



# **Buffalo Sabres**

**Daily Press Clips**

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## **Sabres-Flyers Preview**

By Nicolino Dibenedetto

Associated Press

October 26, 2015

Winning four of five games would have any team feeling a sense of accomplishment, but the Philadelphia Flyers don't want to dwell on the past.

They should like what's in their future.

The Flyers attempt to continue their success against the struggling Buffalo Sabres on Tuesday night in the first of two matchups this week.

Philadelphia's turnaround includes wins over reigning Stanley Cup champion Chicago and the New York Rangers - last season's Presidents' Trophy winner. The Flyers (4-2-1) beat the Rangers 3-2 in a shootout Saturday and are trying to look forward instead of reveling in the past.

"It was (three) days ago," right wing Jakub Voracek told the team's official website. "Now you have to focus for (Tuesday) and stop living in the past. I think that's what winning teams do.

"They just move on and it doesn't matter if they lost or they won the day before. Buffalo is coming in; it's a very young team with a lot of talent up front. We've got to make sure that we play good defense and be patient."

The Flyers are 10-2-1 against the Sabres (2-6-0) since 2011-12, going 5-0-1 in the past six. That defeat came in the last matchup Feb. 19 when Philadelphia fell 3-2 in a shootout, ending a five-game home winning streak in the series.

The Flyers visit Buffalo on Friday, a day after hosting New Jersey - another team that missed the playoffs last season.

"I think (you avoid a letdown) just by focusing on the right things," first-year coach Dave Hakstol said. "I don't want to guard, so to speak, anything. I want to know what the opportunity is, and what we have to do from our perspective to be prepared to go out and take advantage of that."

There should be plenty to take advantage of with Buffalo giving up 11 goals in losing its last two games, including 4-3 to the Devils on Saturday.

Losses aren't the only things piling up as injuries have become a major problem with Zach Bogosian (lower body) and goaltender Robin Lehner (ankle) out. Now, Evander Kane is lost for four to six weeks with an MCL injury in his left knee.

"A lot of the speed and a lot of the tenacity and a lot of our drive, he's been that for our offense," coach Dan Bylsma said of Kane's contributions outside of his three points. "He doesn't quite have the numbers, but yes he's been that for our team. Someone else gets the chance to do that now."

Nicolas Deslauriers is expected to replace Kane on the top line with Ryan O'Reilly and Tyler Ennis, who have combined for five goals and six assists.

Jack Eichel, the second overall pick of the draft, has three goals after finding the net Saturday. All of the center's scoring, however, has come in six home games.

After this contest, Buffalo visits Pittsburgh on Thursday.

The Flyers may have Michael Raffl available after he was accidentally struck in the head by Jarret Stoll's elbow in the second period Saturday. Raffl became dizzy and passed out for a couple of seconds on the bench, but he was a full participant at practice on Monday, according to the team website.

"I feel fine now," Raffl said. "I don't know, I just got elbowed in the corner there and felt a little dizzy and was just trying to make my way back to the bench to take a seat, and next thing I know I just woke up again and everybody was freaking out."

Raffl has two goals in his last three games against Buffalo.

## **With Kane sidelined, Sabres must retool**

By John Vogl  
Buffalo News  
October 26, 2015

Evander Kane had yet to break out on the score sheet, putting up just one goal and three points in the Sabres' opening eight games. But his contributions in nearly every other category were immense.

Kane is Buffalo's biggest hitter, delivering a team-high 24 checks. He's among the steadiest offensive threats, taking 28 shots to trail team-leader Tyler Ennis by one. Kane logs 20 minutes, 18 seconds of ice time per game, making him one of only 24 forwards in the NHL to average more than 20 minutes.

So the news that he'll miss four to six weeks with an injury to the medial collateral ligament in his left knee is a significant blast to a struggling team.

"A lot of the speed and a lot of the tenacity and a lot of our drive, he's been that for our offense," Buffalo coach Dan Bylsma said Monday. "Someone else gets a chance to do that now."

Nicolas Deslauriers, Johan Larsson, Matt Moulson and Marcus Foligno will certainly see increased roles starting Tuesday when the Sabres visit Philadelphia. None possesses the all-around game that Kane has brought.

"It's big," center Ryan O'Reilly said. "He adds a lot of speed. The way he shoots the puck and just the way he plays, he's a physical guy and tough to play against. It'll be a loss, but as much as it hurts to see a guy go down, we've got to step up and we all have to help out."

Kane, who won't require surgery, joins the team's starting goalie (Robin Lehner) and top defenseman (Zach Bogosian) on the sidelines. Kane missed the final three months of last season because of a torn labrum in his shoulder.

"Some of his disappointment right now is just that," Bylsma said. "Unfortunately, you anticipate some injuries. You know you're going to have injuries to players. Unfortunately, in the beginning of our process with this team, you're talking about two guys" in Kane and Lehner "who are starting fresh, starting part of the process from new, and it's disappointing to see both of them get injured."

Kane suffered the injury midway through the third period of Saturday's 4-3 loss to New Jersey. The Devils' David Schlemko rode Kane into the corner, and the winger's left leg slammed hard into the boards as Schlemko locked in knee-to-knee.

"When you see on the replay and you see how it unfolded and what happened, it could have been a lot worse," Bylsma said. "It's not as bad as it could've been."

Still, it's not good. Buffalo is averaging just 1.88 goals per game, and Kane figured to be a key to a turnaround for the 2-6 club.

With Kane's dynamic style absent, the Sabres will look to grind out goals. The talk Monday centered around the goal crease and the team's need to surround it.

"It's just sticking there," Deslauriers said in First Niagara Center. "Sometimes it's not the second whack, it's the third whack that's going to go in. It's just being strong and staying there and being almost immovable and just whack the puck when it's around you."

"You've got to put it in the goalie's mind that you're going to be there all night."

The Sabres, who are scoring on just 6.2 percent of their shots, hope to increase that number by increasing their rebound attempts.

"Guys are getting boxed out a little too easily around the net," said Foligno, who is expected to return after missing one game with a leg injury. "Teams are having a little bit easier job pushing us away from the net. I think we've got to do a better job of getting second and third forwards in and swarming, just jamming the puck.

"The first shot's there, and it just seems to be batted away by their players. Second and third forwards getting there after the shot is key."

The bulky Foligno and Deslauriers should have the best chances of planting themselves near the net. Deslauriers practiced on the top line with O'Reilly and right wing Tyler Ennis, giving the duo someone who can occupy a defenseman if Deslauriers is carrying out the game plan. The 24-year-old will be used sparingly on the top line, so it's likely Bylsma will double-shift Moulson at times to get an offensive threat at the top of the lineup.

"I had a couple shifts with O'Reilly last game, and it went pretty good," Deslauriers said. "It's just to take this as a chance to prove myself more. I'm pretty happy. I think those two players are incredible players, and I need to stick to my game and give them a little more space on the ice."

## **Sabres' Foligno ready to return to lineup**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

October 26, 2015

Marcus Foligno's leg injury should cost him just one game.

The Sabres forward, who sat out Saturday's loss to New Jersey, returned to practice Monday and anticipates being in the lineup Tuesday in Philadelphia.

"I feel like I'm confident enough with the injury," said Foligno, who got hurt Friday night. "It's just a little bit of a dead leg, a little bit of a Charley horse above the knee, hitting the boards early in the first period against Montreal. It was tough to play the rest of the game, but I went through it with the adrenaline.

"I feel pretty good right now, but the next day was a little sore waking up and not good enough to play against New Jersey. I'm looking forward to being in the lineup against Philadelphia."

