



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

December 14, 2015

Sabres-Red Wings Preview

By Alan Ferguson

AP

December 14, 2015

The Detroit Red Wings have earned at least one point in 13 straight games. More than six years have passed since they failed to pick one up against their next opponent.

The Red Wings won in a shootout over Buffalo two weeks ago as part of their streak, and they'll once again host a Sabres team that's struggled on the road of late Monday night.

Detroit (16-8-6) is 8-0-5 in its last 13 after a 3-2 overtime loss at New Jersey on Friday. The Red Wings led 2-0 after two periods.

"Even though we still got the point, it's tough, being on the road and having a two-goal lead and not coming out on top," goaltender Jimmy Howard told the league's official website. "It's tough to swallow, but on the bright side we did get a point. When we continue to keep getting points, it's a good thing."

The Red Wings haven't earned a point in 14 consecutive games since doing so in 20 in a row March 9-April 17, 2006.

They appear to have an encouraging chance to extend their run against Buffalo (12-15-3). Detroit is 12-0-1 in the last 13 meetings after earning a 5-4 shootout win Dec. 1.

The Red Wings, though, also blew a two-goal lead in that game and let the Sabres take command in the third period. Justin Abdelkader got Detroit to overtime with a power-play goal with 6:29 remaining, and Brad Richards had the lone goal in the tiebreaker.

That defeat was the first of four straight on the road for Buffalo, and it suffered three consecutive regulation losses during the trip that ended Thursday with a 4-3 loss to Calgary.

The Sabres stopped that skid with a 2-1 overtime win over Los Angeles on Saturday, and the return to Detroit marks their only road contest in a five-game stretch.

Ryan O'Reilly scored the winner against the Kings and has three goals and seven assists in a seven-game point streak.

"It's being put on his shoulders right now and he's doing the job," forward Jamie McGinn told the team's official website. "I've been watching him for four or five years now and I've seen it every day now."

O'Reilly has just three assists in his last eight games against Detroit with one in the shootout loss. Evander Kane scored two goals in that contest to give him a five-game point streak versus the Red Wings, but he doesn't have a point in his last four games.

Abdelkader recorded two goals and an assist Dec. 1 and has five and one in six contests this month. He has two goals and five assists in a five-game point streak against Buffalo.

Tomas Tatar has six goals and one assist in his last five matchups with Detroit, while Gustav Nyquist has recorded two goals and six assists in his past four.

The Red Wings are 16-0-1 in their last 17 at home in this series, winning eight in a row.

The Sabres have converted at a 34.8-percent clip on the power play in their last seven games and went 2 for 5 against the Wings. Detroit has given up seven goals in its last 21 short-handed situations, but it's also 6 for 21 with the man advantage in the past six.

Sabres' Moulson looking to escape dark side and emerge from slump

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

December 14, 2015

Matt Moulson, trudging through the worst slump of his career, isn't looking for a hat trick. He's not looking for a pretty goal. Heck, he's not even looking for a goal.

Moulson is just looking for ... something.

"For me it's just trying to find some confidence whether it's making a play or getting a chance and trying to feed off that," the Sabres forward said Sunday. "It's not a light switch thing where it just turns on."

Moulson has been playing in the dark for a long time. The winger heads into Monday's game in Detroit without a goal since Nov. 1. The 18-game slump is the longest of his career. With four goals in 30 games, Moulson is on pace for a career-low 10.

"Obviously, I want to try and get some goals here and help this team out," he said.

Moulson was at least visible Saturday night during a 2-1 overtime victory against Los Angeles. Playing alongside left wing Evander Kane and center Jack Eichel for the first time, Moulson had three shots within 15 feet during the first period.

However, those were his only chances in 16:10 of ice time, the most he's received in 10 games.

"With the speed of Evander and Jack – and I thought Jack was skating well again – I thought Matt was really able to get to the offensive zone and get to the house area where he can be good," coach Dan Bylsma said. "It didn't translate to goals for the line, but I thought it meshed pretty well together, and we're going to see it again in Detroit."

