



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

October 24, 2017

Scandella determined to help make Sabres a consistent winner

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

October 23, 2017

All Marco Scandella could do was laugh. It said more than words could.

Because there were no words available to describe how much better he felt after Buffalo's victory Saturday than he did after Friday's beatdown.

"It was a complete 180," Scandella said Monday. "Completely different."

He intends to do his part to keep it that way.

Scandella delivered the spot-on quote of the season following the 4-2 loss to Vancouver. He said the Sabres "need more pride in this dressing room," a telling admission from someone who just arrived during the summer.

Buffalo won less than 24 hours later, a 5-4 comeback victory in Boston. Jack Eichel loudly praised Scandella in the visitors' room, and it was deserved.

The defenseman assisted on Eichel's goal that started the rally from a 4-1 deficit. Scandella took a team-high six shots while skating 27:23, the fourth-highest total of his eight-year career and most since he skated 27:26 for Minnesota on Dec. 31, 2014.

He and the Sabres will look to continue their efforts Tuesday when Detroit visits KeyBank Center in a 7:30 p.m. start.

"We just have to understand what happened last game," Scandella said. "It's a turning point for us to just start playing the right way, keeping possession. We just went after them, and we just have to do that from the drop of the puck next game."

Sluggishness has cost the Sabres, especially at home. They didn't show up for the loss to Vancouver, and they were in a 6-1 hole after two periods against New Jersey.

Including the preseason, Buffalo is 0-4-2 in front of the home fans. The players are aware.

"We have to come back and have a great game at home," Scandella said. "We haven't had a great game at home yet and haven't gotten to win at home yet, so I feel like there's got to be a lot of pride in this dressing room to go get a win for our fans."

The win in Boston proved the team can play. The 2-5-2 record proves they don't do it consistently.

There was going to be an on-ice learning curve with new coaches and significant roster turnover, but the off-ice teaching has been even more pronounced.

"You have to keep reminding them what it's going to take to win," coach Phil Housley said. "It's just playing the right way and getting prepared to play. Those are the areas that we have to continue to focus on and preach.

"It's hard to win in this league. You have to geared up and get yourself ready at the start of the game to play a full 60 minutes, not keep chasing games and put ourselves in position in that area. We're going to continue to focus on that."

It's not a stretch to think players let bad habits slide through without giving it a second thought. The ones who've grown up in the organization know nothing but losing.

Scandella and the Wild made the playoffs in each of the last five seasons. He declined to comment on what the Sabres are doing wrong comparatively, but he emphatically pounced on the opportunity to make things right.

"You know what? I don't want to think about the past in Minnesota," Scandella said. "I'm here, and I'm just going to be a positive guy every day. Everyone's having fun here. We're playing hockey for a living, so how can you not smile when you come to the rink?"

"We've just got to come here with a good attitude, be ready to work. Everything I can do to help guys, I'm going to do everything I can, try to be a leader out there."

"I believe in this group. I feel like we have a lot of great players here. We're building something. We weren't expecting it to happen overnight. It's a process. We just have to build off last game. One day at a time, we've just got to keep getting better."

Sabres Notebook: Power play gets talk, tweaks; Okposo returns to top line; NBCSN games

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

October 23, 2017

After the Sabres completed practice, Phil Housley and associate coach Davis Payne gathered the first power-play unit at the whiteboard. They had a lot to talk about.

The Sabres boasted the top power play in the NHL last season, but they're scuffling along at No. 22 this year. Housley switched the units Monday, and he wants more when Detroit visits Tuesday night.

"Better, quick puck movement," Housley said in KeyBank Center. "We're holding onto it, which is giving other teams on the penalty kill an opportunity to get in position. We have to move the puck quicker whether it's low to high or it's high to low. It's got to be done quicker.

"We have to have more urgency in that area because we hold onto it, they get a stick on it, now they get two guys, now we're in a battle. We shouldn't be in that position if we just move it quickly. That's what we were focusing on."

Buffalo is 5 for 32 on the power play, including a 3-for-5 performance in Vegas. The unit has been blanked in five of the last six games to fall to 15.6 percent. It finished at 24.5 percent last season.

Remarkably, the Sabres are getting outscored on the power play. They have given up six short-handed tallies.

The new units feature two defensemen, a switch from the four-forward, one-defenseman look. Ryan O'Reilly, Jack Eichel and Sam Reinhart skated up front for the first unit, with Victor Antipin and Rasmus Ristolainen at the blue line. The second unit featured Evander Kane, Jason Pominville and Kyle Okposo, with Marco Scandella and Matt Tennyson up top.

Antipin has played in two straight games after being scratched for four.

"He's made the best of his opportunity since he's got back in the lineup," Housley said. "He's moving his feet, skating, defending well – all the things that we're looking for from him.

"He's just sort of moving up and earned a spot to try on the power play."

20h

John Vogl ✓ @BuffNewsVogl

Sabres' power play:

O'Reilly-Reinhart-Eichel, with Antipin-Ristolainen.

Kane-Okposo-Pominville, with Scandella-Tennyson.

Follow

John Vogl ✓ @BuffNewsVogl

Phil Housley and Davis Payne talking with top unit after practice. pic.twitter.com/Lm55boNQnd

11:58 AM - Oct 23, 2017

[View image on Twitter](#)

Replies 1 1 Retweet 6 6 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

* * *

It was a quick journey from the doghouse to the penthouse for Kyle Okposo.

The right winger practiced on the top line with Eichel and Kane. Okposo was benched for much of the Sabres' loss Friday, but an improved effort during a win Saturday elevated his status.