Foligno practiced on a four-man fourth line with Jamie McGinn, David Legwand and Tim Schaller in First Niagara Center.

Zach Bogosian, who has yet to play because of a lower-body injury, did not skate.

"He's improving and getting better," coach Dan Bylsma said. "He's increasing his workload. He has not returned to the ice yet."

## **Sabres notebook: Schaller gets the call and a ‘stern lecture’ from Bylsma**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

October 26, 2015

When Tim Schaller arrived from Rochester for the Sabres’ practice Monday, coach Dan Bylsma put on a stern face and gave the center a talking-to. The coach said he was angry with Schaller for not revealing the severity of a training-camp injury.

Bylsma eventually smiled and told Schaller his anger was only of the mock variety. But the coach really does wish Schaller had opened up about the ailment.

“He was working through a lower-body injury and probably swallowed it a little more than he let on,” Bylsma said in First Niagara Center. “I was feigning getting upset at him for that for the first couple weeks because he’s a better player than that and plays better than he was able to in training camp.

“Frankly, once he’s gotten down to Rochester and gotten to full health, he has been the type of player he can be.”

Schaller was good enough to get a recall to Buffalo, taking the roster spot of injured left wing Evander Kane. Schaller will likely be the extra forward when the Sabres visit Philadelphia on Tuesday, but he may find a place in the lineup Thursday in Pittsburgh or Friday at home against the Flyers.

“We have three games in four nights coming up here again, and I’m sure we’ll see him,” Bylsma said.

Schaller skated in 18 games for the Sabres last season, recording one goal and one assist. The 24-year-old has the same stats in six games for the Amerks this year.

“I’ve been put in a lot of different situations – power play, penalty kill – and I find that with more ice time I play better,” Schaller said. “Any opportunity I can get to play for the Sabres is a great opportunity. Hopefully, I can get in a few games, show what I have and make them not want to send me back.”

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Carlo Colaiacovo may have earned another start for the Sabres. After being scratched for five straight games, the defenseman skated 14:05 with one shot and a minus-1 rating Saturday against New Jersey.

“It’s tough to sit out for a handful of games and jump back in, and I thought it was his best for us so far,” Bylsma said.

The Sabres will be without defenseman Zach Bogosian (lower body) for the ninth straight game to open the season.

“He’s improving and getting better,” the coach said. “He’s increasing his workload. He has not returned to the ice yet.”

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Nicolas Deslauriers practiced on the top line with center Ryan O’Reilly and right wing Tyler Ennis after recording three shots and seven shot attempts against the Devils.

“I think I didn’t even have seven shot attempts in the first five games,” the left winger said.

He recorded only three shots in the first seven games, so he doubled his season output in one outing.

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The Flyers will salute old friend Daniel Briere during the pregame with a retirement ceremony. The 38-year-old hung up his skates this fall after playing in parts of 17 seasons. His best years were with the Sabres (2003 to 2007) and Flyers (2007 to 2013).

Briere is working for the Flyers in a part-time capacity under President Paul Holmgren.

"One of the nicest men you will ever meet," Holmgren said on Flyers.com. "He showed up and worked hard every day, never said a bad thing about any of his teammates, cared about the organization and went wherever we asked him to go.

"He was a good dad, great with the fans, just a great guy. He met every expectation."

## **'I asked for trade every off-season in Winnipeg': Evander Kane**

By Ken Campbell  
The Hockey News  
October 26, 2015

The Buffalo Sabres announced Monday that Evander Kane will be out four-to-six weeks with a strain of the medial collateral ligament in his left knee, which will still leave him plenty of time to be back in the lineup for when the Sabres visit the Winnipeg Jets Jan. 10.

Do not expect the homecoming to be a sweet one after Kane's comments about his time in Winnipeg for a profile in the Nov. 9 issue of The Hockey News, which is now on newsstands and available on-line. Kane recently came under some fire for hiring a helicopter to take him and some teammates to Toronto for Game 3 of the American League championship series and he responded to it by scoring the tying goal and being the first star in the Sabres shootout win over the Toronto Maple Leafs two nights later.

So the glare of the spotlight clearly does not bother this young man, even when that glare gets a little too hot. In fact, he embraces it.

Kane made that and dropped a couple of other pearls, not the least of which was he wanted out of Winnipeg almost as quickly as he arrived there. "Yeah, I asked for a trade every off-season in Winnipeg," Kane told THN.

Despite both Kane and the Jets insisting there had been no trade requests in the off-season, Kane claims he asked for a trade as early as the summer of 2012 when he was coming off a 30-goal season. He asked again in the summer of 2013 and '14, a request that was finally granted when he was dealt to the Sabres last February in a blockbuster trade that saw Zach Bogosian join him in Buffalo in exchange for Tyler Myers, Drew Stafford, two prospects and a first-round draft pick.

After surgery to repair a torn labrum in his shoulder, as well as recovering from a broken ankle and broken hand, Kane missed the rest of last season after the trade, but is now healthy and content playing in Buffalo. The player revolt, which was led by Dustin Byfuglien, which led to his trade to Buffalo was touched off when Kane showed up late for a team meeting and in violation of the team's dress code.

Kane acknowledged it was never a good fit in Winnipeg, saying that rumors there got wildly out of control. He does admit he probably didn't help things with some of his ventures into social media, specifically posing for a picture during the lockout with a wad of bills to his ear, but said there are things players have done a lot worse that have gone without the same sort of scrutiny and criticism.

"There are a lot of guys I could point to that everybody knows publicly who have done a lot worse or been accused of doing a lot worse things than I have," Kane told THN, "but they don't look like me. They don't look like me."

As far as his current injury is concerned, Kane went down in a 4-3 loss to the New Jersey Devils last Saturday after a check along the boards by Devils defenseman David Schlemko. Kane was down on the ice briefly and needed assistance to the locker room.

"I thought I just rubbed him out," Schlemko said after the game. "I talked to the ref after and he said it looked like our legs just kind of locked. Looked like he grabbed his knee. Hopefully he's all right."

Kane had one goal and three points in eight games, much of which was spent playing on the wing with Sabres rookie Jack Eichel.

## **Evander Kane bashes Jets, felt unappreciated**

By Paul Friesen

Winnipeg Sun

October 26, 2015

Evander Kane isn't scheduled to visit Winnipeg until January, but he's already provided some added pop to his first potential game here as a member of the Buffalo Sabres.

In an interview with The Hockey News, which went public Monday, Kane says he didn't get the support he should have from the Jets while playing through injuries last season.

"I'm sacrificing my body playing through pain, doing everything I can to help that team win... knowing guys don't have my back," Kane told THN. "I feel the organization doesn't have my back, and you feel unappreciated."

Kane played with an injured shoulder and with broken bones in his foot and hand last season.

"He played through an awful lot of pain," Jets coach Paul Maurice said in response. "We really appreciated it. I'm sorry he felt that way. I certainly appreciated him playing through those injuries."

Kane also told the publication the team wasn't supportive enough when unsubstantiated rumours about unpaid restaurant bills circulated early in his time in Winnipeg, adding he asked for a trade every summer.

"I just didn't feel as though (the team) had my back at all," Kane said. "It would have been so simple to just squash it and put it to bed."

While acknowledging his actions on social media probably didn't help at times – Kane posed with a wad of cash on a Las Vegas balcony during the 2012-13 lockout -- Kane intimated that his race played a role in the way he was treated as a Jet.

"There are a lot of guys I could point to... who have done a lot worse or been accused of doing a lot worse things than I have. But they don't look like me.

"Jealousy is a disease. It really is."

Kane suffered a knee injury Sunday and is out four to six weeks.

