



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

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Mike Harrington: Nylander makes quite an opening statement

By Mike Harrington
The Buffalo News
September 17, 2018

COLUMBUS, Ohio – Patrik Berglund has played 694 games in the NHL, all with the St. Louis Blues. He's a four-time, 20-goal scorer in this league and has spent the last six years on the same team as superstar Vladimir Tarasenko.

So Berglund knows skill. At age 30, it undoubtedly takes a lot to impress him.

Alexander Nylander wowed him here Monday night.

It was Nylander who set up Berglund for the game's first goal 22 seconds into the second period and the Sabres never trailed in a 4-1 win over the Columbus Blue Jackets that opened their preseason.

The first of Nylander's two assists in the game came on a sensational look from down low. Patiently waiting with the puck in the left corner, Nylander kept his head up and fired a diagonal pass right on Berglund's stick. The veteran one-timed it and Columbus goalie Brad Thiessen had no chance.

"If I was Nylander, I would never try to pass that puck – because I could never make that play," a smiling Berglund said after the win in Nationwide Arena. "It was a great play by him. I came there back door, charged as hard as I could, hit the goal with it and it went in."

"I heard him yell for it and I looked to see if there was somebody in the slot," Nylander said. "Looked again and he was wide open."

Berglund centered Nylander and fellow St. Louis alum Tage Thompson. They were the game's signature trio, with both wingers getting a pair of assists.

Nylander made a similar pass less than six minutes later, finding Nathan Beaulieu out top on a 4-on-3 for another one-timer that gave the Sabres a 2-0 lead. No longer dogged by the groin injury that ruined last season for him, the 20-year-old kept his momentum that he built while scoring three goals in the Prospects Challenge.

There is opportunity on this club. Both because of the lack of depth, especially on the bottom-six forward group, and because of the continuing contract stalemate with Sam Reinhart.

"I feel like I could have pushed more to make a spot last year," Nylander said. "I never got the chance because I was injured. This feels normal. This is the way I should play."

Reinhart would seemingly be the top line right winger, playing with Jack Eichel and Jeff Skinner. But he's not here, and players like Nylander and Thompson have a chance to show their wares in his absence.

Nylander has not engendered much positive vibe thus far in his career. His first two years in Rochester produced just 18 goals in 116 games. In the wake of the injury and his no-show in last season's AHL playoff series sweep against Syracuse, alarm bells were everywhere when the Sabres held him out of development camp in June.

They were steadfast that move was about making sure he was ready come September. Suffice to say, there were plenty of guffaws around HarborCenter at that party line. Not much laughing going on now.

Nylander showed up at the Prospects Challenge looking stronger and smoother on the ice after an improved summer regimen that included a visit to Sweden from Sabres development coach Dennis Miller.

He should have stood out in those games and he did. Things got a tad more real Monday – although the likes of Seth Jones and Zach Werenski were not on the Columbus defense – and Nylander stood out again.

"I've really liked his development through this camp," said coach Phil Housley. "He's done the right things. He's working hard, he's getting his nose dirty, he's on the forecheck and he's making plays."

"I've always known he's skilled with a good shot and is a fast forward," Berglund said of his fellow Swede. "What I saw today and in practice, he's been taking big steps of playing the game the right way, paying attention to the small details in the game."

What impressed Berglund on the goal was not just Nylander's pass. It was how he chipped the puck into the Columbus zone in a good spot and then was part of the forecheck to get it back.

"That's how you play the game now," Berglund said. "It's a grinding game and he sure did do that today."

"I like to create offense and try to make simple plays out there," Nylander said. "Sometimes you have to hold the puck longer than other times, and I wanted to create space by moving my feet and finding the open player."

Nylander's struggles after being taken at No. 8 overall in 2016 have been such a talking point that it's easy to overlook his age. Pushing first-round picks perhaps when they're not ready is now a thing in the NHL, largely because of the hype the internet has given to prospects in the last decade or so that rarely used to exist.

Labels are a problem for first-round picks, especially top-10 guys who don't jump right into the NHL.

"It's taking time. He's a good dude," said goalie Linus Ullmark, a teammate of Nylander's the last two years in Rochester. "He just has to get everything together, play hard and play smart. ... I don't really care if he has been drafted first overall, 30th overall, seventh round, whatever. He's still the same guy. I don't really care about labels. It's about human beings."

