



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

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Gordon's late goal lifts Oilers past Sabres 3-2

By Nick Mendola
Associated Press
November 7, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — When things got tough, the Edmonton Oilers just kept shooting.

The Oilers took 52 shots on Buffalo Sabres goalie Michal Neuvirth, twice overcoming deficits to snap a four-game losing streak with a 3-2 win on Friday night.

"When we got down, they all took a deep breath and got right back to work," Oilers coach Dallas Eakins said. "Our ability to answer back was key tonight."

Boyd Gordon scored the game-winner with 4:16 to play in the third period, taking a pass from Teddy Purcell on a 2-on-1 break and poking the puck into an open net with Neuvirth out of position.

"Teddy made a nice move and got the puck over and fortunately it went in for us," Gordon said.

Gordon now has goals in back-to-back games after waiting 12 games for his first of the season.

"He just quietly goes about his business," Eakins said. "I can't say enough about Boyd. He does a lot of heavy lifting, dirty, dirty work and is happy to do it."

Jiri Pakarinen and Mark Arcobello also scored for the Oilers, while Victor Fasth made 29 saves in the win.

Matt Moulson and Drew Stafford scored for the Sabres, and Neuvirth stopped 49 shots as Buffalo lost its second-straight. The goaltender was not happy with the amount of shots allowed by Buffalo.

"Fifty-two, that's crazy," Neuvirth said. "We got outworked, and they wanted to win more than us. Good for them, but we got to wake up. This can't be happening, especially on home ice."

Purcell had two assists for Edmonton, which erased 1-0 and 2-1 deficits.

"Buffalo got one goal ahead and we knew all the time that we were gonna win this game," Pakarinen said. "I had that feeling the whole time."

A wide-open first period saw plenty of chances for both teams, with Edmonton outshooting Buffalo 19-12 in the scoreless period.

Neuvirth slid across to deny Pakarinen's low shot with 8 minutes gone in the period. He later stopped David Perron's quick move from behind the net to keep the period scoreless.

Cody McCormick's late shot from the slot beat Fasth but hit the crossbar.

Moulson opened the scoring 37 seconds into the second when he skated into the left faceoff circle and fired a pass from Brian Gionta through Fasth's legs.

Pakarinen tied it just 43 seconds after Moulson's goal with a low shot past Neuvirth. It was his first NHL goal, and he barely recalls it.

"I don't even remember," Pakarinen said. "I was a little bit shocked. It was so fast of a situation. I jumped on the ice and the rebound was there and I tried to shoot as hard as I can."

Stafford carried the puck into the Oilers zone before cutting to the right and lifting a wrist shot over Fasth's right shoulder at 6:34 of the third to give Buffalo a 2-1 lead.

Stafford has eight goals and two assists in seven career games against Edmonton.

The Oilers got the equalizer at 11:42 when Perron's odd-angled shot rebounded to Arcobello, who chipped it over Neuvirth's left shoulder.

Gordon notched the game-winner off a giveaway by Andrej Meszaros, taking a pass from Purcell on a 2-on-1 break and poking the puck into an empty net with Neuvirth out of position.

"Now we want to start a winning streak," Arcobello said. "Getting that win was big for us and now we've gotta get on track."

NOTES: Sabres broadcaster Rick Jeanneret and former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly received loud ovations in a puck-drop ceremony to honor the NHL's Hockey Fights Cancer campaign. Both are now cancer-free ... Oilers captain Andrew Ference served the final game of a three-game suspension for a hit to the head of Vancouver's Zack Kassian.

Sabres broadcaster Jeanneret cancer-free

By Staff Report

Associated Press

November 7, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — Longtime Buffalo Sabres announcer Rick Jeanneret said Friday night that he's free of the throat cancer he was diagnosed with during the summer.

On the television broadcast before the "Hockey Fights Cancer" game against the Edmonton Oilers, Jeanneret said he was told this week that the cancer was gone. The 72-year-old native of Ontario is missing the start of the season as he gets radiation treatment.

Jeanneret took part in a ceremonial puck drop with former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly, who was declared free of jaw cancer in September.

Jeanneret, who received the Foster Hewitt Memorial Award two years ago for outstanding contributions as a hockey broadcaster, started calling games for the Sabres in the 1971-72 season, the team's second in the NHL.

Gordon scores late, Oilers beat Sabres to snap losing skid at four

By Stephen Whyno

Canadian Press

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BUFFALO, N.Y. - In a season full of lessons, the Edmonton Oilers learned a quick one to snap their losing streak.

A day after getting discouraged when the Boston Bruins came back and scored on them, the Oilers responded multiple times Friday night against the Buffalo Sabres to win 3-2 at First Niagara Center.

Erasing an early deficit and then one in the third period, the Oilers got the winner from Boyd Gordon to end their skid at four. It was a victory coach Dallas Eakins knows his team needed.

"It's important for our dressing room," Eakins said. "We fully understand critics and we fully understand and I embrace the result. You can stand and talk about how well you're playing and how you've improved, but if you're not getting points, no one's going to listen."

These were two valuable points in a back-to-back situation for the Oilers (5-8-1), who are on the road for two more games: Sunday at the New York Rangers and Tuesday at the Nashville Predators.

"Now we want to start a winning streak," said centre Mark Arcobello, who scored his third goal of the season. "Getting that win was big for us and now we've got to get back on track."

Facing the Sabres (3-10-2), the NHL's last-place team with just eight points in 15 games, this looked like a trap for an Edmonton team that didn't skate Friday morning after playing in Boston.

"Sometimes these things don't set up very well," Eakins said. "You've lost a few in a row and you're coming in to play a team that's struggling and you're playing back-to-back and the odds aren't lining up very well for you."

It didn't help the odds that the Oilers fell behind 26 seconds into the second period on Matt Moulson's first of the season. But Iiro Pakarinen answered 54 seconds later with the first of his NHL career.