His Sabres visit the Jets, Jan. 10.

## **Former Jet Evander Kane takes aim at team, city in magazine interview**

By Tim Campbell

Winnipeg Free Press

October 26, 2015

Buffalo Sabres left-winger Evander Kane isn't finished with Winnipeg quite yet.

Kane did a recent interview with The Hockey News writer Ken Campbell for the magazine's Nov. 9 issue that was published Monday in which he aired numerous grievances with Winnipeg and its Jets.

The 24-year-old Vancouver native was traded to Buffalo by the Jets in February after playing three-plus seasons in the Manitoba capital. He's now out four to six weeks after injuring his left knee Saturday night against New Jersey.

One of the other key elements to that trade, defenceman Zach Bogosian, is also on the Sabres' injured list and hasn't played this season.

One of Kane's pointed complaints in the interview was the Jets -- both his teammates and the organization -- didn't have his back.

"I was playing with a separated shoulder for a year and a half," Kane told THN. "I had a broken ankle and a broken hand all at the same time. It wasn't me telling myself I had a torn labrum. It was the team doctor on the Winnipeg Jets telling me, 'You need surgery, and that's the only way you're going to get fixed. You have a broken ankle. You have a broken hand.'

"I'm sacrificing my body playing through pain, doing everything I can to help that team win with the feeling knowing guys don't have my back. I feel the organization doesn't have my back, and you feel unappreciated."

The Free Press obtained a copy of the THN story just before Paul Maurice's Monday press conference.

The Jets coach responded to Kane's accusations about "not having his back," and being unappreciated.

"I'm sorry he felt that way," Maurice said. "I certainly appreciated him. He did play with a lot of injuries. But if you can find me a player I've ever coached where I came out and said, 'Boy this guy's playing with a broken ankle and I really appreciate it,' I've never said that. I'd never talk about a guy's injury.

"We've got guys that played with that. Evander played hurt. He had a torn labrum and played a year on it. That was his choice to have surgery or not. But he played on it.

"That's a lot of pain. He played through an awful lot of pain and we really appreciated it. But I'm not coming out here and giving you a list of injuries of guys that are playing with them, because they're playing with them.

"There's no sense drawing targets on backs. I'm sorry he felt that way. I certainly appreciated him playing through those injuries."

If Kane's current injury prognosis is accurate, he'll face his former teammates and Winnipeg fans Jan. 10, when the Sabres are scheduled to visit the MTS Centre.

Kane confirmed in the THN story what eventually came to light, but not before he was traded, that each summer he spent as a member of the Jets, he asked for a trade.

It's worth noting that when asked about it while he was in Winnipeg, he talked around it or implied he was denying it.

"Something I asked for a long time finally came to fruition," Kane said in the THN interview. "Yeah, I asked for a trade every off-season in Winnipeg."

To be fair, the Jets also obfuscated on the trade-request matter back then.

In his story, Campbell also writes: "Truth is, though, Kane was never a good fit in Winnipeg, even in his first season there where he scored 30 goals... Every unpaid traffic ticket, every rumour about him skipping out on restaurant bills and having his girlfriend with him on the road, every time he posed for pictures with a wad of money attached to his ear, every time he shaved YMCMB into his scalp because a major cause célèbre in the league's smallest market."

Why was that?

Kane believes racism is relevant to his story, a charge he first levelled more than two years ago in an interview with THN.

"There are lots of guys I could point to that everybody knows publicly who have done a lot worse or been accused of doing a lot worse things than I have," Kane said in the interview. "But they don't look like me. They don't look like me."

"Jealousy is a disease. It really is."

On the race question, Campbell made a broad, combined reference to both the hockey world and Winnipeg "where guys like Thomas Steen are heroes, and it's a cauldron of narrow attitudes that Kane found a little difficult to handle."

"I just didn't feel as though (the Jets) had my back at all," Kane said. "It would have been so simple to just squash it and put it to bed. It just became kind of a big deal."

"Common sense would dictate that I can afford a bill at a restaurant no matter what it is. There'd be no reason for me to do that. If you just default to your common sense, I think at the end of the day you'll realize how ridiculous, how silly and how moronic it really sounded."

The Jets, through GM Kevin Cheveldayoff, declined to comment on the THN story. Monday, apart from Maurice's comment, the Jets said nobody had anything else to say in response to Kane's complaints.

THN's story also includes much about Kane's new start in Buffalo and how his outgoing personality will fit there.

## **No shortage of emotions for Bylsma as he prepares for return**

By Jason Mackey

Pittsburgh Tribune Review

October 26, 2015

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Dan Bylsma will have plenty to think about this week when he returns to Pittsburgh.

A Stanley Cup, a handful of 100-plus-point seasons or winning the Jack Adams Award?

Well, yeah. Maybe.

But he has other business to tend to.

"I won a lot of games while going to lunch at Qdoba, Pizza Milano or TGI Fridays," Bylsma said. "When I got a winning lunch spot, I'd stay there. All three of those places won a fair amount of games.

"I don't know where to go to lunch. Maybe I'll have to go Wednesday and Thursday and pick a couple spots."

Bylsma's visit to Pittsburgh with his new employer — the Buffalo Sabres — will start early Wednesday morning after a late-night flight from Philadelphia, and it will carry with it plenty of emotion, awkwardness and uncertainty, all of which Bylsma admitted he's been thinking about.

"Of course, I've thought about it," Bylsma said Monday after the Sabres practiced at First Niagara Center. "I haven't been gone from Pittsburgh that long. We just moved a couple months ago, not even two months ago. We were there for six and a half, seven years. Six as a coach, seven living there as a family.

"I know more street names in Pittsburgh than I do in Buffalo right now. I'm going to know my way around when I get there."

Which actually is a lie.

The two things Bylsma thinks will be the toughest to deal with are these: walking down the hallway at Consol Energy Center and continuing past the Penguins dressing room on his left, eventually arriving at the visitors' room on his right. That and stepping out onto the opposing bench.

"Those are emotional things for me and things I've thought about," Bylsma said. "But once the puck drops, it's not going to be a big deal. It's not going to be that much different.

"Walking into the building, I know where everyone's office is. I know where everything is to the left. To the right, I've only been in that dressing room once or twice."

Bylsma started Monday's practice the way he did so many in Pittsburgh: skating laps around the ice while messing with veterans by tapping their sticks or chatting with younger players.

Only this time it was Tim Schaller, recalled earlier in the day. Not any of the young guys that Bylsma was somehow able to coax a 49-25-8 season out of in 2010-11, when the Penguins lost 350 man-games to injury and Bylsma wound up winning the Jack Adams as the NHL's top coach.

Though the Sabres were 2-6-0 entering Tuesday's game at Philadelphia, Bylsma already has begun laying the same foundation, several players insist.

"The fact that he's very much a teacher — he preaches details and discipline and things like that — he's a very good coach for younger players who need to learn those things," defenseman Cody Franson said. "I think our young guys have responded well to him."

"He's got a lot of energy," rookie Jack Eichel added. "I think it's good for us. We have a young team. He knows the game really well. I think it's going to be good for us down the stretch."

Bylsma said he's changed quite a bit since Feb. 15, 2009, when the Penguins fired Michel Therrien and promoted Bylsma from Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, keying a late-season charge that resulted in the franchise's third Stanley Cup.

"I'm a little bit grayer," Bylsma said. "I feel a little less hair."

One way Bylsma has changed is through his experience, more specifically the perspective he gained from being told his services were no longer needed.

"They say when you're a coach, you're hired to be fired," Bylsma said. "I think until that happens to you, you don't really believe that. Obviously you know that to be true; we all know how short tenures are in the National Hockey League.

