



Buffalo Sabres

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Like his team, Sabres' Ristolainen off to a slow start

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

October 19, 2017

Rasmus Ristolainen took a general approach.

"I've just got to get better," the Sabres defenseman said Thursday. "That's it. I don't think I find one area that's been good all the time, but it's just all-around. I've got to just be better everywhere."

Phil Housley, after a quick compliment, was more specific.

"Risto has done a terrific job," the coach said in KeyBank Center. "His compete level and the way he plays the game, he does it the right way.

"I think it's just more puck decisions, doing things a little faster, getting back harder on the breakout, working for his partner a little bit better, getting shots off quicker in the offensive zone.

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"Those things you can show him and you can work on, but his compete level is solid."

A high compete level is nice for any player, but Buffalo's No. 1 defenseman is expected to bring all the other things Housley mentioned. Like his team, Ristolainen is off to a slow start. He and the Sabres hope that changes Friday when Vancouver visits the arena.

"You can't change what happened," Ristolainen said. "You can change what's going to happen.

"Everyone knows we've got to play better. It's not easy to win in this league, and you have to earn it. We haven't really earned it."

The Sabres are 1-4-2, which puts them 14th in the 16-team Eastern Conference. The disappointing numbers extend to Ristolainen, who has no goals, three assists and a minus-5 rating through seven games.

As the NHL's runaway leader in ice time – Ristolainen averages a league-high 26:58 per game – it's no surprise that he is skating when a goal is scored. He's been on the ice for 14 of the opponents' 27 goals and eight of the Sabres' 18 goals.

The bigger problem is he's directly contributed to two goals by the opponent, with an asterisk for a third. He had a bad pass at center ice Tuesday in Vegas and whiffed on a pass attempt at the blue line Sunday in Anaheim. During the game against the New York Islanders on Oct. 7, he missed a pass from partner Nathan Beaulieu. The Isles stayed in the zone and scored.

He acknowledged puck management is important as Buffalo attempts to turn around its season.

"We've got to keep it simple, try to play more in the offensive zone because that's where you win the games," Ristolainen said. "We've got to close quicker so we don't have to spend that much time in our D zone. Just work hard and go after guys right away when they get in zone, don't give them space."

The 22-year-old is already in his fifth pro season. He and the revamped defense corps were expected to grow under Housley, but it hasn't happened yet. The defensemen met in Housley's office for 10 minutes Thursday after a start that's featured no goals, five assists and a minus-13 rating.

"When you see points, especially with defensemen, a lot of that's on the power play," blue-liner Jake McCabe said. "Our power play obviously hasn't been producing like it will and it can. That probably has part to do with it.

"Another part is just us trying to find lanes and getting shots through, just getting more consistent and more comfortable with the system we want to run. We've had a lot of line-rush goals. We haven't had a lot of sustained offensive-zone pressure and goals that way. That will come, too."

Ristolainen had his share of time in the offensive zone in Vegas, and it led to a startling stat. The defenseman attempted nine shots, but not one was on net. It's obviously good he got that many looks, but he knows he has to make them count.

"You're not going to see it on the scoreboard," Ristolainen said. "It doesn't matter if you have zero or 10 shots if you don't score or get apples," the hockey slang for assists.

An apple a day by the defensemen would help Buffalo get its season moving.

"Just be ready to play right from the get-go," Ristolainen said. "We have a chance to do that."

Story topics: Rasmus Ristolainen

Sabres Notebook: Ryan Vinz returns to crease; Lehner on long list of absent players

The Buffalo News

John Vogl

OCTOBER 19, 2017

As the Sabres wrapped up practice Thursday, they gathered in a circle at center ice. Coach Phil Housley noticed someone was missing.

He quickly shouted to emergency goaltender Ryan Vinz, who not only joined the group but was pushed to the center of the circle.

"Our backup to the backup to the backup," Housley said with a smile in KeyBank Center. "It was all in fun. He came out and helped us. It was to feel part of it."

"It was just fun to have him out there. Guys enjoyed it."

Vinz, who became part of Sabres lore in 2014, filled in for ill goaltender Robin Lehner. Rather than summon a goalie from Rochester for the workout, Buffalo used the director of hockey technology/programming for the Rinks at HarborCenter.

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John Vogl ✓ @BuffNewsVogl

Ryan Vinz takes the ice for Sabres practice. Chad Johnson here, but no Robin Lehner.

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Vinz's first appearance for the Sabres came Feb. 28, 2014, when the team signed him as an emergency backup. Buffalo had just traded Ryan Miller, and no one was available to play behind Jhonas Enroth.

