



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

THE NEWS & OBSERVER

Hurricanes skate past Panthers 4-2 for fifth straight victory

By Chip Alexander

Just when it seemed every game between the Carolina Hurricanes and Florida Panthers this season would need more than 60 minutes to decide, the Canes changed things up.

The Canes out-skated and out-battled Florida on Sunday, earning a 4-2 win at PNC Arena. Sebastian Aho scored shorthanded early in the third and a snipe on a partial breakaway from Warren Foegele put things away as Carolina picked up its fifth consecutive win and moved past the Panthers into second place in the Central Division.

In the final seconds of the game, a melee broke out in the Panthers' zone as emotions spilled over and the pushing and shoving began. The newly formed division has spawned a pretty nice rivalry — or it is a revival of the old Southeast Division rivalry?

"It's two good teams, you know, playing intense hockey," Aho said. "Maybe there's something brewing. It was definitely intense and fun to play."

And what happened at the end?

"Good question," Aho said. "I was on the ice with a guy on my back the whole time, so I can't tell you."

A team effort

The scuffle came soon after the Panthers pulled Chris Driedger for a 6-on-4 advantage after officials whistled the Canes' Jordan Staal for hooking. But the Canes (17-6-1) battled as if they were protecting a one-goal lead, fighting for pucks, putting sticks on sticks, blocking shots and getting stops from goalie James Reimer.

"That was great to see," Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "The desperation was there and a lot of sellout. Everybody was sacrificing. That's team stuff. You've got to have that if you want to be successful."

To Brind'Amour, the win Sunday was one of his team's best 60-minute efforts of the season.

"There wasn't a lot going on for on stretches, but because there was no room," he said. "Both teams were just playing on top of each other. I liked the fact we hung in there and didn't get frustrated and just kept playing and made some big plays when we had to."

In the previous three games against the Panthers, the Canes lost in overtime, won in a shootout, and won in overtime. It was that tight. But the Canes won in regulation Sunday to claim the two points.

"I definitely think we played a full 60 minutes tonight," Canes center Vincent Trocheck said.

Early and often

Trocheck has now scored in all four games this season against his former team after he banged in a power-play goal in the first for his 13th of the season. When Nino Niederreiter scored off the rush in the second, his 11th goal, Carolina had a 2-0 lead.

The Panthers (15-5-4) pushed back in the second. MacKenzie Weegar scored on a blast after a faceoff win in the Canes zone, and had Reimer not made his biggest save of the game it would have been tied entering the third period.

After a bad turnover by the Canes, the Panthers' Jonathan Huberdeau had the puck alone in front of the net. But Reimer, who had 21 saves, made the point-blank stop with four seconds remaining in the period.

Aho scored 38 seconds into the third for the 10th shorthanded goal of his career. That tied him with Brind'Amour for third place in franchise history — Eric Staal is the team's career leader with 16.

Foegele then struck for a 4-1 lead, busting down the ice after a lead pass from Brock McGinn to beat Driedger with a forehand.

Mason Marchment's goal for Florida in the third made it a 4-2 game, and Reimer robbed the Panthers' Gustav Forsling of a goal later in the period with a glove save while seated in the crease. Reimer had four saves in the late 6-on-4 by Florida.

The Panthers, who had defenseman Keith Yandle play in his 1,000th career game, were in the second game of a back-to-back, having won 6-2 on Saturday against the Nashville Predators.

The Canes enjoyed a rarity: two days between games after their 5-2 win over Detroit on Thursday at PNC Arena.

"It's that mental break," Brind'Amour said. "It's recharging the batteries."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021



Hurricanes' winning streak reaches 5 with win over Panthers

Carolina improved to 3-0-1 on the season against Florida

Cory Lavalette

The Carolina Hurricanes pushed their winning streak to five games, getting a power play goal from Vincent Trocheck, a shorthanded tally by Sebastian Aho, and even-strength goals from Nino Niederreiter and Warren Foegele to defeat the Florida Panthers 4-2 Sunday at PNC Arena.

Carolina improved to 17-6-1 on the season, moving a point ahead of Florida in the Central Division with 35 — just one behind first-place Tampa Bay, which has a game in hand on both the Hurricanes and Panthers.

Three Thoughts

1. Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour had bristled after recent games when questioned about his team's third-period struggles, but he still seemed pleased to see a more complete, 60-minute effort from his team Sunday.

"It was a good effort all the way," Brind'Amour said. "We didn't really have any lows in the game. ... I liked the fact that we hung in there, didn't get frustrated and just kept playing and then made some big plays when we had to."