"But until that happens ... I guess when I look at myself and what's changed is I've been ..."

Bylsma begins to say the "f" in "fired" before cutting himself off.

"I've been let go."

What happened in the summer of 2014, however, won't be on Bylsma's mind at 7 p.m. Thursday. He will have seen "a number of people." There might be cheers. There might be boos. No matter what, Bylsma isn't going to fret over it.

"If I pay attention to social media, I would think one thing," Bylsma said when asked to predict what sort of reception he'll receive. He didn't elaborate on whether that "one thing" was good or bad.

"There's crazy stuff. Crazy stuff. From both spectrums. And I'm sure those sentiments will be expressed."

Bylsma then told what he called his favorite Pittsburgh story, about a fan chiding him after his first NHL win, saying he hasn't done anything until he beats the Flyers. He expects something similar.

"I'm sure someone will say something," Bylsma said. "But I'm not nervous about it."

## **Sabres know Evander Kane's loss will hurt**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
October 26, 2015

BUFFALO – The bad news, in some odd way, was still good for the struggling Sabres. A left MCL injury will only sideline winger Evander Kane four to six weeks, coach Dan Bylsma said.

At least the former 30-goal scorer will play again this season.

After New Jersey's David Schlemko hit Kane hard into the corner boards late Saturday in the Sabres' 4-3 loss, it appeared he might be finished as he writhed in pain on the ice before skating off gingerly.

Kane doesn't need surgery, Bylsma said Monday after the Sabres prepared for tonight's road game against the Philadelphia Flyers. He couldn't offer any other injury specifics.

"It could've been a lot worse," Bylsma said inside the First Niagara Center. "I don't know if I sighed relief when it was four to six. It's not as bad as it could've been."

Still, a 2-6 team that has scored only 15 times could be without Kane for 20 games

Kane, 24, scored his first goal Wednesday and has averaged 20 minutes, 18 seconds of ice time a game, mostly beside rookie center Jack Eichel. Kane's 28 shots rank second behind Tyler Ennis.

His absence will be huge. Remember, the Sabres are also missing top defenseman Zach Bogosian (lower body) and starting goalie Robin Lehner (ankle).

"It's big," Sabres center Ryan O'Reilly said about Kane's injury. "He adds a lot – his speed and the way he shoots the puck, just the way he plays, he's a physical guy. It'll be a loss, but as much as it hurts to see a guy go down, we've got to step up and we all have to help out."

Assuming Kane returns by early December, he will have played only eight games in about a 10-month span. In February, he had season-ending shoulder surgery just days before the Sabres acquired him from Winnipeg.

Instead of promoting a proven scorer like Matt Moulson to fill Kane's role, Bylsma elevated Nick Deslauriers, a regular third- or fourth-liner with seven NHL goals, to the left wing beside O'Reilly and Ennis. The gritty Deslauriers skated with the two briefly Saturday.

"I just need to stick to my game and give them a little bit more space on the ice," Deslauriers said.

Ennis believes Deslauriers is "probably the most liked guy on the team."

"He brings a lot of energy, he's a great kid," he said. "He's going to work and he's got a lot more skill than people give him credit for. He's actually a very, very athletic kid. You think, 'Oh, he's just a tough guy.' But no, he skates fast, he's got really good hands.

"He's just kind of in a situation where he's had to play that fourth-line role. But now he's got a good opportunity to show a lot of people what we see in him, and that's some sneaky skills."

Deslauriers quietly possesses a heavy shot, something he could utilize beside two proven scorers.

"I don't want to say this too loud," Bylsma joked, "(but) he does have a little finish in his game."

The Sabres as a team have showcased little finish this season. Despite pumping 30.4 shots on net a game, 16<sup>th</sup> in the NHL, they rank 27<sup>th</sup> in goals. They've limited opponents to only 25.8 shots a game, third in the league.

Clearly, some things are finally going right for the Sabres. That's why the losses they've experienced this month are far different than the ones they endured the past two seasons, when teams repeatedly annihilated them.

"We're in games," Ennis said. "The last couple years we've been out of games early. We should be at least .500, in my opinion, right now. We've let games slip away. ... Good teams learn and know how to win in situations. ... Right now, we're not confident we're going to win."

O'Reilly said the Sabres need to work on small details.

"I don't think we're looking at our thing going like, 'Gosh, we're nowhere near we want to be,'" he said. "But still, the results we have, we're still not where we want to be."

To fill a forward spot Monday, the Sabres recalled forward Tim Schaller from Rochester, where he has one goal, two points and a minus-7 rating in six games with the Americans. Schaller skated as an extra on the fourth line Monday.

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Sabres winger Marcus Foligno, sidelined by a charley horse Saturday, practiced Monday and could play tonight. Foligno said he had a "dead leg" above the knee after hitting the boards early Friday.

"It was tough to play the rest of the game, but I went through it with the adrenaline," Foligno said.

**Notes:** Bylsma didn't announce his starting goalie for the Flyers. Rookie Linus Ullmark made his NHL debut Saturday. ... Bylsma said Bogosian, out since early in training camp, is getting better and increasing his workloads. Bogosian only practiced with the team once earlier this month. ... The Flyers will honor former Sabres star Daniel Briere, who retired in August, prior to the game.

## **Sabres' Kane is out with a knee injury**

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

October 26, 2015

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- Evander Kane's injury is going to keep him out awhile. Dan Bylsma said "It's a MCL and its four to six weeks."

Bylsma said there are no procedures scheduled for him.

Zach Bogosian is progressing slowly, but still is not back on the ice with the team.

Marcus Foligno said practice went well and he should be able to play Tuesday in Philadelphia. Foligno finished the Montreal game and then missed the New Jersey game with a charlie horse.

For a few shifts on Saturday Bylsma used Nick Deslauriers with Ryan O'Reilly.

Both times they hemmed the Devils into the zone and produced numerous scoring chances. Bylsma said those shifts were by design, "We went into the game with the idea and plan that we'd use him more there."

With Kane out Deslauriers practiced on Monday with O'Reilly and Tyler Ennis.

I know the question you're asking is why? The head coach said, "He skates well, he's big bodied, he's a forechecker, he's a worker and he does have a little finish in his game, so I'm looking at all that and his net presence for those other two guys to feed off of."

Deslauriers always plays on the fourth line so of course he is excited, "Yes definitely, I had a couple of shifts with O'Reilly last game and it went pretty good, so for me I take this as a chance to prove myself a little bit more and I'm pretty happy."

"I think those two players are incredible players, but I just need to stick to my game and give them a little bit more space on the ice."

If you saw my article on Deslauriers last week you know he wants the shoot more. On Saturday he had seven shot attempts and said, "I don't think I had seven shot attempts together in the first five games, so no it felt pretty good and I just wanted to put the pucks on net."

With Kane injured and Foligno iffy Buffalo called up Tim Schaller.

Schaller had some injury problems in training camp which he tried to fight through. Bylsma said he knows Schaller can be better. As for Schaller, he's glad to be healthy so he can show even more, "I am excited, any opportunity I can get to play for the Sabres is a great opportunity so hopefully I can get into games and show what I have and make them not want to send me back home."

"I know that I have more to show. I told Bylsma that before practice and he agrees, so I can score too. I'm good defensively, but with that comes goal scoring. I've got a soft touch around the net and can be pretty gritty around the net too."