Bylsma has directed Moulson to get near the net for rebounds and deflections. The winger doesn't have the speed to join rushes with Eichel and Kane, so he needs to score the crease-front goals.

"I think I can do a better job of getting to the net," Moulson said after practice in HarborCenter. "Yesterday was personally one of my better ones of getting to the net. Those two guys are great at getting pucks to the net, so I've just got to get there for them."

Two things make Moulson's slump particularly troubling for the Sabres:

1. He's shown few signs of getting out of it.

Moulson has just 26 shots during the 18 games. He's taken 51 shots so far, putting him on pace for a career-low 139. The 32-year-old used to hit that number in a little more than half a season.

From 2009 to 2012, when he was averaging 32 goals a year for the New York Islanders, Moulson took between 208 and 237 shots per season. During the lockout-shortened season of 2013, the winger had 154 shots in 47 games.

2. The crashes are becoming increasingly common.

The three worst slumps of Moulson's career have come since he signed a five-year, \$25 million deal with Buffalo before last season. He had droughts of 16 and 14 games last year, and he's blown past those with this skid.

If the slide is weighing on Moulson, his housemate doesn't see it.

"I think he's all right," Eichel said. "He's played in the league awhile. He knows how to be patient. He knows it'll come. We've just got to keep doing the right things and sooner or later we're going to catch some breaks.

"He wants to get around the net. Obviously, Kaner likes to shoot it. I like to move it and shoot it as well. I think it's going to be important for us to contribute against Detroit."

During the Sabres' last trip to Detroit, Moulson sat on the bench for most of the second half. Kane and Eichel, meanwhile, combined for 14 shot attempts (12 by Kane). If the duo repeats its showing, Moulson just might find ... something.

"They're obviously two players that can create a lot out of nothing," Moulson said. "They both get the puck to the net and are great skaters. It makes my job easy. Just get to the net and try to get dirty ones.

"You have to keep working. It's amazing what one off of your rear end or foot will do for your confidence. It's just getting to the net, making sure I'm there and feeding off those two guys."

Sabres notebook: Defense hopes to stay stingy in Detroit

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

December 14, 2015

The Sabres' last game in Detroit was a blast to watch live. There were gorgeous goals and end-to-end rushes from the drop of the puck to the final shootout attempt.

It was not fun for the Sabres to watch on tape. Buffalo's players saw numerous breakdowns and dismal defensive coverage. They gave up a season-worst 46 shots in the 5-4 shootout loss two weeks ago.

The Sabres hope their second visit to Joe Louis Arena on Monday looks nothing like the first. They have good reason to believe it won't.

Buffalo put forth one of its stingiest defensive efforts of the season Saturday during a 2-1 overtime victory against Los Angeles. The Kings entered the game averaging 33 shots per game, but the Sabres held them to three in the first period and 18 during regulation. Los Angeles' top line had a couple of odd-man rushes, but it was nothing overly concerning.

"The game against L.A. was our best in the last little while, maybe six or seven games," Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said Sunday. "One of the things we did, we managed the puck much better, got to the offensive zone and played there."

"It was the best game in a long time containing and nullifying the rush from the opposition. That's going to be key. In Detroit, we didn't have that. We got stretched out quite a bit and dealt with four and five guys on the rush. They were pretty effective, and the game opened up. That's something we have to do a much better job of going into Detroit."

The Red Wings have gotten at least one point in their last 13 games. Their 8-0-5 run has put them in second place in the Atlantic Division.

The Sabres ended a three-game losing streak by ending the Kings' 7-0-1 run.

"We tracked well," center Ryan O'Reilly said. "We clogged up the middle. We kept them to the outside. When we're all committed to doing that, it's tough for any team to get the shots."

"Overall we worked for each other and we had fun. We just kind of played hockey and weren't overthinking things."