"I thought Kyle was fantastic, moving his feet, winning a lot of puck battles," Housley said. "He had a chance to win the game there at the end. Just finding a way to get involved. It might not have been on the score sheet, but certainly his game went to another level."

Okposo skated 16:31 during the 5-4 victory over Boston, attempting three shots (including one that rang the iron in the final minute) and delivering three hits.

"I've played better," Okposo said.

Although he was plus-1 in the game, he didn't have a point. Okposo has no goals, one assist and a minus-6 rating in seven games.

"Still looking for more, still looking for production," Okposo said. "That's something that I've prided myself on the last number of years, and it's not there right now. I thought the work was better definitely and created some opportunities ... but I've got to produce."

* * *

The Sabres think highly of Cliff Pu, so they've wasted little time signing him to a three-year, entry-level contract. The forward will make \$742,500 in the first two seasons and \$792,500 in the third, according to a source.

Pu is playing his fourth year of junior hockey and will turn pro next season. His contract won't start until then.

Pu impressed new Buffalo General Manager Jason Botterill and Housley with a solid Prospects Challenge. They rewarded Pu with two preseason games before sending him back to London of the Ontario Hockey League.

Selected in the third round of the 2016 NHL Draft, Pu blossomed last season. He recorded 35 goals and 86 points in 63 regular-season games, then added seven points in 14 playoff appearances.

Pu has started slowly this season with one goal, six points and a minus-12 rating in the Knights' opening 11 games.

* * *

The Sabres practiced without the injured group of forwards Zemgus Girgensons (lower body), Evan Rodrigues (hand) and center Jacob Josefson (foot), and defensemen Zach Bogosian (lower body), Nathan Beaulieu (upper body), Josh Gorges (lower body) and Justin Falk (undisclosed).

Housley said Girgensons, Rodrigues and Falk skated before practice.

"That's a good sign," Housley said. "It's just intriguing to see them skating. That's the first step of getting back."

* * *

The Sabres' next two games will be televised by NBCSN. The home game against Detroit will start at 7:30 p.m. with Kenny Albert providing the play-by-play and Brian Boucher commentating from between the benches.

The Sabres visit Columbus at 8 p.m. Wednesday. Mike "Doc" Emrick will do play-by-play, Mike Milbury will be the analyst and Pierre McGuire will be between the benches. The Buffalo announcers can be heard on WGR-AM 550.

Sabres' power play is scuffling, so Housley shakes things up

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

October 23, 2017

After the Sabres completed practice, Phil Housley and associate coach Davis Payne gathered the first power-play unit at the whiteboard. They had a lot to go over.

The Sabres boasted the top power play in the NHL last season, but they're scuffling along at No. 22 this year. Housley switched the units Monday, and he wants more when Detroit visits Tuesday.

"Better, quick puck movement," Housley said in KeyBank Center. "We're holding onto it, which is giving other teams on the penalty kill an opportunity to get in position. We have to move the puck quicker whether it's low to high or it's high to low. It's got to be done quicker.

"We have to have more urgency in that area because we hold onto it, they get a stick on it, now they get two guys, now we're in a battle. We shouldn't be in that position if we just move it quickly. That's what we were focusing on."

Buffalo is 5 for 32 on the power play, including a 3-for-5 performance in Vegas. The unit has been blanked in five of the last six games. The Sabres have also given up six short-handed goals.

The new units feature two defensemen, a change from the four-forward, one-defenseman look. Ryan O'Reilly, Jack Eichel and Sam Reinhart skated up front on the top power play, with Victor Antipin and Rasmus Ristolainen at the blue line. The second unit was Evander Kane, Jason Pominville and Kyle Okposo, with Marco Scandella and Matt Tennyson up top.

Antipin has played in two straight games after being scratched for four.

"He's made the best of his opportunity since he's got back in the lineup," Housley said. "He's moving his feet, skating, defending well — all the things that we're looking for from him.

"He's just sort of moving up and earned a spot to try on the power play."

Benched during weekend, Sabres' Okposo returns to top line

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

October 23, 2017

It was a quick journey from the doghouse to the penthouse for Kyle Okposo.

The right winger practiced on the top line Monday with center Jack Eichel and left wing Evander Kane. Okposo was benched for much of the Sabres' loss Friday, but an improved effort during a win Saturday elevated his status.

"I thought Kyle was fantastic, moving his feet, winning a lot of puck battles," Buffalo coach Phil Housley said in KeyBank Center. "He had a chance to win the game there at the end. Just finding a way to get involved. It might not have been on the score sheet, but certainly his game went to another level."

Okposo skated 16:31 during the 5-4 victory over Boston, and he attempted three shots (including one that rang the iron in the final minute) and delivered three hits.

"I've played better," Okposo said.

Although he was plus-1 in the game, he didn't have a point. Okposo has no goals, one assist and a minus-6 rating in seven games.

"Still looking for more, still looking for production," Okposo said. "That's something that I've prided myself on the last number of years, and it's not there right now. I thought the work was better definitely and created some opportunities ... but I've got to produce."

Here were the Sabres' lines and defense pairs for the workout:

Kane-Eichel-Okposo
Benoit Pouliot-Ryan O'Reilly-Jason Pominville
Jordan Nolan-Sam Reinhart-Justin Bailey
Matt Moulson-Johan Larsson-Seth Griffith

Marco Scandella-Rasmus Ristolainen
Jake McCabe-Matt Tennyson/Taylor Fedun
Victor Antipin-Zach Redmond

The Sabres practiced without the injured group of forwards Zengus Girgensons (lower body), Evan Rodrigues (hand) and Jacob Josefson (foot), and defensemen Zach Bogosian (lower body), Nathan Beaulieu (upper body), Josh Gorges (lower body) and Justin Falk (undisclosed).

