres President Ted Black, whose team collected more than 1,700 turkeys weighing 34,000 pounds last year. "With the holiday season upon us, there is always a critical need at the Buffalo City Mission and the Food Bank of Western New York to help the neediest members of our region, and the response was tremendous."

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The Sabres had a moment of silence to honor former NHL coach Pat Quinn and those who lost their lives in the November snowstorm. During the anthems, the organization recognized the efforts of the National Guard during last week's weather event.

## **Sabres seek consistent, gritty play**

By Amy Moritz

Buffalo News

November 27, 2014

The play was a little bit gritty, a little bit lucky and a little bit skillful.

Marcus Foligno dove on the ice near the blue line to make a defensive play. He blocked the shot and the puck jumped out to center ice where Chris Stewart picked it up. Stewart had the speed to earn a breakaway and the skill to finish the play, scoring the only goal for the Buffalo Sabres in Wednesday's 2-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets.

Those are the plays that built a three-game winning streak for the Buffalo Sabres.

Those are the types of plays the Sabres are looking to recreate – the ones that create opportunity through work ethic and produce positive results, although positive results will become increasingly more difficult to obtain.

The Sabres host the Canadiens at First Niagara Center tonight (7 p.m., MSG, Radio 550 AM) then travel to Montreal on Saturday for the home-and-home series.

Montreal leads the Eastern Conference (16-6-1) while the Sabres are tied with Columbus as the conference cellar-dwellers.

As has been the theme for Buffalo this season, the emphasis is looking in the mirror rather than getting too caught up in the opponent. Because the Sabres have plenty to work on regardless of the opposition.

"Today's Thanksgiving and there's a lot of things we've got to be thankful for," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said Thursday after the team practiced for about 30 minutes. "We've proven that if we play the way we have to play, and that's as hard as we can every night, then we have a chance. We proved it three games previously and we proved it" Wednesday night "in the third period. We've got to learn from that and try to do that on a consistent basis.

"We're from a blue-collar town, we have to have that blue-collar approach in everything we do. Even if you're a highly skilled player, that skilled player can still work his skill to his maximum and that's what we have to do for sure."

Blue collar describes the way Stewart played Wednesday night, particularly when he had Patrick Kaleta's back during the second period on Wednesday.

Kaleta, playing his first game in Buffalo in more than a year, was crosschecked face-first into the boards behind his own net by Winnipeg's Adam Lowry. Stewart was near center ice and made a beeline for the corner to go after Lowry.

Stewart ended up with a two-minute penalty for roughing while the Sabres got a five-minute power play.

"I didn't really see much," Stewart said. "I saw Kaleta just down on the ice. ... You have to stick up for your teammates and I'd do it for anyone. Especially a guy like Patty Kaleta. You've got to be smart about it. You definitely don't want to hurt the team and take away the power play, but you gotta let guys know that's unacceptable."

Trailing by 2-0, after a flat first two periods, the Sabres finished strong in the third, highlighted by Buffalo's goal sequence.

It was a blue-collar play that set up Stewart for just his second goal of the season while Foligno picked up just his fourth point in 16 games.

"I tried to go up to the point and I saw one of the guys I was checking was in the corner, so I thought maybe if I could short-cut it ... and we would have a good chance of blocking it and going the other way," Foligno said. "Fortunately for us it went right up the middle. Sometimes when you block a shot it goes somewhere else, but with Stewy's speed, he got to the puck and was able to finish it."

"It takes a lot of heart to sacrifice your body like that," Stewart said. "I think I definitely got a fortunate bounce there and got it on a breakaway and put it home. When someone sacrifices their body like that, you want to reward them."

"In that third period we got on our toes and started dictating and had a lot more desperation in our game," Stewart added. "I think it showed. That was the team we've been the last three or four games. Now we've got to carry that momentum from the third period into the next two games against Montreal."

## **Sabres notebook: Myers, Gorges may play soon**

By Amy Moritz

Buffalo News

November 27, 2014

Tyler Myers and Josh Gorges are both close to returning for the Buffalo Sabres.

And while Ted Nolan doesn't want to rush players back from injury, the team could really use those two guys on the blueline.

Myers missed Wednesday's game with a lower body injury. He did not practice on Thursday.

Nolan said: "Today's a good day to get some medical treatment and cross our fingers he's ready for (today's) game with Montreal. We're banking. We're hoping. Right now it's probably 50-50."

There were no odds placed on Gorges returning. The veteran defenseman has missed five games with a knee injury and was expected to be out for weeks, but was a full participant in practice and is itching to get back.

"I have to be smart, and if I do come back and play, first of all I don't want to put my team in jeopardy," Gorges said. "If I'm not effective, I'm only hurting my team. At the same time I have to make sure I don't go too early where I'm out for another two or three weeks again, which is counterproductive. As much as I want to be back, we've got to be smart at the same time."

Gorges would love to be back in the lineup Saturday when the team plays the Canadiens in Montreal. It will be the first trip to Montreal for the Sabres this season, and the first trip back for Gorges who was traded by the Canadiens to Buffalo in July.

"I don't like sitting on the sidelines," Gorges said. "You put in the time and do what you have to do to get yourself back as quick as possible. I've been skating but nothing compares to game speed and game conditions. That's the only real way to test to see if you're ready is to get out there and play and hopefully everything goes well. Again, we'll take it one day at a time."

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Forward Cody Hodgson was not at practice Thursday but Nolan said it did not involve an injury.

"He'll be back," Nolan said. "He went home for some personal reasons."