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The most interesting part of the Sabres' workout in HarborCenter was the end. As the healthy players began leaving the ice, a few injured ones arrived. Goaltender Robin Lehner (ankle) and forwards Tyler Ennis (upper body) and Cody McCormick (blood clots) stretched, skated and shot pucks for about an hour.

Lehner, who worked with goaltending coach Andrew Allen, skated the most laps as he attempts to return from a high ankle sprain suffered in the season opener. Ennis, who has missed nine games, took light skates while shooting and tipping shots from McCormick and development coach Dennis Miller.

Ennis was unavailable for a formal interview but said during a casual chat that he feels good. Bylsma said Ennis remains in the week-to-week category.

Defenseman Jake McCabe, who had an assist and a disallowed goal Saturday while skating 20:13, was the only player absent from the workout.

"Maintenance day for Jake," Bylsma said. "I think he'll be fine."

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Erstwhile center Zemgus Girgensons is expected to remain on the left wing against Detroit. Johan Larsson moved to the middle of the third line, with captain Brian Gionta on the right wing. Gionta attempted eight shots against the Kings, while Girgensons attempted five.

"In this case, putting Girgensons on the wing gives us a little more flexibility with the lineup, being able to move him up and down the lineup," Bylsma said. "On shifts where Zemgus is killing penalties or on the power play, the third-line center's intact with Lars."

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The Sabres' hot power play will meet a slumping Detroit penalty kill. Buffalo has eight goals with the man advantage in the last seven games. The Red Wings' penalty killers are 10 for 15 in the four games since Drew Miller suffered a broken jaw.

"Obviously, Drew Miller is an elite penalty killer," coach Jeff Blashill told reporters in Detroit on Sunday. "That's why he's such an important piece of our team. With that said, we've got other guys that we think can really do the job, but we've got to execute at a higher rate."

O'Reilly, Sabres end Kings' six-game winning streak

By Joe Yerdon

NHL.com

December 14, 2015

BUFFALO -- Ryan O'Reilly helped the Buffalo Sabres end a three-game losing streak with an acrobatic milestone goal.

O'Reilly scored his 100th NHL goal with 1:41 left in overtime to give the Sabres a 2-1 win against the Los Angeles Kings at First Niagara Center on Saturday. It ended the Kings' six-game winning streak.

O'Reilly received a pass from Jake McCabe and went in on a 2-on-1 with Evander Kane against Kings defenseman Alec Martinez. O'Reilly settled the puck and skated around Martinez, who went down to block a shot. O'Reilly tripped on Martinez's stick and took a wrist shot as he fell that went high over the shoulder of Kings goalie Jhonas Enroth for his 10th goal of the season.

"I was waiting to get around and then see what was open," O'Reilly said. "I usually like low-blocker, but as I was falling I just tried to get it off in that area.

"Anytime you get a game-winner you feel good, especially in OT when we haven't had much success this year. Obviously for myself, you feel great, but at the same time we have to start preparing for Detroit (on Monday)."

O'Reilly had two points against the Kings; he has 10 points in a seven-game streak. He leads the Sabres with 10 goals and 27 points.

"He's pretty much been there in every situation and every opportunity for our team and he's come up big again for us tonight," Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said. "He obviously scores a fantastic goal for us in the overtime, but all game long I think he's out there against the top line against the opposition. He's been nothing short of magnificent for us."

O'Reilly, 24, scored his first 90 NHL goals in 427 games with the Colorado Avalanche.

"Hopefully I got a lot more coming, but obviously it's great to get that and hopefully there are more milestones to come," he said.

The Sabres (12-15-3) came off a three-game road trip when they were swept, but have four wins in their past eight games. The Kings (19-8-2) are 1-11-2 in Buffalo since 1993-94.

McCabe nearly gave the Sabres a 2-1 lead with 11.8 seconds left in the second period, but Kings coach Darryl Sutter challenged the play. After review, it was determined Sabres captain Brian Gionta entered the zone ahead of the puck and was offside.

