



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

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Wilson helps Sabres cool off Rask, Bruins in 4-2 victory

AP

Ken Powtak

February 10, 2018

BOSTON (AP) — Buffalo star Jack Eichel went down with an injury and his teammates responded with one of their best performances of the season.

Scott Wilson had a goal and an assist during Buffalo's big second period, helping the Sabres cool off Tuukka Rask and the Boston Bruins with a 4-2 victory on Saturday night.

"I thought the guys made a terrific effort tonight," Buffalo coach Phil Housley said. "One of the best games I've seen us check."

Eichel left midway through the opening period, favoring his right knee after falling awkwardly on a check by Boston defenseman Matt Grzelcyk along the boards behind the Bruins' net.

"He got tangled up in the corner," Housley said. "We'll know tomorrow when he sees our doctors."

Evander Kane and Benoit Pouliot also scored during the second and Rasmus Ristolainen added an empty-netter with 29 seconds remaining. Former Bruins goalie Chad Johnson made 25 saves as the Sabres picked up the road win with their fathers along for the trip.

"To see Jack go down like that, that's a big hole to fill," Pouliot said. "(The win) feels good for the dads and for everyone."

The Sabres had lost four of five and entered with the NHL's second-fewest points.

Rask stopped 24 shots, but lost in regulation for the first time since Nov. 26. It snapped his career-best 21-game streak with at least a point (19-0-2), the fourth-longest in team history.

The Bruins were bothered by their subpar effort.

"I think it was pretty obvious that wasn't our best game — the way we want to play — but those games happen," Rask said.

Boston center Patrice Bergeron agreed they had a poor effort from the start.

"We were flat," Bergeron said. "When you do that, you don't deserve it — plain and simple."

Ryan Spooner and David Backes accounted for Boston's goals. The Bruins failed to get a point for just the second time in 24 games (18-2-4).

Backes scored with 59 seconds left after Rask was replaced by an extra skater. But Ristolainen fired one nearly the length of the ice for his fifth of the season.

Kane made it 1-0 when he broke in on a clean breakaway after Bruins forward David Pastrnak flubbed a pass near the right point and Sam Reinhart passed the puck to the winger. Kane fired a hard wrist shot that beat Rask on the glove side inside the right post 7:44 into the second.

Wilson made it 2-0 just over five minutes later when he collected a loose puck that was blocked by Bruins defenseman Adam McQuaid and slipped a wrist shot into the net.

Spooner's goal sliced the lead in half before Pouliot one-timed Wilson's pass by Rask at the end of a 3-on-1 break with 71 seconds left in the second.

Rask made a pair of nice pad stops in a relatively quiet opening period. Boston's first shot on goal by a forward came in the final minute.

NOTES: Kane's goal snapped his 10-game scoreless stretch. ... Sabres C Jacob Josefson played his 300th NHL game. ... Bruins D Kevan Miller missed his fourth straight game because of an upper-body injury. ... The teams play again Feb. 25 in their final regular-season matchup.

UP NEXT

Sabres: Host Colorado on Sunday. They beat the Avalanche in the only other meeting this season.

Bruins: At New Jersey on Sunday. Boston won the first meeting, at home on Jan. 23.

As Eichel goes down, teammates step up in Sabres road win

The Buffalo News

Amy Moritz

February 10, 2018

BOSTON – When Jack Eichel went down, the rest of the team stepped up.

There were the usual goal scorers – a beauty breakaway from Evander Kane, set up by Sam Reinhart.

There were the unusual suspects, like Scott Wilson who had a goal and an assist for just his third career multi-point game.

It wasn't anything special or flashy, but when their star player went down, the Sabres responded the right way and came out of the TD Garden with a 4-2 win over the Boston Bruins on Sunday.

"I thought everybody stepped their game up when Jack went down," Sabres coach Phil Housley said.

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So first, let's start with the bad news: With 6:52 left in the first period, Eichel went behind the net to play the puck, but his right leg folded awkwardly underneath him as Matt Grzelcyk closed in. Eichel could not put weight on his right leg as he skated off into the dressing room.

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"He got tangled up in the corner but we'll know more tomorrow when he sees our doctor," Housley said. After the game, the Sabres did not discuss the nature or extent of the injury or potential timeline for Eichel. A source told The Buffalo News that Eichel is expected to have an MRI on Sunday.

But then the good news: The Sabres responded with a strong game, grinding out a win against a Boston Bruins team that had won its last four games.

The franchise player may have gone down, but the Sabres kept their heads in the game.

"It's tough losing Jack," Sabres goaltender Chad Johnson said. "He's our best player and franchise player so it's tough, but we're all professionals. We all understand the situation. Guys get injured or hurt so guys have to step up and play more minutes and they stepped up and did that so it was good."

"Everyone sees it right away," said Reinhart. "It's unfortunate. The first thing you do is hope he's okay because he makes this team go, really. I really liked how everyone kind of stepped up and didn't try to do anything special. Everyone played their own game and that's what we needed from everybody."

"We're not asking someone to have two or three goals or block 10 shots. It's a little bit from everybody. That's what you saw tonight."

The Sabres got a little bit extra from an unlikely source. Wilson was back in the lineup Saturday after being a healthy scratch in the Sabres last game. He went into the lineup for Zemgus Girgensons, who was out with an illness. Wilson scored his third goal of the season to give the Sabres a 2-0 second-period lead. He then set up Benoit Pouliot on a break late in the second as the Sabres took a 3-1 lead into the second intermission.

"With Eichs going down, it's not a good feeling but we had a bunch of guys step up today and play a few minutes and just grind it out," Wilson said. "When you lose your big guy everybody knows that a couple more minutes are coming your way and you're just going to have to dig down that much more. I thought we did a good job of staying together and getting it done."

Wilson used his extra minutes wisely, not only with the offense but with his checking – something which in particular pleased Housley after the game.

"I love the way he uses his speed and he finishes his checks," Housley said. "His attention to detail in the game is really good and it's good to see some guys get rewarded that haven't been rewarded in a while."

The Sabres got a little bit of help from everyone. Kane ended a 14-game streak without a goal when he buried a breakaway, set up by Reinhart, in the second period for the first goal.

Pouliot's goal was his first since Jan. 11 while Johnson was stellar in goal, turning aside 27 shots.

There could be plenty more opportunities like that, depending upon the injury to Eichel.

He left the game without putting pressure on his right leg. It was his left ankle which he injured at the start of last season, suffering a high ankle sprain in practice the day before the season opener. That caused Eichel to miss the first 21 games, returning to the lineup on Nov. 29.

This season, a healthy Eichel from the start of the season had been on pace to shatter personal bests in goals, assists and points. He particularly found an offensive groove as of late. In 29 games since the beginning of December, Eichel had totaled 34 points (15 goals, 19 assists), ranking in the top 10 in the NHL during that stretch. He entered the weekend tied for 11th in the league with four multi-goal games this season.

Sabres Notebook: Finding balance with family time in Boston

The Buffalo News

Amy Moritz

February 10, 2018

BOSTON – Perhaps there would be some extra motivation to play well Saturday night. There's always that possibility when your dad is in the stands and has been following you around for two days. And the Buffalo Sabres are overturning every nook and cranny to find, and sustain, motivation.

"I hope it will," Sabres goaltender Chad Johnson said of the team getting extra motivation from having to face dad, or dad-in-law, or another parental figure, after the game. "You use what you can for motivation. When families are here, parents are here, you always have a little extra motivation to do well for them. It's like when you're a kid, whether it's pressure or excitement or whatever it is, it's always positive."

Then again, there's not necessarily always extra motivation because you have to face dad after the game. Not for veteran guys, like Jason Pominville, who at age 35 has matured beyond searching for approval from his parents.

"No, we've past that," Pominville said. "But he'll always have his little points and stuff like that which is nice. It's not to the point where I'm worried about it."

The trip began in Buffalo on Thursday and the players brought their family member on the team plane to Boston after the game. They had the day off on Friday and most of the team went on a behind-the-scenes tour of Fenway Park, home of the Boston Red Sox. There was a team dinner after that. Saturday morning, the parents followed the guys around, from breakfast to pregame meetings, to the morning skate at the TD Garden.