## **Percy Harvin, Evander Kane highlight gray areas of ‘character issues’**

By Matthew Coller

WGR 550

October 26, 2015

*Concerns,*  
*high-risk,*  
*troubled,*  
*off-field issues,*  
*headache,*  
*questionable,*  
*locker room,*  
*selfish,*  
*red flag....*

Percy Harvin and Evander Kane aren't related. They may have ever met. They are different ages, from different countries and have very different reasons for the sports world at large to have tagged them as "high risk." Harvin and Kane are only connected by the fact that they are only a part of Buffalo sports teams because of concerns over their character.

A coincidental convergence of events over the past two weeks involving Harvin and Kane last week reveals the potential risks and rewards of acquiring players who have been tagged as troubled. Harvin may be considering walking away from the game, while Kane has shown he's a star centerpiece for the Sabres (though an injury will delay that a four-to-six weeks). It also points to the fact that, in order to compete, the Buffalo Sabres and Buffalo Bills will have to be savvy when picking out which red-flag players they want to tie themselves to.

What were the considerations when signing Harvin and trading for Kane? How can Buffalo help them revamp their images? How can we spot real concerns from bogus ones? And what have we learned from these "risky" moves?

### **Sept. 13, 2015 – Ralph Wilson Stadium**

When the ball went up, nobody in the TV audience could tell where it would come down, but everyone inside the stadium knew it was going to land in the hands of Percy Harvin. The sold-out crowd, drunk on offseason hype and hours of tailgating, rose as soon as it left Tyrod Taylor's hand, the same way they crescendo to ear-bleed levels at the sight of a no-doubter home run.

Harvin won the one-on-one track meet to the endzone against his defender, who was playing at least 15 yards off the line of scrimmage at the snap. The towering spiral required the 27-year-old receiver to locate, adjust speed, form a basket with his arms and make the grab while tumbling to the ground. Popping up, Harvin raised both arms in the air, football in his left hand as to say, "I'm here, Buffalo."

The Colts' cornerback walked away defeated. The guy with the Elvis getup reached over from the stands to pat Harvin on the shoulders as he was mobbed by teammates.

One year and five days before his exciting touchdown catch, Harvin had been at the center of every embrace-debate show on sports TV. The former Florida Gators star receiver was traded by the Seattle Seahawks to the New York Jets just a few months after he had returned a kick for touchdown in the Super Bowl.

Harvin had put together a mile-long timeline of problems in Seattle. He was in a preseason fight with receiver Doug Baldwin, and then had reportedly been angry with his role on the Seahawks and refused to play toward the end of a game against the Dallas Cowboys.

On Oct. 18, 2014, he was traded to the New York Jets after allegedly body-slammng teammate Golden Tate. ProFootball Talk wrote Harvin was in danger of "being on the wrong end of a Code Red from teammates who had

enough of his angry, moody, erratic ways."

### **Oct. 21, 2015 – First Niagara Center**

Evander Kane probably thought he made a bad pass. With 4:34 left in the third period of the Buffalo Sabres' first game of the year against the Toronto Maple Leafs, Kane chipped the puck up ice to teammate Zemgus Girgensons, but over-shot the Latvian forward. Girgensons chased after the puck like a greyhound and tracked it down at the same time as a Leafs defender. The two tangled and went to the ice. Toronto's defenseman waived at the puck as he went down, smacking it right onto Kane's stick blade. Goodnight, goalie. "I'm here, Buffalo."

DJ Kool's "*Let Me Clear My Throat*" serenaded Kane's triple uppercut celebration. Though he had been through this routine 109 other times during his NHL career, this one had a little more *bleep you* to it.

Eight hours before Kane took the ice in downtown Buffalo, Sabres fans were busy contacting the Guinness Book of World Records to nominate Toronto writer Damien Cox for Dumbest Column of All Time. He called the Sabres' trade for Kane a "bust" and compared the trade to acquire Kane to the famed Joe Thornton-to-San Jose deal – widely recognized as one of the worst trades in NHL history. Cox, a slithering 40-something also mocked the young, black, social-media savvy player for traveling to two MLB playoff games last week – one while in New York visiting his model girlfriend and the other in Toronto, which he went via helicopter.

"Glad we could BUST out a win tonight," Kane tweeted after the game.

While this particular tweet went over like a free money giveaway with Sabres fans, Kane's twitter account has gotten him in hot water in the past. During the NHL lockout in 2012, the former fourth overall pick sent out an impressively thoughtless tweet with a photo of him in Las Vegas holding a wad of money up to his ear. In June 2013, he sent out a tweet that could be taken as homophobic regarding Miami Heat star Chris Bosh. Then in 2014, he went back to the well, tweeting a picture of himself doing pushups with money on his back.

Social Media Stupid is pretty prevalent within 20-somethings, but the Winnipeg Jets' problems with Kane went beyond his Twitter account. He had been benched several times, including once after an alleged altercation with teammates over breaking team rules.

You have to wonder what percentage of the outrage over his twitter and leaky reports have to do with race, the same way you might ask why Cowboys receiver Dez Bryant was criticized for yelling at teammates (when he was actually pumping them up) and Tom Brady is praised for his competitiveness. The same way you have to wonder why broadcasters called Ben Roethlisberger a "great story" and "redemption" after being suspended for four games when accused of sexual assault and Cam Newton was often treated as a monster for allegedly taking money in college.

There are nuances to all of those things, but there isn't much question that black athletes are covered differently. Ryan Fitzpatrick is a "surprisingly good athlete" and EJ Manuel is "a serious threat to run" even though everyone knows Fitz can scramble and Manuel isn't a good runner at all.

Kane was asked to play in a city once dubbed the "most racist in Canada" in a sport with only a dozen black players.

"There are a lot of guys I could point to that everybody knows publicly who have done a lot worse or who have been accused of a lot worse things than I have," Kane told The Hockey News. "But they don't look like me."

### **Oct. 15, 2015 – Buffalo Bills Practice Facility**

Sanjay Lal could easily pretend to a doctor or history teacher or carpenter or lots of regular things that aren't a football coach. The former Washington Huskies receiver is smart enough to be something else. He's in shape, but not beefy. About 6-foot-1 and stands with hands in pockets rather puffing his out his chest. Lal is old enough to have gray in his five o'clock shadow but young enough to talk about Facebook without it sounding weird. He's the right age to act like a sage yet keep younger players tuned in.

You could tell he had been thinking about his answer all day. The Bills' wide receivers' coach had been told someone wanted to find out more about his first encounter with Percy Harvin and how he'd built up trust with the volatile receiver. Lal was hired by Rex Ryan with the New York Jets in 2012 and was tasked with working with Harvin after the Jets dealt a conditional draft pick for the former Viking and Seahawk.

"As soon as (Harvin's trade to New York) happened, I put myself in his shoes," Lal said. "Here you are, on a Super Bowl-type team and basically your whole life turns upside down and you're sent to the Jets. No offense, but we weren't Super Bowl caliber. I thought, 'if that was me, what would it be like to be pulled out of everything you know and sent to another team that you know nothing about, plus, the reason you're being sent there is that they are saying you are a bad guy or bad teammate. What would that feel like?'"

Lal sat down with Harvin one-on-one. The 5-foot-11 enigma was prepared to pour his guts out to his new position coach. Harvin was ready to explain his past and declare his commitment to the Jets. But Lal wasn't interested in explanations and revisionist history.

"The first thing I said to him was: I don't want to talk about any of that and I don't care," Lal said. "I said: I wasn't there, I don't know the dynamics of where you came from. From there, I felt him relax. We got into (a discussion) of, hey, what do you want out of your eight weeks here?"

"I told him: My job as a coach is to make you as good as you can be."