At practice in a non-contact jersey was Cody McCormick who continues to work through the concussion protocol.

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Nobody was very happy with the play of veteran defenseman Andrej Meszaros or Andre Benoit in Wednesday's 2-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets.

With a day to digest the performance, Nolan said the problem with the experienced defensive core is that they're not using that experience.

"I talked to the players who are doing it, and it's mental lapses that you can't have," Nolan said. "You're a seasoned professional athlete. Those things you can maybe justify when you're younger and inexperienced, but when you're older and have experience, those things should be very few and far between if any. But with us it seems to be a little more than not."

Nolan, who said he likes to take a glass-half-full approach, pointed to the solid play of the youngsters Rasmus Ristolainen and Nikita Zadorov.

"We have to make sure the people making those mistakes don't do them again. And the ones growing up and developing learn from it and aren't doing it too often," Nolan said.

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One game without pay. That's the additional discipline Winnipeg Jets forward Adam Lowry will receive for his hit on Sabres' forward Patrick Kaleta.

The ruling came Thursday afternoon from the NHL's Department of Player Safety.

Based on his average annual salary, Lowry will forfeit \$4,453.41 with the money going to the Players' Emergency Assistance Fund.

Lowry was given a five-minute major for boarding and a game misconduct late in the second period. His hit sent Kaleta face first into the boards. Kaleta, who broke his face while blocking a shot in a preseason game, went to the locker room to have his jaw and teeth examined. He received some stitches for a cut to his lip but returned for the third period.

## **Buffalo Sabres worth \$288M according to Forbes**

By Jim Fink

Buffalo Business First

November 26, 2014

On ice, the Buffalo Sabres have one of the worst records in the National Hockey League.

Off ice, it's a different matter.

Since Terry Pegula bought the Sabres in early 2011 for \$189 million, the value of the team has risen by more than 52 percent.

According to Forbes' just-released data detailing the value of all 30 NHL franchises, the Sabres are now worth \$288 million, up \$99 million in the past three years.

Forbes lists the Sabres as the league's 23rd most valuable franchise.

The value of the Sabres follows a trend of increasing value of NHL teams. Forbes is reporting the league's 30 teams are worth, on average, \$490 million or an 18.6 percent increase in last year. Forbes attributes the increase to the deal the league signed with Canada's Rogers Communications for exclusive broadcasting rights in that country. Forbes is paying the NHL \$4.6 billion during the next 12 seasons for the deal.

The value of the NHL teams is skewed by the Toronto Maple Leafs, New York Rangers and Montreal Canadiens. Each is valued at more than \$1 billion. The Leafs are the league's most valuable franchise, worth \$1.3 billion, according to Forbes. The team reported \$190 million in revenues from 2013-2014 season and \$70.6 million in operating income.

The Sabres, based on Forbes' research, reported \$103 million in revenues last season and \$4.4 million in operating income.

Forbes is predicting the Sabres' value, revenues and operating income will continue to rise, thanks to the HarborCenter, whose first phase opened in late October. HarborCenter has two rinks and such amenities as the (716) sports bar and restaurant.

## **Eastern Conference-leading Canadiens visit Sabres**

By Staff Report

NHL.com

November 27, 2014

### **CANADIENS (16-6-1) AT SABRES (6-14-2)**

**TV: RDS, SNE, MSG-B, BELL TV**

**Season series:** On Nov. 5, the Montreal Canadiens defeated the Buffalo Sabres 2-1 in a shootout. PA Parenteau scored in the third period, and then ended the game with a goal in the third round of the tiebreaker. Sabres goalie Jonas Enroth and Canadiens goalie Dustin Tokarski each made 31 saves in regulation and overtime. Montreal and Buffalo will play the back end of their home-and-home Saturday at Bell Centre.

**Canadiens team scope:** Montreal has not played since a 5-0 loss to the New York Rangers on Sunday at Madison Square Garden. With four days between games, coach Michel Therrien gave his players two days away from the rink before reconvening Wednesday for practice. The Canadiens sit atop the Eastern Conference standings with 33 points, tied with the Anaheim Ducks for most in the NHL. "We're first in the League, so that's really positive," center David Desharnais said. "And the fun part about it is we can go another step higher. We've played some good games and some that weren't as good, then there were games where (goalie) Carey (Price) was incredible and he went and got us a win. So I think we can be better, and that's the beauty of it." Price is 13-4-1 with a 2.35 goals-against average and .922 save percentage. Tokarski played in New York on Sunday, meaning Price, who blanked the Boston Bruins in a 2-0 win Saturday, will have had five days off between starts if Therrien goes with him against the Sabres.

**Sabres team scope:** Buffalo had its three-game winning streak snapped Wednesday in a 2-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets. Defenseman Tyler Myers did not play because of a lower-body injury. He was replaced in the lineup by Andre Benoit, who committed a turnover that led to Michael Frolik's shorthanded, game-winning goal in the second period. The Sabres pulled to within a goal at 5:30 of the third period on Chris Stewart's second goal of the season, but they could not beat Jets goalie Ondrej Pavelec with any of their six shots the rest of the way. Buffalo had 10 shots after two periods, then doubled that total in the third. "That first period and a half or so, I thought our hands were handling that puck like a grenade," coach Ted Nolan said. "It just kept bouncing and bouncing. That third period we played the way we have to in order to be successful." After this game, the Sabres will play three of four on the road.

## **Sabres' Chris Stewart finally ends long goal slump; Tyler Myers a surprise scratch**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
November 26, 2014

BUFFALO – The question made Chris Stewart pause for a moment.

