



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*December 19, 2017*

## **After calling for pride, Sabres' Scandella sees some**

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

December 18, 2017

Marco Scandella has established himself as one of the positive thinkers in the Buffalo Sabres' dressing room. He sees the bright side in almost everything.

Losing is the exception. He despises it. He's not used to it. As it happened over and over in Buffalo, he openly called for more pride among the players.

He's seeing more as the Sabres welcome the Boston Bruins to KeyBank Center on Tuesday.

"I feel like we're earning it right now," Scandella said Monday. "I just feel like the whole team is building a foundation here, and we're headed in the right direction."

It clearly took awhile. Buffalo is on a warm streak (2-1-3) after winning only six of its opening 27 games. After the losses, a furious stare accompanied Scandella's calls for pride.

"At the time I was just really mad," the defenseman said. "You fight your whole life to play in this league. I came from a winning culture, and I think guys are starting to understand how much fun it is to win, first of all, but what it means to actually work hard."

Among the many problems in Buffalo the last few seasons was a sense of entitlement. Players had made it to the NHL, and that seemed enough.

It wasn't like that during Scandella's seven seasons in Minnesota. He doesn't want it to be like that in Buffalo.

"I think we have a really good, cohesive group with the coaches and everybody," Scandella said. "I just feel like we're building something here. Statistically it shows in the last seven, eight games that we've been playing a lot better.

"Everything is up. Everyone is just having more success. Everyone gets more individual success when the team plays better and the team has success. I think we're starting to understand that as a group, and it's huge."

Fans had hoped the players understood it already. Losing supposedly taught the Sabres their share of lessons the past few seasons, but an 8-18-7 record shows not enough learning was done. It's essentially back to Square One with a new group of mainstays.

Scandella is one of them. The 27-year-old seems eager to help build a winner during his first season with the club.

"You see the passion he has for the game, and that's probably first and foremost," fellow defenseman Josh Gorges said. "When he comes out on the ice, he's there to compete. He has a little bit of sandpaper to his game. He likes the fire.

"He's a great guy that kind of just fit in right away, a guy you want to hang around with in the room."

When the Sabres acquired Scandella from Minnesota in June, the plan was to increase his workload immensely. They've followed through.

After skating 18:20 per night last year, Scandella is averaging 23:41 this year. That trails only top-pair defense partner Rasmus Ristolainen (26:55). Scandella is on the ice in all situations, averaging 2:49 of penalty-kill time (he had 1:40 last year) and 1:35 of power-play work (just 16 seconds last season).

"He's doing a great job," coach Phil Housley said. "He's playing on the power play, penalty kill, end of periods, at the end of games whether we're down or up.

"One thing I really like about Marco is his attitude and his energy. Every day he brings it, and it's infectious to our team."

With seven assists in 33 games, Scandella has nearly reached last year's total of nine. He has 62 shots compared to 88 last season, but none have found the net. Jake McCabe is the only Buffalo defenseman to score, and his two goals have come in the last five games.

"I wish we would have more goals and more offensive contributions from our defense," Housley said. "I think it's coming. ... I'd definitely like to continue working with the D getting their shots through, finding lanes and rewarding the forwards that are going there."

Scandella likes that the whole team is seeing rewards for its work. There certainly have been lackluster moments during the last six games, but there have also been signs that Buffalo deserved to pick up seven of a possible 12 points. Scandella has points in two of the last four.

"I've been super happy personally," he said. "Now that we have our group together and are practicing well, I feel like we're going in the right direction and seeing what kind of team we could be."

## **Sabres Notebook: Winter Classic documentary celebrates Buffalo; Josefson back**

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

December 18, 2017

Like the game that it commemorates, the documentary about the original Winter Classic in Buffalo is filled with chills, highlights and compelling story lines. Also like the game, it has Three Stars.

The Third Star of NHL Network's "The First NHL Winter Classic, Hockey Goes Outside" is Sidney Crosby. The Pittsburgh captain used the 2008 outdoor game against the Sabres as a springboard toward becoming a legend, and the film treats him as such.

The fans in Buffalo are the Second Star. The roar inside the Bills' stadium and the festival in the parking lot are captured well. The passion of Western New York sports fans is praised and revered.

As anyone who attended the game can attest, the weather was the First Star. It was a New Year's Day celebration held inside a snow globe, and the flakes created picturesque scenes, unexpected drama and a lasting impression.