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"This morning doing our Xs and Os and pre-scout stuff, they sat in that as well," Johnson said. "Just for them to see our preparation part of it, from the night before to what we eat. For them it's pretty surprising how much food we consume and how much food is available."

Jordan Nolan and his father, former Sabres coach Ted Nolan, opted out of the Fenway Park tour and just spent time together, alone. That's a rarity for fathers and sons in the National Hockey League and special for Nolan, even as his opportunity to see his father regularly has shifted since his move to Buffalo.

"I always like having my dad around," Nolan said. "I played in L.A. for like six years so I didn't get to see him too often but now that we're playing in Buffalo and he's right across the border and I get to see him at every game now."

See him, yes. But get time alone together? That's a bit more special.

"We didn't do the tour," Nolan said. "My dad's done it a few times so we walked around Boston together. We saw a movie, did a little shopping, little lunch, but I just like to spend time with him. That one-on-one time without my mom and my brother, that's nice. We usually spend time together as a unit so to get that one-on-one time with him is really nice."

Even those who went on the Fenway Park visit noted that the best part of Friday in Boston was the chance to spend some time with family. There's not a lot of chances for one-on-one family time in the NHL and Friday provided players an opportunity to find a bit of a balance in the chaos of a pro hockey season.

"I think they get some good communication," Sabres coach Phil Houlsey said. "They're able to see each other in a situation and maybe time to take a step back and really not think about what's happening. It's just enjoying each other's company and just focusing on the next game. I like that the fathers are here. It's just good camaraderie among the group. They're a good group in there."

In Thursday's game, Evan Rodrigues was able to score the game's second goal, taking a puck off the end boards when defenseman Marco Scandella had a shot go wide.

It wasn't a set play, but Scandella did decide that his shot from the blue line wouldn't make it through traffic toward the net, so he purposely shot it wide.

Shooting wide isn't exactly a habit the Sabres are trying to cultivate, but sometimes getting the puck deep and avoiding chasing down a blocked shot helps create the momentum the Sabres are looking for. And that was a key point of emphasis for the Sabres going into Saturday's game with the Bruins.

"A lot of teams are doing a really good job of getting in shot lanes, that first layer and second layer," Houlsey said. "You look at Boston, who's the No.1 team blocking shots, so we realize that we want to continue to keep the cycle going or if it's a shot from the point to keep that momentum forward where it doesn't get blocked and everybody has to regroup. We want to get those pucks to the net if we can, but we want to keep the puck down in their end by the goalie."

So what does a 40-year-old eat to not only stay in the NHL but be the captain of the Boston Bruins?

Glad you asked.

Fluto Shinzawa of the Boston Globe did a story with Bruins defenseman Zdeno Chara about his plant-based diet.

"I felt as you get older, you're trying to find ways to improve your well-being, functioning, and energy level," Chara said in the Globe story. "Everything you hear that people are losing as you get older, I want to be a step ahead of that.

"I want to be more proactive than being on the other side — waiting and waiting, then when it hits you, it's too late. I'm more aware that I want to make some change before they come to me. I want to come to them."

The wraparound: Sabres 4, Bruins 2; Jack Eichel injured

Buffalo News

Amy Moritz

February 10, 2018

BOSTON – The Buffalo Sabres won the game, but lost their star. At least for the night.

The Sabres rode a strong second period with goals from Evander Kane, Scott Wilson and Benoit Pouliot for a 4-2 win over the Boston Bruins in TD Garden. It was the second straight win for the Sabres and ended a four-game winning streak for the Bruins.

But the win came at a cost as Jack Eichel left the game with 6:52 left in the first period. Eichel went behind the net to play the puck, but his right leg folded awkwardly underneath him as Matt Grzelcyk closed in. Eichel could not put weight on his right leg as he skated off into the dressing room.

He did not return. Coach Phil Housley said afterward that the Sabres would know more once Eichel saw the team doctors when the team returned to Buffalo. Asked if the injury could be serious, Housley said, "We'll have to re-evaluate it tomorrow."

Early lead: The Sabres took a 1-0 lead with 12:18 left in the second period. Sam Reinhart corralled a giveaway by David Pastrnak at the Sabres blue line. He fed a streaking Evander Kane for a breakaway and Kane buried his opportunity.

Ending his drought: It was the first goal for Kane since he scored in Minnesota on Jan. 4. That ended a 14-game stretch without a goal and a 10-game stretch without a point.

Sam stays hot: The assist on Kane's goal gave Reinhart 14 points in his last 11 games on four goals and 10 assists.

A 2-0 lead: The Sabres made it 2-0 on a goal by Scott Wilson with 7:16 left in the second. Nathan Beaulieu had a shot from the blue line that was blocked in front of the net by Bruins defenseman Adam McQuaid. Wilson was in the high slot and able to get the puck and fire it past Bruins goalie Tuukka Rask.

Bruins on the board: Boston got on the board with 5:21 left in the second as Jake Debrusk rushed down the right side into the Sabres zone. Casey Nelson didn't pick up Ryan Spooner, who was streaking to the net and tapped in a pass from Debrusk past Sabres goalie Chad Johnson.

Unlikely suspects: The Sabres broke out of their own zone, working close to a 3-on-1 before some Bruins got back. But it wasn't enough defense as Scott Wilson fed Benoit Pouliot who rifled a shot past Rask for a 3-1 Sabres lead with 1:11 left in the second. For Wilson, the assist gave him his third career multi-point game.

Late goal: The Bruins cut it to 3-2 with 59 seconds left in the game when, with the extra attacker, David Backes tipped the puck past Johnson.

Empty-netter: Rasmus Ristolainen sent the puck the length of the ice with 28.2 seconds left to score the empty netter and seal the win for the Sabres.

Scoreless first: It was a 0-0 first period. While the Bruins carried play for much of the first 20 minutes, Buffalo's defense was active and registered six blocked shots with a healthy dose of deflections as well. Johnson was strong, turning back seven shots including some excellent scoring chances on sustained pressure by the Bruins in the closing minutes of the period.

The streak ends: Rask saw his streak of 21 straight starts with earning a point end in the loss to the Sabres. Rask had gone 19-0-2 in that span, a career-best point streak and the longest by a Bruins goalie since Pete Peeters had a 31-game point stretch in the 1982-83 season (26-0-5).

Milestone: Jacob Josefson played in his 300th NHL game Saturday. The 26-year-old native of Stockholm, Sweden was a first-round draft pick of the New Jersey Devils in 2009 and played his first seven NHL seasons in the Devils organization. In 23 games for the Sabres this season he has two goals and two assists.

Scratches: Defenseman Josh Gorges was a healthy scratch for the Sabres while Zemgus Girgensons was out with an illness. Boston scratched defensemen Paul Postma and Kevan Miller and center Frank Vatrano.

Counting the house: The TD Garden sellout streak reached 367 regular season and playoff games on Saturday with 17,565 in attendance.

Up next: The Sabres turn around and return to Buffalo to host the Colorado Avalanche at 7 p.m. Sunday, playing four of their next five games in KeyBank Center. The Sabres host Tampa Bay at 7 p.m. Tuesday, then travel to Ottawa to play the Senators on Thursday. The Sabres return home to host Los Angeles at 1 p.m., Feb. 17 and Washington at 3 p.m., Monday, Feb. 19.

Inside the Sabres: Three franchise legends recall death-defying moments

Buffalo News

John Vogl

February 9, 2018

Before Ryan Miller rewrote the Sabres' record book, before Jason Pominville became a playoff legend, before Thomas Vanek became a top-five scorer, they could have died.

Can you imagine the Sabres without them? What a horror story.

The chilling tale traces to a snowy night during the 2004-05 season, a year before the trio arrived in Buffalo. They were playing in Rochester. The Americans had just put one game behind them, and the road between Rochester and Albany loomed ahead.

"There was no snow while we were in the rink, maybe a dusting, and we got out and it was just a full-on lake effect," Miller said. "We just got a ton of snow.