"I'm searching for the right answer here," the struggling winger said Wednesday prior to scoring a breakaway goal in the Sabres' 2-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets inside the First Niagara Center.

Stewart, a two-time 28-goal scorer, has arguably been the Sabres' biggest disappointment this season, compiling just two goals and three points in 22 games.

So much for that breakout season.

"It's not where I want it to be, that's for sure," Stewart replied when asked about the state of his game.

Stewart has generated almost nothing. Wednesday's nifty goal was just his third in 42 games, a stretch dating back to Jan. 9, when he played for St. Louis.

That's it.

In September, Stewart joked about 2014-15 being "another biggest season of my career." He spoke seriously about taking "the bull by the horns" and not leaving his career "in someone else's hands."

"You got to look at the big picture here," Stewart said Wednesday. "I think there's tons of time left to salvage this thing and have a good season. But the clock's ticking. You definitely got to start turning it around, making changes now."

Stewart enjoyed a strong preseason before starting the regular season with a 12-game goal drought. Wednesday's goal was his first since Nov. 2.

"There's no real excuses," he said. "You take a look at the game sheet, you know you only have two points in 20 games, that's ideally not where I planned on being, but you read into it or you're just going to get down."

The 27-year-old, an unrestricted free agent following the season, might be costing himself millions of dollars. His trade value has plummeted.

"Yeah, it's frustrating," Stewart said about his low output. "I think I'm a little too hard on myself, personally. I hold myself to high expectations. There's definitely a lot riding on it. You hit that 20-game mark and you turn the page. You got three-quarters of the season to salvage something here and get it going."

Of course, Stewart's hardly alone. Center Cody Hodgson also began Wednesday with one goal and two points. Captain Brian Gionta has two goals. Winger Matt Moulson didn't score until Nov. 7.

Stewart knows he can't complain about a lack of opportunity. Sabres coach Ted Nolan loves big power forwards, and early on, he awarded the 6-foot-2, 231-pound veteran around 16 to 20 minutes a game.

Recently, however, Stewart has been demoted to fourth-line duty. His ice time dipped to a season-low eight minutes, 31 seconds Nov. 13.

"I've had more than ample opportunity here," Stewart said. "It's up to me to get it going. When things aren't going well, you take a look in the mirror and start figuring things out."

He added: "There's some other guys going right now, so that definitely plays into the ice time perspective right now. I think when I'm going at the top of my game, I bring something that this team doesn't have, and it's up to me to bring it every game."

Still, Nolan believes Stewart has been performing better recently.

"His game is where a lot of our play was," Nolan said. "Slowly, people are starting to come out of it. Matty Moulson didn't score for a while, now he's going. Gionta, same thing, and Stewart's the same thing."

Naturally, the trying season has taken its toll on Stewart. The struggles sometimes accompany him home.

"I'd be lying if I said I didn't," he said.

But Stewart's 6-month old twin boys, Christian and Connor, have given him a new perspective.

"I think that's the best time for me," Stewart said. "You get a chance just to forget about hockey and realize that there's bigger things in life right now. It's one of my true joys."

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Sabres defenseman Tyler Myers, who blocked a wicked Alex Ovechkin shot with his left hand Saturday, was a surprise scratch late.

Myers practiced Tuesday and joined Monday's session late. It appeared he was fine.

Nolan said the injury's something different, however.

"He was feeling good," Nolan said. "Then all of sudden, the injury just kind of went south on him. We were surprised a little. We got the call around 1 o'clock. He came in, tried to play, but just couldn't do it."

The Sabres officially called it a lower-body injury.

Andre Benoit replaced him.

Meanwhile, Sabres center Cody McCormick skated with his teammates Wednesday morning, another step in the concussion protocol he must follow. McCormick was hit in the head Saturday.

xxx

The 412-day wait to play a home game was excruciating for Sabres winger Patrick Kaleta, an Angola native.

Since his last appearance here Oct. 10, 2013, the 28-year-old endured a 10-game suspension, a surprising demotion to the minors, a torn ACL and what was basically a broken face.

He finally played again Wednesday.

Kaleta briefly left the game in the second period to have his jaw and teeth examined after Adam Lowry knocked him face-first into the boards, earning a game misconduct.

"I can't feel them, but they're still all there," Kaleta said.

Earlier, the agitator immediately made his presence known, thumping a few Jets. His weak roughing penalty during his first shift led to Bryan Little's goal.

"It was a reputation call," Nolan said.

Playing at home was a special experience.

"Just to play at home for me is special, obviously for obvious reasons," Kaleta said Wednesday morning. "It means a lot to me just to be able to play a game for Buffalo in Buffalo. So we can sit here and talk about that probably for about an hour. But you guys don't know how much it means to me just to be able to put on a jersey."

Kaleta even skated at center, a position he had never played as a pro.

## **Sabres' Andrej Meszaros explains his weak reply to hit**

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

November 26, 2014

BUFFALO – At the 14:06 mark of the second period in the Sabres' 2-1 loss Wednesday, the Winnipeg Jets' Adam Lowry hit winger Patrick Kaleta face-first into the boards, earning a five-minute major and a game misconduct.

As a bloodied Kaleta stayed on his knees behind the net, Sabres defenseman Andrej Meszaros, the closest player to Lowry, watched for a moment. Eventually, he skated over and cross-checked him meekly.

**Update:** Lowry has been suspended one game by the NHL for the hit.

Seconds later, Sabres winger Chris Stewart jumped Lowry, igniting a short scrum.

