



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*March 29, 2016*

## Red Wings turn 3-goal lead into 3-2 win over Sabres

By Larry Lage

AP

March 29, 2016

DETROIT (AP) — The Detroit Red Wings picked up two desperately needed points, boosting their chances of extending the franchise's playoff streak to 25 straight seasons.

Barely.

Dylan Larkin, Riley Sheahan and Luke Glendening scored, and the Red Wings held on for a 3-2 victory against the Buffalo Sabres on Monday night.

"Every point counts now," Detroit center Pavel Datsyuk said. "It's good that we won."

The Red Wings pulled within a point of Boston for the third and final guaranteed spot from the Atlantic Division. Both teams have six games left in the regular season.

Detroit is tied with Philadelphia for the second wild card in the Eastern Conference, but the Flyers have one more game to earn at least a point. Philadelphia beat Winnipeg 3-2 in overtime on Monday night.

"As long as we take care of ourselves, we'll be all right," Jimmy Howard said after making 18 saves for the win.

Howard gave up goals to Zengus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart in a 61-second span late in the game. He faced just nine shots through two periods before the Sabres got 11 shots on net in the third.

Buffalo's Chad Johnson stopped 26 shots, but his team simply couldn't generate much offense until the final few minutes.

"You wait that long against a team like that, that's desperation," Reinhart said. "Unfortunately, it took too long."

The Red Wings got off to a listless start in front of a quiet crowd.

Larkin fired up the red-clad fans, scoring on a power play with 1:28 left in the first period. He has a team-high 22 goals and ranks among its leaders with 44 points, the most by a Red Wings rookie since Henrik Zetterberg finished with the same total during the 2002-03 season.

Sheahan scored unassisted midway through the second, taking the puck from deep in the Detroit end and shooting a wrist shot from the top of the left circle that got past Johnson's glove.

"It was a beautiful goal, probably one of the nicest we've had as a team this year," Larkin said. "It was good to see the patience he had and see him let go of his great shot. He's got a real heavy shot."

The Sabres pulled Johnson for the first time with a few minutes left to add an extra skater and Glendening took advantage of the chance to shoot into an empty net. They did avoid a shutout nine seconds later with Girgensons' off-balance shot and suddenly turned a lopsided game into a close one with Reinhart's goal. Buffalo created chances in the final seconds, but couldn't get the puck past Howard.

Buffalo also lost a key player during the game.

Sabres forward Evander Kane, who has 20 goals and 15 assists, didn't play in the third period because of an upper-body injury. Coach Dan Bylsma said he doubts Kane will be in the lineup Tuesday night at Pittsburgh.

"He played a handful of shifts with the injury and just wasn't able to continue," Bylsma said. "He's day to day right now."

NOTES: The Red Wings celebrated Gordie Howe's 88th birthday, which is Thursday, during the first period by signing "Happy Birthday," to the Hall of Famer and presenting him with a cake. ... The Sabres will be relegated to watching the playoffs for the fifth straight year. ... Detroit D Brendan Smith was a healthy scratch. ... Red Wings assistant coach Tony Granato acknowledged he has had talks with Wisconsin about being its coach, but said nothing has been finalized.

## **Sabres-Penguins Preview**

By Nicolino DiBenedetto

AP

March 29, 2016

Sidney Crosby is red hot, and his production has been vital to the Pittsburgh Penguins getting closer to securing a playoff spot.

Crosby looks to help the Penguins move within a point of second place in the Metropolitan Division by continuing his domination of the Buffalo Sabres on Tuesday night.

Third in the NHL with 78 points after amassing 22 during Pittsburgh's 11-4-0 stretch, Crosby is making a run at his third Hart Trophy. He's more worried about getting the Penguins (42-25-8) in the postseason for a 10th straight year, a fate that will be determined over the final seven games.

"We've been fighting for a long time now to get into the playoffs, so I think we still have that mentality," Crosby told the team's official website. "We're trying to make sure we worry about each game and playing the right way. We trust we'll get the results and we'll see where that puts us."

Winning eight of nine games has put the Penguins third in the division, three points back of the second-place New York Rangers in the battle for home-ice advantage in a first-round series.

Pittsburgh, which has been eliminated from the playoffs by the Rangers in each of the last two seasons, won 3-2 in overtime at Madison Square Garden on Crosby's goal with 30 seconds left Sunday.

"It's big for the standings," said Marc-Andre Fleury, who had 25 saves. "It's so close with a division game. You definitely need those points. They've had our number in the playoffs the past few seasons."

Pittsburgh has had Buffalo's number to the tune of eight straight victories, the Penguins' longest active streak against any opponent.

Crosby has 48 points in 30 career meetings with the Sabres, including 29 during his last 14 which have all ended in Pittsburgh wins. He has three points in two matchups this season - both 4-3 victories with the latest in Buffalo on Feb. 21.