The two days between games seemed to revitalize the Hurricanes, who extended their winning streak to five games by taking an early lead, extending it and then responding when Florida got on the board near the game's midway point.

"It's that mental break," Brind'Amour said, "and it's not even a break. We're talking one day off. We had a practice, but it's just getting a day where the guys can stay home and have a life for a little bit of time, I think to just kind of recharge the batteries.

"And then we're right back at it here, another grind. But I think that it helped tonight maybe. We weren't great, but we certainly were good, and we were good throughout the whole game. And that's what was positive."

2. I'll keep mentioning it until it's not true: Trocheck continues to own his old team, scoring for the fourth straight game against the Panthers this season.

Trocheck got the game's first goal on the power play, taking a pass down low from Andrei Svechnikov and quickly spinning and firing a shot past Chris Driedger (22 saves) for his team-leading 13th goal of the season.

"I think it's just luck of the draw on that one," Trocheck said of his success against his longtime team. "Obviously, it's nice to get one against the former team. There's motivation every night, so I don't think it's any different."

Trocheck is now tied for fifth in the league goals and on pace for more than 30 goals in the shortened 56-game season.

3. Florida's Patric Hornqvist started a scrum in the final minute that exhibited the frustrations the Panthers must have after allowing Carolina to earn seven of eight points against them halfway through the season series.

The Hurricanes, for their part, seemed to brush off the late-game theatrics. Foegele — who provided an insurance goal at 3:41 of the third — even seemed to welcome the animosity.

"You can tell that there's something brewing here, for sure," he said. "You're playing the same team eight times this year. ... You can see there at the end the emotions are up. And that's one of the reasons why you love the game, playing with some emotion and fire. It's nice to see the guys stick up for each other out there."

Number To Know

2 — Penalty minutes for Jacob Slavin in Sunday's game, his first of the season. Slavin was called for delay of game in the second period, just the 30th minor penalty in the 398 NHL games of his six-season career. Slavin was going to be called for holding in Carolina's 6-4 loss in Chicago on Feb. 4, but Patrick Kane scored with a backhand on the play to negate the delayed penalty.

Only Bill Quackenbush, who had just 95 penalty minutes in 775 games with Boston and Detroit from 1942-56, has fewer PIMs per game (0.12) among NHL defensemen with at least 300 games played than Slavin (0.15). Quackenbush was the first defenseman to win the Lady Byng Memorial Trophy, earning the honor in 1948-49 after not being called for a single penalty in 60 games played, and he was inducted into the Hockey Hall of Fame in 1976.

Only three defensemen — three-time winner Red Kelly (1951, '53, '54), Quackenbush and Brian Campbell (2012) — have ever won the award. Slavin finished a career-high fourth in voting for the Byng last season despite earning the second-most first-place votes, only behind winner Nathan MacKinnon of Colorado.

They Said It

"Good question. No, I was on the ice, guy on my back the whole time. So I can't tell you."

— Hurricanes center Sebastian Aho on if he knew what happened that led to the teams scuffling near the end of the game.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

Plus

Sebastian Aho, Hurricanes center — Florida entered the third period down a goal and with 1:19 of power play time to try and time the game. By the time their power play was over, the Panthers were down two thanks to Aho's shorthanded goal.

Slavin zipped a pass about 115 feet from Carolina's goal line onto the tape of Jordan Martinook's stick, setting up a 2 on 1. Martinook got the puck to Aho, and he scored his ninth goal of the season 38 seconds into the final period to demoralize the Panthers.

"I thought I was the only guy there, but somehow we both were out there," Aho said. "Great heads-up play by Slavo and Marty too — that was a nice pass on his backhand. That

just shows how good of a player Slavo is. He can make those plays time and time (again), and big goal."

The Hurricanes are now 6-1-1 when Aho scores a goal and 10-2-1 when he has a point.

Minus

Steven Lorentz, Hurricanes center — Coming off a healthy scratch and playing for the first time since he scored his first career NHL goal, Lorentz was beaten cleanly on a faceoff by Noel Acciari in the second period. The puck went right to Florida defenseman MacKenzie Weegar, who one-timed the puck past Hurricanes goalie James Reimer (21 saves) to cut Carolina's lead in half. Lorentz won just 2 of 9 faceoffs on the night and he finished without a shot attempt.



Recap: Canes Beat Panthers to Win Fifth Straight Game

Trocheck scores his fourth in as many games against his former team

By Michael Smith

The Carolina Hurricanes extended their winning streak to five games with a 4-2 victory against the Florida Panthers on Sunday evening in Raleigh.