Viewers can see for themselves soon. "The First NHL Winter Classic, Hockey Goes Outside" will have a special screening at 6 p.m. Tuesday in (716) Food and Sport. The documentary will air nationwide at 8 p.m. Wednesday on NHL Network.

(A clip is available [here](#).)

Plenty is packed into the 50 minutes of running time. Narrated by actor Michael Keaton, the documentary tracks the game from its creation to the building of the outdoor rink to the game-ending shootout and beyond.

"There was no denying the Winter Classic had the feel of a real event, the likes of which the sports world had never quite seen," Keaton says.

The NHL Network original film commemorates the 10-year anniversary of the game, and it digs deep:

\* NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman and executives from NBC Sports discuss how changes in college football bowl games allowed them a window of opportunity.

\* Dan Craig, the NHL's vice president of facilities and operations, details the problems encountered in building the rink with a limited amount of time in less-than-ideal conditions.

\* The cameras catch the ball-hockey games, bonfires and tailgating out in a true winter wonderland.

"There's loads of people already there, and we're there hours and hours before the broadcast," NBC announcer Darren Pang recalls. "I'm thinking to myself, 'This is really, really neat.'"

\* Players such as Ryan Miller, Brian Campbell, Jason Pominville and the witty Colby Armstrong provide an in-depth look at the game itself, commenting on the action as they watch a replay of it.

\* Announcers Bob Costas, Mike "Doc" Emrick, Rob Ray and Pang give their views along with reporters from Pittsburgh and Buffalo, including The Buffalo News' Mike Harrington.

\* Cameras and microphones go inside the locker rooms, giving a behind-the-scenes look at pep talks and postgame hot chocolates.

"Everything kind of worked in our favor that day between the weather, the great crowd, the competitive game, having this young superstar really get to show his stuff at crunch time," says Jon Miller, NBC Sports' president of programming. "It was the perfect experience for us."

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Jacob Josefson made an immediate impact the last time he returned from injury. He'll get another chance to do it soon.

The Sabres center practiced fully again Monday, and he could rejoin the lineup Tuesday when Buffalo hosts Boston.

Josefson skated in the middle of Evan Rodrigues and Jordan Nolan during the workout in HarborCenter. Josefson has missed nine games since reinjuring his ankle Nov. 25 in Montreal. He missed 15 games the first time he got hurt, then returned with a goal and assist in two games before departing again.

"It was tough to see him go down again," coach Phil Housley said of the eight-year veteran. "He's a smart player, and it's good to have him practicing."

With Josefson likely back, Housley shifted Rodrigues to the wing. The forward played the position in college and Rochester before the organization moved him to center last season. Rodrigues has two goals and three points in six games after recovering from a broken hand.

"They've got a little bit of everything on that line, so that's why we moved him to the wing," Housley said. "I definitely think he could move up. He was off for a long time. He's trying to find his game right now. It's been good at times. He's got to find that consistency, but I really like the way he's been playing."

Jack Eichel centered Evander Kane and Jason Pominville on the top line. Ryan O'Reilly was in the middle of Benoit Pouliot and Kyle Okposo. Johan Larsson skated between Zemgus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart.

Scott Wilson and Hudson Fasching were the extra forwards, and the Sabres sent Fasching back to Rochester following the workout. He had no points in five games while skating 9:42 per night.

## Sabres' Josefson closer to return; Rodrigues moves to wing

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

December 18, 2017

Jacob Josefson made an immediate impact the last time he returned from injury. He'll get another chance to do it soon.

The Sabres center practiced fully again Monday, and he could rejoin the lineup Tuesday when Buffalo hosts Boston.

"Another good-paced practice for him, and we'll see how he is tomorrow," coach Phil Housley said in KeyBank Center.

Josefson skated in the middle of Evan Rodrigues and Jordan Nolan during the workout in HarborCenter. Josefson has been out since reinjuring his ankle Nov. 25 in Montreal, forcing him to miss nine games. He missed 15 games the first time he hurt the ankle, then returned with a goal and assist in two games before departing again.

"It was tough to see him go down again," Housley said of the eight-year veteran. "He's a smart player, and it's good to have him practicing."

With Josefson likely back, Housley shifted Rodrigues back to the wing. The forward played the position in college and Rochester before the organization moved him to the middle last season. Rodrigues has two goals and three points in six games after recovering from a broken hand.