Housley said Girgensons, Rodrigues and Falk skated before practice.

"That's a good sign," Housley said. "It's just intriguing to see them skating. That's the first step of getting back."

Sabres ink Pu to his first pro contract

WGR550

PAUL HAMILTON

OCTOBER 23, 2017

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) - Cliff Pu had a nice Prospect Camp and Training Camp, which has earned the 19-year old a three-year entry-level contract.

Pu had a terrific season with the London Knights in the OHL last year, scoring 35 goals and 51 assists for 86 points in 63 games.

This is his fourth season in London, and he's off to a slow start for Dale Hunter. In 11 games Pu has just one goal and five assists and is minus-12.

Last season was the 2016 third round pick's breakout season as he only had 31 points in 63 games the year before.

Pu is hoping to play for Team Canada at the IIHF World Junior Championship in Buffalo, but he's going to have to pick up his season if he wants to compete for a spot on that team.

Redmond has always been a Sabres fan

WGR550

PAUL HAMILTON

OCTOBER 23, 2017

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) - Zach Redmond didn't get a chance to play in Boston on Saturday, but in Monday's practice, he was out there with Victor Antipin and could get a chance Tuesday against Detroit.

Redmond was acquired right before the first game in a deal with Montreal.

Redmond is from Detroit, but grew up a Sabres fan. He said, "I was excited to hear the news and I was excited to hear it was Buffalo."

Being a Sabres fan, Redmond had some favorites on the team. He said, "I was always a big Mogilny fan. I liked Briere too. In Detroit we didn't really get the broadcasts, but I've always been a fan of Buffalo and the owner just seems like he's doing big things around the city which is really cool too."

Redmond not only was a Sabres fan, but also a fan of the area. The defenseman said, "Too me, just the city of Buffalo reminds me of Detroit. It's a blue collar town that loves their sports and they just like a good, hard working brand of hockey."

"So for me, coming into Buffalo, I just want to work hard. The goal for everybody is to win and push the personal agenda aside. I think with the flip of the management team and there's a lot of new faces, so this is a great opportunity for guys like myself, but also for the organization to trend upwards and build on it so it's exciting."

Redmond has played on three other NHL clubs, and he had a sense that maybe his time in Montreal was over. He said he wasn't surprised by the trade, "No, not entirely, they had a ton of guys up there, so you're always a little bit taken aback by a trade, but it wasn't a complete shock to me."

Redmond has played 130 NHL games with Montreal, Colorado and Winnipeg. He's scored nine goals and 29 assists for 38 points. He doesn't really know why he has never gotten to stick in the league, "I've been happy, I've done all I can. I feel like everybody is at a different stage in their career and for me it's been a learning process and sometimes you don't know why certain things happen, but I've been down and I keep getting back up, so I'm proud of myself for doing that."

Redmond has had some serious things happen to him both with illness and injuries. When Redmond was 15 and playing in a tournament in Toronto, he suffered a stroke. It was determined that an oddity caused the stroke and he was able to eventually continue playing hockey.

While in Winnipeg, Redmond was doing a skating drill and fell, a teammates skate severed an artery in the leg, groin and hamstring area. Redmond lost over half the blood in his body and was saved by quick actions on the ice.

When two live changing events like that happen in your life, it has to change you. Redmond said, "The two injuries I had really put my career into perspective. There was a decision if I'd play or not again."

"If there's one thing that I could say from the injuries, it made me realize how much I really do love the game because despite the circumstances, it was an easy call to get back into it, so from that perspective it made me realize how special it is to play this game every day."

That tells us from a hockey perspective, but what about from a life perspective? Redmond said, "Maybe just how sweet life is. I'm not going to act like those two injuries have made me a guy that has it all figured out as far as live every day like it's your last, you still take that sort of thing for granted, but that's definitely a giant reminder of how precious it all is."

Phil Housley said Zemgus Girgensons, Evan Rodrigues and Justin Falk are back skating on their own.

Monday's lines:

Kane - Eichel - Okposo

Pouliot - O'Reilly - Pominville

Nolan - Reinhart - Bailey

Moulson - Larsson - Griffith

Scandella - Ristolainen

Antipin - Redmond

McCabe - Tennyson (Fedun)

PP1: 15 - 90 - 23 / 93 - 55

PP2: 9 - 21 - 29 / 6 - 5

Goalies Robin Lehner, Chad Johnson playing ‘great’ despite Sabres’ struggles

Olean Times Herald

By Bill Hoppe

October 24, 2017

BUFFALO – Through nine games, the Sabres have allowed a whopping 35 goals, the NHL’s second-highest number.

In this defensive era, a figure even approaching three goals a game usually means a team is struggling. The Sabres, who roared back Saturday in Boston to stun the Bruins 5-4 in overtime, have allowed 3.89 an outing.

No wonder they’re 2-5-2 and winless at home in three tries entering tonight’s tilt against the Detroit Red Wings at KeyBank Center.

Thanks to a bevy of defensive breakdowns, Sabres goalies Robin Lehner and Chad Johnson have been facing odd-man rushes and other high-end scoring chances all season.

In six games, Lehner has a 3.29 goals-against average (33rd among qualified goalies) and an .894 save percentage (35th). Meanwhile, in five contests, Johnson’s numbers – 3.84 (42nd) and .881 (41st) – are even worse.

Goaltending, of course, is supposed to be one of the Sabres’ strengths.

