



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*February 3, 2016*

## **Sabres-Canadiens Preview**

By Kevin Massoth

AP

February 3, 2016

The last time the Montreal Canadiens faced the Buffalo Sabres, they were riding the high of a win streak that fell one game shy of an NHL record.

This time around, the Canadiens are about as low as they can get.

Montreal seeks just its sixth win during a two-month free-fall when it opens a four-game homestand Wednesday night against the Sabres.

Montreal (24-23-4) started the season with nine consecutive wins, the eighth of which was a 7-2 rout in Buffalo on Oct. 23 that snapped a three-game skid in this series. The Canadiens added a win over Toronto the next day for a streak that fell one shy of the record set by the 1993-94 Maple Leafs and matched by the Sabres in 2006-07.

Fast forward about five weeks to Dec. 1 and the Canadiens owned the NHL's best record at 19-4-3. Skip ahead another two months and they've plummeted out of the Eastern Conference's playoff picture with by far the league's worst record in that span.

The Canadiens have earned just 11 points (5-19-1) since Dec. 3, making them the only team with fewer than 20 in that time. They've gone 2-8-0 at home and have failed to log points in consecutive games while averaging a league-low 1.84 goals and allowing 3.24.

Monday's return from the All-Star break brought much of the same for the NHL's most two-faced team. What was supposed to be the start of a resurgence turned into a 4-2 loss at Philadelphia, the club's third straight and eighth in nine games dating to Jan. 9.

The Habs erased a two-goal deficit only to surrender a pair in the final period.

"We're just all looking for answers in here," defenseman Nathan Beaulieu said. "It's frustrating. I mean, we're not going to give up on each other... We've got to really look at ourselves in the mirror right now."

Montreal has scored 16 goals in its last nine games while allowing 34.

Although the Sabres (20-26-4) have lost three of four, Robin Lehner has performed well with a 2.02 goals-against average and .948 save percentage in three starts during that stretch - giving him four since returning from an ankle injury Jan. 15.

Lehner, who was hurt in the second period of the season opener Oct. 8, picked up his first win with Buffalo by making 34 saves in a 3-2 victory at Ottawa on Jan. 26 which snapped the Sabres' three-game skid in the final contest before the All-Star break.

With Lehner playing well and Sam Reinhart (upper-body), Josh Gorges (upper-body) and Nicolas Deslauriers (broken foot) soon returning, things are looking up. Gorges and Deslauriers will play Wednesday, while Reinhart - who has 12 goals and eight assists in 47 games - is probable.

"I think that's good for us and then you look at our locker room, we've been pretty prone to injuries this year," Jack Eichel told the team's official website. "You see Deslauriers on the ice, he brings a lot of energy to our team, he's a key component. You see Sam's getting healthy, obviously we all know how good he can be."

"We're starting to come around."

Buffalo has averaged only 1.93 goals in its last 15 games, the last three coming without Reinhart. It's unclear if the Sabres will face Montreal's Mike Condon or Ben Scrivens in net.

## **Foligno advances to line with Eichel**

By Mike Harrington  
Buffalo News  
February 3, 2016

Marcus Foligno has three goals all season, with none in his last eight games and just one in his last 19. He has no multi-point games in his last 72 outings dating to last season.

But Buffalo Sabres coach Dan Bylsma has seen things from the 24-year-old winger that he's liked in recent games. At 6-foot-3 and 226 pounds, Foligno is a big body willing to go into the corners and has dropped the gloves in the absence of injured Nicolas Deslauriers, the team's most known fighter.

And maybe, Bylsma is thinking, Foligno's own offensive game can get a boost from joining the team's hottest duo.

Foligno thus will start on left wing with Jack Eichel and Zemgus Girgensons when the Sabres return from the All-Star break with a game Wednesday night against the Montreal Canadiens in Bell Centre.