The Wraparound: Sabres 4, Columbus Blue Jackets 1

By Mike Harrington
The Buffalo News
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COLUMBUS, Ohio – Good work at the net and in the net.

That was the tale of the Buffalo Sabres' preseason opener Monday night, as the Blue and Gold rolled past the Columbus Blue Jackets, 4-1, before about 5,000 fans in Nationwide Arena.

The Sabres took charge by scoring on their first three shots of the second period via goals by Patrik Berglund, Nathan Beaulieu and Kyle Criscuolo. Meanwhile, goaltender Linus Ullmark stopped 20 of 21 shots he faced while playing the first 40 minutes to keep the Jackets at bay.

Alexander Nylander and Tage Thompson collected two assists apiece for Buffalo while playing on Berglund's wings.

Shooting straight: In addition to going 3 for 3 to start the second period, the Sabres had three goals on their 10 shots in the game over the first 34 minutes.

Opening salvo: After a scoreless first period, it took the Sabres 22 seconds to tally in the second as Berglund rifled home a one-timer from the slot after Thompson did the forechecking work. Nylander fished the puck away from the Columbus defense in the left corner and Berglund one-timed home Nylander's cross-ice pass from the left corner.

Second the motion: Beaulieu made it 2-0 at 6:31 by rifling home a one-timer from between the circles as Nylander found him on a 4-on-3 situation.

Quick response: The Blue Jackets scored just eight seconds later as David Savard's snapshot beat Ullmark.

Breathing room: Criscuolo, who spent most of last year in Rochester, took a Sean Malone pass from in tight and scored at 13:15 of the second period to make it 3-1.

Pulling away: Andrew Oglevie, signed as a college free agent out of Notre Dame, banged home a Scott Wilson rebound at 2:14 of the third period to put Buffalo up by three.

Injury report: Malone hobbled off the ice in the second period with what appeared to be a left knee injury. He did not return for the third. Coach Phil Housley said he would be re-evaluated on Tuesday.

The Buffalo lineup: Especially early in preseason before many cuts are made, who plays and with whom is as big a story as the numbers on the scoreboard. To that end, the Sabres forward lines for this one were:

Nylander-Berglund-Thompson

Wilson-Evan odrigues-Danny O'Regan

Victor Olofsson-Johan Larsson-Oglevie

Malone-Criscuolo-Tyler Randell

The defense pairs were Beaulieu-Matt Tennyson, Brendan Guhle-Casey Nelson, Brandon Hickey-Taylor Fedun.

Ullmark started and Jonas Johansson served as the backup goaltender, stopping all 16 shots he faced in the third. Columbus finished the game with a 37-18 advantage in shots on goal.

In the circle: Berglund went 5-0 on faceoffs in the first period as the Sabres were 9-3. The impact of Berglund and fellow newcomer Vladimir Sobotka is expected to help relieve the loss of Ryan O'Reilly, who set an NHL record last year for faceoffs won in a season. Berglund finished the game 10-5 while the Sabres were 24-26.

No Full Metal Jackets: Nick Foligno, Artemi Panarin, Cam Atkinson, Seth Jones and Zach Werenski all sat this one out for Columbus. So did goalie Sergei Bobrovsky. The Jackets are expected to play most of their big games Tuesday night for a visit by Chicago.

Prominent names in the lineup for Columbus were Brandon Dubinsky, Pierre-Lue Dubois, Sonny Milano and Anthony Duclair. Coach John Tortorella watched this one from the press box and let assistant Brad Larsen run the bench.

Tuesday's schedule: The Sabres headed home after the game and will stage their preseason home opener Tuesday night in KeyBank Center against the Pittsburgh Penguins. It's expected to be the debut of Rasmus Dahlin, and other big names like Jack Eichel, Jeff Skinner, Kyle Okposo and Rasmus Ristolainen are among those likely to play.

The group playing in the game will be holding a morning skate in the arena at 10:30 a.m. The players not in the game will practice at HarborCenter from 11:15-11:45 a.m. and then scrimmage there from 11:50 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

All of those pregame sessions are free and open to the public.

Thin Penguins lineup on tap: As for Pittsburgh, don't head downtown Tuesday night expecting to see many big names.