"We get on the highway, and obviously the highways weren't clear yet."

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It was the first night on the job for a new Amerks bus driver – or as the players say, a "Bussie."

"We never had the guy before, and that just kind of stood out," Miller said during Tuesday's visit to Buffalo. "I don't know what his experience was."

Whatever his experience was, he added to it in a hurry.

"We weren't doing a full clip, but we were going fast enough," Miller said. "We started getting a little bit loose. We kind of looked at each other, and then we got pretty much almost sideways."

"The tail swerved a few times, and on the one side was a ditch," Pominville said. "It was pretty deep, so everyone was worried about that.

"We saw the ditch and we were really swerving. We thought it was definitely going down."

Miller immediately recalled the rock band Metallica. Their tour bus had skidded on ice, and bassist Cliff Burton flew out a window and was crushed to death by the rolling vehicle. Visions of a similar fate flooded the Amerks.

"It's snowing outside, no big deal, and all of a sudden next thing you know we're kind of getting whipped around and flying around," Vanek said. "That was not a fun moment."

As the bus fishtailed and the ditch loomed, the voice of charismatic forward Geoff Peters boomed.

"He grabbed the seat in front of him and started yelling, 'Bring her back! Bring her back, Bussie!'" Pominville and Miller both recalled.

The Bussie brought her back.

"We were riding sideways, we snap back, and we just keep going," Miller said. "Bussie just turned around, and he's (raising his arm in fist-pumping triumph), celebrating like he just won the Super Bowl.

"To see a driver be that excited, you kind of knew you were in a little bit of trouble."

"It sure wasn't fun being on that," Vanek said during the Sabres' recent visit to Vancouver. "The other thing I remember, we had a flight in Buffalo from Boston to Ottawa."

Yup, there's more – as if one close call wasn't enough.

It was March 2012, the latter stages of the players' run that featured 284 victories for Miller, 254 goals for Vanek and a series-clinching overtime winner for Pominville. The Sabres had just lost in Boston and boarded their charter for a flight to Ottawa.

Normally, pilots are aware of weather trouble because previous flights on the route take notice. How many planes had a midnight path from Boston to Ottawa?

One, and it had no idea a warm front was colliding with a cold front. The plane arrived at the same time.

"We dropped I don't know how many thousands of feet," Vanek said.

It wasn't a nosedive. The bottom simply dropped out, as if something punched the top of the plane and sent it straight toward earth.

"No warning, either," Pominville said. "Guys hit their heads on the ceiling."

The plane went down, and everything that wasn't buckled went up. Tyler Myers, the 6-foot-7 defenseman, took an especially memorable blow as he vaulted out of his seat into the roof. One of the assistant coaches had a glass of wine. The glass went down with his hand and the plane, but the wine went up and hung in the air – cartoonlike in nature – before splashing over the coach's seatmate.

The freefall stopped and the flight resumed with a payload of shaky passengers.

"Even our stewardess was sick in the bathroom," Pominville said, "so you know that's a bad flight when even they get airsick."

Memories of the flight jar Vanek to this day.

"I step on a plane now – and this was six, seven years ago – and every time it shakes it reminds me of that," Vanek said. "That was scary."

Fear was evident when Miller first told the tale of the bus ride years ago. His eyes widened, and he repeatedly emphasized that every detail was worse than he could explain.

Even now, a decade and a half later, he shakes his head in disbelief. But at least he's alive to relish the experience.

"It's good to be able to tell that story and smile about it and be like, 'Ah, one of the stories from down in the minors,'" Miller said. "But it was certainly one of those dodge-a-bullet moments."

Story topics: Jason Pominville/ Ryan Miller/ Thomas Vanek

Eichel has some suggestions as Sabres take their parents to Boston

Buffalo News

Amy Moritz

February 9, 2018

In all honesty, it's not the most exciting destination for the annual parents' trip for Jack Eichel. After all, he's from Boston. So he and his dad will just be going home.

But it's not so much about the location as it is about the time spent together.

Over the last decade, NHL teams have developed the custom of the "parents' trip" where fathers, mothers, and other important family members get to spend extended time on the road. Players had family members in Buffalo on Thursday night for the team's game against the New York Islanders. The Sabres left after the game and had the day off in Boston to spend with their chosen family member, including a planned tour of Fenway Park on Friday.

They get back down to business on Saturday when they meet the Bruins in TD Garden at 7 p.m.

Eichel has plenty of suggestions for teammates and their parents about where to go and what to do. And while a day off in Boston isn't anything new for Eichel, the time with his dad is welcomed, even if he doesn't get to show his dad a nifty new NHL city.

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"It's a lot of fun. I wouldn't say it's as sweet because he's just going home," Eichel said. "But I think any time we get to spend together it's fun. It's nice that it's in Boston because I'll have more people at the game than just my dad. It's enjoyable. Obviously I know the area well, so if anyone needs anything, let me know."

Kyle Okposo is bringing his father-in-law along for this trip and said the annual excursion is a way to say thank you to the people who sacrificed plenty in order for him to have a career in the NHL.

"It's just a really fun opportunity for dads, grandparents, mentors, whoever it may be, to get a kind of day-in-the-life of what we go through on the road," Okposo said. "Just get a closer insight to daily life. A lot of those guys put a lot of hours into getting us here and it's fun for them to see and they really enjoy it."

For some of the family on the trip, it will be a chance to see what the current NHL life is like. It's the first time veteran defenseman Josh Gorges is bringing someone along and it will be his father-in-law Doug Morrison.

Morrison was a second-round draft pick of the Boston Bruins in 1979 and played 23 games with the Bruins, spending most of his pro hockey career in the American Hockey League and then in the International Hockey League.

"I think it will be cool for him to see what we do on a routine game-day basis," Gorges said. "He's a guy that actually played the game, that played pro hockey, so I'm sure he'll be excited to see how things have changed from when he played until now and it's just nice to be able to spend some time with family."

Sabres beat the red hot Bruins 4-2

WGR

Joe DiBiase

February 8, 2018

The difference between the home Buffalo Sabres and away Buffalo Sabres have been polar opposites lately. The Sabres have now won 4 road games in a row, compared to just 1 win in their last 5 at home. Tonight's win was over the hottest team in the NHL. Coming into the game, Boston was 18-1-4 in their last 23 games. Jack Eichel left the game in the 1st period with an apparent ankle injury. He would not return. Here's how the entire game played out.

1st Period:

14:35 - Both teams are struggling to create any offense. Just 2 combined shots through the game to this point. Still scoreless in the 1st.

9:00 - The Sabres first great chance came from Jack Eichel, I know what a surprise. Eichel skated into the slot with speed and ripped a wrist shot that was saved by Tuukka Rask.

6:52 - Play was stopped because of an injury to Jack Eichel. Eichel's ankle got caught underneath him. He got up off the ice and skated to the bench under his own power, but went straight to the dressing room.

0:38 - The line of Okposo-Josefson-Nolan got caught in their own end for almost 3 minutes in a row. The Bruins only mustered 1 shot during the stretch, but shot wide on several great scoring chances. The one shot by Boston, was a one timer by Ryan Spooner in the slot. Chad Johnson made a nice save and directed the rebound into the corner.

Goal Summary:

BUF: NONE

BOS: NONE

Penalty Summary:

BUF: 11:27 - Jason Pominville (2 min., hooking)

Shots on Goal:

BUF: 5; BOS: 7

2nd Period

20:00 - Jack Eichel did not come out for the start of the 2nd period.

18:34 - Sam Reinhart fell into the boards hard. It appeared he hit his head and was slow to get up. However, he wouldn't miss a shift. Not much going on early in the 2nd.

12:18 - **SABRES GOAL.** Sam Reinhart hit Evander Kane on a breakaway pass, as Kane got behind Zdeno Chara. Kane walked in and roofed his shot top corner to give Buffalo the 1-0 lead. 1-0 BUF.

7:24 - Evan Rodrigues hit the post with a great shot over Rask's shoulder. The Sabres are not missing Eichel yet, as the chances are still coming.