"It's a good line and we had a lot of chemistry out there today," Foligno said after practice Tuesday in First Niagara Center. "All of us work hard and Jack is a phenomenal player. My job is the same-old, just try to create space for him out there, make sure he feels comfortable and he can use his speed on the forecheck and on the rush."

"He's really skilled. He's strong, really strong in the corners," Eichel said of Foligno. "He's really versatile. There's a lot of good things about his game and, for me, he's a great guy to have on my left side, my right side or wherever he is."

Foligno has three goals and seven assists in 44 games this season, and has never really broken through offensively to match the potential he showed by collecting 13 points in 14 games to close the 2011-12 campaign while playing with Tyler Ennis and Drew Stafford.

Bylsma isn't necessarily expecting those kind of outbursts, but he's hoping that a matchup with Eichel, the reigning NHL Third Star of the Week, can revive Foligno some offensively. Eichel and Girgensons combined for four goals and two assists in road games last week in New York and Ottawa.

"He's playing big and strong, he skates well and is a physical presence for us all year," Bylsma said of Foligno. "I'm pretty eager to see him on that wing, to see if he can be a guy that can not only provide speed and physicality, but can be the benefactor of being a guy at the net and finish plays from Jack and Zemgus."

Foligno, as you would expect, was thrilled by the prospect of getting his first chance on a line with Eichel.

"There's no doubt you have to make an impression off the first two shifts to stay on that line and play the minutes we're going to play," Foligno said. "We're going to be crucial for this team to play a big role. With Jack, he opens up so much more ability for everyone on his line. Me and Zemgus just have to feed off him, create space and get open for him. He's unbelievable one on one, so if he can beat one guy there's going to be an open spot on the ice. It's our job to fill it and get open and get to the net."

Foligno feels he should be better offensively than he has been in his career, with just 29 goals in 236 games and no more than eight in a season.

"Jack is a heck of a disher, as much as he can put the puck in the net," Foligno said. "He can dish it as good as anyone in this league. He's got a great 'sauce' pass that can float over sticks and find you. You have to be ready for that and cash in when we can."

With the exception of Ennis, who remains out for the long-term with an upper-body injury, Bylsma was thrilled to have his entire roster on the ice Tuesday and ready to go. Sam Reinhart and Deslauriers will be returning from injury and Ryan O'Reilly was back at practice after getting Monday off while returning from the All-Star Game in Nashville.

Bylsma likes creating pairs on forward lines and seems content going forward with O'Reilly and Reinhart, Eichel-Girgensons and Johan Larsson with Evander Kane.

Jamie McGinn is at left wing on the O'Reilly line while captain Brian Gionta is playing right wing with Larsson and Kane. Drought-ridden winger Matt Moulson, with no goals since Nov. 1, is back on the fourth line with David Legwand and Deslauriers.

"That is as healthy as we've been in a while," Bylsma said.

## **Sabres Notebook: What to do with eight healthy defensemen?**

By Mike Harrington  
Buffalo News  
February 3, 2016

The Buffalo Sabres have had eight healthy defensemen in practice the last two days, something they haven't had all season with the long-term injuries suffered by Zach Bogosian and Mark Pysyk. Coach Dan Bylsma has said several times this season he abhors having eight on his roster and the team would have to do something about the situation if it ever evolved.

"We're there," Bylsma said with a pained smile after practice Tuesday in First Niagara Center.

Josh Gorges and Rasmus Ristolainen are again the top pair on the blue line while Bogosian was paired with Pysyk on Tuesday and Cody Franson was with Jake McCabe.

Mike Weber and Carlo Colaiacovo will sit out Wednesday's game in Montreal but Bylsma said he expects to see seven of the eight play over the next four days, when the team has the matchup with the Habs and a home-and-home series against Boston.

Weber is likely to play in at least one of the games while Colaiacovo, who has played just once in the last 22 games, appears to be completely out of the mix.

"I'm not going to rotate or alternate guys," Bylsma said. "We'll play the players that will give us the best chance to have success and win a hockey game. ... We're a couple weeks away from the trade deadline as well and that will be a factor."