As teams usually do for their first road preseason game, most of the marquee men are staying home. No Sidney Crosby. No Evgeni Malkin. No Phil Kessel or Patric Hornqvist. No Kris Letang on defense or Matt Murray in goal.

The biggest name the Pens are bringing to town is sharp-shooting winger Jake Guentzel. Former Sabre center Derek Grant, signed as a free agent after a 12-goal season in Anaheim, is also coming. On defense will be Olli Maatta and former Sabre Chad Ruhwedel.

The rest is a mix of fringe NHL/AHL players and prospects, with forward Daniel Sprong perhaps the top name. A second-round pick in 2015, the 21-year-old was a 32-goal man last year at Wilkes-Barre/Scranton.

Amid Sabres camp competition, Nicholas Baptiste stays true to his game

By Amy Moritz

The Buffalo News

September 17, 2018

Nicholas Baptiste watched the offseason moves just like everyone else. He saw the players the Buffalo Sabres added, including veteran Jeff Skinner, the Stanley Cup-winning Conor Sheary, and the up-and-coming Tage Thompson.

It didn't surprise Baptiste. Not when the Sabres finished with the worst record in the National Hockey League.

"Whenever you finish in not a good position you want to improve for the next season and I think management has done a good job bringing guys in. So definitely that's competition, but it's something we all look forward to," Baptiste said Monday afternoon after another hard practice in HarborCenter. He was part of the group not making the trip to Columbus for the Sabres' preseason opener against the Blue Jackets. Baptiste is among those expected to play in Tuesday's preseason game in Buffalo.

Competition can be beneficial for everyone, pushing players to become better and sharper in order to earn, or keep, a roster spot. But the added competition didn't necessarily change much for Baptiste. It couldn't. See, the one thing the 23-year-old has learned in his three seasons as a professional hockey player is that he can't try to change who he is. So it doesn't matter who is around him. Baptiste has to play to his strengths (his speed) and work on his weaknesses (play in the defensive zone) in an attempt to make his first NHL roster out of training camp.

That task won't be easy. The group of forwards in Sabres camp is deep and fierce.

"You're definitely aware of everything that happens in the offseason. You know the spots and you know how many guys they brought in," Baptiste said. "You've just got to stay focused and play your game. You can't worry too much about that side of it. You've got to make sure you're at your best and hopefully that will be enough to help you and make you move forward."

Baptiste has been working at moving forward, and finding his footing, since he signed his entry-level contract and turned pro for the 2015-16 season. A third-round draft pick in 2013, he spent that first season in Rochester. Baptiste made his NHL debut with the Sabres on Feb. 19, 2017, against Chicago and played in 14 games that season with Buffalo, notching three goals and one assist.

He split time last year between the Sabres and Amerks, playing 33 games in Buffalo (four goals, two assists, minus-4), and 36 games in Rochester (seven goals, 11 assists, plus-three).

A restricted free agent, he signed a one-year deal with the Sabres over the summer and got to work.

"I wanted to improve on all sorts of aspects," Baptiste said. "Speed is a big part of my game so I wanted to be sure to keep that up and keep that at an elite level, and being good at the net and being someone that the coach can trust defensively. I've said it a number of times here – you've got to be able to play in your own end. I think that's something I've tried to work on, just board battles and being better on the walls and being able to work from my own end out.

"Everyone's battling. Everyone's working hard to earn a spot, especially for guys who haven't been here for years and years, right? I want to continue to work hard and continue to do the little things that have gotten me to this point. I've just got to keep working, keep focusing on my game."

And with an opportunity to put some distance from the dismal reality that was last season, Baptiste has been able to find the valuable lessons, apply them, and move on.

"Obviously, you don't want to be in a situation where you're not winning," Baptiste said. "The biggest thing for us is just focusing and taking it day by day. Just to play with high intensity and not take a day off, not take a shift

off, not take a workout off. It's been very businesslike but everyone's enjoying themselves, which is very important.

"You've got to come to the rink ready to work. Guys have to come ready to work and work hard and I think that's what's happened these last few days. Everyone's put their best foot forward and that's from the top down. Everyone's pulling the same way."

‘I know what I bring to the table’: Scott Wilson embraces new competition for his roster spot

By Joe Yerdon

The Athletic

September 17, 2018

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Jack Eichel, Jeff Skinner and Kyle Okposo know that they’re going to have ice time on opening night.

Scott Wilson’s point of view is a little bit different.