In his first full season as a starter, Lehner, 26, compiled a gaudy .920 save percentage in 2016-17. Johnson, 31, was voted the Sabres’ unsung hero in 2015-16 before spending last season in Calgary, where he went 11-2-0 over a 13-game stretch for the Flames.

Lehner and Johnson’s current statistics probably reflect the team’s porous defense – the Sabres, for example, have already allowed a stunning six short-handed goals – more than their own play.

“They’ve given us a chance to win, and even saying that, we’ve been chasing some games, they’ve kept it at a good number where we’ve been able to get back in the game,” Sabres coach Phil Housley said of his goalies Monday. “They’ve been providing us great goaltending.

“We’d like to protect them a little bit better. That’s part of our process and trying to take a look at that (defensive) zone.”

The Sabres’ weak start hasn’t shaken the confidence of either goalie.

Lehner said he doesn’t know his statistics.

“And I really don’t care,” he said bluntly. “It’s a team game. All of us need to get better, all of us need to play the game plan.”

Johnson added: “Our position is definitely impacted by a lot of different things, but I feel good about my game and the overall performance, personally, in the game. Obviously, my statistics aren’t where I’d like them to be.”

Lehner, as he often said last season, believes the Sabres can succeed if they follow what Housley and his staff preach.

The Sabres, he said, “have a great game plan set.”

“We got to stick to it,” Lehner said. “I got to make big saves, (Johnson’s) got to make some big saves, people got to step up, but it’s that consistency, we can’t push the envelope.”

Lehner said simplicity makes the Sabres successful.

“Then we have the skill to capitalize and win games,” he said. “We got to tighten up a little. ... We’ve seen it in periods. When we play the way the coach wants us to play, we’re good and we don’t let up much.”

Naturally, a team with a new coaching staff and 10 new players isn’t going to mesh immediately. Even experienced teams can be raw in October.

Johnson has played for a head coach in his first year with a new team three straight seasons, so he understands the process.

“Early on, there’s always that adjustment, there’s the highs and lows, finding the consistency within that structure we’re developing, the identity,” he said. “It always takes time. I always say it takes about two months before you really see that consistency and that game really unfolds.”

The Sabres could speed up that adjustment if they replicate what made them successful late in Saturday’s exciting win, a tilt they trailed 4-1 in the second period.

“When we defend, ultimately we’ll have the puck more,” Sabres winger Jason Pominville said. “I think that’s what happened in Boston. We were maybe a little loose early where we gave up too many opportunities. As the game went along, we were better and better.”

Winger Kyle Okposo said the Sabres need to “hang our hat” on outworking teams.

“That’s a necessity,” he said. “We’re not going to ‘outskill’ anybody. . . . We stuck with the game plan (Saturday), and we put our heads down and grinded one out.”

Sabres sign Cliff Pu to entry-level contract

Olean Times Herald

By Bill Hoppe

October 23, 2017

BUFFALO – The Sabres have signed Cliff Pu, one of their top forward prospects, to a three-year, entry-level contract, the team announced today.

Pu, 19, has 52 goals and 132 points in 178 career Ontario Hockey League games with the London Knights and Oshawa Generals.

Pu looked impressive during NHL training camp last month, earning two exhibition appearances.

The Sabres selected the 6-foot-2, 192-pound Pu in the third round, 69th overall, in 2016.

After compiling 35 goals, 86 points and a plus-36 rating in 63 games for the Knights last year, Pu has one goal, six points and a minus-11 rating in 11 contests this season.

Sabres' Kyle Okposo responds to benching

Olean Times Herald

By Bill Hoppe

October 23, 2017

BUFFALO – A day after getting benched, Sabres winger Kyle Okposo was noticeably better in Saturday's 5-4 come-from-behind overtime win in Boston.

Okposo looked engaged and more like the veteran who usually averages more than 20 goals and 50 points a season.

After the Sabres roared back from three goals against the Bruins, Okposo nearly won it in the final minutes, hitting the crossbar from the slot.

"Kyle was fantastic, moving his feet, winning a lot of puck battles," Sabres coach Phil Housley said this afternoon inside KeyBank Center. "He had chance to win the game there at the end, just finding a way to get involved. He might not have been on the score sheet, but certainly his game went to another level."

Still, despite playing 16 minutes, 31 seconds – Okposo only received one shift in the third period Friday and skated less than 10 minutes – he wasn't thrilled with his performance.

"I played better," Okposo said, who has just one assist in seven games this season. "I'm still looking for more, looking for production. It's something I've prided myself on the last number of years, and it's not there right now. I thought the work was better, definitely, and (I) created some opportunities, had some chances."

More chances as a team helped the Sabres earn only their second win and triumph when after looked finished down 4-1 late in the second period.

More chances as a team helped the Sabres score a season-high five goals and triumph when they looked finished down 4-1 late in the second period.

"When you come from behind, it always kind of brings the group together a little bit," Sabres winger Jason Pominville said. "Those are fun wins that are kind of usually unexpected when you're in that position."

Sabres goalie Chad Johnson said: "You can just tell (we won), guys come in (happier)."

In injury news, forwards Zemgus Girgensons (lower body), Evan Rodrigues (hand) and defenseman Justin Falk (lower body) skated this morning before their teammates, Housley said.

"It's just intriguing to see them skating," he said.

xxx

Defenseman Victor Antipin, a healthy scratch all four games of the Sabres' recent road trip, has impressed Housley since returning to the lineup two games ago.

Housley awarded the Russian rookie, 24, a spot on the team's No. 1 power play during Monday's practice. The power play has struggled this season, allowing more goals (six) than it has scored (five).

