



Buffalo Sabres

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New York judge to dismiss charges against Sabres' Kane

Associated Press

November 1, 2016

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) — A judge will dismiss the charges against Buffalo Sabres forward Evander Kane stemming from scuffles with women in a bar if he stays out of future trouble.

The arrangement is contingent on the 25-year-old player avoiding legal issues for the next six months. Kane didn't speak during or after his brief appearance in a Buffalo court. Kane's lawyer says Monday's action doesn't include an admission of guilt, and Kane still denies the allegations.

Kane was arrested in July, a month after allegedly grabbing three women by the hair and neck in separate encounters on the same night in a downtown Buffalo bar. Kane was removed from the club by bouncers. He was charged with misdemeanor disorderly conduct, trespass and noncriminal harassment.

Sabres prep for challenge of a busy November

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 31, 2016

ST. PAUL, Minn -- The Buffalo Sabres did something here Monday that won't be repeated much for most of November: They practiced. In stages this season, teams around the NHL are not going to get a lot of time to retool and the Sabres are entering one such period now.

Starting with Tuesday's game against the Minnesota Wild in Xcel Energy Center, Buffalo has seven games in the first 12 days of November and 14 games overall this month. From now to Thanksgiving, there is just one time when the Sabres have more than two days in a row off.

"It's a lot of hockey, that's for sure," defenseman Josh Gorges said after the hour-long workout. "We all knew what November was going to be like. We've looked at it but you don't want to look too far down the road that you have this many games in this many nights. It's just what's in front of us and make sure you do what you need to do to get ready for that game, whether it's rest, more work, whatever."

The Sabres finished October with two straight wins to get their record to 3-3-2. Avenging last Thursday's 4-0 home whitewash by the Wild is certainly high on their agenda to start the new month.

"It's game after game after game and it's started now for us," said coach Dan Bylsma. "It's a great time for us to make some hay. Four days ago, we were not feeling good about where we were at. Now we've won to start this run of a lot of games ... we're going to have a chance to keep playing and win more hockey games and that's what we need to do."

The NHL schedule is more compact than normal this year because it started a week later due to the World Cup of Hockey and because teams have a five-day bye period with no practices or games. The Sabres get theirs in late February. The slate wraps up April 9, still around the normal finishing date.

So a team playing well when its rough stretches come up can pile up some quick points. Conversely, a team enduring a crisis of confidence might fritter away lots of chances to creep up the standings.

October was a mixed bag for the Sabres, as they scored just one goal in dropping their first two home games and blew third-period leads in losses at Calgary and Philadelphia. Buffalo finished the month 21st in the league in offense and 12th in defense, scoring and allowing 2.5 goals per game.

Kyle Okposo and a rejuvenated Matt Moulson lead the team with four goals apiece, and Okposo has scored three in the last two games.

"You want to produce and I'm starting to do that," Okposo said. "I try to do the other things affecting the game in a positive way but it's always nice to get on the scoresheet and doing it while you put some wins together."

Where the club has thrived has been on special teams. The Sabres are tied for sixth in the league on the power play at 25 percent and are seventh on the penalty kill at 86.7 percent. The Sabres have killed off 26 of 30 man-advantage situations, with three of the fourth goals against them came in last Tuesday's collapse in Philadelphia.

"Special teams is a huge factor, a key to every game," said Bylsma. "We've started to develop with our power play the mentality we're going to step over the boards and score a goal. With the PK, you'd like to scratch a third period from the record. Minus that, they have done a job in almost every game we've played. The last two games they had to come up with big kills in the third period to keep the game the way it was."

The Sabres jumped to leads on both the Panthers and Wild and didn't sit back trying to preserve them. Florida never threatened and Winnipeg would have been put away had the Sabres simply hit an empty net with one of several chances.

"In today's game, you can't sit back and try to play safe, patient, slower hockey," said Gorges. "You give the other team room, you give them momentum and life and they start feeling good about themselves.

"We needed to have those games and we have to have that same mindset coming into this game. A lot happens throughout an 82-game season. It's about finding that fine line of not getting too excited or too down when things happen. It's a challenge."

Sabres Notebook: Red-hot Wild dealing with cap, injury woes

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 31, 2016

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- The Minnesota Wild have plenty to be happy about heading into Tuesday's visit from the Sabres, with a 6-2-1 record that has them atop the Central Division and third in the NHL's overall standing. But the Wild also have plenty to worry about that left coach Bruce Boudreau in an admittedly foul mood at practice Monday.