"Our video guys watch all those plays," Sutter said. "They made the right call, and it was that close, low-scoring game you're going to call it anyway. And it was the right call. Once you look at it from another angle, it's not even close. That's the rule. That's what video's for."

It was the third time the Sabres had a goal overturned at home, and fourth this season.

"I'd like a few more to go in our favor, but they got it right; it was offside," Bylsma said. "The linesman said they, just at the end, had enough video evidence to overturn it, and I said, 'Well, you got it right.' I'm glad they're getting it right. It's disappointing when it goes against your team and it would've been a big goal for us. They're getting it right and we'd like to get it right more in our favor."

Marian Gaborik gave the Kings a 1-0 lead 4:47 into the first period. He received a pass from Anze Kopitar on a 2-on-1 against Sabres defenseman Mike Weber and took a one-timer that got past goalie Linus Ullmark for his sixth goal of the season.

"I thought we got better as the game went on, but we couldn't seal the deal," Kings forward Tanner Pearson said.

Ullmark made up for it in the second period when Gaborik and Kopitar had another 2-on-1, this time against McCabe. After McCabe slid toward Kopitar, he passed to Gaborik, but Ullmark got across his crease and made the save with his leg.

"I bit too hard on the shooter [on the goal], just getting stuck out there and no backflow at all," Ullmark said. "[Kopitar] made a great [saucer] pass over and [Gaborik] one-timed it, and if you want to take that one, you have to be more patient on your feet and be able to read that there's a 2-on-1 and not just one."

Sabres forward Jamie McGinn made it 1-1 7:19 into the first period with a power-play goal. McGinn picked up loose puck from an attempted pass by O'Reilly that bounced off Pearson and Kings defenseman Brayden McNabb and his no-look backhand between his legs beat Enroth for his sixth goal of the season.

"I don't know what the heck he was doing with that goal," Bylsma said. "I had to see the replay again to actually make sense that he did actually go between his legs and somehow beat the goaltender. But his strength on the power play has been at the net and being in front of the net and being the net-front guy, and I think Ryan was trying to make a seam pass to the weak side of the ice and hit a stick and bounced into that crease and [McGinn] took advantage of it. I thought he played his best game of the year tonight in a lot of areas for us and playing big on that top line."

McGinn has eight points in the past eight games (three goals).

Enroth made 28 saves in his first start against the Sabres since he was traded by Buffalo to the Dallas Stars on Feb. 11. It was his first game since Nov. 22 playing behind Jonathan Quick.

"I'm sure he'd like the power-play goal back," Sutter said. "I wouldn't call that a great goal. Other than that ... that's what a backup's job is; come in and get your points. Nothing around it. Backup goalie, your fifth, sixth, seventh defenseman ... fourth line ... they've got to win you these games."

Jamie McGinn and Ryan O'Reilly happy as Sabres teammates, linemates

By Bill Hoppe
Olean Times Herald
December 14, 2015

BUFFALO – Right away, Jamie McGinn could hear the excitement in Ryan O'Reilly's voice. It was June 26, and the two friends had just been traded from the Colorado Avalanche, only they didn't know they would be joining the Sabres together.

So McGinn and O'Reilly called each other when they learned the full details of the blockbuster deal from television.

The two forwards had grown close over the years, and they knew moving to a new team together would be a special experience.

"We were great friends in Colorado since Day One," McGinn said Sunday inside HarborCenter. "To do it with one of your best friends on the team, that's something that's so rare. To be able to do that just helps the transition. We still talk all the time and (are) still best buddies."

O'Reilly added: "Seeing that he's coming with me helped make the transition a lot easier. (It's nice) having a guy you're so close with that experienced so much together."

Right now, McGinn and O'Reilly are also together as linemates on the Sabres' No. 1 trio with Sam Reinhart.

McGinn, 27, might be playing some of his best hockey ever entering tonight's road tilt against the Detroit Red Wings. The left winger has three goals and eight points in the last eight games after scoring a nifty between-the-legs power-play goal in Saturday's 2-1 win against Los Angeles.