"That line today was really good with Nolan, Josefson and Rodrigues," Housley said. "They complement each other well. They've got a little bit of everything on that line, so that's why we moved him to the wing.

"I definitely think he could move up. He was off for a long time. He's trying to find his game right now. It's been good at times. He's got to find that consistency, but I really like the way he's been playing. I think he brings offense. He's got good vision. He's set up a lot of players during this span of games that we didn't capitalize on."

Sabres Notebook: In wake of OT losses, 3-on-3 work gets extra attention

Jack Eichel centered Evander Kane and Jason Pominville on the top line. Ryan O'Reilly was in the middle of Benoit Pouliot and Kyle Okposo. Johan Larsson skated between Zemgus Girgensons and Sam Reinhart.

Scott Wilson and Hudson Fasching were the extra forwards. If Josefson is cleared to play, the Sabres could send Fasching back to Rochester. The holiday roster freeze goes into effect at 11:59 p.m. Tuesday and ends at 12:01 a.m. Dec. 28.

UPDATE: The Sabres have sent Fasching to Rochester.

Sabres' defense:  
Scandella-Ristolainen  
Beaulieu-Bogosian  
McCabe-Antipin  
Gorges-Falk

— John Vogl (@BuffNewsVogl) December 18, 2017

## Josefson nearing his return to the lineup

The Sabres forward has missed the past nine games with a lower-body injury

WGR550

BRAYTON WILSON

DECEMBER 18, 2017

Jacob Josefson is nearing a return from a lower-body injury that has kept him out of action for the past nine games.

Josefson has a goal and an assist in nine games played this season, but has been hampered by his lower-body injury for a majority of the season. The 26-year old centerman first suffered the injury back on October 15th in a win over the Anaheim Ducks, but returned to action on November 22nd against the Minnesota Wild. Just three games later, Josefson was back on the injury report after re-aggravating the lower-body issue.

"It's always frustrating when you're out, and then you come back for a few games and then hurt it again," Josefson said following practice on Monday. "After that I was down for a bit, but you have to stay positive, work through it and get back stronger than you were before. Now I feel good, and hopefully ready to go."

In the first six games of the season, Josefson struggled to get anything going on the ice with no points, a minus-3 rating and three shots on goal. In the three games played after his first return, Josefson managed to score a goal and add an assist, and was playing quite well on a line with Jordan Nolan and Kyle Okposo.

"When you come back, it's always a challenge to find your timing and get back into game condition," said Josefson. "It's different in practice than playing games, but I felt like my linemates helped me a lot coming back and made it easy for me. I think it took me a period or two to get my feet under me, and after that I felt comfortable right away. Hopefully I can have that mindset again and can get that feeling back quick. I'm going to be very excited to get back out there."

"After being hurt and getting back in, he made an immediate contribution," Sabres head coach Phil Housley added after practice. "That line [with Nolan and Okposo] was playing really well, and it was tough to see him go down again. He brings experience; really good and solid up the middle, down low in the defensive zone, and he just knows where to be in the offensive zone. The goal he scored, he was just in good position. He's just a smart player, and it's good to have him back practicing."

Josefson has been on the ice for the past few practices with his teammates, but Monday was the first time he took part in a team skate on a line combination. He was back skating with Nolan on his left side, while Evan Rodrigues was off to his right.

The Sabres have played some decent hockey as of late with points in five of their last six games, going 2-1-3 in that stretch. Josefson is hoping to add to the Sabres' success, and be able to help continue Buffalo's turn-around from a rough start to the season.

"Last few games, it's been really good. Obviously we still want to be better, but it feels like we're working in the right direction now and we have something we can build off."

As for Tuesday night's matchup with the Boston Bruins at KeyBank Center, Josefson is hopeful that he will be back out on the ice, but it is a decision that will be left up to the coaching staff.

"My body feels good, so it will be up to the coaches," Josefson said. "I would love to, but we'll see tomorrow."

"That line looked really good," Housley said. "We'll see how he reacts after today. Another good paced practice for him. We'll see how he is tomorrow."

Here's how the lines looked on Monday:

Kane - Eichel - Pominville

Pouliot - O'Reilly - Okposo

Nolan - Josefson - Rodrigues

Girgensons - Larsson - Reinhart

Scandella - Ristolainen

Beaulieu - Bogosian

McCabe - Antipin

Gorges - Falk

Hudson Fasching and Scott Wilson were the extra skaters.