"I don't even remember," said Pakarinen, who made his NHL debut Thursday night in Boston. "I was a little bit shocked. It was so fast of a situation. I jumped on the ice and the rebound was there and I tried to shoot as hard as I can."

Eakins said Pakarinen looked a bit like a "deer in the headlights" against the Bruins, and many of his Oilers teammates weren't much different. A 2-1 lead quickly turned into a 5-2 loss for Edmonton, which is without captain Andrew Ference (suspension) and left-winger Taylor Hall (knee injury).

"We were up by a goal we have a big hiccup and next thing you know we're kind of sulking and then boom-boom-boom it's in the back of our net," alternate captain Matt Hendricks said of the Bruins game. "We've had that problem all season."

That's why Eakins was impressed when his players took a deep breath when they went down Friday night, not just when Moulson opened the scoring but when Drew Stafford snapped a shot past Viktor Fasth 6:34 into the third to make it 2-1 Sabres.

At 11:42, Arcobello whiffed on a rebound attempt but beat Michal Neuvirth to tie it up again. That set the stage for Gordon's winner at 15:45 after Hendricks forced a turnover and Teddy Purcell found the fourth-line centre streaking to the net.

"Heno made a good play to him and then Teddy made a nice move and got the puck over and fortunately it went in for us," said Gordon, who has goals in two straight after none in the first 12 games of the season.

In a game between the last-place teams in each conference, the Oilers outshot the Sabres 52-31.

"We'll take 52 every night if we can," Eakins said.

But Neuvirth, who has excelled of late, was the difference in keeping the Sabres in it and frustrating the Oilers.

"He doesn't do a lot, but he doesn't do a lot wrong," said Hendricks, who played with Neuvirth in Washington. "He always just seems to be square with every shot. I think we could've had quite a few goals tonight if it wasn't for Neuvy."

Notes — Legendary Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly and longtime Sabres announcer Rick Jeanneret took part in a ceremonial puck drop on Hockey Fights Cancer night. Kelly, who led Buffalo's NFL team to four straight Super Bowls, was declared jaw cancer-free in September. Jeanneret said on local TV before the game that he was told this week he's throat cancer-free. ... During a commercial break in the second period, Sabres general manager Tim Murray said in a taped message that he was fighting for Bryan Murray. His uncle, the GM of the Ottawa Senators, has been fighting cancer since the summer. ... Martin Marincin replaced Oscar Klefbom in the lineup a day after the Oilers' loss in Boston.

Jeanneret, Kelly brighten spirits before Sabres fall to Oilers

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

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As Rick Jeanneret walked toward center ice to join Jim Kelly, applause filled First Niagara Center. Tears fell, too. The local legends made the Sabres' "Hockey Fights Cancer Night" a true Buffalo event.

The ceremonial puck drop conducted by the duo would have been special all by itself. Then the Hall of Famers delivered news that made Friday night even better.

Jeanneret, who has privately been battling cancer, and Kelly, who has publicly fought the disease, said test results this week showed they are both cancer free.

"On Tuesday I had a PET scan, which basically covers your whole body," Jeanneret said during the Sabres' broadcast on MSG. "Wednesday evening we got a call at home saying, 'You're all clear.' That means for the moment I'm cancer free."

Kelly said during his MSG interview: "Not only did I get to talk to Rick and he got good news, so did I, which was pretty cool. I was able to go to New York City yesterday and they told me from the MRI and the CAT scan that I did that I'm cancer free right now."

The fans, who rose to their feet for the survivors prior to Buffalo's 3-2 loss to Edmonton, cheered again when the interviews were shown on the scoreboard. The outpouring of support touched both men, especially Jeanneret. The Sabres' longtime play-by-play announcer patted his heart and waved as the decibel level grew.

"I am great, and I am really excited to be here," Jeanneret, who has been off since announcing in July he had throat cancer, said on MSG. "I was locked up for almost three months. I couldn't drive because of the pain medication that I was on. It didn't allow me out of the house except to go to medical appointments and things like that.

"Right from the get-go, they said, 'You're going to beat it.' It is a tough road, but I'm here to successfully be able to tell anybody who's suffering from the same disease or one of the same ilk, it can be beat and you can make a comeback and you'll be smiling like I am today."

Kelly, who had part of his jaw removed after an initial bout with squamous cell carcinoma in 2013, joked that he was going to remove his fake teeth during a visit to the Sabres' dressing room so he could match the famed toothless grin displayed by hockey players. The Bills' longtime quarterback walked to center ice after high-fiving the players and exchanging a big hug with Buffalo analyst Rob Ray.

"People have wondered why I'm still here," Kelly said of Buffalo during the broadcast. "It's because of the fans, the people, the people that pray, the people that send me emails, the well-wishes, the cards. I couldn't do this alone.

"Everybody out there, never, ever give up. Keep fighting because you never know what tomorrow holds."

It was tough for the game to match the pregame, especially for the Sabres. They started slow and finished worse.

Edmonton ended a four-game losing streak and earned its first road victory by scoring twice in the final 8:18. The Oilers took 19 shots during a scoreless first period and 19 during the third-period rally to finish with 52.

"That's crazy," said Sabres goaltender Michal Neuvirth, who made 49 saves. "We got outworked, and they wanted to win more than us. Good for them, but we've got to wake up. This can't be happening, especially on home ice.

"The effort was just not there. We've got to be way better than what we showed."

Despite the shooting gallery, the Sabres took a 2-1 lead with 13:26 left on a sparkling drive by Drew Stafford. It didn't last.

Edmonton's Mark Arcobello fought off Andre Benoit for position in the slot and chipped a shot over Neuvirth's shoulder with 8:18 left. Andrej Meszaros' double whammy of failing to clear the puck or recover defensively allowed Boyd Gordon to end a slick passing play with 4:15 to go.