The deadline is Feb. 29. Weber, the longest-tenured Sabre, and Colaiacovo are both unrestricted free agents after the season while Franson and Pysyk have one year remaining on their deals.

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The Sabres have only played the Canadiens once this season, a 7-2 home loss Oct. 23 that was the eighth win as part of the Habs' franchise-record 9-0 start. But Montreal has completely collapsed in the interim, falling out of a playoff spot thanks to its worst stretch of play since 1940.

With injured goaltender Carey Price remaining on the sidelines, the Habs entered Tuesday's game in Philadelphia on a 5-18-1 slide – and have scored more than two goals in just five of those 24 games. They lost games on consecutive nights to last-place Columbus to wrap up play prior to the All-Star break and were booed for large stretches of the 5-2 loss Jan. 26 in Bell Centre.

"Columbus went in there before the break and it didn't sound like it was too happy a group of fans in there," said Sabres winger Marcus Foligno. "That's the type of atmosphere we want to create there. It's a building you don't want the fans to get involved at all. You want to keep them quiet and it really hurts their team because they thrive off their fans big-time."

"I was there one year we didn't make the playoffs so I understand what's going on there," said captain Brian Gionta, an alum of the 2011-12 Habs who finished with 78 points. "At the same time, our focus is here. The guys you played with, the guys you know, you really feel for. But you feel like they'll bounce back too."

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Wednesday's game will be Sam Reinhart's first NHL contest in the Bell Centre, but the Sabres rookie played four preliminary round games in the building there during last year's gold-medal run for Team Canada in the World

Junior Championships. Reinhart had a goal and two assists on New Year's Eve 2014 in a 5-3 win over Jack Eichel-led Team USA.

"It's going to be a way different atmosphere than when I played last year over Christmas and I'm looking forward to it," Reinhart said. "I know Montreal is pretty fanatic about the Canadiens. I'm excited to see it firsthand."

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The Sabres will host a Unyts blood drive Monday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. in the arena. Donors will receive an autographed mini hockey stick and will be able to watch the Sabres' morning practice, which is normally closed to the public. Sabres alumni and Sabretooth will also be on hand.

Free parking is available in the FNC ramp. Walk-ins are welcome and appointments are available by calling 512-7940 or by visiting [unyts.org](http://unyts.org) and using sponsor code 001198 on the donation form. Donors must bring photo ID and be 17 or older. Donors can be 16 years old with parental consent.

## Sabres return from break, visit struggling Canadiens

By Joe Calabrese

NHL.com

February 3, 2016

### SABRES (20-26-4) at CANADIENS (24-23-4)

**TV:** SN, MSG-B, RDS, NHL.TV

**Season series:** The Montreal Canadiens defeated the Buffalo Sabres 7-2 at First Niagara Center on Oct. 23. Defenseman Andrei Markov had five points (one goal, four assists) for Montreal, and center Tomas Plekanec and defenseman P.K. Subban each had three assists. Buffalo defenseman Cody Franson had two assists.

**Sabres team scope:** Coach Dan Bylsma expects several players to return to the lineup Wednesday for Buffalo's first game after the All-Star break. Defenseman Josh Gorges, who missed five of the past six games with an upper-body injury, will play. Forwards Nicolas Deslauriers, who missed 11 games after sustaining a lower-body injury blocking a shot on Jan. 2, and Sam Reinhart, who missed the past three games with an upper-body injury, each practiced Tuesday and is expected to play. "We're looking at back-to-back games here and three in four nights," Bylsma told the Sabres website. "I expect to see seven guys getting into the lineup in the next three games." Forward Tyler Ennis remains out with an upper-body injury sustained in a game against the Washington Capitals on Dec. 30.