Wilson took advantage of the situation in Buffalo after he was dealt to the Sabres from the Detroit Red Wings last December, playing himself into some big minutes on important lines for a good part of the year and carved out a steady role. But with a host of new faces and a lot more players without waiver exceptions, the competition to hang onto that spot has been fierce early in camp.

Wilson is all for it.

“It’s good there’s competition this year,” Wilson said on Monday. “It’s not a fun time to play hockey when you’re losing like that. Bringing in guys is only going to make the team better. With teams I’ve been on in the past, competition brings out the best in even the players that have been around a long time. It’s good, I think you need to battle hard in the first three days of camp just to kind of get back into it and get your legs under you and stuff so it’s nice to have a lot of guys battling and working hard every day.”

In 49 games with the Sabres last season, Wilson had six goals and eight assists. According to Natural Stat Trick, the guys he played with the most were Ryan O’Reilly and Sam Reinhart, which made him a top-six forward more often than not. With O’Reilly off to the St. Louis Blues in a blockbuster offseason deal, Wilson lost one of his on-ice running mates and added three new teammates in Patrik Berglund, Vladimir Sobotka, and Tage Thompson; each one of them a potential rival for ice time and a spot on the roster.

“I know what I bring to the table,” Wilson said. “I know I’m a guy that plays up and down the lineup. If somebody’s hurt, I can play with top guys and try to complement them by just playing hard and being physical. I think a lot of teams lack that hard-nosed physicality these days with a lot of young guys, skilled guys, coming into the league at such a young age. That’s a big part of winning, too. I kind of learned that in my time in Pittsburgh that you do need some grit guys to play all over the place.”

The Sabres were Wilson’s third team last season. The Red Wings brought him in after a late-October trade with the Penguins that sent center Riley Sheahan to Pittsburgh. Even though Buffalo and Detroit had their issues last season, Wilson was part of the Penguins’ Stanley Cup Championship team in 2017 and opened last season with them.

“I think in Pitt it was the same way,” Wilson said. “You had a lot of young guys trying to win spots and a lot of older guys trying to keep `em so I think it’s pretty much the same boat and then having the young guys with energy. It’s good.”

The pace and competition level already has been high in Sabres camp, as it’s been stressed by the organization that camp will be tougher this year. “The first few days are no joke,” Wilson said. His approach has been one of not letting up during the offseason.

“Honestly, we’ve been working out for so long, even when we were kids we were doing pretty much the same thing nowadays,” Wilson said. “You can’t really decide to turn it on the last few weeks of summer anymore. It’s got to be that 365 job. I kind of just approach it the same way. I tried to put on a little bit of weight; I’ve always been kind of a smaller guy so I didn’t really change a whole lot in regards to workouts, just keeping that routine and sticking to it because when camp comes you’re already set into that routine.”

Wilson will get his first crack at proving he belongs Monday night in the Sabres preseason opener on the road against the Columbus Blue Jackets.

With new home and mentality, Jack Eichel shows he's ready to be a leader

By Scott Burnside

The Athletic

September 17, 2018

Lively, engaging, funny and more than a little introspective, Jack Eichel seemed a different person entirely from previous encounters when the Buffalo Sabres' star met with media in Chicago days before the start of training camp.

Saddled with ridiculous expectations as an 18-year-old considered to be a generational talent and drafted to be the face of a franchise, Eichel's body language throughout the years sometimes reflected the difficulty of living through injuries, coaching changes, management changes and not a sniff of the postseason.

Funny thing how maturity sometimes sneaks up on those of us who might be tempted to apply labels and then walk away, failing to recognize that those labels may well become completely inapplicable even minutes after applying them.

Our chat with Eichel was, in that sense, as humbling as it was informative and, heck, downright fun.

The conversation started with Eichel's big offseason acquisition: a house.

Not just any house but his house, his first house.

"I put a lot of it on other people. A lot of people took care of a lot of things for me. I was really lucky, but it is a pain in the ass," Eichel said with a smile. "But it's cool. I'm trying to set it up now."

He checked his watch and figured that his parents, Bob and Anne, were getting ready to land in Buffalo where Anne will take on a sizeable role in turning said house into a proper home.

"I've been there for a few weeks now. It's not really a functioning house, right? There's a bed. There's a couch. There's a couple of TVs. There's nothing in the kitchen. It's an empty fridge. Couple of leftovers in there," Eichel said.