"It was what it was, obviously, if I had to do it over, I probably would've jumped him more, probably would get two minutes or something, but I decided to not go that much harder on him," Meszaros said inside the First Niagara Center. "But maybe I should've."

Why did Meszaros freeze?

"I was looking at the referee," he said. "I wanted to make sure if there's a power play or not. I kind of went there and kind of cross-checked him, didn't want to jump in that hard, so I knew we were going to have a power play. We were down."

He added: "I wasn't sure what was going to be the call, five or two."

Sabres coach Ted Nolan said "there's going to be times for payback."

"Maybe that's not the correct time to do it," he said.

He added: "Hopefully, somebody else will take care of it for us."

Kaleta returned to the game.

Meszaros endured a brutal game, making several gaffes.

## **Sabres' defense slowly improving, still mistake-prone**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
November 27, 2014

BUFFALO – Twenty-two games into the season, the Sabres' weak and often sloppy defense corps has combined for two goals, 20 points and minus-41 rating entering tonight's game against the Montreal Canadiens.

As evidenced by the Sabres' recent three-game winning streak, a stretch in which they allowed only four goals, the defense has looked much better – sturdier, you might say – during some contests this month.

Still, it's a mistake-prone group. And with little or no depth on the blue line, an injury or two can wreak havoc. Wednesday's 2-1 loss to Winnipeg proved that.

With Tyler Myers a late scratch, Sabres coach Ted Nolan inserted struggling defenseman Andre Benoit, a healthy scratch the previous three games. Benoit, a colossal disappointment this season, gave the puck away behind his net during a second-period power play, leading to Michael Frolik's winning goal.

Benoit, however, probably played better than defenseman Andrej Meszaros, who endured a brutal night. Late in the first period, when the Slovak couldn't keep the puck in the Buffalo zone at the point, the Jets' Jim Slater blew by him to create a short-handed breakaway.

Late in the second period, after the Jets' Adam Lowry hit Patrick Kaleta face-first into the boards, Meszaros, the closest player to Lowry, watched before meekly cross-checking him.

Eventually, Chris Stewart stormed in, igniting a short scrum.

Following the game, Meszaros, who said he laid off so the Sabres could keep their power play, regretted his feeble response.

"If I had to do it over, I probably would've jumped him more, probably would get two minutes or something, but I decided to not go that much harder on him," he said inside the First Niagara Center. "But maybe I should've."

Meszaros, a healthy scratch six times already, is only playing because Josh Gorges injured his knee earlier this month.

How much longer can Nolan keep playing Benoit, a team-worst minus-13 with zero points, and Meszaros?

Nolan grew agitated when a reporter asked about the two following the game.

Wouldn't someone from Rochester be a better option?

"We'll have discussions about that, I guess," Nolan said.

Hours later, Nolan said no moves would be made Thursday.

Despite some struggles against the Jets, Nolan has liked the defense's play recently.

Top defense prospects Rasmus Ristolainen, 20, and Nikita Zadorov, 19, have quickly morphed into the team's No. 1 tandem, playing big minutes. Ristolainen skated 23 minutes, 30 seconds on Wednesday. Zadorov skated a whopping 25 minutes, 52 seconds.

"I'm a glass-is-half-full type of guy, and you look at the resurgence of Ristolainen, and (Wednesday's) game, I thought he was really, really good," Nolan said Thursday. "You look at Nikita and how he's coming, sometimes it overrides the flaws of some people. So we have to make sure the people that make those mistakes don't make them again."

What are those mistakes?

"It's mental lapses," Nolan said. "You can't (make them). You're a seasoned professional athlete. You could maybe justify it when you're younger and have experience. But when you're older and have more experience, those things should be very fewer and far between, if any. But with us, it seems to be a little bit more than not."

Gorges, who's close to returning, believes trusting the system and teammates will help the defense improve.

"I think at times there's too big of a gap between our D-men and our forwards, and we're allowing way too much room," he said. "We're allowing players to come and skate the puck in our zone uncontested, and then when they get the pucks in our end, we're not closing quick. We're real hesitant."

Gorges traces the hesitancy to confidence.

"I think when you're confident in what you're doing and what the team's doing, you just react, you play the right way and things come natural," he said. "When you're a little bit unsure, a little bit hesitant, you tend to back off and play safe, and one thing I noticed, you play safe in this league, you're in trouble."

"Players are too good. If you're going to give them room, at least make them make a tough play and make a hard play, and that's something we've got to focus on as a group."

**Sabres' Tyler Myers '50-50' for Friday, Josh Gorges getting closer to returning**  
By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
November 27, 2014

BUFFALO – The Sabres' battered defense corps could receive some reinforcements soon.

Tyler Myers, a surprise scratch for Wednesday's 2-1 loss to Winnipeg, is "50-50" for Friday's home tilt, Sabres coach Ted Nolan said this afternoon. Myers has a lower-body injury and missed today's short practice.

Meanwhile, Josh Gorges, out the last five games with a knee injury, practiced fully today and is getting closer to playing. The Sabres play the Montreal Canadiens, Gorges' old team, Friday and Saturday.

"That was my goal the whole time, was to be back by sometime this weekend," Gorges said inside the First Niagara Center.

Gorges must make sure he doesn't rush back. Nolan said the staff and doctors, not the player, will decide when Gorges returns.

"I got to be smart and make sure if I do come back and play, first of all, I don't put my team in jeopardy," Gorges said. "If I'm not effective, I'm only hurting my team. At the same time, I have to make sure I don't go too early where something happens and I'm out for another two or three weeks."

Gorges said he has felt "pretty good" the last couple days.