Patric Hornqvist had a goal in that meeting, giving him five while setting up five others during a six-game point streak against the Sabres. The right wing, though, hasn't scored in seven games and doesn't have a point in three straight.

Buffalo (31-35-10) is trying to bounce back from Monday's 3-2 loss at Detroit as its attempted rally fell short after scoring twice in a 61-second span late in the third period.

"You wait that long against a team like that, that's desperation," center Sam Reinhart said. "Unfortunately, it took too long."

Reinhart has 11 points in 11 games, including four in the last three. The rookie scored a goal for a second straight game Monday, but he has no points against the Penguins.

Jack Eichel has also been held off the score sheet by Pittsburgh. The star rookie's 23 goals lead the Sabres, but he's only netted one in the past 12 road games.

The Sabres won't have Evander Kane available after he missed Monday's third period because of an upper-body injury. The left wing has 20 goals and 15 assists.

"He played a handful of shifts with the injury and just wasn't able to continue," coach Dan Bylsma said. "He's day to day right now."

Bylsma was behind the Penguins bench from 2009-2014, winning a franchise-record 252 games and one Stanley Cup in '09.

## **Red Wings steamroll Sabres**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

March 29, 2016

DETROIT – It's one thing to play injury-depleted Winnipeg at home on a Saturday afternoon. It's quite another to head into Hockeytown and face a Red Wings team trying to extend a quarter-century of playoff mastery.

The Sabres learned that lesson the hard way.

Buffalo was merely a bystander for the opening 57 minutes Monday night, skating a step or two behind despite knowing how intense Detroit would play. Knowing something and experiencing it are two different things, and the young Sabres learned how quickly a team can move when it needs to win.

"The game was at another level speed-wise and urgency-wise from the Red Wings that we didn't match, that we didn't have," Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said after a 3-2 loss in Joe Louis Arena. "A lot of that was the opportunities that we gave them on the power play. That was a real big storyline of the game, but it was also because they did bring that level early and forced us to deal with it."

Detroit, which has made 24 straight postseasons, needed to win to remain in the wild-card hunt. Buffalo talked all morning about matching the Red Wings' intensity. Instead, the Sabres took nearly as many penalties (three) as shots (four) during the opening period. With three minutes left in the game, the Sabres were in a 3-0 hole and had taken just 14 shots.

"Our mindset was to do everything we can to kind of ruin their parade a little bit," Buffalo right wing Sam Reinhart said. "Unfortunately, it took too long. We knew what we had to do, and there's no excuse for showing up a little late."

The Sabres have more than held their own lately against fellow also-rans Carolina, Ottawa, Montreal and Winnipeg, arriving in Detroit with a 4-1-1 run. But they fell to 1-5-1 in the last seven games against teams in the playoffs or on the cusp.

"We needed more desperation in our game," defenseman Jake McCabe said. "We've seen that over the course of the season. That's where we want to get to. We want to be a playoff team, and we need to be closer to playing playoff hockey every night and get used to winning games like this."

Despite being outclassed for much of the night, the Sabres nearly pulled off another comeback. Zemgus Girgensons scored with 2:50 left to get Buffalo on the scoreboard. Reinhart connected on a cross-ice pass from Casey Nelson with 1:49 to go, forcing the Red Wings to call a timeout to regain their breath and composure.

The Sabres had a few chances with goaltender Chad Johnson pulled, but they couldn't connect for the tying goal.

"At this point you can't really look at the last 30 seconds when there's a lot more to work on in the first 55 minutes," Reinhart said.

Added Bylsma: "Our team didn't give up, that was for darn sure. I liked the way we threw it all out there at the end, but it's a lot too little and a lot too late."

The Sabres rallied without No. 1 left wing Evander Kane. He suffered an upper-body injury during the second period and didn't come out for the third.

"He played a handful of shifts with the upper-body injury and just wasn't able to continue on," said Bylsma, who listed Kane as day-to-day but said it's doubtful the winger will play Tuesday in Pittsburgh.

The Penguins are trying to maintain a divisional playoff spot rather than fall into a wild-card position, so the Sabres should know what type of game they're getting into when they take the ice. They hope it starts sooner on Monday.

"That third was better, but the first two periods it was all Detroit," McCabe said. "They were the desperate team, and they showed us."

## **O'Reilly has become building block the Sabres hoped he could be**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

March 29, 2016

DETROIT – The Sabres wanted a solid foundation while building from the ground up. They needed players with skill, but they desired someone dedicated to improving who could show others the importance of hard work.

They found their guy in Ryan O'Reilly. Buffalo's leading scorer is also its most determined player, one who has made the pursuit of winning and the desire for a flawless game his main objectives whenever he walks into a rink.

"Me and my brother, we just always grew up loving the game," O'Reilly, whose brother, Cal, also plays for the Sabres, said Monday. "We always wanted to get as best as we could. We never think we've arrived anywhere. We always want to grow our games and ourselves. It's one of those things that we enjoy in the game is getting better."