## **Fasching assigned to the Amerks**

Hudson Fasching goes back to Rochester with Jacob Josefson ready to return

WGR550

BRAYTON WILSON

DECEMBER 18, 2017

With forward Jacob Josefson nearing a return to the lineup from an ankle injury, the Buffalo Sabres assigned forward Hudson Fasching to the Rochester Americans on Monday afternoon.

The 22-year old got into five games since his call-up on December 2nd, but did not register a point in any of those games. Fasching finished his latest stint in Buffalo with a minus-1 rating, two penalty minutes and just one shot on goal.

Fasching was skating as one of the extra skaters at Monday's practice along with Scott Wilson.

In 21 games with the Amerks this season, Fasching has six goals and three assists while playing in a top-six role in Rochester.

## **Sabres defense contributing goals**

Olean Times Herald

Bill Hoppe

Dec. 19, 2017

BUFFALO – Zero goals scored by a defense corps over a two-month stretch would be surprising for any NHL team, but one coached by Phil Housley, how could that happen?

Housley, of course, is a Hall of Famer who scored 338 goals, the fourth-highest total among defensemen in NHL history. The Sabres coach once scored 31 times in a season.

But Housley's defense has produced just two goals this season entering tonight's tilt against the Boston Bruins inside KeyBank Center. Jake McCabe has both scores, the first coming Dec. 5 in Colorado, the Sabres' 28th game.

For some perspective, the NHL's four highest-scoring defenses – St. Louis, Tampa Bay, Columbus and Nashville (where Housley coached the previous four seasons) – have scored 24, 23, 22 and 22 goals, respectively.

"It's internally, it's us," Sabres defenseman Nathan Beaulieu said of the meager production. "It's nothing Phil can do, we're the guys out there. ... The only way is to find positives out of situations like this. I think that we're heading in the right direction."

With little secondary scoring, the Sabres have averaged just 2.2 goals a game through 33 outings, the league's lowest total.

"Our team success is going to be based upon our secondary scoring and our big guys stepping up for us," McCabe said. "We're part of that secondary scoring, we have to maybe contribute some more."

Housley, whose defensemen have struggled to showcase the aggressive style he wants, acknowledged Monday the lack of offense from his blue line has surprised him.

"I think it's coming," he said. "A lot of the times we're getting our shots through and we're unfortunate. You look around the league, guys shooting pucks from the point and it's hitting shin pads or finding its way through. We just got to continue to do that."

McCabe said: "Just getting pucks to the net and bodies to the net, that's really what it comes down to. It's not that we haven't had our looks this year, we just haven't had necessarily good puck luck."

True, Housley's defensemen haven't received many breaks or bounces. Still, the offensive struggles should mostly be traced to underperforming players.

For example, defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen, who has nine assists in 24 appearances, has averaged eight goals over the last three seasons. The Finn scored a hat trick in a 14-minute span two seasons ago.

Beaulieu scored four goals and a career-best 28 points last season in Montreal, yet has compiled three assists in 21 contests with his new team.

"I'm not going to panic here," Beaulieu said. "I had (28) points in this league for a reason last year. I'm a producer."

Defenseman Zach Bogosian has seasons of 10 goals and 30 points on his resume but hasn't recorded a point in eight contests this year.

Injuries have also stymied the defense's production. Bogosian (25 games), Ristolainen (nine) and Beaulieu (12) have all missed time, forcing Housley to rely on depth players at times.

Right now, other than Taylor Fedun (foot), the entire defense is healthy.

"Now that we've got the band back together, I think we're going to start trending in the right direction," Beaulieu said.

McCabe kept trending in Friday's 5-4 overtime loss to Carolina, scoring his second goal (coincidentally, both have been reviewed) and adding two assists.

"Jake is getting his shot off a lot quicker, he's jumping up in the play, reading the play real nice and using his mobility to get up," Housley said. "He has a shot mentality now. ... He's just doing things quicker."

Slowly, Beaulieu said, the defensemen are getting "more involved offensively."

"But it's a process, it takes a couple games to get that feeling back in," he said. "Me being out a couple weeks (sick), I feel like the first game in my feet were moving. I feel like offensive chances are going to happen, you can't push it. It's the kind of thing that's got to come to you, you don't want to force it, because that's when you get in trouble."

## **Sabres' Jacob Josefson close to return**

Olean Times Herald

Bill Hoppe

Dec. 18, 2017

**BUFFALO** – During his brief return from an ankle injury last month, Sabres center Jacob Josefson contributed immediately, scoring a goal and two points in three outings.