"It's day it's been getting better, progressing real well," Gorges said. "It's a matter of feeling comfortable with my mobility, my movement and making sure I'm strong enough where no sudden movements or hits are going to tear it again."

In other news, Nolan said the Sabres won't make any moves today. Goalie Jhonas Enroth will likely start Friday, his third straight nod.

Center Cody Hodgson missed today's practice because of a family matter.

**Update:** The Winnipeg Jets' Adam Lowry has been suspended one game for boarding Sabres winger Patrick Kaleta on Wednesday. Lowry will forfeit \$4,453.51 in salary. Kaleta left the game briefly before returning.

## **Sabres fall to Winnipeg 2-1**

By Pat Malacaro

WGR 550

November 26, 2014

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- Hello once again from inside of the Ted Darling Memorial Press Box, high atop ice level at First Niagara Center. It has been a while, and a couple of feet of snow ago, since we last talked. Tonight the Winnipeg Jets make their one and only trip to downtown Buffalo this regular season to take on the Sabres.

Patrick Kaleta is back in the lineup for Buffalo tonight, making his home debut in the 2014-15 season. We will see just how many minutes head coach Ted Nolan decides to give the Angola native, who seems to never be healthy over the past couple of years. For more from today's morning skate, click here for Paul Hamilton's pregame primer.

I will add my observations in between the scoring plays, and you can add your two cents in the thread below. Also, be sure to give Brian Koziol and myself each a follow on Twitter for more: @BrianWGR and @PatWGR.

### **First Period**

*18:17 - Tyler Myers is a scratch for the Sabres tonight. The team has announced that he is out with a lower body injury.*

*16:54 - The Sabres take the first penalty of the night for roughing.*

*16:18 - JETS GOAL.* That did not take long. **Bryan Little** had all the time in the world, and **Blake Wheeler** set the screen in front of the net. **Jhonas Enroth** did not stand much of a chance. **1-0 WPG.**

*10:48 - The Sabres might be getting outshot at this point of the game, but they have not been out hit. Kaleta and Nic Deslauriers have each thrown their weight around for some crushing hits.*

*5:11 - Buffalo is headed to the man advantage thanks to an Andrew Ladd minor. We shall see if they can answer Winnipeg's power play score from earlier in the period.*

*2:47 - That was certainly a power play to forget. Turnovers almost made it a 2-0 Winnipeg.*

### **End of Period**

### **Goal Summary**

**BUF:** none

**WPG:** 3:41 - Bryan Little (8) PPG (Jacob Trouba, Andrew Ladd)

### **Penalty Summary**

**BUF:** 3:06 - Patrick Kaleta (2 min., roughing)

**WPG:** 14:49 - Andrew Ladd (2 min., cross checking). 19:13 - Zach Bogosian (2 min., hooking)

### **Shots on Goal**

BUF - 6, WPG - 10

### **Second Period**

*18:32 - Buffalo is not able to do anything with the carry over power play time to start the stanza. A whole lot of*

passing, but not a whole lot of pucks being thrown on goal.

14:28 - Marcus Foligno put the Sabres a man down with a minor penalty, but the blue and gold are no worse for the wear. I cannot think of one actual chance that the team gave up while on the penalty kill.

10:24 - Mike Weber ate a healthy right hand from Anthony Peluso and "loses" the fight. This whole thing started with Peluso bumping into Enroth after a whistle.

8:12 - The seconds are dripping off of the clock this period, and I do not really know what action that has actually taken place. Shots are 7-2 in favor of the Jets.

5:54 - Kaleta gets drilled from behind and into the glass by Adam Lowry, and a melee ensues. Foligno and Chris Stewart come to the forward's aid while he was down. Lowry is given a five-minute major for boarding and a game misconduct.

**5:40 - JETS GOAL. Michael Frolik** is able to take a **Andre Benoit** turnover behind his net into a wrap around goal to double the Winnipeg lead. You would like your goaltender to bail the defenseman out there. **2-0 WPG.**

### ***End of Period***

### **Goal Summary**

**BUF:** none

**WPG:** 14:20 -Michael Frolik (5) SHG (unassisted)

### **Penalty Summary**

**BUF:** 3:23 - Marcus Foligno (2 min., hooking). 9:36 - Mike Weber (5 min., fighting). 14:06 - Chris Stewart (2 min., roughing)

**WPG:** 9:36 - Anthony Peluso ( 5 min., fighting). 14:06 - Adam Lowry (5 min., boarding). 14:06 - Adam Lowry (game misconduct). 14:06 - Adam Parody (2 min., roughing). 19:51 - Mark Stuart (2 min., hooking)

### **Shots on Goal**

BUF - 4 (10), WPG - 9 (19)

### **Third Period**

17:58 - Another unenthusiastic and underwhelming power play by the Sabres. They did not get a shot on goal while Mark Stuart's minor ticked away.

**14:30 - SABRES GOAL. Chris Stewart** breathes new life into the blue and gold by back handing a breakaway chance into the net to get Buffalo on the board. The deficit is halved. **2-1 WPG.**

10:04 - Matt Moulson nearly tied the game, but could not beat Andrej Pavelec with the shot and Buffalo still trails. It was a good 2-on-1 chance with Tyler Ennis that nearly worked.

2:59 - The two teams have played without any whistles for nearly seven minutes now. There is a great pace to this game, but time is running out for the Sabres. They have been the better team since scoring. Shots are 9-7, Buffalo, this period.