O'Reilly has improved, and so have the Sabres. The 25-year-old has helped bring focus to a young team that needed it. His efforts have been recognized by the Buffalo chapter of the Professional Hockey Writers' Association, which has nominated O'Reilly for the Masterton Trophy.

The award is given annually to the NHL player who best exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship and dedication to hockey. O'Reilly excels in the last two categories. The former Lady Byng winner has just four minor penalties despite leading NHL forwards in ice time at 21:48 per game.

"He's very dedicated to hockey," Sabres left wing Marcus Foligno said in Joe Louis Arena. "I'm sure that award goes with the passion you have for the game, too. He really loves the game and has a huge heart for winning.

"The way he plays, too, is the right way. He works hard, has got skill and has been a leader for us all year. He's been our top leader when it comes to work ethic, and definitely the dedication he shows to the game is nice for all these young guys coming in and learning from him."

Sabres management knew O'Reilly had a reputation as a hard worker, which is why they acquired him in a blockbuster trade with Colorado in June and promptly gave him the richest contract in team history. O'Reilly certainly got off on the wrong foot with Buffalo – he was charged with driving while impaired and leaving the scene of an accident, a case that will go before an Ontario court in July – but his efforts at the arena have created the pied-piper effect that the organization sought.

Attendance for O'Reilly's extensive post-practice drills, which he designs to improve his skills, has steadily grown. They have been particularly beneficial for rookie Sam Reinhart, who has blossomed into a 21-goal scorer.

"It's such a beautiful game," O'Reilly said. "You can be so creative in so many different ways in training, and we just like to incorporate all that. It's a lot of fun. It's just the greatest game in the world, and I'm very lucky and fortunate to be able to play at this level and want to play here as long as I can."

## Quick hits: Red Wings 3, Sabres 2

By John Vogl  
Buffalo News  
March 29, 2016

DETROIT – The last time the Red Wings missed the playoffs, 15 members of the Sabres hadn't even been born yet. Detroit isn't guaranteed of extending its streak, but it sure wasn't going to let a bunch of kids from Buffalo get in the way.

Detroit kept its playoff hopes alive with a 3-2 victory Monday in Joe Louis Arena. The Red Wings kept pace with Philadelphia, which has the same number of points as Detroit (87) but has played one fewer game.

Buffalo lost in regulation for just the second time in seven games. Zemgus Girgensons scored with 2:50 left to end the shutout on just the 15th shot by the Sabres. Sam Reinhart made things interesting with 1:49 to go, ripping home a shot from the left side to make it 3-2.

The last time the Red Wings missed the postseason was 1989-90. Mark Pysyk, Evander Kane, Jack Eichel, Johan Larsson, Sam Reinhart, Zemgus Girgensons, Jake McCabe, Casey Nelson, Nicolas Deslauriers, Zach Bogosian, Nathan Lieuwen, Hudson Fasching, Rasmus Ristolainen, Marcus Foligno and Ryan O'Reilly weren't alive.

Detroit has made the playoffs 24 straight years. The second-longest streak in the NHL belongs to Pittsburgh at nine seasons.

"We want to want to play in the postseason," Detroit captain Henrik Zetterberg said. "When we do that, obviously the streak continues. In here, our main focus is not the streak. It's to be able to play in the playoffs."

**Kane hurt:** Kane did not come out for the third period because of injury. He skated 11:34 with one shot, one hit and one blocked shot during the opening 40 minutes.

**Breaking the seal:** The Red Wings finally turned their solid first period into a 1-0 lead with 1:28 to go. With Josh Gorges in the box for Buffalo's third early penalty, Johnson kicked away Zetterberg's shot from the slot. The rebound went to Dylan Larkin, and the rookie buried it for his 22nd goal of the season.

Detroit outshot the Sabres, 12-4, during the first period. The shot attempts were 20-10. Buffalo won just six of 24 faceoffs (25 percent).

**Coast to coast:** The Sabres put Riley Sheahan on the highlight reels midway through the second period. The Detroit forward circled behind his own net then skated past, through and around Buffalo's players without being touched. He completed his end-to-end rush by lofting a shot over Johnson's glove and into the net off the post. The goal, with 9:05 gone in the second, gave the Red Wings a 2-0 lead.

Detroit had a 21-9 shot lead through two periods.

**Missed chance:** Despite being outplayed, the Sabres had a great chance to tie the game, 1-1, when Detroit took a penalty with only 30 seconds gone in the middle period. Buffalo faltered again. The Sabres' power play had been blanked in seven of the previous nine games, going just 2 for 27 during the span.

**Happy birthday, Mr. Hockey:** During a first-period commercial break, the Red Wings introduced Gordie Howe on the scoreboard. Fans and players from both teams rose to their feet, with the patrons applauding and the skaters tapping their sticks on the boards. A Red Wings host then led the crowd in serenading Mr. Hockey with "Happy Birthday." He turns 88 on Thursday.