There will be no replay Friday when the Sabres host Vancouver. If Lehner is still ill, Buffalo will recall a netminder from the Amerks.

Lehner joined an injury list that is getting longer and longer. Here's the rundown:

* Center Jacob Josefson, who had a walking boot on his right foot.

"He's more of a week-to-week right now after getting evaluated," Housley said. "It's unfortunate for him. Lower-body injury, and we'll see where it goes."

* Center Zemgus Girgensons, who left Tuesday's game in Las Vegas after blocking a shot.

"Zemgus is day-to-day taking that shot, taking a little bit longer to heal right now," Housley said. "We'll re-evaluate that tomorrow."

* Defenseman Josh Gorges.

"He's day-to-day also," Housley said. "There's a lot of guys that got banged up on this road trip. Josh is another one that has a lower-body injury."

* Defenseman Zach Bogosian, who has yet to play this season with a lower-body injury that is believed to be his groin.

"Zach is a week-to-week situation," Housley said. "As we look further into it, we'll have more information as we move forward."

* Defenseman Justin Falk, who also hasn't played.

"Justin's week-to-week still with his injury," Housley said. "He started skating, so that's a good progression."

* Forward Evan Rodrigues still has a brace on his hand and wrist.

Ryan O'Reilly says he's ready to make an impact.

After a forgettable start, the Sabres center has points in two straight games, including his first goals of the season. He scored twice during Tuesday's 5-4 overtime loss to Vegas, giving him two goals and four points in seven games.

He had no goals and one assist in the opening five.

"Every year you've got to reinvent your game," O'Reilly said. "What worked last year at certain times isn't going to work this year at certain times. It's finding a new way and finding different things.

"It took a little bit longer than I wanted it to, but I feel better on the ice now. I feel like I can impact the game more, and I plan to. I've got to be one of the key guys on the team that's leading the charge here and doing things well."

Both of O'Reilly's goals came on the power play, which went 3 for 5 against the Golden Knights after a 2-for-22 start.

"It's definitely nice to get on the board," O'Reilly said. "After last game, it's nice to have a spark on the power play. That gave us a chance to win the hockey game, and that's got to be better.

"You look at all the games we've played, we've had plenty of opportunities on the PP to create and get momentum, and we haven't done it. I personally feel confident on the power play now that I can make stuff happen, and hopefully it opens up."

The Rochester Americans have signed defenseman Stuart Percy to a professional tryout. The 24-year-old played in 37 games last year for Wilkes-Barre/Scranton, the team formerly run by Sabres General Manager Jason Botterill. Percy had one goal and eight points for the Baby Penguins.

A first-round pick of the Toronto Maple Leafs in 2011, Percy has three assists in 12 NHL appearances.

Housley: 'Our work habits have been good'

WGR 550

by Howard & Jeremy

October 19, 2017

After a grueling four-game road trip out to the west coast, the Buffalo Sabres are back in Buffalo to gear up for a matchup with the Vancouver Canucks on Friday night at KeyBank Center.

The struggling Sabres came out of the road trip with their first and only win of the season so far, and grabbed three of a possible eight points. The team continued to show some growing pains out west, but had some bright spots in all four games.

On Tuesday, the Sabres closed out their trip with their first ever visit to Las Vegas, Nevada to face the Vegas Golden Knights at T-Mobile Arena. Buffalo fell behind 4-1 in the third period, only to come back with three goals in the final ten minutes to force overtime. However, Golden Knights forward David Perron sunk the Sabres with about a minute to play in overtime to hand Buffalo another loss.

The Golden Knights continue to impress the hockey world, setting a National Hockey League record for the best start from an expansion team in league history. While Vegas certainly earned the win on Tuesday night, Sabres head coach Phil Housley knows his team did not get out to the best start.

"It wasn't so much about what they were doing, it was what we weren't doing. They're a quick team, they work hard. They have a lot to prove as an expansion team," Housley said with Jeremy White on WGR Thursday morning. "I thought we finally came ready to play in the third period and turned things around. We had 37 attempts and 19 shots in that third period, but it was a little bit too late trying to chase the game."

The Sabres are all-too familiar with the type of start they have had to this season. Buffalo has not had a winning record in the first seven games of a season since the 2011-12 season.

It was a promising start to the season as the Sabres played very well in the home opener against the Montreal Canadiens. Buffalo played with speed and moved the puck with efficiency, but ended up falling short in a shootout. After two miserable games against the New York Islanders and New Jersey Devils, Housley was hoping for a good response heading out west.