Sebastian Aho's shorthanded goal in the third period proved to be the game winner, while Vincent Trocheck scored against his former team for the fourth time in as many games this season.

"It was a good effort all the way. We didn't really have any lulls in the game. There wasn't a lot going on for large stretches, but it was because there was no room," head coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "I like the fact that we hung in there, didn't get frustrated and just kept playing. Then, we made some big plays when we had to."

Fist Bumps

Vincent Trocheck

Trocheck loves scoring against his former team.

"I think it's just luck of the draw on that one," Trocheck shrugged. "Obviously it's nice to get one against the former team, but there's motivation every night, so I don't think it's any different."

Eight seconds into the Canes' second power play of the game, Trocheck struck to open the scoring on just the Canes' second shot of the evening. Like most early power-play goal sequences begin, this started with a faceoff win by Jordan Staal in the offensive zone. Trocheck helped the puck back to Aho, who then dropped it off for Dougie Hamilton at the point. Hamilton walked the blue line toward the middle of

the ice and swung the puck over to Andrei Svechnikov on the near side. Svechnikov stepped up with the puck, but instead of firing off a wrist shot, he dished down low to Trocheck, who accepted the pass, turned towards the net and fired a shot in far side past Chris Driedger.

The goal was Trocheck's team-leading 13th of the season and fourth in as many games against the Panthers, and he now has points in five straight games (4g, 2a).

"He's got a lot of confidence. He's a good player, you know?" Brind'Amour said. "I think he's found a home. When you feel really good - it's no different than any job - when you're feeling good about yourself and where you fit, you have success."

Sebastian Aho

Though the Canes began the third period shorthanded, it took them just 38 seconds to restore a two-goal advantage. From behind his own goal line, Jacob Slavin head faked as if he was going to simply clear the puck down the ice. Instead, he put a stretch pass on the tape of Jordan Martinook, springing a 2-on-1 rush. Martinook fed Aho, who beat Driedger to his blocker side with a wrist shot.

"Great heads-up play by Slavo, and Marty, that was a nice pass on his backhand," Aho said. "That shows how good of a player Slavo is."

The goal was the Canes' second shorthanded marker of the season and the 10th of Aho's career, which equals Brind'Amour for third-most in franchise history.

Nino Niederreiter & Warren Foegele

It's really fun watching Martin Necas put the pedal down as he motors through the neutral zone. He revved it up in the



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

second period and attracted a swell of Panthers' defensemen as he crossed the blue line. That opened up space for Niederreiter on the left wing, and he wristed his 11th goal of the season glove side on Driedger.

Just about two minutes after Aho scored shorthanded to put the Canes up 3-1 in the third period, Foegele stretched his team's lead to three goals when he shrugged off Alex Wennberg on a breakaway to sneak a five-hole goal through Driedger.

Plus/Minus

Plus: James Reimer

Reimer made 21 saves to improve to 3-0-0 with a 2.59 goals-against average and a .923 save percentage in three games against his old team. Between him and Trocheck, there must be something to that, huh?

Of Reimer's 21 saves, perhaps none was bigger than his patient pad stop on Jonathan Huberdeau in the waning seconds of the second period. The puck hopped over Brady Skjei's stick on the choppy ice, leaving Huberdeau all alone in front. Reimer's stop preserved his team's 2-1 lead heading into the intermission, a momentum-saver for the Canes.

In the third period, Reimer came up big again on former Hurricane Gustav Forsling, as Reimer flashed the leather on the defenseman who snuck in undetected from the point.

Minus: Teuvo Teravainen

Teravainen returned to action on Thursday after missing the previous seven games with a concussion, but on Friday, he

experienced concussion-like symptoms. Out of caution, the Canes held him out of the lineup on Sunday.

"We always err on caution," Brind'Amour said.

Stats Pack

1: Since the NHL began tracking trades in 1991-92, Trocheck is the first player to score in his first four games against his former team.

5: Hamilton recorded the secondary helper on Trocheck's goal to extend his assist streak to five games, the longest by a Canes player this season. Hamilton leads the team in both assists (16) and power-play assists (10).

895:20: Before his delay-of-game minor in the second period, Slavin had not been assessed a penalty in his last 895:20 of ice time, dating back to Feb. 2, 2020.

Sunday Night Slam?

Emotions boiled over late in regulation, and Reimer looked ready to be tagged in.