**Power-play work for Nelson:** Sabres defenseman Casey Nelson joined the power play during his debut despite having spent no practice time with the unit. He was more prepared against the Red Wings and joined the second group of Evander Kane, Brian Gionta, Matt Moulson and Zach Bogosian.

"It's definitely an experience thing," Nelson said. "You've just got to go through it and get more comfortable out there. They did some sitdown with me before practice and really went over the power play. I think I've got more of a hang of it."

**Mixing at the top:** For the second straight game, Hudson Fasching started on the fourth line along center David Legwand and left wing Matt Moulson but got shifts on the top line with Ryan O'Reilly and Evander Kane.

**Wanting a piece:** After watching Luke Glendening hit Sabres captain Brian Gionta, Marcus Foligno followed Glendening up ice and whacked him with his stick the entire way. Glendening declined Foligno's invitation to fight, and the Sabres winger went to the box for cross-checking with 4:16 left in the second.

**Next:** The Sabres will conclude the 14th of 15 sets of back-to-backs Tuesday in Pittsburgh. Buffalo is 5-7-1 in the second game. After taking Wednesday off, the Sabres will host Toronto on Thursday in First Niagara Center.

The Penguins are 8-1 in their last nine games and lead the NHL with 48 goals in March. Pittsburgh is 2-0 against the Sabres this season, winning both games by a score of 4-3.

## **O'Reilly named Sabres' nominee for Masterton Award**

By Mike Harrington  
Buffalo News  
March 28, 2016

Center Ryan O'Reilly has been selected as the Buffalo Sabres' nominee for the Bill Masterton Memorial Trophy, awarded each year to the NHL player who best exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship and dedication to hockey.

O'Reilly was chosen in a vote of the Buffalo chapter of the Professional Hockey Writers Association. Winger Marcus Foligno finished second in the balloting and goaltender Robin Lehner finished third. Ten players received at least one vote.

O'Reilly's name will be entered against nominees from each of the other 29 NHL teams. The winner will be announced at the NHL Awards Show in Las Vegas in June. The award is named for Masterton, a forward for the Minnesota North Stars who died on Jan. 15, 1968, a few days after suffering a head injury during a game.

In his first season with the team after a blockbuster draft-night trade with Colorado, O'Reilly leads all NHL forwards in ice time (21:48 per game). He has 17 goals and leads the Sabres in assists (35), points (52) and faceoff percentage (56.6). O'Reilly was also Buffalo's lone representative to the All-Star Game in Nashville in January.

But more than just the numbers, O'Reilly has become a de facto captain in the locker room and on the ice.

In what General Manager Tim Murray has dubbed "The O'Reilly Practices," the 25-year-old routinely stays on the ice after the club's regular workouts and leads many of his teammates in more extra skills drills after the coaches have left. Pylons, sticks and other barriers fill the ice as the pucks fly, often for another 30-45 minutes. Only when O'Reilly is satisfied with the progress do the others call it a day.

Minnesota goaltender Devin Dubnyk was last year's Masterton Award recipient. The Sabres have had two winners: Don Luce (1975) and Pat LaFontaine (1995)

## Red Wings hang on to defeat Sabres

By Paul Harris

NHL.com

March 29, 2016

**DETROIT** -- The Detroit Red Wings almost let a 3-0 lead with three minutes remaining slip away, but held on to defeat the Buffalo Sabres 3-2 at Joe Louis Arena on Monday.

The Red Wings remain tied with the Philadelphia Flyers for the second wild-card in the Eastern Conference. Philadelphia defeated the Winnipeg Jets 3-2 in overtime Monday and hold the tie-breaker since they have a game in hand. The Red Wings, fourth in the Atlantic Division, moved to within a point of the third-place Boston Bruins.

Dylan Larkin, Riley Sheahan and Luke Glendening scored for Detroit (38-27-11). Henrik Zetterberg had two assists and Jimmy Howard made 18 saves.

"I thought we had to be good. I thought we were. ... obviously, until the very end there," Red Wings coach Jeff Blashill said. "I thought we played a good game, we didn't give them much, didn't give up many shots, didn't give up a whole lot of chances. Obviously there's still corrections we can make with some mistakes. Overall, I thought it was good."

Zemgus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart scored for Buffalo (31-35-10). Casey Nelson had two assists Chad Johnson made 26 saves.

Girgensons scored with 2:50 left in the game and Reinhart scored 1:11 later with Johnson pulled to make it close.

"It's about all we played all game, the last three to five minutes," Sabres captain Brian Gionta said. "We had a tough time tonight, a tough time getting on the puck, dealing with their execution."

It was Girgenson's sixth goal and first in 24 games. Reinhart got his 22nd goal.

"Unfortunately, it took too long. ... But no excuse for starting late," Reinhart said.

Glendening's empty-net goal with three minutes left made it 3-0.