"I think our work level was extremely high in the game against Montreal. I thought we dipped a little bit in that area because maybe we were focusing on our system play. We had to take a step back and focus on our work," Housley said. "Coming into this road trip, I thought we didn't get what we wanted on San Jose, but really liked the work level. We fixed the mistakes, and we go to [Los Angeles] and played an outstanding game. 5-on-5 we were the better team; it came down to special teams, but we were moving in the right direction. Finally, it all came together in Anaheim. I thought we had a 200-foot game from end-to-end, really controlled the game well, and I think it just came down to preparation."

"I think our work habits have been good. We have to continue to enforce those areas as we approach practice because that's really where you fine tune your game. That comes down to individuals too, but as we move forward, we'll continue to work on that."

One area of focus for the Sabres since the offseason has been the defense, and how they can improve the overall play from the blue line. The Sabres added players like Marco Scandella, Nathan Beaulieu, Victor Antipin and Matt Tennyson to try and improve, arguably, one of the worst units in the NHL last season.

So far, the defense has struggled to find some comfort in Housley's system. There has been some flashes of brilliance from the back end in some games, but Housley wants to see it on a consistent basis.

"Our defense, as a whole, needs to simplify their game. When we have opportunities to execute, whether it's in a break out or a neutral zone re-group where we can transition the other way, we need to continue to get better in that area. When we do it well and we work together as a group, you can see the results against L.A. and Anaheim with how we can break out and how we can transition. We looked fast and played fast."

As for injuries, Housley gave an update on the status of forward Zemgus Girgensons, who left Tuesday's game in Vegas after blocking a shot while working on the penalty kill.

"The [penalty kill] did a tremendous job in the first two periods of that game, and there's guys putting themselves in front of pucks and blocking shots. It was unfortunate that the shot hit [Zemgus] in the lower-body area where there wasn't a lot of padding. Everything's okay with him. He'll be a day-to-day decision at this point."

Sabres' Ryan O'Reilly starting to produce

Olean Times Herald

by Bill Hoppe

October 19, 2017

BUFFALO – Ryan O'Reilly's ability to adapt to an evolving game has helped the talented center morph from an unheralded second-round pick into an NHL All-Star and the Sabres' most versatile player.

"Every year you got to reinvent your game," O'Reilly said Thursday. "What worked last year at certain times isn't going to work this year at certain times. It's finding a new way and finding different things. It's on myself."

O'Reilly, 26, struggled out of the gate this season, and not surprisingly, the Sabres lost their first five games. Before the team left for its four-game road trip last week, O'Reilly, who's notoriously hard on himself, said he felt "invisible."

But O'Reilly built up his game over the trip. He closed it splendidly in Tuesday's 5-4 overtime loss to Vegas, scoring his first two goals while skating a career-high 26 minutes, 56 seconds.

"It took a little bit longer than I wanted it to," O'Reilly said after the 1-4-2 Sabres prepared for the Vancouver Canucks, tonight's opponent at KeyBank Center. "But I feel a bit better on the ice now. I feel I impact the game more. I plan to (keep impacting) because I got to be one of the key guys on the team that's leading the charge."

Of course, O'Reilly has a very high standard for himself. He has played more minutes than any Sabres forward since the start of the 2015-16 season. He trails only center Jack Eichel in points (122-119) over that time.

Win or lose, O'Reilly, who's in the second season of a seven-year, \$52.5 million contract, usually laments his mistakes and missed opportunities.

O'Reilly knows if he doesn't stand out, the Sabres might falter.

"That's what I'm paid to do," he said. "The key guys got to be the key guys, day in and day out. I haven't been. It's time to do that. It's time to be that spark and do the right things and steal some games."

The Sabres couldn't nab some early wins, in part, because O'Reilly mustered just a single assist in the first five games. Their secondary scoring woes were so bad it took them six games – until winger Justin Bailey scored 1:26 into Sunday's 3-1 win in Anaheim – before they scored an even-strength goal without Eichel on the ice.

O'Reilly scored two power-play goals Tuesday after Sabres coach Phil Housley moved him to the second unit. Still, O'Reilly's all-around game has improved. He pumped five shots on goal Tuesday.

"I feel I'm creating more," O'Reilly said of how he has changed. "I feel I'm a lot tougher to play against. Those first few games I feel I was trying to play too perfect, thinking a lot and not really trusting myself and my instincts. (I changed) once I got back to that and back to just being competitive, hard to play against."