"When you don't want to compete and you don't fight for the puck, that's what's going to happen," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said.

"That last goal was a perfect example of how the whole game went. You stop and you chip it out of the blue line. It's 1 foot away. You don't try to backpedal and try to flick it out, skate away from it like you're afraid to get hit."

The mistakes prevented the Sabres from providing a conclusion to match the good news from Jeanneret and Kelly.

"I'm proud of them for standing up to cancer and speaking out," Stafford said. "The battle they both went through and continue to go through, hopefully most of us don't have to endure that. It's very inspirational to see them."

Sabres notebook: Moulson thrilled with breaking the ice

By Amy Moritz

Buffalo News

November 7, 2014

He looked to the heavens as if to thank the hockey gods. The relief on his face was noticeable all the way to the rafters at First Niagara Center.

Matt Moulson needed that goal, his first of the season. And momentarily it was a breath of fresh air for the Buffalo Sabres.

Brian Gionta skated the puck out from behind the Edmonton Oilers' net and fed it to Moulson, who promptly fired it past Viktor Fasth.

The goal gave the Sabres a 1-0 lead over the Oilers, but that was one of the few highlights for the home team. Despite a difficult loss at Boston on Thursday night, the Oilers dominated the majority of play, throwing 52 shots at Buffalo's Michael Neuvirth and coming out with a 3-2 win Friday night.

"It was a great play by Gio," Moulson said of the goal. "He made a great pass and I just kinda shoveled it to the net and it went in. The main thing is we've got to get wins here. We've got to help jump start our line but we as well have to be better defensively, too."

It's the same thing the Sabres have been talking about all season – better play in their defensive zone will lead to more opportunities to score. Also more opportunities to hold the lead.

"I don't think we were nearly intense enough in our zone," Moulson said. "They got a lot of second and third opportunities."

Those were opportunities the Sabres didn't generate themselves. If Moulson's goal is going to kick start his line with Gionta and Zemgus Girgensons, making consistent, simple plays in the defensive zone will continue to be of primary importance.

"I think you can improve a lot of things in our game," Moulson said. "We had some chances tonight and then had periods where we didn't get many offensive chances. We were kind of bogged down in our own zone. Hopefully we clean that up and I think that will lead to a lot more chances. Those two guys are great players I'm playing with. So we'll get chances."

With his goal, Moulson now has six points (two goals, four assists) in six career games against the Oilers.

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An off-ice incident is going to cost an unnamed Sabres prospect a one-game suspension, General Manager Tim Murray said.

"It's not a Buffalo Sabres player," Murray told The Buffalo News. "It's a Buffalo Sabres property."

Murray brought up the prospect suspension during his weekly appearance on WGR-AM 550.

"We had a player this week that's probably going to get suspended for a game for something that happened away from the ice," Murray said on the radio. "He was with other people and kind of got caught up in something. He happened to be there when there was an incident happening."

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The Pittsburgh Penguins were scheduled to become the first NHL team to practice in HarborCenter on Friday afternoon. Instead, the team took the day off after flying to Buffalo from Winnipeg. It was a well-deserved rest day.

The Penguins are on a six-game winning streak. It's their longest since taking seven straight from Dec. 9-21, 2013.

They meet the Sabres at First Niagara Center tonight (7, MSG, Radio 550 AM).

Pittsburgh is coming off a 4-3 shootout win in Winnipeg on Thursday. The Jets held the Pens' power play scoreless (0 for 5). Pittsburgh still holds the best unit in the league, clicking at 37.2 percent.

Led by Sidney Crosby (seven goals, 12 assists) and Evgeni Malkin (five goals, 11 assists), the Penguins are averaging 4.00 goals per game – best average in the NHL. Malkin had his 11-game point streak stopped in Winnipeg but both Crosby and Malkin scored in the shootout to give the Pens the win and improve their record to 9-2-1.

The scoring prowess is backed up by Marc-Andre Fleury.

The 29-year-old goaltender just signed a four-year extension worth a reported \$23 million. Fleury is 7-2-0 with a 1.89 goals-against average and a .931 save percentage.

"I believe in Marc-Andre Fleury, as the team does," Penguins General Manager Jim Rutherford said in a news release. "He's won before and he will win again. We're very pleased to have him signed long term."

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It was a week ago when the Sabres met the Penguins in Pittsburgh. The Sabres lost the game, 5-0, and lost forward Marcus Foligno to an upper body injury. Foligno has been sidelined ever since.

Friday morning he took the pregame skate with the team but was a scratch. He was scheduled to be evaluated by doctors again on Friday afternoon with the possibility of him returning to the lineup tonight.

"First period just got jammed on the boards," Foligno said when describing his injury. "I tried to dump the puck in and was vulnerable, caught my left shoulder and it's just something I've got to take care of. Don't want to rush back.

"It's just frustrating. You want to be out there playing and it feels weird when you're missing games. You mentally think that you're behind but that's why you work hard in practice. Now getting out there in skates and getting my feet underneath me again hopefully I can come back pretty soon."

Oilers defeat Sabres for first road victory

By Joe Yerdon

NHL.com

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BUFFALO -- It took nearly a month, but the Edmonton Oilers got their first win on the road.

Boyd Gordon scored with 4:15 remaining to give the Oilers a 3-2 victory against the Buffalo Sabres at First Niagara Center on Friday.

Gordon took a pass from Teddy Purcell and beat Sabres goalie Michal Neuvirth as he fell to the ice for his second goal of the season. Purcell was free to gain the zone after a pass from Matt Hendricks. The Sabres' defense flowed to Purcell and left Gordon alone to the right of Neuvirth.