The Bills' 46-year-old coach said his receiver was willing to listen and eager to get better – which doesn't exactly sound like the Percy Harvin you find via Google search. It doesn't sound like the Percy Harvin who battled Vikings coaches so much so that he allegedly threw a weight at former Minnesota head coach Brad Childress. It doesn't sound like the same player who was suspended twice in high school for unsportsmanlike conduct and eventually banished by the high school sports association for getting into a fight at a basketball game.

Talking with Lal, you can't help but wonder if the very thing that makes Harvin untenable is what makes Harvin great. Consider that he isn't big and isn't any faster than any other speedster out there, yet has become a superstar-caliber NFL player.

"With Percy, what sets him apart from another guy with equal skill set is his competitive fire," he said. "He gets angry when he doesn't do something right – angry at himself, angry that it didn't happen right – in a good way. He plays angry, he plays with something to prove. There aren't a lot of guys that have made money and have a Super Bowl right that still play like that."

Maybe Harvin, who grew up in a single-parent household in Virginia, will always have his anger destroy him. Maybe he needed someone like Lal to understand it.

### **Oct. 20, 2015 – First Niagara Center**

Buffalo Sabres coach Dan Bylsma snapped back, "What reports? I didn't read them?" His large hands gripped the podium. His poker face is about as good as Jim Carey's in *Liar, Liar*. Coaches know what percentage of the time the third-pair defenseman for Calgary dumps the puck.

The question wasn't actually about Evander Kane's "character issues." The question was about Bylsma's first impression of Kane, but he focused on the part about past reports that Kane had battled with front office, coaches and teammates with the Winnipeg Jets' organization for years.

"The coaches that have coached him say it's totally the opposite (of what has been reported)," Bylsma said. "He's coachable, he works at a high level, he's a battler, he's fit in with his teammates here and he's desperately trying to find ways to win hockey games. That's what I see out of him."

Bylsma's comments scratch the surface of the fundamental problem with tagging athletes with "character issues." You can search the internet all day long and won't find a single report that Evander Kane was lazy on the ice. You

will find that he was playing through ankle and shoulder injuries before undergoing surgery that ended his 2014-15 season.

Kane had a big grin as he was approached by several reporters at his locker. He stood up, skates still on, towering over the throng. He knew he would be asked about traveling to the Blue Jays game in a helicopter along with two teammates. At first, he pretended not to know what the reporters were talking about, and then jovially chatted about the game and what it sounded like to hear a Josh Donaldson home run from behind home plate.

If he didn't want to answer a question about "character issues" then it wasn't overly obvious. He didn't fully lose the grin while answering politely.

"I think it's gone really well so far," he said. "I think we have a pretty close group in here. With all the new faces, I think guys have gotten to know each other pretty well in a short amount of time. For us, our focus is getting better on the ice.

"Like I've said all along, it's the fresh start that I've been looking for a number of years now. Fortunately, it's something I was excited about and am enjoying right now. "

Everyone nodded and Kane sat back down untied his skates.

Team captain Brian Gionta, a Stanley Cup winner and player widely regarded as one of the best leaders in the NHL, was sitting close by. He said the Sabres took a similar approach to that of Sanjay Lal with the Jets and Harvin.

"There's no pre-conceived notions," the former Devils and Canadiens forward said. "You gotta find out for yourself what a guy's all about. You don't know what's happened in the past. You give him the benefit of the doubt, he comes in with a clean slate and you go from there."

Gionta didn't have much more to say about the subject. It was noticeable that Sanjay Lal's interview about Harvin lasted 12 minutes and could have gone longer and Bylsma and Gionta's answers combined didn't eclipse three minutes. It seems NFL teams are much more comfortable acknowledging when a player has had past problems. The Bills and Rex Ryan seem to pride themselves on redemption stories - probably to their detriment at times.

Hockey teams aren't tasked with talking about off-ice issues as often. Maybe it was evidenced at how inexperienced they are when the Blackhawks held a press conference to, more or less, announce that Patrick Kane was being falsely accused of rape. It came off cold and tone-deaf. Not that the NFL hasn't botched "character issue" pressers (see: Rice, Ray), but most football clubs have become masters of damage control. But there was no damage control with Evander Kane. Sabres went with a "Huh? What problems?" strategy from the moment they acquired him.

After selecting two players with red flags in the 2015 draft, Buffalo Bills' general manager Doug Whaley was hush-hush his philosophy in an interview with WGR.

"(We go to) extensive lengths," Whaley said. "I don't want to give a competitive advantage away to our opponents because I know people listen, but we go into detail."

### **Oct. 22, 2015 – Somewhere**

You can imagine Percy Harvin deleting his Twitter app for the week. As the Bills' social media team and every Bills beat reporter alive tweeting out photos of London, England, en masse, Harvin was somewhere back in the States, thinking about where his career would go next. While Marcell Dareus was shooting a video reading Shakespeare on a bridge, Harvin couldn't have been in a good place mentally.

Harvin had missed the previous week's game with hip problems and elected not to travel with the team to England, where they were preparing to play the Jacksonville Jaguars. Reports, which were quickly challenged, surfaced that he was considering retirement due to mounting injuries. Coach Rex Ryan, who speaks in

paragraphs not sentences, had nothing to say about Harvin's absence.

Through five games, he'd been a success story. No blips on the radar. No spats with coaches or teammates and quick chemistry with fellow Virginian Tyrod Taylor. Harvin had 19 catches for 218 yards and one damn spectacular 51-yard touchdown. But after missing the Bills' matchup against the Tennessee Titans with the nagging hip, he informed the team he would need some time to decide on his future.

We love to grade GMs on whether these things work out. Some are obvious wins, like guard Richie Incognito, who went unsigned for a year after a bullying incident and has turned out to be the team's best lineman. Whaley hasn't had big misses, but there are consequences to be paid publicly after a miss like the Chicago Bears signing DT Ray McDonald, who had been accused of domestic violence in the past, then was again after signing.

If Harvin never plays again, there might be some gray area as to whether it was a loss. His injuries will have caused him to call it quits, but many will ask if a different type of player would have battled through the pain. Of course, it's an insensitive and callous question, but it will be asked. What that should tell you is: Character concerns are always viewed through the lens of on-field production.

### **Oct. 23, 2015 – The corner, First Niagara Center**

Evander Kane's face was hard to look at in slow motion. He went down in the corner after being checked hard up against the boards at an awkward angle. Kane left the ice, didn't return and only provided the Twitter update that he would be back "ASAP."

His start to the year with the Sabres has been excellent no matter what a silly Toronto writer says. His on-ice work ethic has been impressive and if ice time is a reward, he is being given the highest accolade by his coach seeing as he's leading the team in that category.

Unlike Harvin's deal, Kane's will keep him in Buffalo long past a "lower body" injury. He's under contract until 2018, whereas Harvin's contract can be voided after this year.

While it may look like the risky receiver isn't going to end up being a boom, it will be much longer before we know if Murray's decision to deal for a "red flag" player was the right one. It's one of the nice things about being an NHL GM: People are forced to be more patient when they play 82 games.

These things can also change quickly. What looks like a masterful decision, can quickly turn into an ugly one. Former Sabre Rob Ray made that point when asked about Kane's transition to Buffalo.

"I think everybody has handled it really well," Ray said on Hockey Hotline on WGR. "I think they were really overwhelmed when Evander came in with all the media across Canada was saying he was going to be this devil child and he was going to be hard to control and he was going to do all this crazy stuff. He's not. He's himself. He's got a personality that's kind of out there a little bit sometimes but so be it. I played with many of those guys. You didn't really care what they did away from the game as long as they came to play and worked hard when they were here.