Larkin's power-play goal gave Detroit a 1-0 lead with 1:28 left in the first period. He moved to the bottom of the left circle and put the rebound of Zetterberg's shot off Johnson, the inside of the right goal post and into the net. It was Larkin's 22nd goal, the most by a Red Wings rookie since Zetterberg had 22 in 2002-03.

"I think the last game (a 7-2 loss against the Pittsburgh Penguins on Saturday) might have been a little tough for us but it was big to get the first goal tonight," Larkin said. "I think the second one was an even bigger goal. I think we do have to work on taking the lead all the way to the end and playing a full 60 minutes."

Sheahan made it 2-0 9:05 into the second period. He picked up the puck in the corner to Howard's left, went behind the net, stopped and started in the bottom of the opposite circle, headed up ice, weaving his way through the three zones and beat Johnson with a wrist shot from the top of the left circle. It was Sheahan's 12th goal and third in three games.

"I just tried to get up ice and I saw a little bit of room to skate," Sheahan said. "I keep kind of just kept going and kept going and made my way through there. I didn't really mean to do that or have that in mind but I had some room and I got a good shot off so it was good."

Hockey Hall of Fame member and Detroit Red Wings legend Gordie Howe was in attendance and addressed Detroit's players before the game. With fewer than seven minutes remaining in the first period, Howe was shown

on the scoreboard and got a standing ovation from the crowd, which sang "Happy Birthday". Howe will turn 88 on Thursday.

Buffalo forward Evander Kane left the game after the second period with an upper-body injury and did not return.

"He played a handful of shifts with the injury and just wasn't able to continue," Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said. "He's day-to-day right now. I doubt we'll see him in [Tuesday's] game [in Pittsburgh]."

## Red-hot Penguins set to host Sabres

By David Satriano

NHL.com

March 29, 2016

### **SABRES (31-35-10) at PENGUINS (42-25-8)**

**TV: 7:30 p.m. ET; NBCSN, FS-D, SNE, SNO, SNO**

**Season series:** The Pittsburgh Penguins have won each game against the Buffalo Sabres by a 4-3 score. Penguins goalie Jeff Zatkoff made 50 saves and center Evgeni Malkin had a goal and an assist in the second period at Consol Energy Center on Oct. 29. Defenseman Kris Letang had three assists at First Niagara Center on Feb 21. Defensemen Zach Bogosian (one goal, two assists) and Rasmus Ristolainen (three assists) lead the Sabres with three points each.

**Sabres team scope:** Buffalo likely will be without wing Evander Kane, who left a 3-2 loss to the Detroit Red Wings on Monday after the second period. "He played a handful of shifts with the upper-body injury and just wasn't able to continue on," coach Dan Bylsma told the Sabres website after the game. "I doubt we'll see him in [Tuesday's] game, but it's a little early to tell at this point." The Sabres will try to play spoiler against the Penguins, who are in third place in the Metropolitan Division. They scored two goals in the final three minutes to turn a 3-0 lead into a 3-2 game Monday, but were unable to tie the game. "I liked the way we threw it all out there at the end, but it's a lot too little and a lot too late at that point in time in the game," Bylsma said.

**Penguins team scope:** Pittsburgh did not practice Monday following a 3-2 overtime win against the New York Rangers on Sunday. They are three points behind the Rangers for second place in the Metropolitan Division with a game in hand and three points ahead of the New York Islanders for third place having played one more game. "It's huge. Two points in the standings," defenseman Kris Letang told the Penguins website after the game. "To win in their building on a back-to-back game was pretty big." The Penguins have won eight of their past nine games (8-0-1). Forward Phil Kessel was named the NHL's Third Star of the week after having two goals and five assists this weekend, including five points in a 7-2 win against the Detroit Red Wings on Saturday. "I thought his last two games might be his best two games since I've been here," coach Mike Sullivan told the Penguins website. "He's going to the battle areas. He's in front of the net, he is down in the trenches. I think Phil is playing hard right now. ... He is a dangerous guy." Forward Oskar Sundqvist was reassigned to Wilkes-Barre/Scranton of the American Hockey League.

## Ryan O'Reilly Masterton Trophy nomination earns widespread mockery

By Greg Wyshynski

Yahoo Sports

March 28, 2016

The NHL's Bill Masterton Trophy nominations are trickling out on Monday. And if the reaction tells you anything, the Buffalo chapter of the Professional Hockey Writers' Association had theirs trickle down their legs.

Ryan O'Reilly is the Buffalo Sabres nominee for the Masterton Trophy, given annually "to the National Hockey League player who best exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship, and dedication to ice hockey."

And really, what better exemplifies dedication to your standing as a professional athlete than drunkenly crashing your vintage truck into a Tim Hortons and then fleeing the scene?