"He's made the best of his opportunities since he's got back in the lineup," Housley said. "He's moving his feet, skating, defending well – all the things that we're looking for from him. He's just sort of moving up and earned a spot to try on the power play. His puck movement has been really good."

Sabres sign Cliff Pu to three-year deal

WKBW

Matt Bove

Oct 23, 2017

Buffalo Sabres announced that the team has signed Cliff Pu to a three-year entry-level deal. Pu was selected with the 69th pick in the 2016 NHL Draft by the Sabres and is currently playing in his fourth season with the London Knights of the Ontario Hockey League. Pu's three-year deal begins whenever the 19-year-old decides to turn pro.

Follow

Matthew Bové ✓@Matt_Bove

Seth Griffith gets the #Sabres first goal of the preseason but major kudos to Evan Rodrigues & Cliff Pu for PERFECT passes @WKBW #Sabres

7:30 PM - Sep 18, 2017

7 7 Replies 117 117 Retweets 252 252 likes

Twitter Ads info and privacy

Over the summer Pu stood out for all the right reasons during the Sabres Prospects Challenge, training camp and into the preseason. The 19-year-old impressed the Sabres coaching staff so much that he was given an extended look into the preseason and was the last junior player left on the roster. Sabres' head coach Phil Housley said it was a reward for an excellent camp.

Despite the strong summer, Pu is off to an average start, at least statistically, in his fourth season with the Knights. In 11 games Pu has one goal and five assists. Last year was far and away Pu's best year in London, finishing with 86 points [35G, 51A] in 63 games.

Bove's take:

There was a reason Cliff Pu was the last junior left standing during training camp. Everyone knew he was going back to London, but that didn't stop Pu from making a strong impression, leaving fans excited about his future in the organization.

Follow

Matthew Bové ✓@Matt_Bove

#Sabres return Cliff Pu to London (OHL). He had a very nice prospects challenge/training camp. Another player Sabres fans can be excited for

9:11 AM - Sep 23, 2017 · North Tonawanda, NY

During the Prospects Challenge, Pu was on the ice during all situations. He was their top-center, played on the power play and even spent some time killing penalties. Like so many others, Pu still needs to improve in plenty of areas but he's a great piece for the organization to lock up for the next several years.

There's a chance Pu represents Team Canada at the upcoming IIHF World Junior tournament in Buffalo, adding yet another storyline and player to watch in the much-anticipated tournament.

Follow

Matthew Bové ✓@Matt_Bove

DJ Khaled voice another one! Cliff Pu gets saucy and finds CJ Smith for another #Sabres power play goal. BUF 5 - BOS 3 @WKBW

9:09 PM - Sep 9, 2017

Sabres look to keep momentum against Red Wings

FoxSports.com

Oct 24, 2017

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Little was going right for the Buffalo Sabres in their first year under head coach Phil Housley — until a shocking comeback win over the Boston Bruins on Saturday.

After losing seven of their first eight games, the Sabres overcame a three-goal deficit to pick up a 5-4 overtime win over the Bruins. Buffalo (2-5-2) will look to carry that momentum into a Tuesday night home game against the Detroit Red Wings.

“I think we need to use this game as an example of what it takes to win a hockey game,” Sabres center Jack Eichel said. “It doesn’t mean much if you don’t come back Tuesday and have a good performance.”

Center Ryan O’Reilly scored the game-winner for Buffalo in overtime. It was his third goal of the season after a difficult start to the year.

“It wasn’t a great backhand, I just kind of raised it and it sneaked in,” O’Reilly said. “It was a nice bounce for us, we haven’t had a lot of those lately. Again, we’re going to start preparing for the next game. We’re still disappointed with our start in the season, and we’ve got to get better.”

Eichel, Evander Kane and Jason Pominville are all tied for the team lead with 11 points. Goalies Robin Lehner (1-3-1, .894 save percentage) and Chad Johnson (1-2-1, .881 save percentage) have yet to find a groove inside the crease for Buffalo.

The Red Wings (4-4-1) are looking in the mirror after their worst effort of the young season, a 4-1 loss to the Vancouver Canucks on Sunday night. Coach Jeff Blashill canceled the team’s Monday practice, instead holding a team meeting that featured extensive video work.

“I talked, I showed video of lots of things that aren’t good enough in the areas that we’ve got to be way better,” Blashill said, according to the team’s website. “It wasn’t a discussion meeting. It wasn’t a Kumbaya. It was a, ‘This is not good enough, these are the areas it’s not good enough, we got to be better.’”

“I thought that was better than an hour practice where I would have got the message across like I did get it across through my meeting without maybe the physical exertion where we’ll need the energy (against Buffalo).”

The Red Wings took the message to heart.

“Sometimes it’s good to get a little reality check, a wakeup call,” captain Henrik Zetterberg said, according to the team’s website. “We have been playing pretty decent hockey, but (Sunday) was unacceptable, and we have to make sure it doesn’t happen again. It was a stinker, but we know we can play good hockey if we do it right if we have a little more passion, a little more effort.”

Mike Green leads the team with 11 points (one goal, 10 assists). Zetterberg and Dylan Larkin are tied for the second on the team with nine points, and Anthony Mantha has eight. Jimmy Howard (3-2-0) owns a save percentage of .916 in six games.

Scandella's offensive contributions continued to progress in Boston

Sabres.com

by Jourdon LaBarber

October 23rd, 2017

When the Buffalo Sabres acquired Marco Scandella from Minnesota back in June, general manager Jason Botterill expressed his belief that the defenseman might have more to give offensively than what we've seen from him in the past.