The Wild skated with just 14 players, four under what would dress in a normal game. Two players were returned to the minor leagues after Saturday's 4-0 win over Dallas to save some cap space, former Sabre Chris Stewart had the flu and former Buffalo/Rochester winger Zac Dalpe underwent knee surgery Monday, according to the Minneapolis Star-Tribune.

"I was really grumpy this morning," Boudreau told Minnesota reporters. "Coaches like to have really good practices. And I know the reasons why we only have eight forwards and six defensemen out there. It doesn't make practice any easier if you want to keep getting better, especially early on in the season. ... when you're not able to practice full bore because of numbers, then it's sort of irritating."

Minnesota lost two stalwarts, forward Zach Parise (foot) and defenseman Marco Scandella (ankle), with week-to-week injuries in Thursday's 4-0 win over the Sabres in KeyBank Center. Center Erik Haula remains at least a week away from returning due to a foot injury.

The Star Tribune reported the Wild was checking with the league about potential long-term injured reserve designations on their cap so they can avoid potentially playing the same short-handed by a player due to the cap.

With that as a backdrop, Minnesota has won four games in a row -- and Devan Dubnyk has become the first goaltender in franchise history to post shutouts in three straight games. The Wild blanked Boston and Buffalo on the road and returned home for the Dallas win as Dubnyk earned NHL Second Star of the Week honors.

The Wild have gone a franchise-record 181 minutes, 43 seconds without allowing a goal, dating to a tally by New York Islanders center John Tavares with 1:43 left in a 6-3 Minnesota loss Oct. 23 in Barclays Center.

Minnesota native and former University of Minnesota star Hudson Fasching won't have a homecoming Tuesday night against the Wild as the Sabres winger was ruled out for the game with a groin injury suffered on his lone shift Sunday in Winnipeg.

Coach Dan Bylsma said the Sabres will make a recall from Rochester to have 12 forwards for the game. That player was not on hand for practice Monday, perhaps out of salary cap considerations and perhaps given the fact the Amerks just returned from a road trip in Newfoundland on Sunday.

The Sabres ended practice Monday with some light moments. It started with a shootout drill, and goalie coach Andrew Allen as well as his two netminders were celebrating making 11 straight saves before Nicholas Baptiste finally scored.

Then the goalies got out of the way, the Sabres gathered at one end of the ice and took turns firing pucks at the empty net at the opposite end. The team had multiple chances at the empty net in the final three minutes in Winnipeg, including several chances when the Jets were on a 6-on-4 power play. And no one looked for a pass to Kyle Okposo, who was in search of his first hat trick with the Sabres.

"We went over a couple scenarios," said a smiling Bylsma. "All in good fun. You'd like to slide them in there and end the game. There were a few lessons to learn, from not getting the center red line to not finding Kyle Okposo for a hat trick."

Evander Kane charges from bar incident heading to dismissal

By Melinda Miller

The Buffalo News

October 31, 2016

The harassment and trespassing cases against Evander Kane will be dismissed in April if Kane stays out of trouble for the next six months, it was agreed Monday morning.

Buffalo City Court Judge Barbara Johnson-Lee approved the plea agreement and ordered an adjournment in contemplation of dismissal for all four cases, which stemmed from alleged incidents involving the Sabres star at a bar on West Chippewa Street the night of June 24 and 25.

Kane had faced one misdemeanor trespass charge and separate noncriminal violations of disorderly conduct and harassment after two female patrons and a bouncer at the Bottoms Up club reported Kane had grabbed the women and pulled their hair, and then refused the bouncer's orders to leave.

Kane, through his attorney Paul Cambria, has consistently denied the complainants' versions of the events.

By Monday, all plaintiffs had agreed with the proposed plea and, according to Assistant District Attorney Lynette Reda, none were requesting an order of protection against Kane.

[Related: 'You're coming to my house with me and you're going to like it,' woman said Kane told her]

Had that been the case, Cambria indicated he was prepared to counter with his own request for orders of protection to keep the complainants away from Kane, saying "any orders of protection should be mutual."

Kane, who appeared in court wearing a suit but no tie and no socks, did not comment beyond his responses to the judge.

After the proceedings, Cambria said his client was ready to put the matter behind him.