But Josefson, 26, is a third- or fourth-liner whose offensive production is a bonus. Since the Swede tweaked his ankle Nov. 25, the Sabres have missed the veteran's savviness.

"It was tough to see him go down again," Sabres coach Phil Housley said this afternoon inside KeyBank Center. "He brings experience, really solid up the middle, down low in the defensive zone, just knows where to be in the offensive zone. ... He's just a smart player."

Josefson will likely return for Tuesday's home tilt against Boston. He practiced between Jordan Nolan and Evan Rodrigues this morning inside HarborCenter. Josefson has missed nine games and sat out 15 earlier.

Rodrigues moved to the right wing from center today.

"They compliment each other well, they got a little bit of everything on that line, so that's why we moved (Rodrigues) to the wing," Housley said.

With Josefson on a line, winger Scott Wilson skated as an extra.

Update: The Sabres sent winger Hudson Fasching back to the Rochester Americans this afternoon. Fasching had zero points in five games during his first recall this season.

## **Sabres hope effort translates into win vs. Bruins (Dec 19, 2017)**

Fox Sports

Dec 19, 2017

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Consistency remains a problem for the Buffalo Sabres as they look to turn things around for good.

Buffalo will look to put forth a more consistent effort on Tuesday night in a nationally-televised home game against the Boston Bruins.

The Sabres (8-18-7) are coming off one of their better offensive efforts of the season on Friday against the Carolina Hurricanes. In that game, former second overall pick Jack Eichel delivered his first career hat trick but the Sabres ultimately came up short in a 5-4 overtime defeat.

Article continues below ...

Powered By Minute

Those outcomes are the story of the season in recent weeks for Buffalo. After a dreadful stretch in November that saw Buffalo lose 11 of 12 games, the Sabres have been better as of late but have yet to see it pay off in the standings.

Buffalo has points in five of its last six games but has also lost four of its last five games (1-1-3).

“There was a lot of good things, but at the end of the day, we only get one point,” Eichel said after the loss to Carolina. “It stings a little bit.

“It’s not good enough to get a point. It seems like it’s been the reoccurring theme here of late. We’ve had good effort and put ourselves in games and had opportunities to win and we’re coming out with overtime losses.”

Sabres coach Phil Housley continues to stress consistency, structure and urgency in Buffalo’s play on the ice.

“It’s just those little details and I continue to talk about it, our play without the puck,” Housley said. “It’s that urgency that something bad could happen, and (against Carolina) it did.”

With 28 points (11 goals, 17 assists), Eichel is second on the team in scoring. Evander Kane (14 goals, 17 assists) has been Buffalo’s best and most consistent player this year and leads Buffalo in scoring.

One bright spot for Buffalo has been the play of goalie Robin Lehner, who has really come on as of late. Lehner has a save percentage of .911 in 25 games played this year.

The Sabres could get some help sometime this week as Jacob Josefson looks to return from an ankle injury. Josefson has missed much of the season due to injury but has performed well as a depth player when in the lineup.

Boston (16-10-5) is entering a busy period of the schedule; the Bruins are in the middle of a stretch of three games in four days and seven games in 10 days.

The Bruins head to Buffalo following a big 7-2 win over Columbus on Monday night at home. Improving on the power play was a focal point after struggling in a Saturday overtime loss to the New York Rangers and the Bruins came up with two power-play goals in the second period against Columbus to open the flood gates on offense.

“It was good to get the first goal,” Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy said after his team scored the first three goals. “It’s always an advantage, especially at home, to get the other team chasing the game.”

Charlie McAvoy scored a power-play goal and added an assist. Fellow Bruins rookies Danton Heinen and Jake DeBrusk played key roles with a goal and two assists.

Heinen has four goals and nine points in the last seven games.

David Pastrnak leads the Bruins in scoring with 31 points (15 goals, 16 assists); Brad Marchand is second in scoring with 29 points (14 goals, 15 assists). Both Tuukka Rask (.912 save percentage) and Anton Khudobin (.915 save percentage) have excelled between the pipes.

## **Sabres' Moulson producing with AHL Reign**

TSN.ca Staff

Dec. 18, 2017

Buffalo Sabres forward Matt Moulson owns one goal and nine points in five games with the AHL's Ontario Reign since clearing waivers on Dec. 5.