"I think it starts from there, and the offensive stuff, the fun stuff that I can be creative with and I can try things, (follows). It was nice to get a few breaks there and get on the board. Now I got to consistently do it."

Housley, a rookie coach, has quickly learned O'Reilly "is a very proud guy" who constantly evaluates his play.

"Eventually he was going to work his way out of it," Housley said of the slump. "But I think he had to focus on just being better positionally down in our own end on a breakout, and because of it he's getting a lot of touches through the neutral zone entering the offensive zone. I thought he had just more of a shot mentality the last (four games). You could see his game coming from San Jose to L.A. to Anaheim."

"Maybe he would've liked to have been more of an offensive contributor, but sometimes you got to take a step back before you take a step forward. He did a terrific job with that and finally got rewarded against Vegas."

Sabres return from road trip banged up

Olean Times Herald

by Bill Hoppe

October 19, 2017

BUFFALO – Up top in the press box, with a view of the entire ice surface, hockey can look pretty simple.

“It’s obviously a lot easier watching games than it is being on the ice,” said Sabres winger Seth Griffith, a healthy scratch the last two games. “You see stuff that you wouldn’t normally see necessarily on the ice.”

Thanks to a glut of injuries, Griffith, the team’s biggest surprise during training camp, should receive a fresh opportunity in Friday’s tilt against Vancouver.

So far, Griffith, a dynamic AHL scorer, has one assist in five appearances. Perhaps taking a step back and watching games from a different perspective can help buoy him.

“When you’re up top, you can see the plays develop, you can see the speed, you can see how much time you really have and how much poise you can have,” Sabres coach Phil Housley said this afternoon inside KeyBank Center. “I think it gives you a different look, and then you can see and try to translate that in my game. ‘Hey, I got more time with the puck than I really do.’”

The Sabres, of course, expect Griffith, whose AHL scoring prowess hasn’t translated to the NHL, to produce offense.

“I feel like I was playing pretty well,” said Griffith, who has six goals and 17 points in 63 NHL games. “I had some chances I should’ve beared down on. ... I’m just trying not to think too much about it.”

Griffith, who practiced at right wing with center Sam Reinhart and Benoit Pouliot this morning inside HarborCenter, will likely play because the Sabres returned from their four-game road trip with a long list of injuries.

“There’s a lot of guys that got banged up on this road trip,” Housley said.

The injuries, according to Housley:

- Center Jacob Josefson is week-to-week with a lower-body injury. Josefson is wearing a walking boot on his right foot after leaving Sunday’s 3-1 road win in Anaheim.
- Forward Zemgus Girgensons is day-to-day after blocking a shot in Monday’s 5-4 overtime loss in Vegas.
- Defenseman Josh Gorges is day-to-day with a lower-body injury.
- Goalie Robin Lehner missed today’s practice because he wasn’t feeling well. Because of the Swede’s absence, the Sabres used HarborCenter employee Ryan Vinz, a former high school goalie, in net.

“Our backup to the backup to the backup,” Housley joked.

Vinz dressed as an emergency backup for a game in 2013-14 after the Sabres traded goalie Ryan Miller.

Housley also said defensemen Zach Bogosian (lower body) and Justin Falk (undisclosed) are week-to-week. Both were injured before the season. Housley had been saying Bogosian, who was hurt Sept. 29, was day-to-day.

Update: The Rochester Americans have signed defenseman Stuart Percy, 24, to a professional tryout, the team announced today.

Toronto selected Percy in the first round, 25th overall, in 2011. The 6-foot-1, 193-pound Percy played 12 games with the Maple Leafs, compiling three assists.

Buffalo Sabres searching for elusive improvement in their rebuilding process

National Post

by Michael Traikos

October 19, 2017

BUFFALO — It was at the end of Thursday’s practice when head coach Phil Housley brought in the Buffalo Sabres together at centre ice for a group chat and cheer.

Wait a second, he said. Someone was missing.

Housley then gestured towards Ryan Vinz, a staff member at the team’s practice facility who was working overtime as the emergency practice goalie. As he joined the circle, the rink erupted in laughter and cheers.

“Our backup to the backup to the backup,” said Housley, smiling afterwards. “It was all in fun. The guys enjoyed it.”

For the Sabres, who are 1-4-2, it was one of the few times this year that the team has had a chance to smile.

We’re only two weeks into the NHL season, but it’s been a familiar story in Buffalo. Once again, the team is struggling out of the gate. Meanwhile, their nearest rival, the Toronto Maple Leafs, are having the sort of success that Sabres fans thought their team would have.