**Canadiens team scope:** Montreal plays the second game of a back-to-back after a 4-2 loss at the Philadelphia Flyers on Tuesday. Philadelphia scored two power-play goals in the first period. "Tonight, the difference was the special teams," coach Michel Therrien said. "We had a chance to tie up the game and we had bad reads and bad execution. Pretty simple." The Canadiens, who have lost three in a row, are 2-8-1 in their past 11 games and 6-19-1 since Dec. 1, the worst record in the NHL during that span. Montreal's 48 goals since Dec. 1 are also the fewest in the NHL. Subban has 14 points (three goals, 11 assists) in his past 14 games.

## **Sabres' Zemgus Girgensons finding offensive game beside Jack Eichel**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
February 3, 2016

BUFFALO – Barely a minute into the third period last Tuesday, Sabres winger Zemgus Girgensons roared down the left side into the Ottawa zone before stopping and lifting a saucer pass to center Jack Eichel, who was zooming to the net down the middle.

The rookie connected, got stymied by Senators goalie Craig Anderson but managed to tuck the loose puck in for the winner in the Sabres' 3-2 comeback victory.

The slick score, the duo's fourth goal and sixth point in two nights, illustrates the growing chemistry between the youngsters, who have quickly become the Sabres' most dangerous tandem.

"Kind of a two-pronged effect with guys with speed coming at you," coach Dan Bylsma said Tuesday after the Sabres prepared for tonight's road contest against the reeling Montreal Canadiens.

That speed, especially Eichel's, can be lethal. Combine that with Girgensons' physicality and ability to create space, and Bylsma might have finally found a regular sidekick for Eichel after months of searching. Bylsma plans to have winger Marcus Foligno join them tonight in the Sabres' first game following the NHL All-Star break.

"Last game, (Girgensons) transporting the puck up the ice allows Jack to have speed away from the puck," Bylsma said inside the First Niagara Center. "In other games it's been with Jack carrying the puck, Zemgus having speed away from the puck ... driving."

Right away, they clicked. In their first game together Dec. 30 in Washington, Girgensons set up Eichel's goal before later ending his 11-game goal drought by completing some of the pivot's nifty work.

"I can provide some space for him to do that stuff, where I think that's a major thing," Girgensons said. "We complement each other."

Eichel added: "I think it's just he's an easy guy to play with. I think we just work really well together. He's really skilled. He's strong – really strong in the corners."

Playing beside Eichel has ignited Girgensons, who struggled offensively for months. The Latvian scored as many goals in 1:13 in the third period last Monday as he had in the previous *31 games*.

Girgensons had 15 goals and 30 points in 61 games in 2014-15, yet mustered only two scores in his first 32 appearances this season. Still, the 22-year-old believed he was playing a strong game.

"I think that's the only thing that's been lacking, point production," said Girgensons, who has five goals and 10 points in 42 games. "Of course, it's a big part of the game."

To Bylsma, Girgensons' performance in the last 12 games or so, not his point production, is "more of an indicator of where Zemgus' game is at."

"He certainly didn't get a lot of goals, didn't get a lot of assists," he said. "He was stuck there at two for an awful long time (11 games)."

The 6-foot-3, 226-pound Foligno's presence on the line is intriguing. The enigmatic 24-year-old has been all over the lineup this season, skating on a slew of trios. He played 17 minutes, 33 seconds last game, his highest total since Oct. 12.

"He can get up the ice as well," Bylsma said. "If you're looking too much at Jack or Zemgus, hopefully you can see Marcus, with his speed, getting to the net and being a factor."

Foligno "is playing his best hockey right now," Bylsma said.

"I'm actually pretty eager to see him on that wing, to see if he can be a guy that can not only provide that speed and physicality, but be the guy who can be the benefactor of a guy at the net and finish off some plays from Jack and Zemgus," he said.

Foligno, who has three goals and 10 points in 44 games, knows playing beside Eichel and Girgensons could help his offense "big time."

"It's something in the back of my mind I need to get going," he said.