"He just quietly goes about his business," Oilers coach Dallas Eakins said of Gordon. "We made a slight adjustment to the line there and they ended up getting us the goal. I can't say enough about Boyd. He does a lot of heavy lifting, dirty, dirty work and is happy to do it."

It was the Oilers' first victory away from Rexall Place in six games this season (1-4-1), and the first in three games of a five-game trip that continues Sunday at the New York Rangers.

"For me it's important for our dressing room," Eakins said. "We fully understand critics and we fully understand and I embrace the result. You can stand and talk about how well you're playing and how you've improved, but if you're not getting points, no one's going to listen. For me, the points are always for those guys in the room. They understand what process we're going through, they understand where we're at and where we're going, and that's our main concern right now."

The Oilers ended a four-game losing streak.

"The League is all about consistency," Edmonton forward Ryan Nugent-Hopkins said. "[Over] 82 games, you've got to find a way to be consistent. We're not going to have 82 great games, but you've got to find a way to battle even when you're down a goal. You've got to find a way to score, and in the past couple years I know we've been a little inconsistent. We've got to find a way to be better this year and I think that's when we'll take that next step forward."

The Oilers scored two goals after forward Drew Stafford gave the Sabres a 2-1 lead 6:34 into the third period with his third goal of the season.

Stafford carried into the Oilers zone, made a move to get around defenseman Martin Marincin and snapped a wrist shot over the right shoulder of goalie Viktor Fasth. The goal was Stafford's first at even strength this season.

"Just getting the puck like that in the neutral zone with speed, anytime I get that type of opportunity, as any player will tell you, it's a Grade-A opportunity to get some speed behind the puck," Stafford said.

The Oilers outshot the Sabres 19-11 in the third period and 52-31 for the game.

"When you don't want to compete and you don't want to fight for the puck, that's what's going to happen," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "We went through this same song a number of times. The worst thing about it, we had a 2-1 lead. We made the biggest mistakes to give them the two goals to go ahead."

Oilers forward Mark Arcobello tied it 2-2 with his third goal of the season. Arcobello scored his second goal in as many games when he snapped a shot over the glove hand of Neuvirth at 11:42.

"We had a good third, and we were able to respond after their second goal to give a good push back and get the win," Arcobello said.

Arcobello was set up when he grabbed a loose puck from David Perron and fought off Sabres defenseman Andre Benoit in the slot.

"We couldn't put two passes together," Nolan said. "We'd get it up to the wingers, the wingers couldn't do anything on the boards. Too much pressure for them. There was no support. So it started from the first period. We never adjusted."

Forward Matt Moulson gave the Sabres a 1-0 lead 26 seconds into the second period. Brian Gionta hit Moulson with a pass from behind the net, and Moulson snapped a shot past Fasth for his first goal of the season.

"It was a great play by [Gionta]," Moulson said. "[Gionta] made a great pass and luckily I just kind of shoveled it to the net and it went in. The main thing is we've got to get wins here and maybe that'll help jump start our line."

The Oilers tied the game 54 seconds later when rookie forward Iiro Pakarinen scored his first NHL goal in his second game. Pakarinen fired the rebound of Mark Fayne's shot from the point past Neuvirth.

"I was a little bit shocked," Pakarinen said. "It was so fast of a situation. I jumped on the ice and the rebound was there and I tried to shoot as hard as I can."

The Oilers had 85 shot attempts to 51 for the Sabres. Neuvirth made 49 saves; Fasth stopped 29 shots.

"Fifty-two, that's crazy," Neuvirth said. "We got outworked, and they wanted to win more than us. Good for them, but we got to wake up. This can't be happening, especially on home ice."

The Sabres host the Pittsburgh Penguins on Saturday.

Buffalo forward Tyler Ennis was assessed a game misconduct at the final buzzer when he appeared to make contact with linesman Derek Nansen with his stick.

Sabres allow 52 shots, fall to hapless Oilers

By Bill Hoppe
Olean Times Herald
November 7, 2014

BUFFALO – Fifteen games into another trying season, goaltending has been the Sabres' only constant each night.

Despite some wretched efforts and an anemic offense on pace to be the worst in NHL history, Michal Neuvirth and Jhonas Enroth have kept the Sabres in almost every contest, stopping a barrage of shots.

On Friday, the Sabres laid another egg, allowing the hapless Edmonton Oilers to pump a season-high 52 shots on Neuvirth.

"Fifty-two, that's crazy," Neuvirth said following the Sabres' 3-2 loss before 17,490 fans inside the First Niagara Center.

Still, thanks to Neuvirth, the Sabres had a chance to win just their fourth game this season. Drew Stafford's nifty goal put them 2-1 6:34 into the third period.

Then they imploded late.

Mark Arcobello tied it at 11:42. Boyd Gordon followed at 15:45, securing the Oilers' first road win.

The Sabres wasted another fine effort in net. Sooner or later, the huge workload could buckle the goalies. The Sabres have allowed an NHL-high 560 shots.

"Our goalies have been outstanding for us all year, both of them," Sabres defenseman Josh Gorges said. "It's about time we started paying them back a little bit. It wasn't a ton of great scoring chances against, but we got to limit the workload for these guys.

"We got to find a way to start playing more time in the offensive zone and stop making our goalies work so much."

The Sabres made some progress earlier this week, winning a 3-2 shootout against Detroit on Sunday before losing a 2-1 shootout to Montreal on Wednesday.

They regressed Friday.

"When you don't want to compete and you don't want to fight for the puck, that's what's going to happen," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "We went through this same song a number of times. The worst thing about it, we had a 2-1 lead. We made the biggest mistakes to give them the two goals to go ahead."

Neuvirth added: "We got outworked, and they wanted to win more than us. Good for them, but we got to wake up. This can't be happening, especially on home ice."

Neuvirth said the Sabres "can't take anybody lightly in this league."