It’s still early, however. The Sabres, who play the Vancouver Canucks on Friday, are only four points out of the final playoff spot, which won’t be decided for another five months. And they aren’t the only team dragging their feet in the early going.

From the Montreal Canadiens and the New York Rangers to the Edmonton Oilers and the San Jose Sharks, several would-be playoff teams find themselves stuck at the bottom of the standings. In Montreal’s case, it’s an inability to score. In Edmonton, it’s an inability to defend. In some cases, it’s both.

The expectations were somewhat lower in Buffalo. After missing the playoffs the last six years and finishing with the second-worst record in the Eastern Conference last season, no one was really counting on the Sabres to challenge for a playoff spot. But fans still expected to see a step in the right direction, especially after watching Toronto’s young guns seemingly go from worst in the league to Stanley Cup contender in a the blink of an eye.

No one inside the Sabres dressing room is content with one win in seven games, but the players are trying to keep things in perspective.

“Panic’s a pretty high-end word,” said forward Evander Kane, who leads Sabres with five goals and 10 points. “I think urgency is the right word, coming out to play the right way now. The first five, six, seven games are over and done with, and we have to be an urgent hockey club starting tomorrow night to the rest of the season.”

There are signs that the Sabres might be turning a corner. The team defeated the Anaheim Ducks 3-1 last Sunday for its first win of the season and came away with a point Tuesday in an overtime loss to the Vegas Golden Knights after scoring three goals in the final 10 minutes of the third period.

But as Kane said, “Positivity only takes you so far, right.”

The team needs better results. To do that, they need to start believing in themselves. Of course, it’s hard to believe in yourself when Ryan O’Reilly is telling reporters that he’s been “useless” and the team is losing on a nightly basis.

Maybe that’s why Housley tried to get the players laughing on Thursday.

It’s just a matter of building some momentum,” said Jack Eichel, whose talent remains the biggest reason for optimism in Buffalo. “For now, a come-from-behind loss in overtime will have to do.

“You look at the third period of the Vegas game, that was a good step in the right direction,” said Eichel, who has nine points in seven games. “The first 40 minutes we probably want to have back, but the last 20 minutes the guys started to play. They stopped worrying — stopped worrying about what was going on — and just started playing. Usually when you do that, you start having success.

“I think that’s one of the problems right now, we’re just doing a little too much thinking, not making plays and not letting our instincts take over. It’s a long season.

“Every team goes through adversity. It’s just how you handle it. For us, it’s important to try and get better every day.”

Sabres focused on finding consistency in preparation

Sabres.com

by Jourdon LaBarber

October 19, 2017

When it comes to looking back at the Buffalo Sabres' loss in Vegas on Tuesday, Phil Housley said there's a difference between dwelling on the past and learning from it. Thus practice on Thursday ended on a lighthearted note, with fill-in goaltender Ryan Vinz called upon to break the huddle at center ice (more on him later).

At the same time, Housley maintained that the Sabres need to be aware of what hampered them in their game against the Golden Knights, one that saw them struggle through two periods before finally erasing a three-goal deficit in an eventual overtime loss.

"I think it's just how you prepare," Housley said. "You look at our situation, we had a day off in Vegas. Sometimes you decompress as a player and you've got to get yourself geared up for the battle again at the start of the game. I think that lacked. A switch went off.

"We got fired up for the third period, we got a point."

Prior to the loss in Vegas, the Sabres had been proud of the way they began their last two games in Los Angeles and Anaheim. In those two periods, they controlled the pace of play on their way to outshooting opponents a combined 23-17 and outscoring them 2-0.

The next step is to do that consistently, which players said begins at an individual level.

"Everyone's different," alternate captain Ryan O'Reilly said. "Some guys can do things a lot quicker than others. It depends on the guy. You've got to find your own way to get going and find what we need to do. But yeah, I think we need to start better and I think that's to a man."

"You can do as much team stuff as you want but at the end of the day, it boils down to you as an individual player," forward Evander Kane said. "Not everything's going to work for everybody, so you have to find your own method, your own routine, whether that's before the game, during the game, at home. You've got to find out what works for you and come ready to play."

The preparedness is as much mental as it is physical. In the first two periods against Vegas, O'Reilly felt the Sabres were overthinking with the puck in an attempt to avoid mistakes. In games they start well, he said, it feels more like they're letting loose and just playing.