## Healthy Sabres defense corps presents problem

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
February 3, 2016

BUFFALO – In reality, it's a good problem. With Josh Gorges ready to play, the Sabres have eight healthy defensemen. Given the rough-and-tumble nature of the position, bodies are always at a premium, especially at this time of year.

Still, Sabres coach Dan Bylsma doesn't like it much. He's already had to mothball defenseman Carlo Colaiacovo, who has played one game since Dec. 7. Now someone else must sit.

What will the Sabres do? Could a move be coming?

"I expect to see seven guys get in the lineup the next three games, for sure," Bylsma said this afternoon inside the First Niagara Center. "Yes, we're also (close) to the trade deadline. I think that will be a factor in play as well."

For now, it appears Mike Weber, who practiced as a spare today, will sit Wednesday in Montreal. Bylsma might switch up his defense corps Thursday at home against Boston. Weber's recent play has mostly impressed Bylsma.

"I'm not going to rotate or alternate guys," Bylsma said. "We're not going to be on a three-man rotation. We'll play the players that I think give us the best chance to have success and win a hockey game."

The Sabres have experienced some injuries on the blue line. Zach Bogosian and Mark Pysyk have both missed chunks of the season. But one defender has usually been injured at a time. Other than recalling Jake McCabe from an early-season one-game assignment and Pysyk from a conditioning stint, they haven't used any from the AHL.

Gorges (upper body) won't be the only player returning against the Canadiens. Wingers Nick Deslauriers (lower body) and Sam Reinhart (upper body) both practiced today and appear ready to play.

Here are the rest of the lines Bylsma used today:

- Jamie McGinn, Ryan O'Reilly, Reinhart
- Marcus Foligno, Jack Eichel, Zemgus Girgensons
- Evander Kane, Johan Larsson, Brian Gionta
- Matt Moulson, David Legwand, Deslauriers

## **Sabres' O'Reilly returns from the All Star Game**

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

February 3, 2016

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- Ryan O'Reilly returned to practice on Tuesday after attending the NHL All Star Game.

O'Reilly was Buffalo's only representative and it was also his first ever All Star Game. The Sabres center enjoyed it, "It was a great city to host (Nashville) and the NHL did a great job putting everything on. It was good, it was my first time experiencing that and I enjoyed myself."

We all wondered how the 3-on-3 format would be received and O'Reilly liked it, "I really enjoyed the game, the 3-on-3 was probably the best part, it was still fun, but it was competitive too, guys wanted to win and it was cool to get to play with Jagr, Karlsson, Subban and others that I never get a chance to play with."

I think the biggest difference we saw was the goaltenders were the big stars instead of the patsies. O'Reilly said, "The goaltending was outstanding. There could've been more scoring, but they're making unbelievable saves and I think it's nice, it shows how great these goalies are."

"In past games its backward passes, it's not game speed that you normally play at, so it was nice for them to get actual normal scoring chances."

O'Reilly didn't get the break that the other players got, but he still took advantage of it, "It was nice to relax here and get to see some nice performances. O'Reilly said saw Dierks Bentley and Kelsea Ballerini.

O'Reilly did one-timers and a relay in the skills competition. He said, "It was kind of long and you're sitting around a lot and then you have to do your event and I was so cold, but it was a good experience, the shootouts were hilarious, it was a good time and it seems like the fans enjoyed it."

With the break over there are 32 games left and the Sabres are in 27<sup>th</sup> place in the NHL, one point in front of Toronto, Edmonton and Columbus and one point in back of Calgary. Winnipeg is just three in front of the Sabres.

O'Reilly is extremely disappointed with where the team sits and he says the time is now, "We have to get going right away and if we want to have success it has to be one game at a time. It's going to be tough, all you have to do is look at the standings and you can see where we are, so we just treat every game like it's our last one because it's not going to be easy to climb out of this hole we're in and get back into the hunt."