"We think it's an appropriate disposition," Cambria said, while making it clear he still considers Kane to be innocent.

He also said he felt Kane was treated fairly, like any other person facing similar charges. He chalked up Kane's public handcuffing when he was arrested on the noncriminal charges as the actions of "one police officer," and not indicative of anything else.

Cambria said Kane will have no problem abiding by Johnson-Lee's order to lead a law-abiding life for the next six months, and that his focus is on getting back on the ice and being a hockey star.

The injured Kane has been off since he sustained cracked ribs in the season opener against the Montreal Canadiens on Oct. 13.

"He's mending, he's doing better," Cambria said. "He's going to get on it and be a good part of the Sabres."

Sabres are improving at defending

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

October 31, 2016

St. Paul, MN (WGR 550) -- The Sabres waited a day to call a forward up from Rochester. Hudson Fasching's groin injury will keep him out of Tuesday's game and Dan Bylsma said a recall is coming. My guess is they waited a day for Salary Cap reasons.

During practice on Monday, all the forwards alternated in with Derek Grant and Nick Baptiste.

The Sabres just barely missed seven shots towards the empty Winnipeg net on Sunday so at the end of practice, Bylsma did have them working on it.

By winning two games in a row, the Sabres have now collected 50 percent of their points and have vaulted from 29th to 15th in the NHL standings. They've also only given up one goal in those two games which has them 12th in the league in goals against.

The overall team has defended very well in those two games. Yes, they got out shot by Winnipeg, but Robin Lehner was under control and they still had the forward mentality to get out of the zone. Ryan O'Reilly said, "It starts with being smarter with the puck. In our own end we're talking more which makes it easier. With our D and forwards there's been a lot of communication and then we're doing a good job of boxing out so the goalies can see it."

Communication has been a key part of practice since the Philadelphia debacle. O'Reilly also mentioned that the team is playing heavy too.

The first pass out of the zone has been much better as players aren't fumbling with the puck when they get it on their sticks. Rasmus Ristolainen broke it down very simply, "Communication, support, help and good flat passes on the tape." Zemgus Girgensons talked about the guy receiving the pass has to be in good position which wasn't happening earlier in the season.

The Sabres have tried to dictate in these two games and it's worked for them. The line of Girgensons, Tyler Ennis and Sam Reinhart has gotten better and Girgensons said, "Throughout all three periods there hasn't been a time where we have been like let's sit back and wait. We just keep playing our game and that's how we have to do it."

As far as why the line has improved Girgensons said, "Just understanding where we're at at times. Every time you get new linemates it takes a little time to get used to it, but just trusting each other knowing that the other person will do his job."

Dan Bylsma has liked what he's seen, "I think there's been improvement in all three of the guys on the line. Zemgus and Tyler, they had a good shift in the Florida game in the second period that drew a penalty that put us on the power play and got us a goal in that game. Same thing again in last night's game where they had two good shifts in the second period in the offensive zone. I think they're starting to come, Tyler had nine shot attempts then six shot attempts and then five again last night and you see their line starting to come as a group."

Join Brian Koziol for the pregame on Tuesday beginning at 8:00.

Evander Kane Case to be Dismissed in Six Months

By Brian Mazurowski

WGR 550

October 31, 2016

Buffalo Sabres' Winger Evander Kane will be clear of all charges if he can stay out of trouble for the next six months.

An Adjournment in Contemplation of Dismissal (ACD) was filed in Buffalo City Court Monday morning. Under the ACD, the case against Kane will be dismissed on March 30, 2017 if he steers clear of any run-ins with law enforcement.

Kane faces four counts of harassment in the second degree, one count of trespassing, and one count of disorderly conduct, all stemming from a June incident at Bottoms Up nightclub on Chippewa.

"We requested that. That was our request," said Kane's attorney Paul Cambria about the ACD. "Before they would consent to that, they consulted with the individuals who filed the complaints and apparently there was no objection to it."

Flaherty said the investigation in to the claims against Kane included interviewing several witnesses, and pouring through hours of surveillance tape footage. Flaherty described Kane's conduct as "arrogant, surly, and boorish," but said it was not criminal.

Both Cambria and Flaherty said the resolution reached on Monday was common in these types of cases.

"This is an appropriate disposition," Cambria said. "It's not unusual for non-criminal violations. This was an appropriate resolution."