Once more, with feeling: The Buffalo chapter nominated a 24-year-old athlete whose impaired driving trial will take place roughly two weeks after the NHL Awards this summer for an award that usually reserved for players who overcome catastrophic injury, life-threatening illness or, perhaps most admirably, journeyman goalies.

Mike Harrington of the Buffalo News was tasked with writing the nomination story in the Buffalo News:

*In his first season with the team after a blockbuster draft-night trade with Colorado, O'Reilly leads all NHL forwards in ice time (21:48 per game). He has 17 goals and leads the Sabres in assists (35), points (52) and faceoff percentage (56.6). O'Reilly was also Buffalo's lone representative to the All-Star Game in Nashville in January.*

*But more than just the numbers, O'Reilly has become a de facto captain in the locker room and on the ice.*

*In what General Manager Tim Murray has dubbed "The O'Reilly Practices," the 25-year-old routinely stays on the ice after the club's regular workouts and leads many of his teammates in more extra skills drills after the coaches have left. Pylons, sticks and other barriers fill the ice as the pucks fly, often for another 30-45 minutes. Only when O'Reilly is satisfied with the progress do the others call it a day.*

Clearly, the Mark Messier Leadership Award's cloudy future forced the nomination of O'Reilly for the Masterton for doing "de facto captain" things.

The nomination has earned quick criticism and bafflement and mockery. And rightfully so.

Look, we get that the Sabres don't exactly have a deep bench of potential nominees, and that's when you have to stretch logic to lasso one in. Like, for example, when the Winnipeg media gave theirs to a goalie who lost his job to a rookie, listened to advice and wasn't a big meanie to reporters.

Winger Marcus Foligno finished second in the balloting and goaltender Robin Lehner finished third. Maybe you kick it over to Brian Gionta or David Legwand as the venerable "old guy" nominee, seeing as how neither have pending impaired driving trials on their dockets.

But the Buffalo PHWAers clearly feel they've made the right call, backlashed be damned.

While we respect the defiant streak, it's unfortunate that a player with such recent off-ice infamy would be nominated for an award that essentially honors the NHL's greatest role models.

And with that said, let's all exhale emphatically and applaud the Chicago chapter for making Michal Rozsival their Masterton nominee this season ...

## **Sabres deal offers Cornel a path to play pro hockey**

By Sean McIntosh  
Peterborough Examiner  
March 29, 2016

With the Petes preparing for Game 3 of their Eastern Conference quarter-final series, team captain Eric Cornel signed a three-year entry-level contract with the Buffalo Sabres of the NHL.

Cornel was drafted by the Sabres in the second round of the 2014 NHL entry draft. Being able to sign the contract was a dream come true for him, he said.

"It felt great," he said. "Something I've always wanted to do is give myself the chance to play pro hockey."

Buffalo is currently seven spots from the bottom of the NHL standings, but is in the midst of rebuilding its roster by stockpiling young prospects. Potentially being able to play with top end young players, like first-round picks Jack Eichel and Sam Reinhart, is an exciting thought for Cornel.

"I think Buffalo's really doing well. They're getting a lot of prospects and if all the young guys get a chance to move up through the minor leagues and come up as a group, I think it's going to be special," he said.

Cornel said getting the contract signed was never a distraction from playing with the Petes.

"All season I was pretty focused on our team," he said. "It's not going to change at all. We have a special group in here and we're really looking forward to a playoff run."

Over his four years as a member of the Petes, Cornel has grown into a leader, said Petes coach Jody Hull.

"I'm proud of him. He's put in a lot of hard work over the last four years here," he said. "He's been one of our most consistent guys as far as work ethic, both in game and in practice, and when you do things the right way like that, usually there's some benefits and success at the end of the road."

Cornel picked up two assists in the series-tying 5-3 win over the Battalion in North Bay Sunday, after the team lost 2-1 in Friday's Game 1. The series will now shift to Peterborough, with the Petes hosting North Bay on Tuesday night.

It's important the team play with the same energy at home as they did in North Bay, Hull said.

"We're not going to change much in how we do things," Hull said. "You try to stick to your routine as much as possible obviously. We'll review video and see if there's anything different we can do to help our club."

"The big thing is to continue to play with confidence and be consistent every time you're on the ice," he said.

Splitting the two games in North Bay was huge for the team, added Cornel.

The Battalion have "a tough rink to play in," Cornel said. "It's like a hostile environment. For us to get that win, and pretty convincingly too, in the second game, it's good for our confidence knowing we can win up there. Now we got to take care of business here."

Puck drop is at 7 p.m. Tuesday at the Memorial Centre. The Petes will then host North Bay on Thursday for Game 4.

## **Red Wings Survive Against Sabres 3-2**

By Dan Cave

WGR 550

March 29, 2016

The Sabres were listless for about 57 minutes on Monday before pouring it on in the final moments of regulation, yet still falling short of the Red Wings 3-2. Late goals by Zemgus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart provided a dose of late hope, but it was too little too late. The Sabres managed only nine shots on net over the first 40 minutes.