"As far as in the room, I think it's really important that, as quick as you possibly can, those guys feel like they are a part of things, they are important and that guys enjoy being around them. I think the longer you let them go do their own thing, if it does turn bad, then it's a lot harder to control."

### **The Future – Downtown Buffalo**

While the HarborCenter and its affixed hotels stare down at a budding downtown area, the honest-to-goodness truth is that Buffalo will never draw athletes here. The star power of New York and L.A. bring them like flies to florescent lights, even if everything's more expensive and traffic is brutal. For as long as Whaley and Murray are in Buffalo, they will have to deal with the reality that player decisions will have gray areas – ones that could put their jobs at risk if they go wrong.

Fans will have to battle with this reality, too. Second chances aren't shots at redemption, they're just second chances. Atoning for sins through sports achievement is a superficial thing you hear Chris Berman say because Chris Berman is superficial. Success is usually only proof that the only thing that matters in sports is how good you are, now whether you are good in a locker room or for your community. That's not something we're often willing to admit.

There's a line each GM and fan has for players with character concerns, but if you ask 999 people you'll get 999 different answers. In the end, the same might be true about whether taking a chance on Harvin and Kane were worth it.

## **Evander Kane to miss 4-6 weeks with MCL injury**

By Nick Filipowski

WKBW

October 26, 2015

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) - For the next 4 to 6 weeks the Sabres will be without Evander Kane who suffered an MCL injury after being check hard into the boards in the third period of Saturday night's 4-3 loss to New Jersey.

The good news is the injury will not require surgery, but the bad news is an offense creating plenty of chances but struggling to find the back of the net is now without one of its prolific playmakers.

"A lot of the speed and a lot of the tenacity and a lot of our drive, he's been that for our offense," Bylsma said.

The injury to the winger is an added blow to the Sabres. They're also without top goaltender Robin Lehner who suffered a high ankle sprain in the team's first game.

The two suffered injuries in February that sidelined them the remainder of last season.

Kane, then with Winnipeg, needed shoulder surgery and did not play for Buffalo after being traded. Lehner, who was acquired in a trade from Ottawa, worked back from a concussion.

"Unfortunately, you anticipate injuries. You know you're going to have injuries to players," Bylsma added.

"Unfortunately in the beginning of our process and with this team, you're talking about two guys who are starting fresh and starting part of the process from new and it's disappointing to see them get injured."

An injury update for defenseman Zach Bogosian who has not played in a game this season after suffering a lower body injury during training camp. He skated with the team about 10 days ago, but wore a red non-contact jersey.

Bylsma added on Monday the defenseman has not been on the ice since.

## **Kane out 4-6 weeks with knee injury**

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

October 26, 2015

The apparent leg injury that sidelined Evander Kane in the third period of Saturday's game against New Jersey will force the Buffalo Sabres to be without their star forward for an extended period of time.

Sabres coach Dan Bylsma announced that Kane will miss the next 4-6 weeks with an injured MCL. Kane was injured when a check by Devils defenseman David Schlemko caused his knee to bend awkwardly as it hit the boards.

While he's only managed to score one goal in eight games this season, there's no denying the many qualities that Kane has brought to the ice in his first season with the Sabres. They'll now unfortunately be without those attributes for about a month.

"A lot of the speed and a lot of the tenacity and a lot of our drive, he's been that for our offense," Bylsma said. "He doesn't quite have the numbers, but yes he's been that for our team. Someone else gets the chance to do that now."

Kane only played in 37 games last year before undergoing an operation on his shoulder that forced him to shut down his season in February.

Through the first month of the season, he'd been a driving force on Buffalo's top two lines.

"It's big," forward Ryan O'Reilly said. "He adds a lot of speed and the way he shoots the puck and just the way he plays, he's a physical guy and tough to play against. It'll be a loss but as much as it hurts to see a guy go down we've got to step up and we all have to help out."

The Sabres did receive some good news on Monday as forward Marcus Foligno returned to practice after missing Saturday's game with a lower-body injury. Foligno said that he expects to be ready to play against the Flyers in Philadelphia on Tuesday.

In other injury news, Bylsma said that defenseman Zach Bogosian is continuing to rehab his lower-body injury, but has not yet returned to the ice. Bogosian has not played in either the preseason or regular season after sustaining his injury early in Training Camp, but did practice wearing a red non-contact jersey on Oct. 14.

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### **SCHALLER RECALLED**

Buffalo needed to recall a forward from Rochester in Kane's absence, and Tim Schaller was the one to receive the opportunity. Schaller has two points (1G + 2A) in six games for the Amerks of the American Hockey League this season.

Schaller scored one goal for Buffalo in the preseason, but on Monday he wanted to make it clear to Bylsma that there was more to come once the opportunity arises.

"Before practice, I told him I have more to show and he agrees with that," Schaller said. "I can score, too. I'm good defensively, but with that comes goal scoring. I've got to stop pucks around the net and also be gritty around the net too."

Bylsma seemed to have an idea as to why Schaller wasn't able to bring his best in camp.

"He was working through injury – a lower-body injury – and probably swallowed it a little more than he let on and so I was feigning getting upset at him for that for the first couple weeks," Bylsma said. "He plays better than he was able to in Training Camp and frankly once he's gotten down to Rochester and gotten to full health he has been the type of player he can be."

With three games in four days this week, beginning in Philadelphia on Tuesday and ending with a home game against the Flyers on Friday, Bylsma said that we can expect to see Schaller in the lineup sooner rather than later.

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### **DESLAURIERS JOINS THE TOP SIX**

Kane's injury caused a bit of line shuffling at Monday's practice too, with no change more noticeable than the addition of Nicolas Deslauriers on the Sabres' top line with O'Reilly and Tyler Ennis.

With that being said, the plan isn't exactly new. While he's spent most of the season on the team's fourth line, Deslauriers played on some shifts with O'Reilly and Ennis on Saturday and together they were able to generate multiple scoring chances.

Bylsma said that he hopes for O'Reilly and Ennis to feed off of Deslauriers' tenacity and net presence.

"Going into the last game actually, we went in with the plan that we'd use him more there at bits and pieces of the game," Bylsma said. "He skates well, he's a big body, he's a forechecker, he's a worker and I don't want to say this too loud but he does have a little finish in his game and has so far this year."

For Deslauriers, who has scored one goal this season, the line promotion is simply another chance for him to continue showing the multitude of ways that he can contribute.

"I had a couple shifts with O'Reilly last game and it went pretty good," he said. "I think for me it's just to take this as an opportunity to prove myself a little bit more and I'm pretty happy, I think those two players are incredible players and I just need to stick to my game and give them a little more space on the ice."

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### **UP NEXT**

Coverage of Tuesday's game begins at 6:30 p.m. with Tops Sabres Gamenight on MSG-B and Bell TV. The game can also be heard on WGR 550. Puck drop is scheduled for 7 p.m.

The team will wrap up their two-game road trip on Thursday in Pittsburgh.

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### **MONDAY'S PRACTICE**

44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 90 Ryan O'Reilly – 63 Tyler Ennis  
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## Fasching picks up 4 points in sweep of Northeastern

By Kris Baker

Sabres.com

October 26, 2015

**Hudson Fasching** kicked his season into gear over the weekend, notching his first four points of the year to help No. 19 Minnesota to a home-ice sweep of Northeastern.

Fasching captured his first goal of the season Friday and added an assist as the Gophers blanked the Huskies 4-0. Fasching was a difference maker all game long. He set a power-play screen on the Gophers' first tally of the game at 6:48.