For anyone who's ever purchased a home for the first time, the feelings of nervousness and pride are universal. And those feelings are evident for the Boston-area native.

"There's kind of a good den off the living room. So it's like an open room. The previous owner it was sort of like a playroom for their kids. I sort of turned that into a gym treatment area," the 21-year-old said. "Bedrooms are pretty standard. A garage. It's a townhome. It's like right near the arena. It's fairly new, it's two years old, there's only been one previous owner."

No shuffleboard table or bubble hockey just yet. There is a wine cellar, which elicits approving nods from the writers in attendance and prompts a perfunctory invitation to check out the wine cellar once it gets up and running.

All good-natured joking about the wine cellar aside, there is more than a little symbolism attached to this purchase.

"So I haven't lived on my own in a while," he explained. "I would say just everything's your own. Nobody can tell you what to do with a room. You can just do everything the way you want to do it. You get a lot of ideas. I have a lot of ideas of what I want to do with the house. You just get excited about it. It's your own spot. So I'm like, this is cool. I've got my own spot. You can do everything that you want to do. ... It's almost to the point where you want to [make] it a great spot where people come over and go 'wow, this is great.' And people want to be over there. It's not there yet, but hopefully it gets there."

Eichel bought this townhome in the rapidly evolving downtown, waterfront area near the Sabres' home at KeyBank Center. That he purchased the home from former Buffalo Bills GM Doug Whaley adds a nice subtext to the story.

The Bills and Sabres are both owned by the Pegula family, which is committed to building winning franchises in a town starved for success and has shown little patience when it comes to making decisions on who will run and/or coach their teams.

Both Sabres GM Jason Botterill and head coach Phil Housley are entering their second seasons in Buffalo, and the pressure to show signs of moving in the right direction is immense. And Eichel is at the center of this drama.

In a precariously short period of time, Eichel has moved from the hope of the future to the focal point of the present.

With No. 1 draft pick Rasmus Dahlin in the fold and an offseason of great personnel change as Botterill tries to create an environment where winning can take root — shipping out Ryan O'Reilly, and adding Jeff Skinner, Connor Sheary and Patrik Berglund, among others — Eichel is the star around which the rest of the team will orbit.

He gets that in a way that perhaps he didn't before or rather seems to be embracing that notion in a way that might not have been possible before.

"Obviously there's a lot of expectations and, for me, I thought that there was a lot when I first came in the league," Eichel said. "You sort of learn how to deal with them and then when you don't have the success that you've had your whole life, it's something new, right? So I've never dealt with this before. So I think I started to learn how to deal with it, and I think once you go through it, you're sort of in a position where you're — this is bad, I don't want to do this anymore. Then it happens a few years in a row and you start questioning yourself, what you're doing, you start questioning everything that goes on and you get to the point where you can't look around at anybody else, all you've got to do is look at the mirror, at yourself and think about what you can change to make yourself a better player and a better person, a better teammate, better leader.

"So I think a lot of it has to do just with a lot of soul-searching. I think I had a really good summer of maturing, growing up. I think I have a different mindset now than I did 12 months ago, 24 months ago, six months ago. So I'm excited about the year."

And there it is, the reminder once again that what we've been watching the past three years is not just the evolution of a genuine hockey talent but the evolution of a boy to a man. Eichel will not turn 22 until October.

If he perhaps didn't live up to expectations, especially in answering for the team, who can blame him really?

"You know what? I don't say it's part of taking ownership because I don't want to change who I am. Obviously, there's things you want to get better at, and for me, it's maturing, getting older. Being more of a guy that people rely on and lean on, and I think — we're just joking around about talking about buying a house — but I think that's something that is part of maturing, right?" Eichel explained. "You're living by yourself. I think it's part of the process and yeah, like you said, it's being around the guys more. Having guys over. Being closer to your teammates. Growing up a little bit. Maturing. I think it's all part of the process.

"I think buying a house is great because you're on your own time. You're on your own schedule. Things flow the way you want them to. I felt like when I lived by myself a few summers ago I had a really, really good summer of training. Everything in your fridge is your own. Everything in the pantry's your own. No one else is there to stray you in a certain direction. The only direction you're going is the one you want to go in. And I think that's really good for me right now. I think I have a lot of aspirations and things I want to do and I think living by myself will allow me to do them easier. A lot of it comes with going to the rink, just being close to the rink and being able to get there easy and being there a long period of time every day. Working on your game, so I think it makes a little bit easier for me."