"The effort was just not there," he said. "We got to be very better than what we showed tonight."

The Oilers, who lost 5-2 in Boston on Thursday, pounced on the Sabres early, pumping 19 shots on Neuvirth in the first period.

"They came at us, they came at us hard," Gorges said. "They pinched on the walls. They played in-your-face. I just don't think we did a good enough job of playing under pressure, making the right reads and winning enough battles."

Nolan added: "We couldn't put two passes together. We'd get it up to the wingers, the wingers couldn't do anything on the boards. Too much pressure for them. There was no support. So it started from the first period. We never adjusted."

Gordon's goal irked Nolan, who believes the players' problems are "between their ears."

While he didn't use his name, Nolan ripped Andrej Meszaros' effort on the goal. The defenseman couldn't clear the puck, allowing Teddy Purcell to feed Gordon.

"Their last puck was a perfect example of how the whole game went," Nolan said. "You stop and you chip it out at the blue line. It's one foot away. You don't try to backpedal and try to flick it out skating away from it like you're afraid to get hit."

Matt Moulson's first goal this season opened the scoring 26 seconds into the second period. Edmonton's Iiro Pakarinen tied it at 1:20, however.

It appeared Neuvirth, who made his third straight start, wouldn't play Friday. Nolan said Thursday Enroth would start.

But when the Sabres ended their skate Friday morning, Neuvirth went off the ice first, meaning he had earned the start.

Why the change?

"Oh, I thought I said Neuvy was going to start," Nolan said.

Then Nolan smiled.

"Just to confuse the other team," he joked.

Nolan left the door open for Enroth to start tonight against the Pittsburgh Penguins. Enroth allowed five goals in Pittsburgh last week.

Legendary Sabres play-by-play man Rick Jeanneret says he's cancer-free

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

November 7, 2014

BUFFALO – Legendary Sabres play-by-play man Rick Jeanneret told the team's pregame show Friday he's cancer-free.

The Sabres announced in July that Jeanneret was battling throat cancer.

The NHL's longest-tenured broadcaster underwent a CAT scan Tuesday and received a call Wednesday saying everything was OK, he said.

"That means for the moment I'm cancer-free," Jeanneret said.

Jeanneret, who described the last five months as "tough," thanked his family and the medical staff that treated him.

"Right from the get-go they said, 'You're going to beat it,'" he said. "They just made me be positive, and it was as simple as that. Some of the times it was tough to be positive, because you sure as heck didn't feel like. ... But I'm here to be able to tell you – successfully be able to tell you – anybody who's suffering from the same disease or one of the same ilk, it can be beaten and you can make it back, and you'll be smiling like I am today."

As part of "Hockey Fights Cancer Night," Jeanneret and Hall of Fame Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly, who's fought cancer publicly, participated in a ceremonial faceoff. The crowd inside the First Niagara Center roared for both local legends.

Sabres' Patrick Kaleta experiencing vision problems from injury

By Bill Hoppe
Olean Times Herald
November 7, 2014

BUFFALO – After a puck “broke a bunch of things” in Patrick Kaleta’s face Sept. 28, doctors cut through the bottom part of his eyelid to repair him, the Sabres winger said.

“They have to cut through all those muscles, so it’s almost like my muscles get tired out a bit,” Kaleta said prior to Friday’s 3-2 loss to the Edmonton Oilers inside the First Niagara Center.

So the oft-injured agitator has been experiencing vision problems on the ice. He still hasn’t been cleared to play.

“I can’t squint that good or protect my eye against the light, so it’s sensitive to light,” Kaleta said. “So I’m trying a whole bunch of things.”

Kaleta has experimented with eye black under a full face shield, a tinted shield and “a bunch of other different things just to see what’s going to be best so I can see the best out there.”

He wore a visor with a special jaw protector Friday morning.

The tinted shield didn’t work.

“I think the trainer said it wasn’t dark enough, but I gave it a shot,” Kaleta said.

The 28-year-old also practiced with a shield tinted like a windshield.

“The top part is tinted,” he said. “It kind of deferred the light to there, rather than to my eye. I don’t know what I’m going to use or what the best solution is, so I’m just trying to see what works best.”

Eventually, Kaleta’s problem should heal.

“I’m able to do some treatment before on those muscles, where before I wasn’t, because I had to heal,” he said. “I’m still healing, but it’s at a point where I can start using my skin and stuff just like a regular muscle.”

Still, Kaleta’s clearly losing his patience. A year after getting banished to the minors early last season and tearing his ACL in November, he had earned a roster spot out of training camp. Then a slap shot hit him in the face during a preseason game in Toronto.

Kaleta, who hasn’t played an NHL game since Oct. 10, 2013, broke a couple of sticks in practice Thursday. While cordial with a reporter, he appeared frustrated before talking.

“I don’t like sitting in practice,” Kaleta said. “It’s been a long time just basically moving pucks around and doing that stuff. So I’m getting to the point where obviously I want to play, try to help contribute, at least have the possibility of contributing, moving forward. That’s about it.

“I think if you’re a competitive athlete, normal athlete, you should get frustrated, because you want to go out there and help the team. That’s just the type of person I am. I’ll be here and do whatever I can. I’m at a point now I just want to play.”

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The Sabres made one lineup change Friday, inserting defenseman Andre Benoit, a healthy scratch the last two games, for Tyson Strachan.

Benoit had zero points and minus-9 rating in 12 games.

"He's got some offensive flair to get game," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "I thought early he took too many chances offensively. I think he was trying too hard. So now he has a chance to sit back and reflect on that a little bit.

"But he's a very gifted offensive player that can make that first pass and send guys off on breakaways, and that's exactly what the next stage of our game is. We have to ... (spring) guys in the neutral zone."

Benoit added: "I just got to be really reliable and play better, I think."