The Sabres are where they are because they've been on the wrong end of too many one goal games. O'Reilly said that's where he comes in, "For myself those are probably the most frustrating ones, you come of the ice and it's just inches, it's a couple of small plays that affected the entire game, but you know that we're close there, so going forward we know that we can do good things and it's going to take a little bit more from every single one of us."

The lines were different in practice as Marcus Foligno joined the Eichel line.

Josh Gorges, Sam Reinhart and Nick Deslauriers all practiced and all should play in Montreal.

Lines:

McGinn O'Reilly Reinhart

Foligno Eichel Girgensons

Kane Larsson Gionta

Moulson Legwand Deslauriers

Gorges Ristolainen

McCabe Franson

Pysyk Bogosian

Weber Colaiacovo

## **Bylsma likes Girgensons-Eichel as a pair**

By Howard Simon

WGR 550

February 3, 2016

Dan Bylsma had a very successful All-Star break. The Sabres head coach caught a couple of giant steelheads while fishing in below freezing temperatures. Just don't ask him where he was because Bylsma doesn't want to give away the location. Fishermen like to keep that stuff to themselves.

Bylsma is hoping to reel in a whole bunch of wins over the last 32 games of the Sabres season. They resume play in Montreal on Wednesday night. A number of players are having strong seasons for the Sabres including Ryan O'Reilly, Rasmus Ristolainen and Sam Reinhart. But Jack Eichel is constantly on the mind of Sabres fans. Eichel hit the break on a hot streak with 20 points in his previous 18 games.

Eichel had some success when teamed with Zemgus Girgensons and Bylsma said he wants to keep those two players together.

"Zemgus carries the puck, we've seen Jack carry the puck and he can clearly carry the puck and lug the mail. If you focus on Zemgus carrying the puck up the ice and Jack starts from 50-60 feet away in full speed, he's not your focus as a defenceman and all of a sudden he's upon you and by you and Zemgus carries the puck and gets it to the net" Bylsma said. "So to have a guy like Zemgus who can skate well himself and move the puck up the ice, I think it can be a real added benefit to have Jack use that speed away from the puck. You're going to continue to see Zemgus next to Jack there for a little bit."

## **Sabres prep for final 32 games of the season**

By Nick Filipowski

WKBW

February 3, 2016

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) - Even with Tyler Ennis out, in his own words Dan Bylsma said Tuesday the Sabres are about as healthy as they have been all season and expects both Sam Reinhart and Nic Delauriers to return to the lineup Wednesday against Montreal.

While the Canadiens have struggled without netminder Carey Price, the Sabres will look to use that, and their own health to their advantage, as they look to turn around an offensive attack that ranks 3rd worst in the league, averaging a little more than 2.26 goals per game.

"Coming back from the break, guys are kind of refreshed," Sam Reinhart, who has missed the last three games, told reporters on Tuesday. "Ready to go in now and make a push."

"We got behind the 8-ball a little bit and we've been inconsistent," fellow rookie Jack Eichel added. "I think we can work on that consistency here and see how we are at the end of the year."

Outside of Ryan O'Reilly's team leading 17 goals and the two rookies combining for 28, offense has been hard to come by for Buffalo due to changing line combinations because of health and a general lack of production from veterans on the team.

Tyler Ennis, who has only played in just 23 games, has just three goals while fellow forward Matt Moulson has tallied four.

Even winger Evander Kane has struggled netting just 11 goals in 40 games. He scored 10 for Winnipeg before being traded last season and did not play for Buffalo after shoulder surgery. He scored 19 times in 63 games during the 2013-2014 season with the Jets.

On Monday, after a tough practice following the All-Star break, Josh Gorges said this is the time of year things "amp up" around the league.

"You know the games are a little bit harder a little bit more intense," he said. "The details in the game are a little more crucial. When you go into the trade deadline it jumps up more with that final playoff push, so we need to be focused and prepared to make that step. These games are only going to get tougher and tougher as we go along so mentally we have to be focused and sharp and know what we have to do."