"Four of the five charges are what we call violations, they're not crimes," Flaherty said. "They're similar to a speeding ticket, it's something for which a police officer could detain you and you have to go to court, but it's not a criminal-level offense."

Cambria said that he does not expect Kane to face discipline from the Sabres or the NHL for the incident. Kane has not played for the team after suffering three broken ribs in the team's season opener.

Kane spoke briefly about the incident when the Sabres opened training camp in September.

"These situations are what they are," Kane said. "They happen to athletes who are in a position such as myself, and those are things you have to deal with. They come with the territory."

The District Attorney on Monday said despite those comments, he believes Kane has not thought light of the process.

"I would hope that having been in court, he recognizes that the police take these types of allegations seriously," Flaherty said. "He will not get away with it again. I hope he understands that, because if he's brought back to court before March 30, the charges are still pending and he can be tried on those charges."

Kane also faces a civil suit from a woman who claims she suffered emotional trauma and required multiple surgeries and blood transfusions after an encounter last December. In March, prosecutors declined to charge Kane with any crimes following an investigation into a possible sexual assault in that incident.

Kane has filed a counter-suit in that case.

"He has sued that individual for making false statements," Cambria said. "Those suits are filed and they'll play their way through the courts."

Charges against Evander Kane may be dismissed next March

By Michael Mazurowski

WBFO

October 31, 2016

Local hockey star Evander Kane's charges in relation to a bar confrontation last June may be dismissed early next spring, if the Buffalo Sabres forward stays out of further legal trouble until then.

Monday morning in Buffalo City Court, Judge Barbara Johnson-Lee granted an "adjournment in contemplation of dismissal." Kane's pending counts of harassment, trespassing and disorderly conduct, stemming from an encounter with four others inside Bottoms Up on Chippewa Street in the early morning hours of June 24, may be dismissed and the case sealed on March 30.

His attorney, Paul Cambria, welcomed the adjournment outside the courtroom.

"We're pleased with it. We're pleased with the fact that the District Attorney's Office treated this like anyone else's case with the same kind of charges."

Acting District Attorney Michael Flaherty spoke shortly after Monday morning's proceedings. He explained that while Kane was accused of deeds including grabbing a woman's hair and placing his hands on one of his accuser's necks, none of his actions caused a level of injury that would qualify for criminal charges.

He also suggested what happened between Kane and his four accusers, including a bouncer, was no more severe than many other incidents that happen within Buffalo-area bars on any given weekend. Flaherty added that the adjournment offered to Kane is the no different than what many others get.

"This is a standard, ordinary and everyday disposition for somebody charged with these level of offenses and somebody with a lack of criminal conduct in his past," Flaherty said.

Both Flaherty and Cambria insist Kane's local sports celebrity status had no influence in the adjournment.

In addition to the adjournment, the District Attorney's office did not seek any orders of protection. Flaherty explained that because those involved do not regularly encounter each other, prosecutors believe that orders of protection are not necessary.

Kane's legal troubles are not entirely finished. He faces a civil lawsuit by a local woman who claims he sexually assaulted her late last year in a downtown hotel room. The hockey player was never charged with criminal counts. Kane has filed a countersuit against his accuser, suggesting their encounter was by mutual consent and that her lawsuit is an attempt to defame him.

Evander Kane's harassment, trespassing charges to be dismissed in six months

By Ali Ingersoll

WIVB

October 31, 2016

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) — Evander Kane's case is one step closer to being dismissed. Today he accepted ACD – adjournment in contemplation of dismissal – meaning if Kane, 25, doesn't have any legal issues for the next six months, the charges will be dismissed and the cases will be sealed.

These cases involve harassment and trespassing charges stemming from an alleged incident that happened in June at Bottoms Up- a bar on Chippewa.

According to the complaint- Kane grabbed three women at the bar that night then had a run in with bouncers while they were trying to remove him from the bar. Police recovered surveillance video from the bar showing the incident unfolding. The DA saying police spent several hours pouring over evidence like the surveillance video.

Acting DA Michael Flaherty calling Kane's behavior on the video boorish and arrogant; adding ACD is frequently granted to defendants who don't have lengthy criminal histories and that's why Kane received the delayed dismissal. Flaherty believes his office handled the Sabres winger's case fairly and say Kane hasn't been treated any differently due to his status.