Moulson made his debut with the Reign on Dec. 9 and has recorded at least a point in each game since. He was loaned to the Reign, the affiliate of the Los Angeles Kings, as to not disrupt the development of the Sabres forwards in Rochester, general manager Jason Botterill said at the time.

In 14 games with the Sabres this season, Moulson was held without a point. Botterill is hoping Moulson's strong start with the Reign will lead to a turnaround in his career.

"You look at his start down in the AHL already: Hopefully, this jump-starts him getting back into the National Hockey League," Botterill told the Buffalo News on Friday.

"It was a very difficult move," Botterill added of the decision to demote Moulson. "Everyone in that locker room, everyone in this organization has a ton of respect for Matt and the professionalism that he brings.

"It was difficult conversations, but it was a situation that we had to make some adjustments to our team where we were at."

The 34-year-old is making \$5 million for the Sabres this season and still has one year remaining on a five-year, \$25 million deal he signed with the team ahead of the 2014-15 season. TSN Hockey Insider Darren Dreger reported earlier this month the Sabres were willing to retain salary to move Moulson, but couldn't find a trade partner.

He scored 14 goals and posted 32 points in 81 games with the Sabres last season. Moulson posted three straight 30-goal seasons from 2009-2012, but has not topped 15 goals since 2014.

The Sabres (8-18-7) have yet to find a spark since waiving Moulson, posting 2-1-3 record.

## **Following another full practice, Josefson could return Tuesday**

by Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

December 18th, 2017

Following a second straight full day of practice, signs are continuing to point in the right direction for Jacob Josefson. The forward reacted well to practice on Sunday and, if he continues to make progress, he could be in the lineup for the Buffalo Sabres against Boston on Tuesday night.

Sabres coach Phil Housley said that Josefson's availability will be based on how his ankle responds to Monday's practice.

"We'll see how he reacts after today," Housley said. "Another good-paced practice for him, we'll see how he is tomorrow."

Josefson has missed a total of 24 games since sustaining the injury to his ankle in Anaheim on Oct. 15. He returned briefly in mid-November, but played in just three games before reinjuring the ankle in Montreal on Nov. 25.

In those three games, Josefson offered a glimpse of the secondary scoring he could bring to the lineup. He scored a goal and an assist, his first points of the season, and together with linemates Jordan Nolan and Kyle Okposo posted a shot attempt percentage of 55.8 at even strength.

"After being hurt and getting back in, he made an immediate contribution," Housley said. "That line was playing really well and it was tough to see him go down again. He brings experience, he's really solid up the middle, down low in the defensive zone and knows where to be in the offensive zone

"... He's just a smart player and it's good to have him back practicing."

With Okposo now skating alongside Ryan O'Reilly, Josefson has spent the last two practices centering a line with Nolan and Evan Rodrigues. Housley said the decision was made to move Rodrigues to the wing based on the balance it brings to that line, with Johan Larsson remaining the fourth-line center.

Rodrigues has played all six of his games at center since being recalled on Dec. 4, scoring two goals and an assist in that span.

"I think they complement each other well," Housley said. "They've got a little bit of everything on that line. That's why we moved him to the wing."

Brian Duff caught up with Rodrigues in Monday's "Sabres Now," which you can watch below:

Sabres Now (12/18/17)

01:32 • December 18th, 2017

With Josefson back in the mix, the Sabres reassigned Hudson Fasching to Rochester on Monday afternoon.

### **McCabe makes an impact**

Jake McCabe registered a career-high three points in Buffalo's overtime loss to Carolina on Friday, including his second goal of the season. Housley pointed out an area of improvement in the defenseman's game that may have had something to do with his offensive outburst.

"Number one, I think Jake is getting his shot off a lot quicker," Housley said. "He's jumping up in the play, reading the play really nice and using his mobility to get up. He has a shot mentality now because of it. It's good to see him in the rush, bringing offense from the defense in that position. I think he's just doing things quicker."

McCabe has scored the only two goals by a Sabres defenseman this season, with the first having come in Colorado on Dec. 5. Housley, who scored 338 goals playing on the back end during his own Hall-of-Fame career, has continued to work with the defensemen on getting their shots through from the point.

"Yeah, I wish we had more goals and more offensive contributions from our defense," he said. "I think it's coming. A lot of the time we're getting our shots through and we're unfortunate. You look around the league, guys are shooting shots from the point and it's hitting shin pads or finding its way through. We've just got to continue to do that."