### ***End of Game***

***Winnipeg 2, Buffalo 1***

## **Goal Summary**

**BUF:** 5:30 - Chris Stewart (2) (Marcus Foligno)

**WPG:** none

## **Penalty Summary**

**BUF:** 8:49 - Andrej Meszaros (2 min., tripping)

**WPG:** none

## **Shots on Goal**

BUF - 10 (20), WPG - 7 (26)

## **Final Thoughts**

The Sabres played a "twenty minute game" and it cost them. Getting just ten shots on goal through two periods is the bigger issue, than the effort given in the final frame. This team needs to put together a complete game in order to win. No question about it. Another thing that really bothered me was Andrej Meszaros not coming to Patrick Kaleta's aid after he was hit from behind. Those types of hits need to be dealt with, and dealt with right away. The fact that the defenseman looked right at Adam Lowry and did nothing is a huge indictment on the rear guard. Next up for the blue and gold is a game on Friday night. The Sabres and the Montreal Canadiens will drop the puck after 7 o'clock on the flagship home of the Sabres Radio Network - WGR Sports Radio 550. Pregame coverage with Mike Schopp and the Bulldog begins at 6 p.m.

## **Jets continue winning ways on road in Buffalo**

By Mark Ludwiczak  
The Sports Xchange  
November 26, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- The Winnipeg Jets continue to find ways to win on the road, and they aren't looking for style points along the way.

The Jets defeated the Buffalo Sabres 2-1 Wednesday night behind a solid defensive effort for their second road win in as many nights.

"It's what we're good at," Winnipeg coach Paul Maurice said. "That's the kind of people that we have. They're a highly competitive group and we can suffer some adversity over the course of the game and manage to survive." Center Bryan Little and right winger Michael Frolik scored for the Jets (12-9-3), who also beat the Columbus Blue Jackets, 4-2, on Tuesday. Those goals helped Winnipeg improve to 8-4-2 on the road compared to their 4-5-1 home mark.

"I just think we keep things really simple on the road," Little said. "We bring our work boots and keep it simple. There's not really any simple remedy to how we play.

"It wasn't the prettiest game by any standards but we had a couple huge penalty kills, the power play came through again. It was ugly but we'll take it."

Little opened the scoring 3:41 into the first period on the power play. After receiving the puck inside the left circle, Little paused to avoid a sliding Sabres defenseman before putting a wrist shot home for his eighth goal of the season and third in as many games.

Frolik made it 2-0 on a short-handed goal with 5:40 left in the second period following a terrible giveaway by Buffalo defenseman Andre Benoit.

Benoit, who was in the lineup after Tyler Myers suffered a lower-body injury, had a giveaway on a sloppy pass behind the Buffalo net. Frolik then skated out and lifted a backhand shot past Sabres goaltender Jhonas Enroth for his fifth goal of the season.

Right winger Chris Stewart scored for the Sabres (6-14-2), who were sluggish and saw a three-game winning streak come to an end. Enroth made 24 saves.

"That first period and a half or so, I thought our hands were handling that puck like a grenade," Sabres head coach Ted Nolan said. "It just kept bouncing and bouncing. That third period we played the way we have to in order to be successful."

Stewart got the Sabres on the board 5:30 into the third with a breakaway goal. After a Winnipeg shot was blocked at the Buffalo blue line, Stewart raced down the ice and put a backhand attempt past Pavelec.

Buffalo's best moments came during a short stretch in the third period when the Jets showed signs of fatigue. But Winnipeg's defense held strong and goalie Ondrej Pavelec came through when tested.

Pavelec made 19 saves and his best stop came on a 2-on-1 midway through the third period.

"Every time the game is like that -- something's coming," Pavelec said. "It's never like that for 60 minutes. We knew that if they played like that for two periods, they're coming. We knew it. They had a few chances. I'm happy that they scored only goal. We found a way. The guys helped me in the first two periods, and it was up to me to help them in the third."

Added Maurice: "I thought a couple things affected us in the third period and it was the worst possible situation, we're running three lines and there's no timeouts in the last 10 minutes of that game. I'm looking at the clock

expecting two more (stoppages) and we'll be able to reset and get some rest. We played a really solid game through two (periods) I thought we did a good job staying in our structure even when we were 100 percent sure what was coming the other way."

A scary moment came just before Frolik's goal when Sabres right winger Patrick Kaleta was sent into the boards on a hit from behind by Jets left winger Adam Lowry. Kaleta immediately went to the Sabres locker room and Lowry was given a game misconduct penalty in addition to a five-minute major.

Buffalo was unable to score on the ensuing power play and gave up the Frolik's goal seconds into the five-on-four advantage. Kaleta eventually returned to the game.

It was Kaleta's first game back in the lineup since suffering a torn ACL last October.

"It felt good (to come back) but we lost so it's obviously not good enough," Kaleta said. "So back to the drawing board."

NOTES: D Tyler Myers (lower body) and C Cody McCormick were scratched for the Sabres. ... LW TJ Galiardi, D Toby Enstrom and C Mathieu Perreault were scratched for the Jets. ... This was the 54th game between the teams and the first of two meetings this season. Their next meeting is Dec. 16 in Winnipeg. ... Winnipeg RW Chris Thorburn entered the NHL with the Sabres, who drafted him 50th overall in 2001. Jets D Adam Pardy also played for the Sabres, during the 2012-13 season.

## **Sabres look to keep things rolling at home against Winnipeg**

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 26, 2014

The Winnipeg Jets are in town Wednesday night for a 7 p.m. faceoff against the Buffalo Sabres at First Niagara Center.