Botterill, hired in May of 2017 after cutting his teeth in the Pittsburgh Penguins' organization, understands how important this process is. He saw it in Pittsburgh with Sidney Crosby and he is working to surround Eichel with players who can create the kind of fabric that brings consistent success. And the management and coaching staff have been working with Eichel to become the kind of person and player that leads a successful team.

"We've seen that throughout the summer," Botterill told The Athletic. "Our engagement with him has been very, very positive."

Botterill isn't looking for Knute Rockne speeches in the dressing room.

"It's just about interacting with the guys, lead by example," Botterill said.

It's not something that can be forced but has to be natural, organic if you will, and Botterill believes they are seeing positive signs heading into what is a critical season for the franchise.

"I think he's handled it a lot better this summer," Botterill added. "He's very motivated."

Nowhere is this evolution going to be more important, more visible, than in the connection between Eichel and Dahlin, who stands to become the franchise defenseman that the team has lacked for years.

Coincidence or not, Dahlin moved into a home next to Eichel.

Recently Eichel had Dahlin drive him home from the rink.

"He's got his Swedish license. Doesn't have an American license yet. He's kind of new to driving in the states and directions," Eichel said with grin.

"I think the hockey stuff will take care of itself because that's what he's always known and that's where he's comfortable, but for him it's he's never lived in the United States before. It's a completely different environment. I don't think he really understands how big of a deal he'll be. Not only in Buffalo but everywhere in the world that he goes. When we went to dinner — I think he's a bit naïve right now to how big of a deal he is, how much attention he's about to get. And I think this is just the start of it. I think this same for me when I first came in I got it a little bit more because I was at BU the year before, we got a lot of attention there, we had a really good team. But him coming from Sweden, I think that it's sort of new for him and just like at dinner people are 'can I get a photo?' He doesn't really understand it yet."

The understanding will come from living it, but having a next-door neighbor like Eichel who has walked those same steps can't help but be a benefit.

"It's the rigors of the NHL the season, it's a long season, there's a lot of travel, a lot of ups and downs. There's going to be times where he's not playing well, there's going to be times when he's the best player on our team," Eichel said. "It's all about managing that and managing yourself and everything that goes with it."

Longtime NHL netminder and analyst Martin Biron likens the dynamic in Buffalo to what transpired in Detroit when Steve Yzerman arrived on the scene, the fourth overall pick in 1983. He, too, was named captain at an early age on a team that wasn't very good. But as Yzerman grew, so too did the lineup around him.

"And Steve Yzerman became this fantastic player and this fantastic captain," Biron said.

Could Eichel be that kind of catalyst in Buffalo? Can he follow a similar arc?

"I think we've seen a gradual progression with Jack," Biron said. The former Sabre netminder said there has been a change in Eichel's approach, even his body language has become more positive, assertive.

And while there might have been frustration with Eichel in the past, Biron said a corner does appear to have been turned.

"I think everybody in Buffalo has had their ups and downs with Jack," Biron told The Athletic. "I think that's all in the past. This year, even this summer, when I watch him on the ice for the informal skates, there's a different feeling around the locker room, around the team."

Sabres open the preseason with a 4-1 win over Columbus

WGR550

September 18, 2018

The Buffalo Sabres opened the preseason with a 4-1 win over the Columbus Blue Jackets on Monday night at Nationwide Arena in Columbus.

Alexander Nylander and Tage Thompson both tallied two assists in the win, leading the team in points for the evening. Patrik Berglund, Nathan Beaulieu, Kyle Criscuolo and Andrew Oglevie scored for the Sabres. Goaltender Linus Ullmark started the game for the Blue and Gold, stopping 20 of 21 shots in two periods of action before Jonas Johansson relieved him for the third period. Johansson was perfect on 16 shots against in the third period.

The first period was scoreless, with Columbus outshooting the Sabres 9-7 in the opening period. However, Buffalo struck first with Berglund's goal just 22 seconds into the second period. Thompson and Nylander went behind the Blue Jackets net to retrieve the puck, then Nylander found Berglund in the slot for the one timer to open the scoring.