7:16 - **SABRES GOAL.** Scott Wilson knocked down a shot from the point, and banged home the puck for his 3rd of the season. The Sabres announced at about the same time that Jack Eichel will not return to the game. 2-0 BUF.

5:17 - **BRUINS GOAL.** Boston forward Ryan Spooner cut towards the net and beat Casey Nelson to the puck. Spooner also put the puck past Chad Johnson. Nelson has to be able to tie up Spooner's stick in that situation. 2-1 BUF.

1:11 - **SABRES GOAL.** On a 2 on 1, Scott Wilson floated a pass across ice to Benoit Pouliot who one timed it just inside the post. The Sabres have responded well to Eichel leaving the game, scoring 3 goals in 1 period. 3-1 BUF.

Goal Summary:

BUF: 7:42 - Evander Kane (17) (Sam Reinhart); 12:44 - Scott Wilson (3)(Beaulieu, Rodrigues); 18:49 - Benoit Pouliot (10)(Scott Wilson)
BOS: 14:39 - Ryan Spooner (9)(DeBrusk, Krug)

Penalty Summary:

BUF: NONE
BOS: NONE

3rd Period

19:26 - It was a very energetic first 30 seconds for the Sabres. Reinhart helped get the puck in the zone, setting up an Evander Kane wrap around opportunity. Kane chased the puck after and took a tripping penalty.

13:23 - Sam Reinhart continues to create offense. Reinhart drew two defenders in, and threw a pass to Benoit Pouliot who was alone in front. Rask made the stop on Pouliot.

6:30 - Both teams took tripping penalties setting up an extended 4 on 4. Both sides traded chances, but the best came when Casey Nelson made a beautiful pass in front to Evander Kane. Kane was stopped by Rask.

0:59 - BRUINS GOAL. David Backes tips a Patrice Bergeron shot over Johnson's shoulder to make it a 1 goal game with 1 minute to play. Bruins net was empty.

0:28 - SABRES GOAL. Ristolainen fired the puck from his own end, and into the empty net. Securing the Sabres victory.

Goal Summary:

BUF: 19:32 - Rasmus Ristolainen (4)(Unassisted)
BOS: 19:01 - Backes (10)(Bergeron, Marchand)

Penalty Summary:

BUF: 0:34 - Evander Kane (2 min., tripping); 8:32 - Sam Reinhart (2 min., tripping)
BOS: 8:45 - Charlie McAvoy (2 min., tripping)

Saves:

BUF: Chad Johnson - 25 saves
BOS: Tuukka Rask - 24 saves

Power Play:

BUF: 0 for 1 - 0%
BOS: 0 for 4 - 0%

3 Stars:

1st - Benoit Pouliot
2nd - Scott Wilson
3rd - Sam Reinhart

What's next:

Sabres return home to host the Colorado Avalanche tomorrow night. Whether Jack Eichel plays remains to be seen. Evander Kane did say after the game that Eichel seemed to be in "good spirits". The Avs are just outside of a playoff spot in the West. Puckdrop is set for 7pm, and the Paul William Beltz Pregame Show will start at 6pm on WGR!

Jack Eichel injured

WGR

Paul Hamilton

February 10, 2018

Boston, MA (WGR 550) - During the first period, Sabres' center Jack Eichel was hit behind the net by his former BU teammate Matt Grzelcyk. Eichel's right leg folded under him and it took him a few seconds to get up.

Eichel struggled to the bench favoring his right leg. He went straight to the dressing room.

Eichel did not come out for the second period.

Midway through the second period, the Sabres announced he will not return.

After the game Phil Housley had no update other than to say Eichel will be evaluated back in Buffalo. Housley said, "He got tangled up in the corner. We'll know tomorrow when he sees our doctors."

The players of course were concerned after the game. Winning goaltender Chad Johnson said, "When you're in game, everything around you goes away. Jack's our best player, franchise player, it's tough seeing him go down."

Scott Wilson stepped up big with a goal and an assist. He said, "When you lose your big guy, everyone knows a couple more minutes are coming your way. Everyone did a good job staying together and getting the job done."

Eichel and Evander Kane are very close. Kane said, "Saw him in the locker room. He looked to be in pretty good spirits."

From the Locker Room: Sabres-Bruins

WGR

February 8, 2018

Saturday's win against the Boston Bruins was the Sabres 4th straight win on the road. It came against the hottest team in the NHL in the Boston Bruins, who had won 4 in a row coming into the game. Jack Eichel was the story of the night, as he left the game in the 1st period with a apparent ankle injury. Phil Housley provided no update after the game.

Go inside the Sabres locker room to hear reaction from Phil Housley, Evander Kane, Scott Wilson, and Chad Johnson.

Phil Housley

On Eichel's status:

"He got tangled up in the corner. We'll know tomorrow when he sees our doctors."

On the team's play after Eichel left:

"One of the best games I've seen us check. Got a lot of chances, lot of looks. Cashed in on some. Everyone stepped their game up when Jack went down."

Full Audio: <http://www.wgr550.com/media/audio-channel/2-10-phil-housley-post-game>

Evander Kane

On how Eichel is feeling:

"Saw him in the locker room. He looked to be in pretty good spirits."

On the effort of the team:

"Good game. They've been playing some real good hockey. We did a good job sticking with it, not giving them much. Got some key saves and big goals."

Full Audio: <http://www.wgr550.com/media/audio-channel/2-10-evander-kane-post-game>

Chad Johnson

On what he saw in front of him:

"It was a real solid game from the start to the finish, kept it simple. I thought we got all the opportunities as a result of playing good defense"

On the impact of Eichel going down:

"When you're in game, everything around you goes away. Jack's our best player, franchise player, it's tough seeing him go down."

Full Audio: <http://www.wgr550.com/media/audio-channel/2-10-chad-johnson-post-game>

Scott Wilson

On his big night with 2 points:

"When you lose your big guy, everyone knows a couple more minutes are coming your way. Everyone did a good job staying together and getting the job done."

On how the team beat the Bruins:

"Sticking to the gameplan, Jack's a guy that makes plays, but playing simple when a guy like that goes out, goes a long way."

Full Audio: <http://www.wgr550.com/media/audio-channel/2-10-scott-wilson-post-game>

The Sabres' fathers trip is very special

WGR

Paul Hamilton

February 10, 2018

Boston, MA (WGR 550) - Lindy Ruff started a tradition that has caught on all over the National Hockey League. Most teams have a parents trip where the parents come along and take part in meetings, meals and other planned activities.

The Sabres also have had trips where players can bring along their mentors. This time, the dads came to Buffalo and saw a home game which was a 4-3 victory over the Islanders. After the game, they boarded a plane for Boston and had some planned activities on Friday.

They all went over to the home of the Boston Red Sox and toured Fenway Park. Head coach Phil Housley is happy to have them along, "I think it's been great, we'd like to think of us as one big family and it's good to see the fathers being a part of this trip."

I started playing hockey when I was 7-years-old and my dad was at every single game. He was the type of man that never interfered with the coach, but was always supportive.

I know it killed him once I went to college because he didn't have the money to come out and watch me play. The only time he got a chance to see me play in my first three seasons was when we came east to play in Elmira's tournament.

When I was a senior, we gave my parents a trip to Colorado so they could come out and see me play out there. They had never been west of the Mississippi River, so they were really excited.

A few parents were on the trip and we had a great time. They got to go skiing with us outside of Boulder and they were set to watch me play two games, but I didn't cooperate.

In the third period of game one, I jumped in to help a teammate and got thrown out for the rest of that game and the next.

My mother was delighted that I was sitting up with them for Game 2, but my father wasn't a happy camper.

The joy of a parents trip is just to see their faces. The parents on my Colorado trip were just so happy and had so much fun.

Parents like to be included, they're the ones that sacrifice so we as players can play. It's getting us to practice at 5am before school. It's sacrificing money so we can have proper equipment and can travel all over to play. As a kid at Amherst, our league was in Canada and it wasn't cheap for them. When you can see how happy they are on trips like this, it makes it all worthwhile.

Dreger: 'Nash might complicate things for the Sabres'

WGR

Joe DiBiase

February 9, 2018

The NHL trade deadline is just about two weeks away on Monday, February 26th at 3 p.m.