It was believed the Sabres would not be a playoff contender, and that could still hold true as they sit 8th in the Atlantic Wild Card standings.

However, the Ottawa Senators were in nearly the exact same spot, with nearly the exact same record in 2015 before making an improbable postseason run winning 23 of their final 31 games.

Buffalo has 32 games remaining in the season.

"It's time to string some wins together. Our goals are not going to change," Marcus Foligno said. "It's always going to be the playoffs and we have to start putting some wins together now."

## Sabres maintaining simple approach for post All-Star push

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

February 3, 2016

Another day of practice is in the books for Sam Reinhart and Nicolas Deslauriers, and both have responded well enough to where it appears they'll be ready to play for the Buffalo Sabres in Montreal on Wednesday night.

It's impossible to say it without wanting to knock on wood (as Sabres coach Dan Bylsma is known to do), but the Sabres might just be one Tyler Ennis short of having their full lineup for their first game back from the All-Star break.

"I think that's good for us and then you look at our locker room, we've been pretty prone to injuries this year," Jack Eichel said after practice on Tuesday. "You see [Deslauriers] on the ice, he brings a lot of energy to our team, he's a key component. You see Sam's getting healthy, obviously we all know how good he can be ... We're starting to come around."

With 32 games remaining and considerable ground to make up in the standings, it's also a reason for optimism. As it stands prior to Tuesday's games, Buffalo is 11 points out from the second Wild Card spot in the Eastern Conference.

That's a tall order for a young team, but they're aware of the task at hand. With hopes of health coinciding with wins, they've decided to simplify their approach beginning with their game against the Canadiens.

"Win one game at a time, that's all you can do," Eichel said. "You can only focus on your next game and your next opponent. I think that's what we want to do and win as many of these games as we can and see where that puts us. I think we got behind the eight ball a little bit and we've been a little inconsistent. I think we can work at that consistency here and see how we are at the end of the year."

Ryan O'Reilly, who spent the weekend participating as a first All-Star in Nashville, agreed with Eichel's sentiment.

"It's going to be tough because we're going to want to look at the standings and see where we are," he said. "But we have to approach every game like it's our last one and give everything we have because it's not going to be easy to climb out of this hole we're in and get back in the hunt."

O'Reilly recognizes that, if you look at individual games rather than the overall record, it's a sign that the Sabres aren't as far away as they might seem. Fourteen of Buffalo's 30 losses this season have been by just one goal; three others were lost by two goals thanks to empty-netters.

Cutting down on the little mistakes that lead to goals for the opponent and keep their own goals out of the net could make the difference in those close games.

"For myself those are probably the most frustrating ones," O'Reilly said. "That's when you come off the ice and know it's inches, it's a couple of small plays that affect the entire game. But knowing that, you know that you're close. You know that there are some little details that we could've changed to change the outcome."

"Going forth, we know that we can do good things. It's just going to take a little more from every single one of us."

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### TUESDAY'S PRACTICE

Despite the changes made to the lines with Reinhart and Deslauriers' returns, one pair of forwards that remained

consistent was that of Eichel and Zemgus Girgensons. Eichel assisted Girgensons for two goals against the Rangers on Jan. 25 before scoring two of his own the following day.

"I think we just work well together," Eichel said. "He works really hard on the ice. He's really skilled; he's strong, really strong in the corners. He's really versatile, I think there are a lot of really good things about his game and for me he's a good guy to have on my left side, right side wherever he is."

Here's how the rest of the lineup looked on Tuesday:

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

4 Josh Gorges – 55 Rasmus Ristolainen  
47 Zach Bogosian – 3 Mark Pysyk  
29 Jake McCabe – 46 Cody Franson  
6 Mike Weber – 25 Carlo Colaiacovo

40 Robin Lehner  
31 Chad Johnson

Power Play 1  
McGinn – O'Reilly – Reinhart  
Eichel – Ristolainen

Power Play 2  
Kane – Girgensons – Gionta  
Bogosian – Cody Franson