O'Reilly, 24, scored the slick overtime winner later, giving him three goals and 10 points during his seven-game point run. The center could tie his career-best streak tonight.

The Sabres dished three notable prospects under 21 and a second-round pick in a deep draft to the Avs so they could acquire established NHL talent that would provide them an immediate impact.

So far, the trade has already paid huge dividends. O'Reilly has been the Sabres' best forward, skating big minutes and playing in every situation while compiling a team-best 10 goals and 27 points in 30 games.

Where would the Sabres, who have only 12 wins and 27 points, be without him?

Meanwhile, McGinn, who has six goals and 14 points, might be the Sabres' biggest surprise and most versatile forward. He can be plugged in anywhere. McGinn has skated on every line this season beside just about everyone.

McGinn's physical, straightforward style meshes with most players.

"I'm just trying to be that piece that they don't have and trying to be physical and being a presence out there, so it doesn't matter where I'm playing, my game doesn't change, whether it's fourth line or first line," McGinn said. "I have to do the things that make me successful by keeping it simple, being physical and getting to those dirty areas in front of the net."

After spending some time beside rookie center Jack Eichel recently, Sabres coach Dan Bylsma promoted McGinn to the top line with O'Reilly last week.

"I know playing with him just keep the stick down and he's going to find you the puck or get the puck to the net or make that move," McGinn said. "So I'm just enjoying it. We clicked before, and I'm glad we're continuing it. I know we enjoy playing with each other because he's a special talent."

McGinn and O'Reilly also played together with Matt Duchene two seasons ago when McGinn scored a career-high 19 goals and 38 points and O'Reilly had a career-high 28 goals and 64 points.

"He's versatile," O'Reilly said. "You can use him in any situation. He's a guy that's probably one of my best friends. I know how good of a guy he is. Everyone loves him. Everyone, they want to play with him. He's easy to play with."

But they couldn't play together most of last year after McGinn underwent season-ending back surgery. Getting his skating legs and feet back in training camp has been "a big factor" for McGinn, Bylsma said.

"You're seeing that now, and now you're seeing him again in that opportunity to score and scoring goals for us," he said.

McGinn added: "The legs feel good. It's just good to get back into the rhythm of things. It's been a long time."

Notes: Sabres winger Tyler Ennis (upper body) has been skating on his own. Bylsma had no new update on Ennis, who's week-to-week. ... Goalie Robin Lehner, out since suffering a high ankle sprain opening night, was also on the ice with Ennis on Sunday after their teammates.

Sabres upend Kings 2-1 in overtime

By Pat Malacaro

WGR 550

December 14, 2015

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- The Buffalo Sabres are on the ice, facing a former teammate in goal for the Los Angeles Kings. Jhonas Enroth gets the start for LA against the blue and gold. The two teams are scoreless in the first period. Check back throughout the game for updates, and head inside for Pat Malacaro's live-game blog.

Buffalo returns home from a disastrous Western Canadian road trip, while the Kings are surging following a 3-2 shootout win in Pittsburgh last night. For more from today's mornins skate, click here for Paul Hamilton's pregame primer.

Be sure to add your comments in the thread below, while I add my two cents in between the scoring plays. Also, feel free to give Brian Koziol and myself each a follow on Twitter: @BrianWGR and @PatWGR.

First Period

17:26 - This game has zero flow to it through the first two minutes tonight. There have been at least three whistles so far, and except for a chance at the side of the net for Buffalo, neither side has really established an offensive zone presence early on.

15:13 - KINGS GOAL. It could not get much easier for LA on their first shot on goal of the game. Tic-Tac-Toe, it is a one-goal lead for the visitors. **Tanner Pearson** started the play through the neutral zone, **Anze Kopitar** made a perfect pass to **Marian Gaborik**, who had a yawning net to score into. **1-0 LAK.**

12:55 - Buffalo goes to the man advantage after Jordan Nolan is called for taking down Mike Weber in the Buffalo zone.