The Sabres enter the game on their first three-game winning streak of the season and their first since Feb. 25 to 28 of last season. During the current streak, they've averaged four goals per game and have only given up four goals total.

Defenseman Mike Weber, who enters the game on a three-game point streak (0+3), said that it's been a while since the team has felt as confident as they do right now.

"When you play the game the right way, you get rewarded. It doesn't matter who you have in the locker room, what type of players you have – you can have a group of All-Stars or a group of grinders," he said.

"You play the game the right way and respect the game in the aspect of you've got to get pucks deep, you've got to get pucks to the net, you've got to get to the dirty areas to score goals, and it's a five-man effort in the D-zone, things start going well for you and they have in the little bit here."

Jhonas Enroth will start in goal for Buffalo after a 43-save performance on Saturday against Washington. In his career against Winnipeg, he has a .943 save percentage and a 2.01 goals against average, yet his record is just 0-2-1. Enroth has stopped 62 of his past 64 shots faced.

As a team, the Sabres haven't had much recent success against the Jets, going 3-6-1 in their past 10 games. They'll look to win consecutive home games against Winnipeg for the first time since they won four in a row at home against the Thrashers/Jets franchise from Jan. 1, 2010 to Nov. 8, 2011.

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### **HOME SWEET HOME**

After sitting out the past three games as a healthy scratch, Patrick Kaleta is set to play in his first home game since Oct. 10, 2013. The Angola, N.Y. native's recent history of suspensions, injuries and battles with Mother Nature have been well documented and he's excited to get back out there with his teammates.

"I've been waiting a long time to hear my name being called by RJ [Sabres play-by-play announcer Rick Jeanneret], so I'm definitely looking forward to that," he said. "Just to play at home for me is special for obvious reasons.

"It means a lot to me just to be able to play a game for Buffalo and in Buffalo. We could sit here and talk about that for an hour but you guys have no idea how much it means to me just to put on the jersey."

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### **CYCLING THROUGH CENTERS**

Kaleta may see some time at center with Cody McCormick, who is being evaluated for a concussion, out of the lineup.

His linemate Marcus Foligno might play a little in the middle as well, but Sabres coach Ted Nolan is taking an all-hands-on-deck approach and will be prepared to call on all of the team's centers to fill the role when needed.

"We'll use [Kaleta] as a safety valve in the center ice position," Nolan said. "We'll see how it goes and maybe we'll double shift [Zemgus] Girgensons a few shifts, [Cody] Hodgson a few shifts and maybe even put [Tyler] Ennis in the middle. So you never know how it goes."

McCormick and alternate captain Josh Gorges, who is out with a lower-body injury, took part in the team's optional morning skate.

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#### **PROJECTED LINEUP**

26 Matt Moulson – 28 Zemgus Girgensons – 63 Tyler Ennis

65 Brian Flynn – 17 Torrey Mitchell – 12 Brian Gionta

44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 19 Cody Hodgson – 21 Drew Stafford

82 Marcus Foligno – 36 Patrick Kaleta – 80 Chris Stewart

24 Tyson Strachan – 57 Tyler Myers

51 Nikita Zadorov – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen

6 Mike Weber – 41 Andrej Meszaros

1 Jhonas Enroth

34 Michal Neuvirth

Scratched: 8 Cody McCormick (injured, concussion protocol), 61 Andre Benoit (healthy)

Injured Reserve: 4 Josh Gorges (lower body), 31 Matt Hackett (lower body)

## **Sabres succumb to Jets special teams**

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 26, 2014

After winning their past three games, a slow start cost the Buffalo Sabres a chance at four victories in a row.

Winnipeg Jets forward Bryan Little scored 3:41 into the game on the power play as the Jets beat Buffalo 2-1 at First Niagara Center.

Little now has 20 points (9+11) in 23 career games against the Sabres. Martin Frolik scored shorthanded to give the Jets a 2-0 lead 5:40 into the second and Sabres forward Chris Stewart brought the Sabres within striking distance when he scored his second of the season 5:30 into the third.

"The first period or first period-and-a-half or so, I thought our hands were handling the puck like a grenade," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "It just kept bouncing and bouncing. We couldn't get a hold of it.

"And then all of a sudden in the third period, we played the way we have to play in order to be successful. I think the biggest message here tonight, we have to play like that for 60 minutes."

With both Jets goals scored on special teams tonight, Jhonas Enroth still hasn't allowed an even-strength goal in his last 208:35 on the ice, posting a 1.50 goals-against average and a .956 save percentage in the team's last three games.

Enroth made 24 saves while Winnipeg netminder Ondrej Pavelec stopped 19 shots.

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### **TURNING POINT**

Patrick Kaleta took a hard hit with 5:54 to play in the second period when he was checked from behind into the end boards in the Winnipeg zone by Adam Lowry.

Kaleta is wearing a shield on his mask because of an injury to his face in the preseason that required surgery. His head hit the glass behind the net with a hard impact and he was slow to get up.

He returned for the third period and played 7:30 in his second game of the season. He was credited with six hits and drew two penalties.

Kaleta said he cut his face open and had to get his teeth and jaw checked out by team doctors after the hit.

"That's the way it happens sometimes," he said. "If you follow my career and stuff like that, you'll notice I'm attracted to that sort of stuff. It is what it is and I'll be fine."

Andrej Meszaros was the first man after Lowry after the hit, but Stewart had the biggest impact, skating down the ice to go after the Jets center. Stewart and Jets defenseman Adam Pardy each received two-minute roughing minors while Lowry was slapped with a five-minute boarding major and a 10-minute game misconduct.