Meanwhile, winger Marcus Foligno skated Friday morning but missed his third straight game. Foligno said his left shoulder got jammed into the boards trying to dump a puck in Saturday in Pittsburgh. It's not the shoulder he hurt last season.

Foligno could play tonight.

The Sabres also scratched defenseman Mike Weber.

Oilers rally past Sabres 3-2

By Dan Cave

WGR 550

November 7, 2014

Edmonton scored twice in the third period on Friday in a 3-2 win over the Sabres at First Niagara Center. Boyd Gordon notched the winner for the Oilers, who racked up 52 shots on Michal Neuvirth.

Matt Moulson opened the scoring 26 seconds into the second period, one-timing a Brian Gionta feed past Viktor Fasth. Kept out of the net for Buffalo's first 14 games, Moulson looked to the sky with relief after picking up his first goal of the season. The Sabres' lead didn't last long, however. Iiro Pakarinen tied the score less than a minute later for Edmonton, slamming home a big rebound.

Buffalo went ahead at 6:34 of the final period on Drew Stafford's third of the year. Stafford picked the top corner, sending a shot over Fasth's blocker for the 2-1 lead. Mark Arcobello tied it up later in the third, beating Andre Benoit to the puck and slapping a shot over Neuvirth's shoulder. Gordon put the Oilers ahead for good about four minutes later, finishing off a 2-on-1 with Teddy Purcell.

Neuvirth took the loss, but earned third-star honors keeping Buffalo in the game with 49 saves. Fasth stopped 29 Sabres shots for the win. The Sabres are right back at it on Saturday, hosting the Pittsburgh Penguins at 7 p.m. Catch the play by play with Dan Dunleavy and Rob Ray on WGR 550 and the Buffalo Sabres Radio Network.

1st Period

Goals

None

Penalties

4:12 - BUF - Andrej Meszaros (2 min., cross checking)

2nd Period

Goals

0:26 - BUF - Matt Moulson (1) (Brian Gionta, Zemgus Girgensons)

1:20 - EDM - Iiro Pakarinen (1) (Mark Fayne, Teddy Purcell)

Penalties

5:36 - BUF - Chris Stewart (5 min., fighting)

5:36 - EDM - Keith Aulie (5 min., fighting)

6:03 - BUF - Andrej Meszaros (2 min., slashing)

3rd Period

Goals

6:34 - BUF - Drew Stafford (3) (Nicolas Deslauriers, Rasmus Ristolainen)

11:42 - EDM - Mark Arcobello (4) (David Perron, Nail Yakupov)

15:44 - EDM - Boyd Gordon (2) (Teddy Purcell, Matt Hendricks)

Penalties

2:03 - EDM - Keith Aulie (2 min., holding)

Goaltending

EDM - Viktor Fasth (29 saves, 31 shots)

BUF - Michal Neuvirth (49 saves, 52 shots)

Power Plays

EDM - 0 of 2

BUF - 0 of 1

Three Stars

- 1.) EDM - Teddy Purcell (0 G, 2 A)
- 2.) EDM - Iiro Pakarinen (1 G, 0 A)
- 3.) BUF - Michal Neuvirth (49 saves)

Sabres give up 52 shots in loss to Oilers

By Steve Vesey

WIVB

November 7, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) - Edmonton sure didn't look tired. One night after losing to Boston, the Oilers piled up 52 shots on their way to a 3-2 comeback win over the Sabres.

Boyd Gordon scored the game-winner in the third period to complete the comeback Friday night.

Matt Moulson scored his first of the season to open the scoring the second period, but Edmonton answered less than a minute later on Iiro Pakarinen's first career NHL goal.

Buffalo took the lead again in the third period, when Drew Stafford found the net. Edmonton kept peppering Michal Neuvirth with shots, leading to Marco Arcobello's game-tying score, and eventually leading to Gordon's game-winner.

The Sabres stay at home to host Pittsburgh tomorrow night.

Gordon goal helps Oilers edge Sabres

By Mark Ludwiczak

The Sports Xchange

November 7, 2014

BUFFALO, N.Y. -- Throughout their four-game losing streak, the Edmonton Oilers still believed that they were showing signs of progress.

Now they have some points to back it up.

Edmonton put 52 shots on net and center Boyd Gordon scored with 4:15 remaining to lead the Oilers to a 3-2 win over the Buffalo Sabres on Friday night.

"It's important for our dressing room," Edmonton coach Dallas Eakins said. "We fully understand critics and I embrace the result. You can stand and talk about how well you're playing or how you're improved, but if you're not getting points no one's going to listen. So for me the points are always for those guys in the room, they understand what process we're going through. They understand where we're at and where we're going."

Center Mark Arcobello and right winger Iiro Pakarinen also scored for the Oilers. Goalie Viktor Fasth made 29 saves.

Edmonton (5-8-1) is now hoping to turn the tables and go on a winning streak of its own. The Oilers began the year with a five-game losing streak, then won four games in a row before their more recent four-game losing skid.

"I don't think anybody's doubted it at all in this room," Oilers center Ryan Nugent-Hopkins said. "Because I really do feel like we've played some really good hockey all season and still I feel like when we lose games, it's mistakes that really kills us. ... I don't think I've been involved with a game like that in my period here and it just goes to show how much we've improved but it's about finding a way to do that every night."

Gordon finished off a terrific play by right winger Teddy Purcell on the winning goal. Purcell skated to his right around Sabres defenseman Nikita Zadorov before finding a wide-open Gordon to his left, who tapped the puck into an open net.

Eakins was glad to see Gordon get rewarded for the hard work he's been putting in inside both zones.

"He works so hard and he's never looked sideways once at the number of times he has to start in his D-zone," Eakins said of Gordon. "He takes great pride in it, he takes great pride in our penalty kill and he just quietly goes about his business. ... I can't say enough about Boyd. He does a lot of heavy lifting, dirty, dirty work and is happy to do it."