"This type of activity in bars happens every weekend," said Michael Flaherty, Erie County's acting District Attorney. "As things go, this was as low level an offense as we receive. He was accused of grabbing a girl by her hair and other physical contact with three young women. None on which rose the level of criminal complaint."

"It's an appropriate decision," said Paul Cambria, Evander Kane's defense attorney. "It doesn't get any better than a dismissal so we're pleased with the fact the DA treated it like everyone else's case with the same charges."

Kane's attorney, Cambria, saying he believes his client will not have any issues making it six months without any other legal problems; saying Kane is looking forward to putting this behind him and focusing on hockey.

None of the alleged victims have requested an order of protection against the Sabres star.

Cambria saying he doesn't think any civil suits will come from these allegations against Kane.

Kane is still facing a civil suit and a counterclaim for an incident that happened in December 2015. When in Winnipeg, Kane faced assault allegations for an incident there.

Charges against Evander Kane could be dropped in six months

By Thuy Lan Nguyen

WKBW

October 31, 2016

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) - Evander Kane's legal troubles could be over soon.

Buffalo City Court Judge Barbara Johnson-Lee granted an 'adjournment in contemplation of dismissal' or ACD for Kane's charges stemming from an incident at Bottoms up on Chippewa.

The charges, four harassment and one trespassing charge, will be dismissed and sealed in six months if Kane stays out of legal trouble.

The Erie County District Attorney's office says that this is routine procedure for people with non-criminal charges and no prior record. Acting DA Michael Flaherty says Kane was not treated any differently because of his athlete status.

Flaherty also said an extensive investigation was conducted by Buffalo Police, including the review of surveillance footage from Bottoms Up. He said in the video, Kane can be seen grabbing a woman by her wrist and hair, but his actions did not meet criteria of assault or criminal status.

"His actions weren't gentlemanly...It could be described as I said, arrogant, boorish and surly but not criminal," said Flaherty on Kane's conduct back in June.

All people involved in the scuffle at Bottoms Up, according to the DA's office, are in agreement with the ACD and have not requested any orders of protection. The owners of Bottoms Up say Kane was not trespassing.

"We denied them [the charges] from day one, so we thought they were inappropriate and we said so by denying any wrongdoing," said Paul Cambria, Kane's attorney.

Cambria says Kane's priority now is healing from his injuries and heading back on to the ice. He does not anticipate any civil charges to be filed or discipline from the Sabres organization.

Wild-Buffalo game preview

By Michael Russo

Minnesota Wild

October 31, 2016

Preview: Including the Sabres on the road five days ago, the Wild has shut out its past three opponents for the first time in franchise history (13-0 goal advantage). It's carrying a franchise-record 181-minute, 43-second shutout streak. The Wild is 8-2-2 in its past 12 games against the Sabres, outscoring them 41-23.

Players to watch: Wild D Ryan Suter is tied for first among NHL defensemen with 10 points. D Christian Folin and LW Jason Zucker are tied for second in the NHL's plus-minus ratings at plus-9. C Eric Staal is tied for 22nd in the NHL with four goals. Staal leads the Wild with 43 points in 44 games against Buffalo. Former Sabres captain Jason Pominville has six points in seven games against his former team. Sabres C Ryan O'Reilly has 13 points in 31 games against the Wild. Former Gopher Kyle Okposo has eight points in 13 games against Minnesota.

Numbers: The Wild leads the NHL with 18 players who have scored at least one goal. Of the 23 skaters on the roster this season, 22 have at least one point. ... The Wild has the NHL's best penalty kill (25-for-26, 96.2 percent). ... The Wild averages 25.9 shots per game, 29th in the NHL.

Injuries: Wild RW Chris Stewart (illness) is questionable; LW Zach Parise (foot), D Marco Scandella (ankle), C Erik Haula (foot) and C Zac Dalpe (knee) are out. Sabres C Jack Eichel (ankle), LW Evander Kane (ribs), LW Nicolas Deslauriers (knee) and RW Hudson Fasching (groin) are out.

Moulson sees more offense to come from top line

By Jourdon LaBarber

Buffalo Sabres

October 31, 2016

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA - Matt Moulson and Kyle Okposo have had their fair share of history as linemates, which dates all the way back to the 2009-10 season when they were teammates with the New York Islanders. In five seasons together, they logged 1,102:04 of shared ice time at 5-on-5.