### **Scoring**

- Dylan Larkin capitalized on Detroit's third power play opportunity of the opening period, rattling home a Henrik Zetterberg rebound for the 1-0 lead.
- The Red Wings made it 2-0 in the 2nd period on Riley Sheahan's 12th, a shot that bounced off the post and into the net.
- Luke Glendening's empty netter with three minutes to play appeared to seal it, but Zemgus Girgensons found the net only 10 seconds later to get Buffalo on the board for the first time.
- Just 1:01 later, Reinhart ripped a one-timer from Casey Nelson past Jimmy Howard, pulling the Sabres to within a goal. With Chad Johnson once again out of the net, Buffalo poured it on over the final two minutes but couldn't tie it up.

### **Game Notes**

- Nelson picked up his second assist in as many career games.
- Reinhart's 22nd pulls him even with Larkin in the rookie goal scoring race, and one behind teammate Jack Eichel (23).

### **What's Next**

The Sabres stay on the road for a second straight night, visiting the Pittsburgh Penguins on Tuesday. Hear the call on WGR 550 and the Buffalo Sabres Radio Network.

## **Sabres-Red Wings: From the Locker Room**

WGR 550

March 29, 2016

Zemgus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart scored 1:01 apart late in the 3rd period, but the damage had already been done in Buffalo's 3-2 loss to the Red Wings. Read what both players told reporters following the game.

### **Zemgus Girgensons**

"I don't think we got the forecheck going early, I don't think we played north as much as we should have. We turned the puck over, we gave them fuel in the fire to come at us. We gave a nice push in the last three minutes, but you can't win hockey games just playing three minutes out of 60."

"I was just yelling for [Gionta] to put the puck out there. He heard me and made a really nice play, and I just went gloveside."

### **Sam Reinhart**

"Our mindset was to do everything we can to ruin their parade a little bit. That being said, we still have a job to do this season. We still have teams we can catch and continue to get better. Unfortunately it took too long, but I think the preparation mindset was good going in. We knew what we had to do and there's no excuse for showing up a little late."

"I feel like we created their speed too much. We could have held onto the puck a little more. Coming out of our end we gave them too many quick transitions and they were able to capitalize on a couple of them and really dominate the game for the most part from that standpoint."

## **Sabres have their Masterton candidate**

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

March 29, 2016

Detroit, MI (WGR 550) -- The Professional Hockey Writers Association votes for a candidate in each city for the Masterton Trophy. The award exemplifies the qualities of perseverance, sportsmanship and dedication to hockey.

The Buffalo Chapter selected Ryan O'Reilly. The Sabres leading scorer with 17 goals and 35 assists for 52 points in 64 games said, "It's a huge honor, the organization is just first class and they make it easy for when you want to do something in the community and be involved."

Many athletes like to try to give back to kids inside the community. The center said, "Anytime you do something with kids and to get that kind of support from those people it's just awesome and a great thing to be a part of with little kids that look up to us, for me I was in the same boat when I was younger, anytime I saw a NHL player, I couldn't believe it so to see little kids and to say hi to them and talk to them it's one of those things that you never thought you'd be doing."

I remember when I interviewed O'Reilly in August about the driving while impaired charge that still hasn't been settle in Canada, he was so upset about the message that he had just sent to parents and kids. He mentioned it numerous times in the interview and said he would do everything he could to make it up to them.

Since then he has been the model citizen for his teammates and the community. I can say first hand that when kids are at HarborCenter he stops and has a give and take with the whole group. The look in their eyes that I see can be rewarding.

O'Reilly stays on the ice about 30 minutes after practice with youngsters like Sam Reinhart, Jack Eichel and now Hudson Fasching joins him. It's that type of dedication that impressed the voters, "Me and my brother just grew up loving the game, we always wanted to be the best that we could."

"We never thought we had arrived anywhere, we always wanted to grow our games and ourselves, so it's something that we enjoy every day, that getting better."

Buffalo picks up its game in hand on Montreal tonight in Detroit and a win would tie the Habs for 23<sup>rd</sup> in the NHL. The Sabres are three in back of Arizona and four in front of Winnipeg, Columbus and Calgary.

Detroit is tied with Philadelphia for the Eastern Conference's last playoff spot. The Islanders have the first wild card spot, which is four points in front. The Red Wings are three in back of Boston in the Atlantic Division which would also get them in.

The Sabres have picked up three out of four points in Joe Louis Arena this season, but Dan Bylsma knows this could be different, "We talked about it this morning, they're going to be a desperate team and one that's fighting to get into that playoff picture. We've talked about playing games at this time of year and they're harder to win."

Buffalo has won three of four games and has picked up points in nine of 12 games.

Chad Johnson will get his fifth straight start with Robin Lehner still not on the trip. Johnson has gone 3-1-0 in the four games giving up nine goals.

The Wings have lost two of three and four out of seven.