Right winger Drew Stafford and left winger Matt Moulson scored for the Sabres (3-10-2), who gave up a 2-1 lead in the third period and came up short after getting points in two consecutive games at home.

"When you don't want to compete and you don't want to fight for the puck, that's what's going to happen," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "We went through this same song a number of times. The worst thing about it, we had a 2-1 lead. We made the biggest mistakes to give them the two goals to go ahead."

Goalie Michal Neuvirth's 49-save performance was the best aspect of Buffalo's evening. The 26-year-old continued his recent stretch of strong play and appears to have the upper hand in net over Jhonas Enroth.

"Our goalies have been outstanding for us all year, both of them," Sabres defenseman Josh Gorges said. "It's about time we started paying them back a little bit."

After a scoreless first period, both teams traded goals 54 seconds apart to begin the second. Moulson opened the scoring for Buffalo 26 seconds into the period, ending his scoring drought with his first goal of the season.

Moulson scored on a quick one-timer to the blocker side from close range.

Pakarinen tied the game less than a minute later following a big rebound by Neuvrith. It was his first career goal in just his second NHL game.

Buffalo took a 2-1 lead 6:34 into the third period on Stafford's second goal in as many games. Stafford skated to his right around Edmonton defenseman Martin Marincin and roofed a wrist shot high to the stick side for his third goal of the season.

Arcobello made it 2-2 with 8:18 remaining with a fine effort from the slot. Despite tight coverage from Sabres defenseman Andre Benoit, Arcobello put a shot into the top right corner of the net while falling backward.

NOTES: Before the game, the Sabres held a ceremonial faceoff with Buffalo Bills Hall of Fame quarterback Jim Kelly and Sabres play-by-play announcer Rick Jeanneret as part of Hockey Fights Cancer Night. Both men have beaten cancer and received a standing ovation from the crowd. ... LW Marcus Foligno (shoulder), D Mike Weber and D Tyson Strachan were scratched for the Sabres. ... D Andrew Ference, LW Luke Gazdic and D Oscar Klefbom were scratched for the Oilers. Ference, Edmonton's captain, sat out his third and final game of a three-game suspension. ... This was the 68th game all time between the teams. They meet again on Jan. 29 in Edmonton.

Sabres seek to build on positives as Oilers come to town

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 7, 2014

The homestand continues Friday night for the Buffalo Sabres as the Edmonton Oilers roll into First Niagara Center.

The Oilers are coming off a tough road loss to the Boston Bruins on Thursday. Edmonton held a 2-1 lead midway through the third before the Bruins scored four straight – including two on the power play 1:09 apart – to win 5-2.

The Sabres are expecting a tired team, but they know they're still going to have to focus on playing their own game and executing to their best of their ability. Buffalo is 2-2-2 in its past six games, taking the past two into the shootout. Buffalo topped Detroit on Sunday, but fell to Montreal on Wednesday.

"They're a team you can't take lightly," Sabres forward Chris Stewart said. "They've got some good players over there, some high-end offense and they're a team that you have to make them work for their chances and make them play in their D-zone. That's where they'll have their breakdowns."

Faceoff is scheduled for 7 p.m. The Tops Gamenight pregame show begins at 6:30 p.m. on MSG-B and Bell TV. The game can also be heard live on WGR 550.

"The bottom line is we have to play the way we have to play," Sabres coach Ted Nolan said. "The way we played last game is exactly what we want to do, whether a team has four in five nights or three in four. It doesn't really matter. We have to come out the way we came out last game."

THE ABSORBING MAN

Michal Neuvirth will in fact be the starting goaltender against Edmonton. He's been splitting time in net this season with Jhonas Enroth, but has now earned the nod in three straight games.

"These guys are earning their starts and they're competing with one another, which is great," Nolan said. "As I mentioned before, someone's going to win in the end, who's going to be the so-called No. 1. But the way we're going right now, we need both of them."

Neuvirth made 31 saves on Wednesday in the 2-1 shootout loss to Montreal. He is 2-5-1 with a .930 save percentage and a 2.59 goals-against average as a member of the Sabres. Nolan has been impressed by his ability to make the big save when it counts.

"He's almost like a sponge with those rebounds – there are no rebounds, hardly at all. He's playing very well for us," Nolan said.

"When the games get put on the line, I remember Grant Fuhr. He let three, four or five goals in, but he'd never let that goal to beat you in. He's in that similar mold. If you stay close, it's going to be tough to get one by him and he's proven that so far. Hopefully he'll keep doing that."

PROJECTED LINEUP

17 Torrey Mitchell – 63 Tyler Ennis – 80 Chris Stewart

26 Matt Moulson – 28 Zemgus Girgensons – 12 Brian Gionta

44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 19 Cody Hodgson – 21 Drew Stafford
22 Johan Larsson – 8 Cody McCormick – 65 Brian Flynn

4 Josh Gorges – 57 Tyler Myers
61 Andre Benoit – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen
51 Nikita Zadorov – 41 Andrej Meszaros

34 Michal Neuvirth
1 Jhonas Enroth

Healthy Scratches: 6 Mike Weber, 24 Tyson Strachan
Injured: 82 Marcus Foligno
Injured Reserve: 31 Matt Hackett, 36 Patrick Kaleta

Benoit will return to the lineup after sitting out the past two games as a healthy scratch. Nolan hopes his offensive instincts will help Buffalo move up and out of their zone quicker and more efficiently.

UPDATE ON FOLIGNO

Marcus Foligno took the morning skate and was planning to meet with team doctors afterwards. He said it isn't likely that he'll play against Edmonton, and while he doesn't want to rush the healing process, he hopes he'll be ready Saturday against Pittsburgh.