Beaulieu scored what would be the game winner on the power play, thanks to some solid puck movement again involving Nylander and Thompson. Columbus defenseman David Savard scored just 8 seconds after Beaulieu's goal, but then Criscuolo scored to make it 3-1 to end the second period.

Oglevie tapped in a rebound to round out the scoring in the third period, and the Sabres won 4-1 despite being outshot 37-20 in the game.

The Sabres play next on Tuesday night at KeyBank Center against the Pittsburgh Penguins, faceoff at 7p.m. Expect to see the likes of Jack Eichel, Rasmus Dahlin and Jeff Skinner for that game, as Rick Jeanerette and Rob Ray have the call Tuesday night on WGR.

SCORING SUMMARY

First period:

No scoring

Second Period:

(0:22) - SABRES GOAL - Patrik Berglund (1)

Assists - Alexander Nylander (1), Tage Thompson (1)

(6:31) - SABRES GOAL - Nathan Beaulieu (1) - PPG

Assists - Alexander Nylander (2), Tage Thompson (2)

(6:39) - BLUE JACKETS GOAL - David Savard (1)

Assists - Anthony Duclair (1), Pierre-Luc Dubois (1)

(13:15) SABRES GOAL - Kyle Criscuolo (1)

Assists - Sean Malone (1), Tyler Randell (1)

Third Period:

(2:14) - SABRES GOAL - Andrew Oglevie (1)

Assists - Scott Wilson (1), Evan Rodrigues (1)

Sabres win preseason opener

By Josh Reed

WIVB

September 17, 2018

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB)- The Buffalo Sabres opened the preseason with a 4-1 win in Columbus.

The Sabres and Blue Jackets were scoreless heading into the 2nd period when Patrik Berglund and Nathan Beaulieu scored goals for Buffalo. Columbus would cut the lead in half on a goal by David Savard but the Sabres would retake a two goal advantage on Kyle Criscuolo's goal. Andrew Oglevie would cap off the scoring with a 3rd period goal. Alex Nylander had a pair of assists in the Sabres win.

Goaltending duties were split between Linus Ullmark and Jonas Johansson who stopped 31 of 32 shots they faced.

The Sabres host the Pittsburgh Penguins Tuesday night at 7:00.

Sabres open preseason with a win

By Dale Mussen

WYRK

September 17, 2018

Certainly not that it means a whole lot, but it's a positive. And for a team where not much of anything went right last year, they'll take it. The Sabres opened the preseason with a 4-1 win over the Columbus Blue Jackets on Monday night.

Goal scorers for Buffalo were Patrik Berglund, Nathan Beaulieu, Kyle Criscuolo and Andrew Ogelvie. Berglund was one of the players picked up in that five for one deal for Ryan O'Reilly. Tage Thompson was one of the other players in the O'Reilly deal and he drew assists on the first two goals as did William Nylander.

Lynus Ullmark played the first two periods in goal for Buffalo and stopped 20 of 21 shots. Jonas Johansson played the final period and stopped all 16 shots he faced.

Not playing for Buffalo were the likes of Jack Eichel, Kyle Okposo, Jason Pominville, Conor Sheary, Jeff Skinner, Rasmus Ristolainen and their top rookie defenseman Rasmus Dahlin. But I would bet a significant number of them could be in the lineup tonight when the Sabres host the Pittsburgh Penguins in their first home game of the preseason. It's a 7:00 game time.

Ullmark, Johansson spark Sabres past Blue Jackets

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Linus Ullmark and Jonas Johansson combined to make 36 saves for the Buffalo Sabres in a 4-1 win against the Columbus Blue Jackets at Nationwide Arena.

Ullmark played the first two periods and made 20 saves on 21 shots. Johansson, a third-round pick (No. 61) at the 2014 NHL Draft, made 16 saves in the third period.

Patrik Berglund, Nathan Beaulieu and Kyle Criscuolo scored for the Sabres in the second period. Andrew Oglevie gave Buffalo a 4-1 lead at 2:14 of the third.

David Savard scored the Blue Jackets' only goal at 6:39 of the second period.

Matiss Kivlenieks made seven saves as the starting goalie for Columbus but left after the first period with a lower-body injury. Brad Thiessen allowed four goals on 13 shots for Columbus.

The Blue Jackets were 0-for-5 on the power play.