Jimmy Howard will be in goal for Detroit and has given up nine goals in three outings which includes one game of 25 minutes.

Pavel Datsyuk has points in four straight games and has seven points in six games.

Join Mike Schopp for the pregame at 6:30 when he'll be joined by Dan Bylsma, Ryan O'Reilly and Casey Nelson.

## Furious comeback effort falls short in Detroit

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

March 29, 2016

**DETROIT** – Only after Luke Glendening found the back of an empty net for the Detroit Red Wings were the Buffalo Sabres finally able to make things interesting on Monday night at Joe Louis Arena. Detroit had led for the entire night, and Glendening's goal extended that lead to 3-0 with three minutes left to play.

Only 10 seconds passed, however, before Zemgus Girgensons caught a pass from Brian Gionta and scored from the left circle. Another minute went by and Sam Reinhart scored into the wide-open net thanks to heads up feed by Casey Nelson.

After putting forth one of their most disappointing offensive outputs of the season through the first 57 minutes, the Sabres all of a sudden trailed by only one goal with 1:49 remaining. They came close to getting that goal, too, putting puck after puck to the net until they eventually ran out of time in a 3-2 loss.

"It fell to me twice, I know some other guys had opportunities too," Reinhart said of the team's last ditch effort to tie the game. "At this point you can't really look at the last 30 seconds when there's a lot more to look at in the first 55 minutes."

Up until those final minutes, the Sabres appeared certain to end up with fewer than 19 shots, which was their season-low entering Monday. They put six shots on net in the final three minutes to avoid that total and finished with 20.

"Our team didn't give up, that was for darn sure," Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said. "I liked the way we threw it all out there at the end but it's a lot too little and a lot too late."

Buffalo was called for three penalties in the first period, and it eventually came back to bite them. Dylan Larkin opened the scoring for the Red Wings on the power play with 1:28 remaining in the period after Josh Gorges was called for interference.

The Sabres went without a shot on their own power play to begin the second, and Riley Sheahan added to the lead 9:05 into the period with a coast-to-coast goal that began with him circling behind the net in his own zone and ended with him sniping a shot to the upper far-side corner.

Sheahan skated between Matt Moulson and Brian Gionta on the entry and distanced himself from Rasmus Ristolainen, the last defender in his path, to take his shot from the left circle.

"I feel like we created their speed too much," Reinhart said. "We could've held on to the puck a little bit more, I feel like coming out of our end we kind of gave them too many transitions. They were able to capitalize on a couple of them and really dominated from that standpoint."

The Red Wings entered Monday tied with the Philadelphia Flyers for the second Wild Card in the Eastern Conference. Detroit's 24-year playoff streak, the longest active streak for any team in the four major North American sports, hinges on these last two weeks, and it showed in the Red Wings' play.

"I think the game was at another level speed wise and urgency wise from the Red Wings that we didn't match, we didn't have," Bylsma said. "I think, again a lot of that was the opportunities we gave them on the power play and I think that was a real big storyline in the game but it was also because they did bring that level early and forced us to deal with it."

The Sabres said it was the exact sort of effort they knew they'd need to match going in.

"Our mindset was to do everything we can to kind of ruin their parade a little bit," Reinhart said. "With that being said we still have a job to do this season, we still have teams we can catch and continue to get better. Unfortunately it took too long, but I think the preparation, mindset was good going in."

Chad Johnson made 26 saves in the loss for Buffalo.

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### **KANE LEAVES EARLY**

Evander Kane continued to play in the second period after sustaining an upper-body injury, but did not return in the third. His status is questionable for Buffalo's game in Pittsburgh on Tuesday night.

"He played a handful of shifts with the injury, the upper-body injury, and just wasn't able to continue on. Day-to-day right now, we'll get him evaluated a little bit more and I doubt we'll see him in tomorrow's game but it's a little too early to tell at this point."

Ryan O'Reilly joined a line with rookie forwards Jack Eichel and Sam Reinhart in Kane's absence.

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### **ANOTHER POINT FOR NELSON**

Playing in only his second NHL game, Nelson was on the ice for both of the Sabres' late goals on Monday and earned his second career assist on Reinhart's tally. Nelson faked a shot from the point and instead found Reinhart with a pass to the left circle.

"I think there was a lot of traffic," Reinhart said. "It was a nice, composed play back there, there's no question about it."

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### **HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO MR. HOCKEY**

Gordie Howe, the Red Wings legend and all-time leading scorer, was in the building to celebrate his 88th birthday on Monday. Howe was introduced during the game as the crowd sang "Happy Birthday." Prior to the game, he met with a few of the Sabres, including Eichel.

### **UP NEXT**

The Sabres are right back in action with another road game on Tuesday night against the Pittsburgh Penguins. Coverage begins at 6:30 p.m. with Topps Sabres Gamenight on MSG-B and Bell TV. The game can also be heard live on WGR 550.