Lines at practice

9 Evander Kane - 15 Jack Eichel - 29 Jason Pominville

67 Benoit Pouliot - 90 Ryan O'Reilly - 21 Kyle Okposo

17 Jordan Nolan - 10 Jacob Josefson - 71 Evan Rodrigues

28 Zemgus Girgensons - 22 Johan Larsson - 23 Sam Reinhart

20 Scott Wilson - 24 Hudson Fasching

6 Marco Scandella - 55 Rasmus Ristolainen

82 Nathan Beaulieu - 47 Zach Bogosian

19 Jake McCabe - 93 Victor Antipin

4 Josh Gorges - 41 Justin Falk

40 Robin Lehner

31 Chad Johnson

## Sharpen Up: December 18, 2017

by Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

December 18th, 2017

Jack Eichel put on a show Friday night, scoring twice in the third period to cap off a hat trick and tie the game against Carolina. However, the Hurricanes capitalized in overtime to claim the extra point.

Buffalo was back at practice on Sunday and put in some 3-on-3 work.

Here's what you need to know.

### About Friday night

Sabres fall to Canes in OT, 5-4

04:39 • December 15th, 2017

From the Lexus Postgame Report...

With whiteout conditions making visibility sparse and travel difficult in parts of Western New York, fans who ventured out to KeyBank Center to watch the Buffalo Sabres host the Carolina Hurricanes on Friday night deserved to be treated. Thanks to Jack Eichel, they were.

Eichel put forth a career performance, scoring the first hat trick of his young career and the first by a Sabre in Buffalo in more than six years to go along with an assist and a career-high 11 shots on goal. The performance livened the crowd and erased a two-goal deficit in the third period.

Eichel's spectacular hatty

00:57 • December 15th, 2017

In the end, though, it wasn't enough. Jacob Slavin scored 2:15 into overtime, sealing a 5-4 win for the Hurricanes. The Sabres have now earned points in five of their last six games, but three of them have been overtime losses.

Jack Eichel Postgame (12/15/17)

03:39 • December 15th, 2017

"It's not good enough to get a point," Eichel said. "It seems like it's been the reoccurring theme here of late. We've had good effort and put ourselves in games and (had) opportunities to win and we're coming out with overtime losses."

Jake McCabe Postgame (12/15/17)

02:03 • December 15th, 2017

"There's not a ton of glaring mistakes in our game right now but the small ones add up," Jake McCabe said. "We don't make a play on the wall or as defensemen we don't make a good breakout pass, then we're stuck in our zone. It might not happen that play, but a couple plays down the road and that's when those plays start adding up."

Phil Housley Postgame (12/15/17)

04:20 • December 15th, 2017

"I hand it to our guys to find the energy to come back and tie the game," coach Phil Housley said. "I thought it was a great effort on their part because it easily could've gone in the other direction. For the most part we played a really, really good game."

Evander Kane Postgame (12/15/17)  
02:01 • December 15th, 2017

Yesterday's practice

Sabres Now (12/17/17)  
01:45 • December 17th, 2017

The Sabres have points in five of their last six games, but have lost three of those games in overtime, bringing their overtime record this season to 1-6.

With that in mind, practice at KeyBank Center on Sunday morning ended with the team working to hammer out some details in 3-on-3 play.

"It's having more control once we get the puck, not throwing it away or trying anything to high-risk," alternate captain Ryan O'Reilly said. "We want to keep our motion up because obviously those are points we can get and it hasn't been good enough."

Phil Housley (12/17/17)  
04:56 • December 17th, 2017

"Obviously we've had opportunities to win games. It just hasn't happened for us," Housley said. "Any time the guys who have gotten the opportunities cans core, it's good for their confidence."

Jacob Josefson skated on a line with Jordan Nolan and Evan Rodrigues, and he hopes to return to the lineup from an ankle injury at some point this week. Housley said he'll be reevaluated on Monday. Josefson said the ankle feels strong, and the thought of re-injury no longer weighs on his mind.

"It was at first when I started skating," he said. "But I skated by myself for a little bit more than a week, around a week, and then had a couple of morning skates and stuff like that too ... I've been more and more comfortable and now I don't really think about it out there."

Coming up today

Full practice coverage coming your way from HarborCenter later this morning.

We'll also have Kris Baker's Sabres Prospects Report for you.

And be sure to check out BuffaloWorldJuniors.com this week for tournament news and notes and we get closer and closer to the Dec. 26 start date.