For much of the season, Buffalo Sabres forward Evander Kane was the only big name known to be on the trade market. Now, they have some competition.

It was reported by TSN's Bob McKenzie that the New York Rangers asked for forward Rick Nash to give them his 18-team no trade list, and would focus on trading him to one of the other 13 teams. McKenzie added this a few days later:

Chris Nichols

@NicholsOnHockey

McKenzie: As of this moment, three pieces seem to be the asking price for Rick Nash. "A first-round pick, a top prospect, and another lesser player or prospect or pick." #NYR

6:40 PM - Feb 6, 2018

206

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If that's the asking price for Nash, Kane may be the more attractive trade piece. Kane and Nash both have 16 goals this season, but Kane has 10 more assists, and is seven years younger. Not to mention that Nash has a \$7.8 million cap hit this year, and Kane's is just \$5.25 million. Another advantage for the Sabres is Kane's lack of a no movement clause. The Sabres can trade Kane to any of the other 30 teams.

Both players will be free agents at the end of the year.

TSN's Darren Dreger shed some more insight into the trade market, and what the outlook is for an Evander Kane trade. Here is some of what he had to say with Andrew Peters, Craig Rivet and Marty Biron on The Instigators on Friday:

On Nash's availability effecting the market:

"The quality of players on the market, such as Rick Nash, may complicate things for the Sabres right now. There's still a decent enough market, but Botterill might not get what he's hoping to get."

On the Kane asking price:

"The original ask for Evander Kane has been three pieces, and Jason Botterill hasn't gotten any offers like that yet. Now the market has grown, which has created some tension."

On Kane's production dropping:

"The fact that Evander Kane's production has dipped has been a deterrent, but we might start to see some activity two weeks leading up to the deadline. That may make things interesting for a potential Kane trade."

How do the Sabres use analytics?

WGR

Paul Hamilton

February 9, 2018

Boston, MA (WGR 550) - We hear a lot about analytics in sports these days. The Philadelphia Eagles just won the Super Bowl with an aggressive approach, but what about the Buffalo Sabres?

Tim Murray used his own version of analytics, which didn't work at all when trying to build this team. It led him on a path of poor trades and poor drafting. Jason Botterill is the new general manager and has a large analytics department led by Jason Nightingale. Botterill receives a lot of important information from him that he uses to help evaluate players and the team.

Botterill doesn't just sluff off what he gets from Nightingale and his staff. Botterill said, "There's a total respect for what Jason and his staff do in the organization and we think that's important. They aren't just out there on an island."

Botterill thinks it's extremely important to integrate both analytics and the eye test in player evaluation. He thinks you need scouts and analytics to make the best decisions for your team. "I don't want to say specifically what we use as I'll keep that internal, but it's important to respect both sides, Botterill said. "We want to hear both sides, we want to hear what our scouts have to say and what they see and we want to hear the numbers that can give us an edge in evaluating players."

"We like to compare information too. Jason and his staff will say this is what we see from a player the past few weeks from a numbers perspective. He'll ask if that's what we see when scouting. I like to see how close the two evaluations are."

The things Botterill uses might be different from what Phil Housley uses.

We've heard Housley speak of a shot mentality ever since he got to Buffalo. Housley thinks analytics is a way that can help him evaluate, "There are a couple of ways I use the analytics. Number one, overall team play, what are we doing against the other team and what is the other team doing against us and that's really the shot attempts and the percentages that players get.

"Another way to look at it is matchups, what's going on in the game? I think analytics tells a story about what's going on when you're on the ice or a line's on the ice or D-pairings are on the ice. Are there more shots at their net than coming at ours? So it does help me in matchups and overall, just the way we're playing."

It's not all team oriented in the head coach's mind. He said, "We use it for individuals, what kind of matchups and line chemistry we can create over a period of time? We look at those three players and how do they mix? How do those analytics play out when they're getting some quality time over some games and within that, the lines they're playing against, who are they facing?"

Every year there are more and more numbers available. Some are useful and some are not. I was told by one of the first guys to discover analytics and really study them that the worst thing is the guy that knows a little bit about analytics, but misinterprets what it is they are looking at. It makes the people that do know what they're talking about look bad.

Housley didn't have a lot of numbers to help him when he first got into coaching. He said, "I think the difficult thing for me, just five years ago I was just trying to find how can we use it? Trying just to confine it to an immediate look and seeing what works and how we can incorporate it into our team and into our system and we got a snapshot of what I really like and it's a quick view because if you get into trying to take all of it, I mean there's so much information out there it can be overwhelming."

Players tend to look at it differently. Most players would rather evaluate their play by watching video, not looking at numbers. Ryan O'Reilly said he can do a much better job by doing it himself, "I don't, I try not to look at it.

"There's a certain feel to every game, every game is different in its own little way."

O'Reilly says there are things within a game that are important to him, "When I look at a game, I look at how did I do in my battles, how many battles did I win, how much did I create, how much did I possess the puck, did I turn it over? That's the kind of thing personally that only I can assess. There's not very many people that are going to know what's best for me, I've got to find it internally and take all those things into account.

“It’s things like how I felt, how my legs were, how I was handling the puck and I think that’s something that only I can self-evaluate and make adjustments from it.”

The Sabres are having their dad’s trip so Friday was an off day full of activities with their dads. The fathers were at the Islanders game and will also be at Saturday’s Boston game.

Sabres' Jack Eichel leaves game injured

Olean Times Herald

Bill Hoppe

February 11, 2018

Buffalo Sabres center Jack Eichel left Saturday's 3-2 win in Boston in the first period after his right leg bent awkwardly as he fell into the end boards.

Eichel, who got tangled with Bruins defenseman Matt Grzelcyk, then skated off on his own as he grimaced in pain.

Following the Sabres' second straight victory, coach Phil Housley had no update on Eichel, the team's only NHL All-Star.

"We'll know more tomorrow when he sees our doctors," Housley told reporters in Boston.

Without their best player, the Sabres won for the second time in Boston, Eichel's hometown, this season.

"I thought everybody stepped their game up when Jack went down," Housley said.

Eichel, 21, has compiled a team-best 22 goals and 53 points in 55 games this season. A sprained left ankle sidelined him the first 21 contests last season.

The Sabres host the Colorado Avalanche on Sunday.

Winter Classic helped Sabres' Sam Reinhart bust long slump

Olean Times Herald

Bill Hoppe

February 9, 2018

BUFFALO – In his short career, Sam Reinhart had never competed on a stage as grand as Citi Field in New York. Sure, the Sabres winger had played in more meaningful games than the Winter Classic.

But the NHL's signature regular-season event, an outdoor game watched by millions across North America, is a big deal.

So when Reinhart scored for the first time in 17 games on New Year's Day, a power-play goal he called "one of the better ... ones in my life," there was a belief it could ignite him.

It turns out that goal in the Sabres' 3-2 loss to the New York Rangers helped transform Reinhart's miserable season.

Counting the Winter Classic, Reinhart has scored six goals and 15 points in the last 16 games entering tonight's road tilt against the Boston Bruins.

The past month has arguably been the best stretch of Reinhart's three-year NHL career. After scoring the late winner Thursday, his third point in a 4-3 win over the New York Islanders, he has compiled four goals and 13 points in the last 10 contests, including five points in the last two games.

Trace Reinhart's resurgence back to New Year's Day. The former second overall pick began that afternoon a colossal disappointment, having mustered just five goals and 11 points through 38 contests.

"I've played in some pretty big games, that one maybe not as nerve-racking as some of the ones I've been in, but that stage was definitely the biggest," Reinhart said Thursday after the Sabres ended their four-game losing streak at KeyBank Center. "So to be able to kind of find it there when obviously a lot of people are watching helps the confidence.

"Throughout the season you kind look for a spark, and that's probably the spot where you can look back and see things started turning around because I did feel good, especially coming off of Christmas two games prior at the Island and Jersey."

So what has changed for Reinhart over the last five weeks?