"When you're not thinking and you're just trusting your instincts, you could see how much better it is," O'Reilly said. "In the sense that we have to be more focused but in a different way. We need to be focused on the process and not the outcome."

"Everything becomes a little easier," forward Kyle Okposo added. "Everyone seems to be a step ahead. I think that's where we need to get to."

Okposo said that his own preparation has changed as he's progressed through his NHL career. The same goes for young players as they continue to develop in the league, which the Sabres have no shortage of. Finding a way to consistently bring their best from puck drop is part of the process for Housley and his team.

"I think guys prepare well," Kane said. "I think we just need to get it to that next level."

The back up to the back up to the back up

You may remember Vinz from his cup of coffee with the Sabres during the 2013-14 season, when he dressed as an emergency backup to Jhonas Enroth after Ryan Miller was traded less than two hours prior to a game against the San Jose Sharks.

Now the Director of Hockey Technology at HarborCenter, Vinz was called upon again for practice on Thursday with Robin Lehner feeling under the weather.

"Our back up to the back up to the back up," Housley joked. "It was fun to have him out there. Guys enjoyed it."

You can hear from Vinz later this afternoon in today's Sabres Now with Brian Duff.

Injury report

Jacob Josefson and Zemgus Girgensons were absent after sustaining lower-body injuries in Anaheim and Vegas, respectively. Housley said Josefson is week-to-week, while Girgensons is day-to-day. Sam Reinhart moved from the wing to center in their absence.

On defense, Josh Gorges did not participate while Zach Bogosian and Justin Falk - both of whom have missed the entirety of the regular season thus far - remained absent. Gorges is day-to-day, while Bogosian and Falk are week-to-week. Housley said Falk is currently skating on his own.

Lines at practice

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

Defense: 6 Marco Scandella, 55 Rasmus Ristolainen, 19 Jake McCabe, 82 Nathan Beaulieu, 5 Matt Tennyson, 93 Victor Antipin

31 Chad Johnson

Sharpen Up: October 19, 2017

Sabres.com

by Chris Ryndak

October 19, 2017

Buffalo is back home for practice today as they ready themselves for tomorrow night's match against the Vancouver Canucks on Friday at KeyBank Center.

The Sabres went 1-2-1 on the four-game trip that saw them beat the Anaheim Ducks and earn a point in their first-ever game in Vegas.

Here's what you need to know.

Coach Phil Housley said in his weekly appearance this morning on WGR 550 that the coaching staff will be evaluating the entire lineup heading into today's practice at HarborCenter.

Buffalo rallied back on Tuesday against the Golden Knights, scoring three times in the third, including twice in the final two minutes to force overtime. However, they fell in overtime. Despite earning the point, the fact they started out slow and fell behind early did not sit well with Housley.

Phil Housley Postgame (10/17/17)

03:02 • October 18th, 2017

"I think it's just unacceptable the way we approached the game," Housley said after the game. "We had a chance to build on something and I know this is a process, but the process was a little broken tonight. Our lack of preparation and accountability, and urgency to start the game the way we finished was lacking."

Stay tuned for full practice coverage from HarborCenter. Jourdon will provide you with the Ice Level Report while Duffer will bring the heat with Sabres Now.

Injury update

Zemgus Girgensons left the game in his second shift of Tuesday's game when we blocked a shot on the penalty kill in the first period.

"It's just a blocked shot. It's a day-to-day thing for him. It's tough," Housley said this morning on WGR. "Our PK did a tremendous job in the first two periods of that game - and just guys putting themselves in front of pucks and blocking shots. That's a lot of the PK but it's unfortunate that it hit Z in the lower-body area where there isn't a lot of padding.

"Everything's OK with him and he'll just be a day-to-day decision at this point."

The Sabres were also without Jacob Josefson, who missed Tuesday's game due to a lower-body injury sustained on Sunday in Anaheim. Defenseman Zach Bogosian stayed behind on the trip while he recovers from a lower-body injury of his own. Justin Falk (undisclosed injury) and Evan Rodrigues (hand) are currently on injured reserve.

Jersey auction happening now

The Sabres announced yesterday that the team is holding a game-worn jersey auction.. The auction will be held at Sabres.com/Auctions until Sunday, Oct. 29 at 9 p.m. Proceeds from the auction will benefit the Buffalo Sabres Foundation.

The jerseys available for bidding include set three of the game-worn home and road jerseys from the 2016-17 season, highlighted by Jack Eichel and Ryan O'Reilly. This set will also include the NHL 100th Anniversary sleeve patch logo. All jerseys will come with a certificate of authenticity.