Now, they're linemates once again in Buffalo on the Sabres' top line with Ryan O'Reilly as their center.

So far, the results have been positive, even beyond the three goals Okposo has scored in his last two games. Corsi-for percentage is a statistic indicating the percentage shot attempts coming from a team when given players are on the ice, and the trio of O'Reilly, Moulson and Okposo have posted a 52.69 percent mark in 27:31 of shared 5-on-5 ice time. Meanwhile, they've spent 57.1 percent of that time in the offensive zone.

"We've, over the past couple of games, had a lot of opportunities to score," Moulson said following practice in St. Paul on Monday. "I think the more you play with the same linemates, the more you get used to them and where each other are. Even if you played with each other before, I think just getting to know each other's tendencies now is important."

The trio has also gotten the chance to know each other on the power play, where they've anchored a top unit that has scored eight goals in eight games. Four of the goals have come from Moulson, two from O'Reilly and one from Okposo. Those three players have also combined for six assists on the man advantage.

What helps them is a shared knowledge of what they're trying to accomplish as a line. Whether or not they're able to execute on a given play, Moulson said, more often than not, they've done a good job of reading off one another with the same goal in mind.

When asked about what has stood out about Okposo's game most so far, both Moulson and O'Reilly brought up his use of size and his strength on the puck.

"I think he's doing a great job of taking it to the net and creating those opportunities he beats a guy down low and creates mini odd-man opportunities down low below the circle," Moulson said.

"He's good at carrying the puck in as well. He's got a lot of assets but I think that's his biggest asset is just being strong on the puck, making plays, and sometimes it creates offense out of nothing where he can hang on to it and beat the guy and create something."

To see what Moulson is talking about, look at these back-to-back plays from the second period of the Sabres' game against the Minnesota Wild last Thursday. On the first play, Okposo carries the puck at the bottom of the circle, spins around and is able to use his body to ward off Minnesota defenseman Jonas Brodin to create room to reach the net-front.

That attempt was stuffed by Wild goalie Devan Dubnyk, but he made a similar play off of the very next faceoff. This time it was Christian Folin who played victim along the wall as Okposo held strong on the puck and got in alone on the net.

Sabres coach Dan Bylsma said that Okposo had created roughly 15 scoring chances in a three-game stretch prior to this weekend, when he scored once in a win over Florida and twice more in a victory over Winnipeg. With the amount of offense he was creating, perhaps it was inevitable for the pucks to start finding the back of the net.

Moulson said he sees the same thing from the trio as a whole going forward.

"I think each day is an opportunity to create offense the way we want to create it in practice and games," Moulson said. "I think it's coming. I feel like we're right on the verge of having a break of goals in the game."

Fasching out in Minnesota

Hudson Fasching did not practice on Monday after leaving in Winnipeg with a groin injury in the first period. Bylsma said that Fasching will not play against the Wild on Tuesday night. The Sabres will recall a forward from Rochester to join the lineup in his absence.

Who takes the shot?

After missing their chances at an empty net late in the game against Winnipeg on Sunday, it might go without saying that the Sabres spent some time at practice clearing pucks toward the empty cage. Afterward, Brian Duff asked players who they'd trust most to take that shot, which is the subject of today's Sabres in :90.

Baptiste more comfortable after second recall

Bylsma joked prior to the game in Winnipeg that he hoped to see Nicholas Baptiste continue his streak of scoring goals without actually taking a shot. Baptiste played the first two games of his career in Calgary and Vancouver earlier this month and scored his first goal on a bounce off of a Canucks defender.

Well, that run came to an end in more ways than one. Baptiste wasn't able to score a goal, but he did generate plenty of offense with three shots in eight minutes of ice time.

"I feel good," Baptiste said. "I think last night I got a lot more chances, generated more offensively than I did in the last two games. I think it comes with a bit of confidence, knowing I can play at this level and contribute at this level. I'm looking forward to tomorrow and trying to generate even more than I did last game."

Baptiste got looks with different linemates due to Fasching's early exit, including a 4-on-4 shift alongside O'Reilly. Bylsma said he thought the rookie put his speed on display more in those situations than he had in games past.

"I thought Nick's game in Vancouver was a solid game," Bylsma said. "He had an opportunity to show more speed in last night's game, show he can be effective ... I thought you got to see a little bit more of what Nick can bring."