Clearly, he's brimming with confidence. If you watch him, he's playing more physically and getting to the net, an area where he's at his best. His strong chemistry with slick center Jack Eichel, his close friend and the Sabres' only NHL All-Star, is evident.

But Reinhart, who averaged 20 goals and 45 points in his first two seasons, insists he hasn't changed anything.

"Nothing, nothing," he said. "It was a pretty frustrating start as it was for a lot of guys. For me right now, it's a little rewarding and still frustrating knowing I haven't changed too much in everything – my preparation, my mindset, how I feel with the puck out there. It's nice to see it finally going in."

Reinhart, 22, will acknowledge more physicality has helped buoy him, something Sabres coach Phil Housley has noticed.

"He's making some really strong plays down low," he said. "He's been really heavy in the battle down there, been slippery along the wall. I think his wall plays has gotten way better in our own zone. When you do that in your own zone and pay attention to defense, you spend more time in the offensive zone."

Eichel said: "He's getting to the net, he's getting a little more physical, he's getting tenacious. I think he's starting to build that confidence."

On nights Reinhart's not feeling a groove, showcasing some grit can get him more engaged. So can simply thinking less.

"I think the game well and I think it kind of bites me in the butt sometimes when I think a little bit too defensively," he said. "I think I do put myself in the right spots. When I am kind of aggressive up the ice, it leads to some pretty good things."

The Sabres flew to Boston following Thursday's game and had Friday off.

Sabres forward Jack Eichel injured in game vs. Bruins

WKBW

Matt Bove

February 10, 2018

Boston, MA (WKBW) - Just when Buffalo Sabres fans thought things couldn't get any worse, they did.

In the first period of Saturday's game against the Boston Bruins, Sabres forward Jack Eichel fell awkwardly to the ice, appearing to injure his right leg/ankle.

Eichel immediately skated into the Sabres locker room and never returned. In 54 games this season, Eichel leads the Sabres with 53 points [22G, 31A].

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Injury update: Jack Eichel will not return tonight.

8:28 PM - Feb 10, 2018

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Last year Eichel missed the first month and a half of the season after suffering a high-ankle sprain in practice the day before the regular season started.

At this point the severity of the injury is to be determined.

The Sabres went on to beat the Bruins, 4-2.

Eichel exits early after leg injury in Boston, Sabres pick up win

WIVB

Shannon Shepard

February 10, 2018

BOSTON, M.A. (WIVB) – Back in front of his hometown fans, Jack Eichel exited early after suffering an awkward leg injury Saturday night.

Nick Filipowski

@NEWS4_NICK

Here's the injury to Eichel in 1st period Vs. #Bruins

Legs/knee gets bent into the wall #Sabres @news4buffalo

7:41 PM - Feb 10, 2018

13

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While going for a puck behind the net, Eichel's right leg bent and slammed into the boards. He stayed down for a few seconds before skating off with his stick. Later in the game the Sabres announced Eichel would not return.

The Sabres center missed part of last season after an injury to his left ankle.

Buffalo was able to regroup after the shocking loss, going on to win 4-2.

Evander Kane netted his first goal in 15 games on a breakaway shot beating Tuukka Rask.

The second period turned out to be one of the most successful for the blue and gold, as they scored three goals.

Next up, Buffalo returns home to host the Avalanche on Sunday night.

Sabres top Bruins, end Rask's point streak

NHL.com

Matt Kalman

February 10, 2018

BOSTON -- The Buffalo Sabres ended Tuukka Rask's point streak at 21 games with a 4-2 win against the Boston Bruins at TD Garden on Saturday.

Rask lost for the first time in nine starts and for the first time in regulation since Nov. 26. He made 24 saves.

"I think it was pretty obvious that that wasn't our best game, not the way we want to play," Rask said. "But those games happen."

[WATCH: All Sabres vs. Bruins highlights]

Ryan Spooner and David Backes scored for the Bruins (33-12-8), who lost for the second time in regulation in their past 24 games (18-2-4) and had their winning streak end at four games. Boston is five points behind the Tampa Bay Lightning for first place in the Atlantic Division with two games in hand.

"I just thought we were cute tonight," Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy said. "And it was leading up to something and we have creative guys, but at some point you've got to get it there. It's got to get to the net with traffic. We just didn't do enough to earn our goals."

The Sabres won despite losing leading scorer Jack Eichel with 6:52 left in the first period because of an apparent lower-body injury. Coach Phil Housley said Eichel would be re-examined Sunday.

Eichel exits game with injury

00:30 • February 10th, 2018

"I thought the guys made a terrific effort tonight, one of the best games I've seen us check with good sticks and coming back into our own zone," Housley said. "As a result, we got a lot of chances, a lot of looks, a lot of 2-on-1s and we cashed in on some. I thought everybody stepped their game up when Jack went down."

Scott Wilson had one goal and one assist, and Evander Kane, Benoit Pouliot and Rasmus Ristolainen scored for the Sabres (16-29-10), who have won four straight road games for the first time since the start of the 2011-12 season. Chad Johnson made 25 saves.

Kane scored his first goal in 15 games on a breakaway at 7:42 of the second period to give Buffalo a 1-0 lead. After Sam Reinhart intercepted David Pastrnak's pass at the Sabres blue line, he sent Kane in alone for a shot that beat Rask to the glove side.

Wilson made it 2-0 when he scored from the slot at 12:44. Nathan Beaulieu's wrist shot from the left point went off Bruins defenseman Adam McQuaid, but Wilson smacked the rebound past Rask.

Wilson buries loose puck

00:46 • February 10th, 2018

Spooner cut the Sabres lead to 2-1 with a goal at 14:39 with a redirection of Jake DeBrusk's pass to the front.

Wilson set up Pouliot's goal on a 3-on-1 at 18:49 of the second to make it 3-1.

"I think just getting a little confidence; I think we lacked that for a long time," Wilson said. "And obviously getting this one tonight, it grows on you a little bit."

Backes scored during a 6-on-5 with Rask pulled for an extra skater at 19:01 of the third period before Ristolainen scored an empty-net goal at 19:31.

Backes scores on redirection
00:41 • February 10th, 2018

Goal of the game
Kane's goal at 7:42 of the second period.

Kane's breakaway snipe
00:50 • February 10th, 2018

Save of the game
Johnson's save against Zdeno Chara at 14:31 of the third period.

Johnson's pair of strong saves
00:19 • February 10th, 2018

Highlight of the game
Pouliot's goal at 18:49 of the second period.

Pouliot's blistering one-timer
00:47 • February 10th, 2018

They said it

"I don't know. I think the team, tonight we played a real solid game. I've felt good about my game all season; I just haven't gotten the results. I've been a part of some tough games and some tough teams that sort of exposed us a little more than we'd like to. I think it was just a good team effort tonight. I felt good, and I think a lot of guys stepped up and played really well in front of me." -- Sabres goalie Chad Johnson

"Things have gone well for us, so maybe our guys thought, 'Well, we'll tic-tac-toe around tonight.' It's just we needed a little more meat and potatoes." -- Bruins coach Bruce Cassidy

Need to know

Wilson has five points (two goals, three assists) during a four-game point streak on the road. ... Sabres forward Jacob Josefson played his 300th NHL game. ... Rask's 21-game point streak is the fourth-longest in Bruins history.

What's next

Sabres: Host the Colorado Avalanche on Sunday (7 p.m. ET; MSG-B, ALT, NHL.TV)

Bruins: At the New Jersey Devils on Sunday (7 p.m. ET; MSG+ 2, NESN, NHL.TV)

Sabres overcome Eichel's injury to earn win in Boston

Sabres.com

Jourdon LaBarber

February 10, 2018

BOSTON - With their leading scorer having gone down with an injury, the Buffalo Sabres could have fallen flat against a talented opponent in the Boston Bruins. Instead, they responded with one of their most complete performances of the season.

Jack Eichel left the game in the first period with an apparent lower-body injury, but a stellar defensive effort - combined with second-period goals from Evander Kane, Scott Wilson and Benoit Pouliot - paved the way for the Sabres to earn a 4-2 victory at TD Garden on Saturday night.