He said he took a hit in the first period in the team's game against the Penguins last week and aggravated his left shoulder. He had surgery on his other shoulder in the offseason.

"It's frustrating. You want to be out there playing. It feels weird when you're missing games," he said. "You mentally think you're behind, but that's why you work hard in practice. Now I'm getting out there on skates and getting my feet underneath me again. Hopefully I'll come back pretty soon."

IT'S #HOCKEYFIGHTSCANCER NIGHT

The Sabres will again take part in the NHL Hockey Fights Cancer program during the team's game, presented by ECMC, on Friday.

As part of an NHL-wide initiative to raise money and awareness for cancer research, the Sabres will be hosting events throughout the night with the help of local cancer patients and their charitable organizations.

Fans attending the game will have the opportunity to purchase "RJ" hats for \$20 in honor of Rick Jeanneret and his fight against cancer. The hats have been donated by New Era Cap Company and will be sold before the game and until they are sold out. A portion of the proceeds from the sale will be donated to the cancer care and research.

To commemorate the night, all Sabres players will wear purple jerseys and use sticks with purple tape during warm-ups. The jerseys and sticks will be auctioned off on NHL.com immediately following the game to benefit cancer care and research.

There will also be a ceremonial puck drop before the game, so fans are strongly encouraged to be in their seats early.

Hockey Fights Cancer is a charitable initiative founded in December 1998 by the National Hockey League and National Hockey League Players' Association. It is supported by players, NHL member clubs, NHL alumni, the NHL Officials' Association, professional hockey athletic trainers and equipment managers, corporate marketing partners, broadcast partners and fans throughout North America.

Jeanneret, Kelly recognized prior to Sabres-Oilers game

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

November 7, 2014

This year's Hockey Fights Cancer Night in Buffalo was certainly one to remember.

As part of the event, two Hall of Famers who have been battling cancer were involved in an emotionally charged ceremonial faceoff prior to the Buffalo Sabres game Friday night against the Edmonton Oilers.

First, former Buffalo Bills quarterback Jim Kelly walked out onto the ice at First Niagara Center from the Sabres bench and was met with loud cheers and a standing ovation. Then legendary Sabres play-by-play announcer Rick Jeanneret emerged from the tunnel. And it got even louder.

It marked Jeanneret's first public appearance since the team released a statement in July saying he had been diagnosed with throat cancer. He's been undergoing treatment ever since.

In an interview with Brian Duff on the pregame show, Jeanneret said he had a PET scan on Tuesday and the next night, received some very good news.

"Wednesday, we got a call at home saying, 'You're all clear.' That means at the moment, I'm cancer free," Jeanneret said.

"...It is a tough road, but I'm here to be able to successfully tell you, anybody suffering from the same disease or one of the same ilk, it can be beaten. And you can make it, come back and you'll be smiling just like I am today."

He thanked his wife, whom he affectionately calls Cupcake, the rest of his family and the medical staff that has been taking care of him during his time. He said he's been cooped up in his house while undergoing treatment, so it was apparent how special it was for him to be out and about and to especially be able to attend a Sabres game.

Kelly and Jeanneret met with the players in the dressing room before they took the ice. Kelly said he was wowed at how big 6-foot-8 defenseman Tyler Myers is on skates and planned a prank that didn't come to fruition.

"One thing I was going to do and I didn't get to do it is, I wanted to pull my teeth out because I'm missing my whole upper jaw and say, 'You know what guys? Hockey players aren't the only guys that are missing teeth! Me too!'" Kelly said with a hearty laugh during a first-intermission interview on the broadcast. "I forgot!"

For the players – especially those who have been with the organization for several years – seeing the two Buffalo sports icons meant a lot.

"That was extremely emotional and inspirational for a lot of guys in here, especially myself," Sabres forward Drew Stafford told Sabres.com after the game. "I've been around quite a while. Some of these new guys in here might not understand the significance of that."

"Seeing those two and what they've gone through – the journey that they've been on. It's extremely inspirational and I'm very, very happy for them that they were able to show up and give their support."

Kelly has battled cancer in his jaw since June 2013 and in September, declared he was cancer free. He was happy to announce that he found out on Wednesday that the results of an MRI showed that he is still cancer free.

"People wonder why I'm still here and it's because of the fans, the people, the people that prayed, the people that sent me emails and well wishes and the cards," Kelly said. "I couldn't do this alone."

A DISAPPOINTING RESULT ON THE ICE

As for the game itself, the Sabres dropped a 3-2 decision to Edmonton.

Matt Moulson scored of his first of the year for Buffalo and Drew Stafford scored 6:34 into the third period to take a 2-1 lead.

Moulson has six points (2+4) in six career games against the Oilers. Stafford now has 10 points (8+2) in seven games against the Oilers and has scored in six of those seven games.

However, the Oilers came back with third-period goals from Mark Arcobello and Boyd Gordon, who netted the game winner with 4:15 remaining.

"I don't think we were nearly intense enough in our own zone. They got a lot of second and third opportunities," Moulson said.

One player that really couldn't be faulted for the result was goaltender Michal Neuvirth, who made 49 saves in the loss. He was two saves shy of his career high, which came last season in a 51-save performance on March 13 at Carolina.

"We got outworked and they wanted to win more than us," Neuvirth said. "Good for them, but we've got to wake up. This can't be happening, especially on home ice."

The Sabres take on the Pittsburgh Penguins on Saturday at 7 p.m. to wrap up their four-game homestand. It will be Military Appreciation Night at the arena.

Sabres coach Ted Nolan hopes the team will be able to bounce back from a disappointing game against Edmonton.

"When you don't want to compete and you don't fight for the puck, that's what's going to happen," he said. "We went through this same song a number of times and the worst thing about it is we had a 2-1 lead. And we made the biggest mistakes to give them the two goals to go ahead."