The Sabres had a power play coming, but Winnipeg was the team that made the most of it, scoring 14 seconds into it to take a 2-0 lead.

"I first looked at the referee and I wanted to make sure there was a power play or not," Meszaros said. "I kind of went there and kind of cross-checked him and didn't want to jump in that hard because I knew we were going to

have a power play. We were down and then [Stewart] jumped in there. We got the power play, but we didn't do a whole lot."

Even after the goal, the Sabres weren't able to generate much with the man advantage. Buffalo's power play went 0-for-4 on the evening.

"We've got to create chances and at least get some momentum, especially on the five-minute power play there," Sabres captain Brian Gionta said. "To give one up, it's a tough one and to not really generate much. Our execution was off that whole power play."

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## **MISSING MYERS**

Tyler Myers did not play due to a lower-body injury. No lineup changes on the blue line were expected, but when Myers didn't take the ice for warmups, it became apparent that he was going to sit this one out.

He was scheduled to have a maintenance day on Tuesday, but took the ice late as practice was starting to wind down. He did not participate in the optional morning sakte before the game.

Nolan said that they found out Myers was going to be unavailable at around 1 p.m. on Wednesday.

"He was feeling good and then all of a sudden, the injury just kind of went south on him," Nolan said. "We were surprised a little bit."

The Sabres will practice Thursday morning and will play again Friday when they host the Montreal Canadiens in the first half of a home-and-home series.

## **Sabres hope to build on positive 3rd period**

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 27, 2014

The Buffalo Sabres took the ice for practice Thanksgiving morning at First Niagara Center. Though their three-game winning streak was snapped the night before with a 2-1 loss to the Winnipeg Jets, they feel like they can build on the way they played in the third period.

They outscored the Jets 1-0, outshot their opponent 10-7 in the final 20 minutes and came close to tying the game in the dying seconds on a wrist shot by Zemgus Girgensons.

"We won the third period but unfortunately it wasn't enough," forward Marcus Foligno said. "You learn from it and we've got another good team in Montreal coming in."

The Sabres host the first half of a home-and-home against the Canadiens on Friday. They'll travel after the game for a match at Bell Center on Saturday.

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### **LOWRY HAS HEARING FOR HIT ON KALETA**

During the second period of the game against Winnipeg, Sabres forward Patrick Kaleta, playing in only his second game of the season was boarded behind the Jets net by Adam Lowry. Chris Stewart came to Kaleta's defense, though he received a roughing minor, didn't negate the five-minute power play that came as a result.

"You've got to stick up for your teammates. You've got to do it for anyone and especially a guy like Patty Kaleta. He's a heart-and-soul guy," Stewart said.

"You've got to be smart about it. You definitely don't want to hurt the team or take away the power play but you've got to let guys know that that's unacceptable and guys are going to stick up for their teammates around here."

Lowry has a hearing with the NHL Department of Player Safety on Thursday. He received a five-minute boarding major and a 10-minute game misconduct on the play.

Kaleta was able to return to the game and was on the ice for Stewart's goal early in the third, which cut the Jets' lead down to one.

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### **MISSING FROM ACTION**

Tyler Myers and Cody Hodgson missed practice. Myers was scratched from Wednesday night's game with a lower-body injury and received more medical treatment on Thursday.

Nolan has his fingers crossed that Myers will be ready for the team's game Friday night against Montreal.

"We're banking – we're hoping," Nolan said. "Right now, it's probably 50/50."

Hodgson was excused from practice for personal reasons. He's expected to be ready to go for Friday.

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## **GORGES AT LEAST DAY-TO-DAY**

Josh Gorges skated with the team again at practice. He's currently on injured reserve for a lower-body ailment sustained on Nov. 11.

He hopes to be ready for this weekend's slate of games and said he's making progress in his recovery every day. But he and the coaching and medical staffs will make sure he's totally ready to go before he's put back in a game situation.

"I've got to be smart and make sure that if I do come back and play, first of all I don't put my team in jeopardy. If I'm not effective, I'm only hurting my team," Gorges said.

"At the same time, I have to make sure I don't go too early where something happens and I'm out for another two or three weeks again which is counter-productive. As much as I want to be back, we've got to be smart at the same time."

With both Myers and Gorges out of the lineup on Wednesday, the defensive corps was without two of its steadiest players. It wasn't the cleanest of games for the defensemen out there and while Nolan lauded the play of 20-year-old Rasmus Ristolainen, he would like to see a better effort from his blue liners.

"We have to make sure the people making those mistakes don't do them again or again and again," he said. "And the ones who are growing up and developing, they can learn from it and hopefully not do it in their careers too often."

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## **GIVING THANKS**

With it being Thanksgiving in America, a few of the players shared with Sabres.com what they're thankful for this year.

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## **THURSDAY'S PRACTICE**

26 Matt Moulson – 28 Zemgus Girgensons – 63 Tyler Ennis  
65 Brian Flynn – 17 Torrey Mitchell – 12 Brian Gionta  
44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 21 Drew Stafford  
82 Marcus Foligno – 36 Patrick Kaleta – 80 Chris Stewart  
8 Cody McCormick (non-contact)

51 Nikita Zadorov – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen  
24 Tyson Strachan – 41 Andrej Meszaros  
6 Mike Weber – 61 Andre Benoit  
4 Josh Gorges

1 Jhonas Enroth  
34 Michal Neuvirth

Did Not Skate: 19 Cody Hodgson, 57 Tyler Myers

Goaltender Matt Hackett, who's recovering from a knee injury sustained in April, took the ice after practice wrapped up.