The win was Buffalo's second in a row and fourth-straight on the road. Chad Johnson made 25 saves, while Rasmus Ristolainen scored an empty-net goal with 28.2 seconds remaining.

"I thought guys made a terrific effort tonight, one of the best games I've seen us check with sticks and coming back into our zone," Sabres coach Phil Housley said. "As a result, we got a lot of chances, a lot of looks, a lot of 2-on-1s and we cashed in on some. I thought everybody stepped their game up when Jack went down."

Recap: BUF 4, BOS 2

04:32 • February 10th, 2018

Eichel sustained his injury with 6:52 remaining in the first period after falling awkwardly on his right leg during a collision with Bruins defenseman (and former Boston University teammate) Matt Grzelcyk. Housley had no further updates on his status after the game.

Eichel leads the Sabres with 53 points this season, 34 of which have come since the beginning of December. He missed the first 21 games of last season with a left high-ankle sprain.

"When you're in-game, sort of everything around you goes away," Johnson said. "It's tough losing Jack, he's our best player and our franchise player. It's tough but we're all professional, we understand the situation. Guys get injured or get hurt so guys have to step up."

In Eichel's absence, the Sabres received contributions from throughout their lineup. Kane began the night amid a 14-game goal-scoring drought. Pouliot's drought was at eight games. Wilson sat out Thursday's game as a healthy scratch, having entered the lineup due to an illness to Zemgus Girgenons.

"When you lose your big guy, everyone knows a couple more minutes are coming your way and you're just going to have to dig down that much more," Wilson said. "I thought we did a good job of staying together and just getting it done."

Wilson buries loose puck

00:46 • February 10th, 2018

Even beyond the goal scorers, the Sabres outcompeted a Bruins team that entered the night as one of the NHL's hottest clubs. The Sabres outshot the Bruins 28-27, outhit them 33-22 and recorded 20 blocked shots in front of Johnson.

How hot were the Bruins? They came into the night having earned a point in all but one of their last 23 games, with an 18-1-4 record in that span. They had earned at least a point in their last 21 games with Tuukka Rask in net (19-0-2), including eight-straight wins.

"I think the compete and the battle and the heaviness in the battle, definitely you have to win those," Housley said. "But I just thought, the way we checked, coming back, even on the forecheck and coming into our zone, there wasn't a lot of room early."

"We did a terrific job protecting Johnny and when we needed a save, he made some big saves."

Johnson's great blocker stop

00:19 • February 10th, 2018

The Sabres will have further word on Eichel's status once he's reevaluated by team doctors on Sunday. With or without him, they'll have a chance to win their third game in a row that night at home against the Colorado Avalanche.

With an impressive win under their belt, Wilson thinks the team should go into that game with confidence.

"I think we lacked that for a long time," he said. "Obviously getting this one tonight, it grows on you a little bit. We've beaten some good teams this year, we've just got to keep it going tomorrow and build on that confidence."

Good luck charm?

The Sabres have had special guests in attendance for each of their last two victories. Their annual "fathers trip" began in Buffalo on Thursday, when players had their dads and mentors in attendance for a 4-3 win over the New York Islanders.

The fathers traveled with the team to Boston and were in attendance once again on Saturday.

"It's great that the fathers are on the trip," Housley said. "I hope they can stay with us the rest of the year."

A big night for Benny

Pouliot ended his night with one goal, but Kane joked that he could have had five. That might not be so far-fetched - Pouliot tallied six shot attempts, including one that rung the post and one that was robbed on a glove save by Rask.

The goal Pouliot did score came during a 3-on-1 rush on a feed from Wilson.

Pouliot's blistering one-timer

00:47 • February 10th, 2018

"I was using my speed," Pouliot said. "I think when I use my speed I can be effective in that way. The guys I played with made big plays too so that was nice. So yeah, speed. If the whole team does that we'll have a lot of success."

Reinhart stays hot

The Sabres twice had minor scares involving Sam Reinhart, first when he got up and skated gingerly to the bench after going hard into the boards on a hit from Grzelczyk and later when he blocked a shot, limped off the ice and briefly went into the tunnel to shake it off.

Not only did Reinhart remain in the game after both incidents, he made the pass that sprung Kane free for a breakaway on his second-period goal.

Kane's breakaway snipe

00:50 • February 10th, 2018

With the assist, Reinhart now has 14 points (4+10) in his last 11 games.

Up next

The Sabres will return home to host the Colorado Avalanche on Sunday. Looking for a night out with the family? Family packs - which include four 300-level tickets, four hot dogs, four sodas and four popcorns - are available here.

If you can't make it downtown, coverage on MSG-B begins at 6:30 p.m. with the GMC Game Night Pregame Show. Radio coverage can be found on WGR 550, with puck drop set for just after 7.

Sabres look to continue road streak against surging Bruins

Sabres.com

Jourdon LaBarber

February 10, 2018

BOSTON - If facing one of the league's hottest teams isn't enough motivation, the Buffalo Sabres will have some added incentive to pull out a victory against the Boston Bruins on Saturday night. If they come up short, they'll have their fathers to answer to.

The team's annual fathers and mentors trip began in Buffalo on Thursday, when the dads were in attendance to watch the Sabres earn a 4-3 win over the New York Islanders. It continued with the trip to Boston, including a tour of historic Fenway Park, and ends with the game against the Bruins.

Will their fathers' presence loom in the back of players' minds?

"I hope so," goalie Chad Johnson, who will start for Buffalo, said. "Yeah, probably. You use what you can for motivation. I think when your families are here, parents are here, you always have that little extra motivation to want to do well for them."

Preview: BUF at BOS (2/10/18)

02:16 • February 10th, 2018

The Sabres were able to overcome defensive inconsistencies in their victory over the Islanders, areas they'll have to clean up to leave Boston with a win. The Bruins have earned a point in all but one of their last 23 games, with an 18-1-4 record in that span.

Buffalo is looking for its fourth-straight road win, having swept three games in Western Canada in late January prior to going 1-1-2 on a five-game homestand. Johnson said that replicating the detail-oriented game that helped them earn wins in Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver will be crucial against Boston.

"I think it's just focusing on the details, having a good F3 and committing to the team game," Johnson said. "I think everybody saw the success we had out west, when we just played simple, had that good F3 and competed together and supported the puck. Just the little things in hockey you have to do consistently from start to finish to win hockey games."

The Bruins are led by forwards David Pastrnak and Brad Marchand, who enter the night with a team-high 51 points each. Pastrnak has scored points in 10-straight games.

One of the keys to slowing down their attack, according to Sabres coach Phil Housley, is paying attention as their defensemen look to activate on the rush and in the offensive zone.

Phil Housley Pregame (2/10/18)

03:30 • February 10th, 2018

"It starts on our forecheck," Housley said. "They're going to try to activate, and we have to be on the right side of them so they can't get in the play. In the offensive zone, hopefully we can get some pins where we can kill their cycle game because their D do like to get active."

Coverage on MSG-B begins at 6:30 p.m. with the GMC Game Night Pregame Show, or you can listen to the game live on WGR 550. Puck drop is scheduled for just after 7.

Projected lineup

Zemgus Girgensons did not participate in the team's morning skate due to an illness and his status will be a game-time decision. Here's the projected lineup in his absence, with Scott Wilson taking his spot on a line with Johan Larsson and Jason Pominville:

71 Evan Rodrigues - 15 Jack Eichel - 23 Sam Reinhart

9 Evander Kane - 90 Ryan O'Reilly - 21 Kyle Okposo
20 Scott Wilson - 22 Johan Larsson - 29 Jason Pominville
67 Benoit Pouliot - 10 Jacob Josefson - 17 Jordan Nolan

6 Marco Scandella - 8 Casey Nelson
82 Nathan Beaulieu - 55 Rasmus Ristolainen
41 Justin Falk - 93 Victor Antipin

31 Chad Johnson
40 Robin Lehner

Sharpen Up: February 10, 2018

Sabres.com

Chris Ryndak

February 10, 2018

The Sabres open up a back-to-back set tonight. They'll be in Boston to take on the Bruins and then return home for a game Sunday night at KeyBank Center against the Colorado Avalanche.