After missing all of the preseason as he worked his way back from offseason hip surgery, Scandella's shot attempts have risen steadily through his first nine games as a Sabre, coming to a head with a season-high eight attempts and a team-high six shots on goal in Boston on Saturday.

With that performance, he's now averaging 2.2 shots per game. His career-high for a full season is 1.8, set in 2014-15. He's averaging 3.4 shot attempts, up from his average of 2.8 last season.

It's early, of course. But if Phil Housley has his way, then those numbers will only progress, both for Scandella and his defensive corps as a whole.

"He's been a big part of our D corps back there," Housley said. "I think just the D in general have done a good job, and that was the best game [when it comes to] movement and finding lanes. They had 13 shots on goal ... That's key to me that they're improving in that area."

Sabres Now (10/23/17)

02:13 • October 23rd, 2017

Housley said the Sabres won their game against the Bruins because they "played the right way." In his system, part of that entails defensemen getting pucks to the net. Scandella said it was a mix of opportunity and mentality that led to his outburst in the offensive zone.

"I just felt like, once you start shooting a couple pucks everything opens up and then the forwards have more time," Scandella said.

"I feel like we have really good forwards who can hold the puck down low. The only way we're going to open up space for them is by being shooters and making those forwards come out on us and creating a gap between their defensemen and their forwards. The onus is on us. When we get pucks we have to get them through or at least keep them alive. Last game we did a good job of that."

It's not just about taking shots; it's about getting them through. Housley has worked with his defensemen to do that this season, stressing the importance of changing their angle and letting shots off with speed.

"If you don't do things quick, they're going to get knocked down or blocked," Housley said. "We can't help the second layer, whether they block that shot. As long as we beat the first layer, it gives us a better percentage of getting the puck to the net."

A sequence of two shot attempts on the same shift in the first period of Saturday's game showed Scandella's ability to do both. The first saw him pinch down toward the left faceoff circle to create a shooting lane:

The second, which came 17 seconds later, came after his forwards won a battle along the boards on the forecheck. The puck trickled back to Scandella at the blue line, and he had a quick enough trigger to get his shot through:

Scandella's shot mentality eventually paid off. After taking a low-to-high pass from Jack Eichel during the second period, he drifted to the middle of the ice before letting off the shot that led to Eichel's rebound goal.

Eichel's rebound goal

00:59 • October 21st, 2017

Was going to the middle a calculated move?

"I'm not going to give away my secrets," he said, laughing. "But I'm always trying to keep my head up and look for shooting lanes. I saw Marchand was a little bit low so I thought I had time to take it to the middle."

Scandella will have even more of a chance to contribute offensively moving forward, having practiced on Buffalo's second power-play unit Monday. He averaged 1:46 on the power play with the Wild back in 2011-12, but has since averaged 35 seconds or less.

Following their win over the Bruins, the Sabres stressed the importance of recognizing what they did well and using it as a blueprint in games moving forward. For Scandella and the rest of the defensemen, continuing to find the net will be one of the keys.

A responsible game

Aside from their shot mentality, another aspect of "playing the right way" that the Sabres displayed Saturday was their tendency to chip the puck deep upon entry and retrieve it on the forecheck, something Scandella thought they did better in that game than they had previously.

"We were very responsible with the puck," Scandella said. "We knew that they had a lot of forwards who can score, so we didn't want to give them opportunities by turning pucks over in the neutral zone because we know their rush game is very good. So I felt, collectively, we were very responsible with that."

Meanwhile, Housley was able to roll all four of his lines for the majority of the game. The numbers became a bit skewed as he leaned on his top-end players more in the third period, but by the end of the game 10 different forwards had skated more than 10 minutes at even strength.

"I think guys have got to realize the way we've got to play," Sabres forward Jordan Nolan said. "When we play a little too loose and don't stick to our systems, that's when we find ourselves in trouble and lots of breakdowns and we're down in games."

"Once we realize we've just got to get pucks deep and play simple, I think the skill will come out. Once you start playing like that, I think our top guys will start creating more offense that way. It's just a mindset."

Injury updates

While none of the injured Sabres returned to practice, there was some good news on Monday as Housley announced that Zemgus Girgensons (lower body), Justin Falk (undisclosed) and Evan Rodrigues (hand) have returned to skating.

The Sabres are also without defensemen Zach Bogosian and Josh Gorges and forward Jacob Josefson, all of whom are dealing with lower-body injuries. Gorges is day-to-day, while Bogosian and Josefson are week-to-week.

Lines at practice

67 Benoit Pouliot - 90 Ryan O'Reilly - 29 Jason Pominville
9 Evander Kane - 15 Jack Eichel - 21 Kyle Okposo
17 Jordan Nolan - 23 Sam Reinhart - 95 Justin Bailey
26 Matt Moulson - 22 Johan Larsson - 25 Seth Griffith

6 Marco Scandella - 55 Rasmus Ristolainen
19 Jake McCabe - 5 Matt Tennyson / 27 Taylor Fedun
93 Victor Antipin - 38 Zach Redmond

40 Robin Lehner
31 Chad Johnson

Shawinigan's Vasily Glotov heats up with 1st hat trick of QMJHL career

Sabres.com

by Kris Baker

October 23rd, 2017

It was inevitable that Shawinigan Cataractes overage forward Vasily Glotov (2016, seventh round) was going to start heating up in Quebec Major Junior Hockey League action.