Two minutes later, he applied deep pressure and forced a turnover on the second. Fasching was finally rewarded with one of his own in the 58th minute when he drifted low with his stick on the ice and swatted home a one-timer to close out the scoring.

Fasching stepped up again on Saturday, producing his third career two-goal game as Minnesota held on for a 4-3 victory. The junior power forward got his first of the night in the opening minute of play with a powerful forehand drive from his off-wing. He'd get his second of the game – the eventual game winner – late in the opening frame when he took a pass at the side of the net while on the power play and finished with a forehand.

Fasching has captured four points (3+1) through five games for the Gophers, who get a week off ahead of a non-conference set with Notre Dame.

### **NCAA**

**Anthony Florentino** (2013, fifth round) snagged the game-winning goal Friday and added an assist as No. 3 Providence earned a 2-1 victory over Ohio State. Early in the middle period, Florentino stepped into a slap shot that went high blocker side to give the Friars the edge. On Saturday, Florentino recorded one shot and a pair of minor penalties as Providence completed the sweep with a 6-4 win over the Buckeyes.

The junior rearguard has four points (2+2) through five contests. Next up for the defending national champion Friars is a trip to Hamilton, N.Y. for a pair of games against Colgate.

**Cal Petersen** (2013, fifth round) posted back-to-back 39-save efforts over the weekend as Notre Dame played to consecutive 3-3 ties with No. 5 Minnesota-Duluth. Petersen is now 1-1-2 on the year with a 3.37 goals-against average and a .911 save percentage.

Notre Dame forward **Connor Hurley** (2013, second round) contributed one shot goal and a minus-2 rating through the pair of ties with Minnesota-Duluth. The sophomore has one assist in four appearances this season. The Fighting Irish move on to face Connecticut for a pair of games this weekend.

RPI goaltender **Jason Kasdorf** allowed four goals on 27 shots Saturday in a 5-2 loss to No. 11 Michigan. The 23-year-old backstop falls to 1-4 with a 3.05 GAA and a .916 save percentage. The Engineers get back to work Friday when they begin a home-and-home set at No. 18 Union.

**Judd Peterson** (2012, seventh round) scored a pair of goals Friday including his second shorthanded tally of the year as No. 9 St. Cloud State lost 5-2 at Quinnipiac. The sophomore forward came down the right side and fit a shot in the far side of the net while on the penalty kill to make it a 1-0 game at 13:28 of the opening period.

Early in the second period, Peterson deflected a shot at the edge of the crease to make it 2-0 Huskies before Quinnipiac closed it out with five unanswered goals. Peterson, who also posted a game-high eight shots on goal in the loss, was unable to keep his hot streak going on Saturday as the Huskies were swept by the Bobcats 4-1. Peterson is tied for fifth in the nation with five goals in his first six games.

St. Cloud State defender **William Borgen** (2015, fourth round) produced four shots on goal in the weekend losses to Quinnipiac. The Huskies will look to recover from the disappointment when they kick off the NCHC schedule next weekend on home ice against No. 15 Miami.

In Saturday action, **Christopher Brown** (2014, sixth round) picked up one assist as No. 4 Boston College earned the road sweep with a 4-0 win at Colorado College. The freshman centerman was held off the score sheet the night before in a 3-0 blanking of the Tigers. Boston College goes for four-straight shutout victories when they return home to face Denver on Friday.

Freshman defenseman **Ivan Chukarov** (2015, seventh round) notched one assist Friday for his first collegiate point as Massachusetts stormed back with four third-period goals to force a 6-6 tie with New Hampshire. The helper, Chukarov's first collegiate point, came as the Minutemen finally caught the Wildcats with 2:40 remaining in regulation. UMass is back at it Friday at Maine.

In Saturday exhibition action, **Sean Malone** (2013, sixth round) was credited with one shot on goal as Harvard skated to a 3-3 tie with CIS powerhouse New Brunswick. The Crimson kick off regular-season play next weekend versus Dartmouth.

### **WHL**

**Brendan Guhle** (2015, second round) scored his first goal of the year Friday as Prince Albert extended their winning streak to five games with a 7-2 hammering of Moose Jaw. Guhle used his stick to break up a play in front of his goal and immediately jumped into the left lane, sped into the Warrior zone and finished off a rebound to give the Raiders a 4-1 lead in the middle frame.

Guhle was unable to connect on Sunday as the Raiders won again 2-1 in overtime at Regina, leaving him with five points (1+4) through six outings heading into Wednesday's tilt with Edmonton.

**Brycen Martin** (2014, third round) picked a corner on the power play for his second goal of the season Friday as Saskatoon came back to earn a 4-3 overtime victory at Kootenay. The left-shot defender logged a plus-2 rating on Saturday as the Blades came from behind for the second consecutive night to defeat Medicine Hat 5-4. Martin has collected 10 points (2+8) in 12 games. Next up for the Blades is a Thursday showdown with Edmonton.

**Giorgio Estephan** (2015, sixth round) scored his third goal of the year Friday as Lethbridge extended their winning streak to five games with a 3-2 overtime victory over Swift Current. Estephan looked to keep the production going on Saturday, but instead saw his five-game point streak snapped in a 4-3 win at Edmonton.

Estephan, who has three goals and 14 points this season, will look to begin another streak when the Hurricanes begin their run through the province of British Columbia Tuesday in Victoria.

**Devante Stephens** (2015, fifth round) earned one assist Friday to halt his 10-game point drought as Kelowna toppled Prince George 5-2. The second-year rearguard finished with a plus-2 rating on Saturday as the Rockets pitched a 3-0 shutout of Calgary. The Rockets are off until Friday when they host Prince George.

### **OHL**

On Friday, **Eric Cornel** (2014, second round) connected for one assist as Peterborough was defeated by Kitchener 4-1. Cornel returned to action Sunday, supplying one shot on goal in the Petes' 4-1 loss to Ottawa. Cornel, who earlier in the week was named to Team OHL for the Canada Russia Series contest November 16 in Windsor, ranks third on the team with 11 points (3+8) through 13 games.

### **QMJHL**

**Vaclav Karabacek** (2014, second round) gathered six shots on goal Friday as Baie-Comeau was hammered by Chicoutimi 12-1. Karabacek registered five shots on goal and a minus-6 rating on Sunday as the Drakkar endured another drubbing at the hands of the Saguenens, 6-0. The crafty Czech has amassed five points (4+1) for a struggling Baie-Comeau squad that has won just three of its 14 games.

## **Sweden**

**Jonas Johansson** (2014, third round) earned his second shutout of the year Tuesday, stopping all 32 shots sent his way as Almtuna IS cruised past Leksands IF 5-0. Johansson maintained the hot hand on Thursday with a 40-save performance in a 7-4 triumph over IF Bjorkloven, but the magic ran out on Saturday when he allowed six goals on 37 shots in Almtuna's 6-2 loss to VIK Vasteras HK.

Johansson enters the final week of October with a 7-7 record, a 2.61 GAA and a .904 save percentage. Almtuna hits the road for a Tuesday tilt with Timra.

**Gustav Possler** (2013, fifth round) popped off for two goals and an assist Saturday for his first multiple-point game of the year as MODO was defeated by Skelleftea AIK 5-3. Possler began the week with an assist in MODO's 4-3 loss to Djurgardens IF on Tuesday. He was unable to get on the board in Thursday's 5-2 defeat at the hands of Vaxjo Lakers HC.

**Victor Olofsson** (2014, seventh round) produced two assists in the week's three outings as MODO's losing skid hit five games. The speedy winger continues to lead the club in scoring with 10 points (3+7) through 13 games. MODO is back in action Tuesday when they host first-place Frolunda HC.