Boston is on a four-game winning streak while the Sabres are coming off a big victory over the Islanders on Thursday.

Here's what you need to know.

The team was off yesterday as they toured Boston with their dads, who were invited to travel with the players on this trip. Stick with us for any lineup news from the morning skate, which will be underway shortly.

Tonight's matchup

Let's take a look at the numbers, courtesy of @SabresPR's Game Notes....

This is the third of four meetings between the Sabres and Bruins this season.

Last meeting: Boston defeated Buffalo 3-0 in Buffalo on Dec. 19, 2017

Next meeting: Sunday, Feb. 25 in Buffalo

The Sabres are 2-6-2 in their last 10 games vs. the Bruins; 4-4-2 on the road.

Sabres goaltenders Robin Lehner and Chad Johnson have combined to stop 203 of the 213 shots (.953) they have faced at even strength in Buffalo's last eight games. Lehner has stopped 175 of 185 shots (.946) in his last six games.

Robin Lehner has faced Boston five more times than his next most frequent opponent (Montreal - 14). In 19 career games against the Bruins, he has logged a .922 save percentage and a 2.71 goals-against average.

Rasmus Ristolainen has 14 points (3+11) in his last 17 games, dating back to Dec. 29. Ristolainen's 14 points during that span ranked fifth among NHL defensemen entering play Friday.

Kyle Okposo has recorded 13 points (3+10) in his last 12 games, including four multi-point games. Okposo has 24 points (6+18) in 29 career games against the Bruins, including 15 points (5+10) in the last 14 matchups.

Ryan O'Reilly has recorded 12 points (7+5) in his last 13 games. He has eight points (4+4) in his last nine games against Boston.

Sam Reinhart has totaled 13 points (4+9) in his last 10 games.

Jack Eichel enters tonight's game with consecutive multi-point games (2+2). He has totaled seven points (3+4) in nine career games against Boston.

Casey Nelson has an assist in each of the Sabres' last two games.

O'Reilly's redirection PPG

00:47 • February 8th, 2018

The Sabres have tallied at least one power-play goal in 10 of their last 13 games dating back to Jan. 7 at Philadelphia (and went 0-for-0 on Jan. 11 vs. Columbus), converting at a 33.3 percent clip during that span.

Buffalo's power-play percentage during this stretch led the league entering play Friday, and the team's 13 power-play goals tied for the league lead.

During that stretch, the Sabres' top power-play unit (Eichel, Okposo, O'Reilly, Reinhart, Ristolainen) has combined for 12 goals and each member of the unit has at least six power-play points.

Ryan O'Reilly entered play Friday leading the league with five power-play goals since Jan. 7. Jack Eichel's nine power-play points (2+7) during that stretch tied for second.

O'Reilly has taken 72.8 percent of the team's power-play faceoffs during that span, going 43-for-59 (72.9%).

O'Reilly's nine power-play goals this season tied for fifth in the league entering play Friday.

Today in Sabres history...

Coach and general manager Punch Imlach (1918-1987) (R) of the Buffalo Sabres speaks with two of his players, Gilbert Perreault (L) and Rick Martin during the 1971-1972 season at an unspecified location. (Photo by Denis Brodeur/NHLI via Getty Images)

Coach and general manager Punch Imlach (1918-1987) (R) of the Buffalo Sabres speaks with two of his players, Gilbert Perreault (L) and Rick Martin during the 1971-1972 season at an unspecified location. (Photo by Denis Brodeur/NHLI via Getty Images) Denis Brodeur/Getty Images

1980: George "Punch" Imlach, Roger Crozier and Frank Christie become the first three members of the Buffalo Sabres Hall of Fame.

Sharpen Up: February 9, 2018

Sabres.com

Chris Ryndak

February 9, 2018

That was fun. Buffalo scored on their first two shots of the game last night and then Sam Reinhart broke a tie with 4:14 left in regulation as Buffalo won 4-3 to pick up their 1,000 th regular season home victory.

Here's what you need to know.

About last night

Recap: NYI 3, BUF 4

04:43 • February 8th, 2018

From the Lexus Postgame Report...

For nearly a month, the Buffalo Sabres sat one victory shy of a milestone. They won their 999th regular-season game against the Columbus Blue Jackets on Jan. 11 but had gone without a win at KeyBank Center since.

Reinhart with Dan (2/8/18)

02:49 • February 8th, 2018

Playing the finale of a five-game homestand against the New York Islanders on Thursday, the Sabres finally got the job done. Sam Reinhart led the way with three points, including the go-ahead goal with 4:14 remaining in a 4-3 Sabres victory.

Buffalo led 3-0 in the second period on goals from Jack Eichel, Evan Rodrigues and Ryan O'Reilly. The Islanders responded with goals from John Tavares, Ross Johnston and Anders Lee, the last of which tied the game just 1:03 before Reinhart scored the winner.

Buffalo Sabres

✓

@BuffaloSabres

"We found a way to win. That's what matters at this point, and we'll take it."

More from Jack Eichel -

12:10 AM - Feb 9, 2018

135

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"It's really small details and you have to stick with it," Reinhart said. "It was a pretty ugly one but those are the ones you kind of have to find a way to win on a consistent basis in this league."

Reinhart had already earned two assists prior to scoring the game-winning goal, when he buried the rebound of a shot by Rodrigues from out in front of the Islanders net. His three-point night gave him 13 points (4+9) in his last 10 games, matching the total he scored in the first 44 games of his season.

Buffalo Sabres

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@BuffaloSabres

Coach Housley talks about what he liked & didn't like in our 4-3 win over the Islanders -

12:14 AM - Feb 9, 2018

24

See Buffalo Sabres's other Tweets

Twitter Ads info and privacy

Coach Phil Housley acknowledged the fact that the team will need more wins to gain the trust of their fans. Getting that 1,000-win milestone out of the way is a start.

"To get a win in front of the home crowd is important," Eichel said. "[We've] got to keep people coming to games. We've got to start winning here, we've got to start making this a tougher place to play."

Buffalo Sabres

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@BuffaloSabres

"We did a good job of burying our chances."

Evan Rodrigues' full postgame comments -

11:48 PM - Feb 8, 2018

45

See Buffalo Sabres's other Tweets

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For more on the new Rodrigues-Eichel-Reinhart line, check out the full game recap here.

<https://www.nhl.com/sabres/news/sabres-islanders-recap-sam-reinhart-jack-eichel/c-295769584>

View image on Twitter

View image on Twitter

Buffalo Sabres

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@BuffaloSabres

Night. Made.

A signed stick for this little fan from 1st Star ☆ Sam Reinhart.

10:05 PM - Feb 8, 2018

265

34 people are talking about this

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Notes from the game

Courtesy of @SabresPR...

With tonight's victory, the Sabres became the 11th NHL franchise to record 1,000 regular-season home wins.

With a goal and an assist, Jack Eichel now has five points (2+3) in three games against the Islanders this season.

Eichel finished the game tied for 18th in the league in goals (22) and tied for 17th in points (53) this season.

Eichel finished the night with 25 primary points (13+12) during 5-on-5 play this season, surpassing his career-best total of 24 set during his 81-game rookie season (12+12).

Sam Reinhart, who assisted on Buffalo's first two goals and scored the game-winner, now has 13 points (4+9) in his last 10 games.

Ryan O'Reilly's goal was his ninth power-play tally of the season, tying him for fifth-most in the NHL as of the end of tonight's game. O'Reilly now has 12 points (7+5) in his last 13 games.
Kyle Okposo's assist gives him 13 points (3+10) in his last 12 games.

Coming up this weekend

It's the Dads Trip as the Sabres have brought some special guests with them for their game tomorrow night in Boston.

The Sabres and Bruins will face off at 7 p.m. Check out the GMC Game Night pregame show starting at 6:30 on MSG. Catch Dan and Rayzor's call on MSG and WGR 550.

We'll have full coverage right here for you on Sabres.com. The team will be back home on Sunday for a night game against the Avalanche at 7 p.m. Get your Family Packs right here.