That moment took place last week as Glotov scored five goals in the week's three road games, including his first-ever QMJHL hat trick in a Sunday win at Moncton.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

Shawinigan's Vasily Glotov connects for his first-ever QMJHL hat trick in a Sunday win at Moncton. #Sabres

5:45 PM - Oct 22, 2017

3 3 Replies 4 4 Retweets 45 45 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Glotov finished off a give-and-go Thursday for his third goal of the year as Shawinigan earned a 7-6 overtime decision at Cape Breton.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

Shawinigan's Vasily Glotov gains the zone, gives, gets it back for the finish in Thursday's 7-6 win at Cape Breton #Sabres

8:08 AM - Oct 20, 2017

Replies 4 4 Retweets 14 14 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Glotov was at it again on Saturday, picking a short-side corner from the left circle in the Cataractes' 4-2 loss at Charlottetown.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

Vasily Glotov goes high short side for his fourth goal of the year in Shawinigan's Saturday loss at Charlottetown #Sabres

9:36 AM - Oct 22, 2017

Replies 3 3 Retweets 20 20 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

The momentum carried over into Sunday's matchup with Moncton, with Glotov earning the game's first star with his three-goal afternoon in a 7-4 victory over the Wildcats.

The first and third of Glotov's goals came via wrist shots from high between the circles, while his second, the game-winner, came on a one-timer at the edge of the crease.

The big week boosts the affable Russian's offensive totals to seven goals and 11 points in 13 games.

OHL

Cliff Pu (2016, third round) connected for a pair of assists as London ended their eight-game losing streak with a 5-1 victory at Kitchener. Pu was unable to produce in Sunday's 5-2 win at Mississauga, leaving him with one goal and six points through 10 games heading into the week of October.

In Thursday action, defenseman Austin Osmanski (2016, seventh round) picked up one assist to extend his point streak to three games in Peterborough's 5-1 win at Windsor.

Osmanski's streak came to an end in Saturday's 7-3 loss at Flint, but he got back on track with another helper as the Petes closed the week with a 3-2 defeat at Saginaw on Sunday.

Osmanski has six points (1+5) in 12 games this season, including a goal and four assists in seven games since Peterborough acquired him from Mississauga.

WHL

Red Deer winger Brandon Hagel (2016, sixth round) recorded an assist Friday in the Rebels' 4-2 win over Calgary, and he extended his point streak to four games by picking up another helper in Saturday's 4-1 loss to Prince George.

Hagel has 14 points (3+11) in 11 games, but has gone without a goal in his last nine outings.

Prince Albert defenseman Vojtech Budik (2016, fifth round) recorded an assist for the second straight game Tuesday as the Raiders lost in overtime 5-4 to Vancouver. Budik, who put seven shots on net in a 4-3 overtime victory over Saskatoon on Saturday, has collected four points (1+3) and 32 shots on goal through 11 contests.

NCAA

Casey Mittelstadt (2017, first round) threaded a short pass for an assist and produced a team-high four shots on goal Friday as Minnesota edged North Dakota 2-1.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

A nice little feed from Casey Mittelstadt finds Rem Pitlick in stride for the goal in the Gophers' Friday win at North Dakota #Sabres

3:01 PM - Oct 21, 2017

3 3 Replies 14 14 Retweets 53 53 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Mittelstadt was kept out the lineup for Saturday's rematch with an undisclosed injury, leaving the freshman with four points (2+2) through his first five collegiate contests.

Christopher Brown (2014, sixth round) scored his first goal of the year Friday as Boston College was defeated by St. Cloud State 5-2. Brown recorded two shots on the goal Saturday as the Eagles again lost to the Huskies 3-1.

Boston College defenseman Casey Fitzgerald (2016, third round) notched one assist Friday and five shots on goal Saturday as the Eagles were swept by St. Cloud State. Fitzgerald's Friday helper gives him four points in five games this season and keeps him tied for the team scoring lead.

Sophomore defenseman Jacob Bryson (2017, fourth round) picked up a pair of assists Friday, including one on the overtime winner, as Providence got past St. Lawrence 6-5.

Bryson, who recorded one shot on goal the next night as the Friars were blanked 4-0 by Clarkson, has a team-best four helpers through five contests, tying him for second among team point-getters.

Linus Weissbach (2017, seventh round) recorded one shot on goal Friday as Wisconsin dropped a 5-1 decision at Northern Michigan.

The next night, Weissbach scored his third goal of the year as the Badgers earned the weekend split with a 4-0 victory over the Wildcats. The freshman winger has three goals and five points in his first seven collegiate contests.

St. Cloud State defenseman William Borgen (2015, fourth round) recorded two assists Friday for the fourth multi-point effort of his NCAA career in a 5-2 win over Boston College, and logged a plus-1 rating the next night as the Huskies earned the non-conference sweep with a 3-1 win.

St. Cloud State senior forward Judd Peterson (2012, seventh round) netted one assist in the Huskies' sweep of Boston College. Peterson is still looking for his first goal of the season but leads the club with five helpers through five games.

In Thursday action, Brett Murray (2016, fourth round) notched his first point of the year, an assist, as Penn State defeated American International 7-5. Murray, who the next night went without a point in the Nittany Lions' 3-2 overtime loss to American International, has one point (0+1) through six games.

Connecticut defenseman Philip Nyberg (2016, fifth round) has yet to return to the lineup after suffering a lower-body injury in the team's first game of the season at Maine.

Ivan Chukarov (2015, seventh round) has yet to suit up for Massachusetts as he continues his return from an offseason injury.

Brown University winger Maxwell Willman (2014, fifth round) will kick off the season Friday at Yale.