12:40 - SABRES GOAL. It did not take the blue and gold long to even the score. **Jamie McGinn** was a help by getting the face-off back to the point, and after some nice passing he found the puck on his stick at the top of the crease. A nifty between the legs backhand shot gets through **Jhonas Enroth**. **1-1 tie.**

6:51 - The second Buffalo power play does not yield the same results as the first, but the team's puck handling has been very good for the last few minutes. They have held the puck nicely and have not allowed the Kings any shots on goal since their only one that resulted in a goal. Shots are 9-1 in favor of the Sabres.

End of Period

Goal Summary

BUF: 7:19 - Jamie McGinn (6) PPG (Ryan O'Reilly, Rasmus Ristolainen)

LAK: 4:47 - Marian Gaborik (6) (Anze Kopitar, Tanner Pearson)

Penalty Summary

BUF: none

LAK: 7:07 - Jordan Nolan (2 min., interference). 10:43 - Andy Andreoff (2 min., tripping)

Shots on Goal

BUF - 12, LAK - 3

Second Period

18:21 - What a save by Linus Ullmark to rob Gaborik of his second goal of the night. It was another odd-man opportunity that Ullmark anticipated well and slid over to make the pad save on.

15:12 - Los Angeles has certainly found their legs this period and are trying to take the play to the home team. The Sabres hold a 3-2 edge in shots, but I think the Kings have had the better of the play for the majority of this stanza.

11:14 - This has been a surprisingly chippy game from both sides. I did not expect so many thunderous hits to be levelled by either side. It has been a pleasant surprise tonight.

7:17 - Buffalo has picked up the intensity as this period has drawn on. Enroth has had to be on point on more than one occasion this frame, and thankfully for the Kings he has stood his ground.

:11.8 - Jake McCabe beats Enroth with a perfect backhand shot into the top corner of the net. The play was reviewed after the Kings challenged that Buffalo was offside on the play and the challenge was won by the visitors. It looked like Brian Gionta and Evander Kane were both offside. Still 1-1.

End of Period

Goal Summary

BUF: none

LAK: none

Penalty Summary

BUF: none

LAK: none

Shots on Goal

BUF - 9 (21), LAK - 7 (10)

Third Period

16:14 - Buffalo continues to be the better team tonight. The Kings only need to win one period, as Paul said during the intermission, but Buffalo can go along way to determining if the visitors actually win the stanza. Shots are 4-2 in favor of Buffalo.

11:13 - The tide has started to turn this period and it is moving in favor of the Kings. First it was Drew Doughty with a nice spin-o-rama move to try and score, and since then LA has kept the puck in the Sabres' zone almost the whole time. I get the feeling that the Kings will get a goal soon, just a matter of time.

6:12 - The seconds and minutes continue to drip off of the clock, and I do not think Buffalo has had more than one or two quality scoring chances this frame. It looks like the Kings are feeding off of the fact that this game is tied despite being outplayed for forty minutes.

:52.6 - How the heck do the Sabres have 8 shots on goal this period?! I would not have guessed that.

End of Regulation

Goal Summary

BUF: none
LAK: none

Penalty Summary

BUF: none
LAK: none

Shots on Goal

BUf - 8 (29), LAK - 8 (18)

Overtime

1:41 - SABRES GOAL. What action at both ends of the ice! **Ryan O'Reilly** finally ends it with a goal and sends the hometown fans happy. **Brian Gionta** had a chance to end it on a breakaway, as did **Anze Kopitar** at the other end of the ice. **2-1 BUF.**

End of Game

Buffalo 2, Los Angeles 1 FINAL/OT

Goal Summary

BUF: 3:19 - Ryan O'Reilly (10) (Jake McCabe)
LAK: none

O'Reilly and McGinn enjoying success as linemates

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

December 14, 2015

When he was initially traded to the Buffalo Sabres in June, Jamie McGinn had no idea that one of his best friends on the Colorado Avalanche had been traded with him.