Europe

Victor Olofsson (2014, seventh round) had a nice week, scoring a pair of game-winning goals as Frolunda HC won all three of their Swedish Hockey League contests.

Olofsson made a nice play Tuesday, breaking into the zone and passing the puck to a trailer before scooping up the rebound of a blocked shot and burying the game-winner with 5:24 left in regulation to thrust the Indians to a 3-2 win over Orebro HK. Olofsson also had an assist in the victory.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

Victor Olofsson breaks in/keeps control, sets up teammate, picks up scraps of blocked shot, slings home his third goal of the year #Sabres

5:48 PM - Oct 17, 2017

4 4 Replies 5 5 Retweets 26 26 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Olofsson recorded two shots on goal in Thursday's 4-3 shootout win over Mora IK, but got back in the goal column Saturday by scoring the backhand game-winner in overtime to secure Frolunda a 3-2 triumph over Skelleftea AIK.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

Victor Olofsson knows what do with extra space. Today he found room in the middle, lofted lucky backhand bankshot for the OT winner #Sabres

3:15 PM - Oct 21, 2017

2 2 Replies 5 5 Retweets 18 18 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Olofsson has four goals and six points in 11 games with averaging a career-best 16:46 of work per outing.

Rasmus Asplund (2016, second round) posted a combined six shots on goal last week as Farjestad BK won just once in three tries. After getting off to a hot start with six points in his first six games, Asplund has not gotten on the score sheet in his last six outings.

Marcus Davidsson (2017, second round) set up a goal for the third-straight game Tuesday as Djurgarden IF lost to Linkoping 3-2, and then saw the career-best three-game point streak halted Thursday as Djurgarden fell to Karlskrona 2-1.

Follow

Kris Baker @SabresProspects

Marcus Davidsson hits the zone as the third forward, gets the puck, gives it back for the assist. Three-game point streak.
#Sabres

5:44 PM - Oct 17, 2017

Replies 1 1 Retweet 8 8 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Davidsson has three assists and a plus-2 rating in nine games while averaging 10:27 time on ice per effort.

In Finland second division action, Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen (2017, second round) made 18 saves as LeKi downed Espoo United 4-1. The win improves Luukkonen to 6-2 with a 2.86 goals-against average and .912 save percentage.

In the Finnish junior ranks, defenseman Oskari Laaksonen (2017, third round) posted seven shot attempts in 22:16 of work Saturday as Ilves U20 lost to KalPa 5-2, and returned the next day with one assist in a 5-4 win over TPS.

Laaksonen has played 19 games, picking up one goal and seven assists while serving on Ilves U20's top defensive pair.

For more on all the youngsters in the Sabres pipeline, check out Kris Baker's website, SabresProspects.com. You can also follow him on Twitter (@SabresProspects) for in-game updates throughout the week on any Buffalo prospects that are in action.

Sharpen Up: October 23, 2017

Sabres.com

by Chris Ryndak

October 23, 2017

Buffalo completed another comeback on Saturday in Boston and picked up the extra point thanks to Ryan O'Reilly's overtime tally.

The Sabres are back at practice today. They'll host the Detroit Red Wings tomorrow night at KeyBank Center on NBCSN. Great seats are still available, so come on down and check it out.

Here's what you need to know.

Video: O'Reilly, Sabres come back to beat Bruins in OT, 5-4

A slow start Saturday night could've sunk the Sabres. They were down 3-0 37 seconds into the second period and even after Jason Pominville scored midway through the second to snap Anton Khudobin's shutout bid, the Bruins reclaimed their three-goal lead just minutes later.

But then Buffalo really started chipping away, scoring four unanswered goals to win 5-4.

From the game recap:

In the visiting dressing room at TD Garden on Saturday night, after he had scored his overtime goal and a failed challenge sealed a much-needed victory for the Buffalo Sabres, Ryan O'Reilly had a message for the rest of his teammates.

It didn't take long for Jack Eichel to echo that message when he addressed the media after the game.

Video: Eichel: Postgame Interview at BOS

"I think we need to use this game as an example of what it takes to win a hockey game," Sabres forward Eichel said. "Factor said it after the game, it doesn't mean much if you don't come back Tuesday and have a good performance."

"Factor" is one of a few nicknames O'Reilly has in the Sabres dressing room, and he was certainly one on Saturday. It was the hard work of O'Reilly and his linemates that began Buffalo's comeback from a 3-0 deficit midway through the second period, and it was his backhand shot in overtime that sealed a 5-4 win for the Sabres over the Boston Bruins.

Video: O'Reilly on Buffalo's OT win in Boston

"We've, to a man, got to realize why we had success and why we won tonight," O'Reilly said. "It wasn't a perfect game by any means, but the big staples of the game were all there for us. I think we all kind of realized that, 'Ok, this is something we've got to feel.'"

"It's not getting any easier. We've struggled at home and it starts Monday with a good practice. We've got to come out and find a way to do it at home."

The Buffalo defense combined for 26 shots attempts, led by eight from Marco Scandella.

Video: Housley Postgame Interview at BOS

"We've been really preaching that, just trying to find a lane," coach Phil Housley said. "Marco's shot through and Jack's goal was a result of that. We're going to continue to work on that because in our offensive scheme it'd be a big part of our plan. I really liked what our D did tonight."

Video: Pominville: Postgame Interview at BOS

On tap today

We'll follow up on Saturday's win with Jourdon's Ice Level Practice Report and Duffer's Sabres Now video. We'll also have lineup news and injury updates as well.

Kris Baker's weekly Sabres Prospects Report will be heading your way today as well.

0 Comments

[View Less](#)