He picked up the phone as soon as he found out that Ryan O'Reilly was a part of the package.

"We actually saw it on the TV," he said. "We called each other right away because he didn't know either. I could just feel the excitement in his voice and I knew how excited I was to come with Ryan.

"We were great friends in Colorado since day one so to do it with one of your best buddies on the team, that's so rare."

Six months later, the two friends are excelling not only as teammates, but as linemates. Both players scored in Buffalo's 2-1 overtime win against Los Angeles on Saturday and both are in the midst of productive stretches offensively.

McGinn scored on the power play for his eighth point in eight games (3+5), a span in which he has played on three different lines. He joined the top line with O'Reilly and Sam Reinhart in the third period against Vancouver on Monday.

It was the first time the two former Avs played on the same line, McGinn said, since the 2013-14 season. They played alongside Matt Duchene at times that season and McGinn thought they clicked well.

After a few games together in Buffalo, O'Reilly seems to agree.

"That was one of the best things about that trade – was getting to go with one of my closest friends," O'Reilly said. "Getting to play together was great and when we can find success too with it and contribute to win hockey games, it's awesome."

It's the same qualities that made McGinn so easy to get along with off the ice, O'Reilly said, that makes him able to succeed regardless of whom he plays with.

"Everyone on the team loves him," he said. "Everyone, they want to play with him and he's easy to play with. He's easy to talk to. He doesn't get frustrated with you. If you make a mistake he's always there to support you."

O'Reilly, meanwhile, is riding a seven-game point streak during which he has compiled 10 points on three goals and seven assists. He too has had a variety of wingers on his line, but it hasn't stopped him from leading the team with 27 points this season (10+17).

"He's an easy guy to play with, he sees the ice so well and does the small things as well, but he's good with the stick," McGinn said. "I know [when I'm] playing with him, just keep the stick down and he's going to find me or get the puck to the net."

If O'Reilly's talent was overshadowed at all in Colorado, it's shined brightly as he's continued to excel in a leadership role in his first year as a Sabre.

"It's being put on his shoulders right now and he's doing the job," McGinn said. "I've been watching him for four or five years now and I've seen it every day now."

THEY'VE GOT THE POWER

With McGinn's power-play goal in the first period on Saturday, the Sabres improved to 8-for-23 (34.8 percent) with the extra man in their last seven games. When asked what has made the difference, O'Reilly mentioned one player in particular who's begun to excel with the man advantage.

"If you work hard and have a shooting mentality some things are going to open up, and I think a key guy for us has been [defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen]," he said. "He knows how to get shots through, he's got a heavy shot and he's smart, makes great plays. He's been a big spark for us there."

Ristolainen's assist on McGinn's goal gave him 17 points in his last 17 games, six of which have come on the power play. Two of the defenseman's three goals in the third period against Calgary on Thursday night came on the power play.

SUNDAY'S PRACTICE

Defenseman Jake McCabe was absent from practice Sunday at HARBORCENTER for a maintenance day, Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said. Forward Tyler Ennis (upper body) and goaltender Robin Lehner (ankle) did not participate in practice but skated on their own. Both Ennis and Lehner are still a ways away from returning to action.

Here's how the lines stacked up:

88 Jamie McGinn – 90 Ryan O'Reilly – 23 Sam Reinhart
9 Evander Kane – 15 Jack Eichel – 26 Matt Moulson
28 Zemgus Girgensons – 22 Johan Larsson – 12 Brian Gionta
44 Nicolas Deslauriers – 17 David Legwand/19 Cal O'Reilly – 82 Marcus Foligno

4 Josh Gorges – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen
25 Carlo Colaiacovo – 47 Zach Bogosian
6 Mike Weber – 46 Cody Franson

The Sabres will play in Detroit on Monday and Bylsma expects McCabe to be ready for it. Pregame coverage begins at 7 p.m. on MSG-B and Bell TV. The game can also be heard live on WGR 550 with puck drop slated for 7:30 p.m.