"Every game means so much," Foegele said. "You could see at the end, the emotions are up. That's part of the reason you love the game, playing with some emotion and fire. It's nice to see the guys stick up for each other out there."

Quote of the Night

"We have a really good team." - Vincent Trocheck

Up Next

The Canes host the Nashville Predators on Tuesday and Thursday to round out their four-game homestand.



Aho has goal, assist for Hurricanes in victory against Panthers

Carolina has won five straight; Yandle plays 1,000th NHL game for Florida

By Kurt Dusterberg

RALEIGH, N.C. -- Sebastian Aho had a goal and an assist, and the Carolina Hurricanes extended their winning streak to five games with a 4-2 victory against the Florida Panthers at PNC Arena on Sunday.

Vincent Trocheck, Nino Niederreiter and Warren Foegele scored for the Hurricanes (17-6-1), who improved to 3-0-1 against the Panthers this season and 8-1-1 at home. James Reimer made 21 saves.

"Both teams were playing on top of each other, and I like the fact that we hung in there and didn't get frustrated," Carolina

coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "We just kept playing and made some big plays when we had to."

Keith Yandle played his 1,000th NHL game for the Panthers (15-5-4), who had their five-game point streak end (3-0-2). Chris Driedger made 22 saves.

"Over the course of the season, there's a couple games that you know, whether it's fatigue or scheduling, it caught up to you," Florida coach Joel Quenneville said. "I'm not making excuses, but tonight we weren't great."

Trocheck scored eight seconds into a power play to give the Hurricanes a 1-0 lead at 15:55 of the first period. He took a pass from Andrei Svechnikov at the left post and swept the puck past Driedger for his fourth goal in the past five games.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

Trocheck, who was traded from the Panthers to the Hurricanes on Feb. 24, 2020, has scored one goal in each of the four games against Florida this season.

"I think it's just luck of the draw on that one," Trocheck said. "Obviously, it's nice to get one against the former team. There's motivation every night, so I don't think it's any different."

Niederreiter made it 2-0 at 4:52 of the second period after Martin Necas carried the puck through the neutral zone and fed him for a wrist shot from the left face-off circle.

MacKenzie Weegar pulled Florida within 2-1 at 10:41 when he scored on a one-timer after Noel Acciari won a face-off to him.

Jonathan Huberdeau had a chance to tie the game with four seconds left in the period, but Reimer made the save with his right pad at the top of the crease.

Aho scored a shorthanded goal 38 seconds into the third period to extend Carolina's lead to 3-1. Jaccob Slavin started the play with a stretch pass to Jordan Martinook, who set up Aho for a wrist shot from the slot.

"Great heads-up play by [Slavin] and [Martinook] too; that was a nice pass on his backhand," Aho said. "It was a big goal."

Quenneville said he felt Reimer's save and Aho's goal changed the game.

"The big turn was we have it all alone with [Huberdeau] at the end of the second period, and then they score the

[shorthanded goal] to start the third," Quenneville said. "That's a two-goal swing there."

Foegele gathered a loose puck at the red line and held off Alex Wennberg to score five-hole for a 4-1 lead at 3:41.

Mason Marchment got the Panthers within 4-2 when he scored into an open net at 9:09 off a pass from Huberdeau.

"I think [Quenneville] was trying in the third to get some offense going, and it worked out," Huberdeau said of playing with Marchment. "He's a smart player, and he obviously gets in the right spot. He can score some goals."

NOTES: Forward Aleksander Barkov had an assist on Marchment's goal to extend his point streak to a season-high six games (one goal, seven assists). ... Yandle is the 352nd player and 116th defenseman to reach 1,000 NHL games. He has also played for the Phoenix/Arizona Coyotes and New York Rangers in 15 NHL seasons. ... Brind'Amour said Teuvo Teravainen was scratched because of symptoms related to the recent concussion that caused him to miss seven games. Teravainen returned to play 14:30 in a 5-2 win against the Detroit Red Wings on Thursday. ... Trocheck has four goals and two assists during a five-game point streak. ... Necas has two goals and five assists during a four-game point streak. ... Aho's shorthanded goal was his 10th in the NHL to tie Brind'Amour for third in Hurricanes/Hartford Whalers history (Eric Staal, 16; Dave Tippett, 11). ... Carolina defenseman Jake Gardiner had two hits in 13:55 in his return after missing five games with an upper-body injury.



Trocheck, Reimer help Hurricanes blow past Panthers 4-2

By Bob Sutton

RALEIGH, N.C. (AP) — Vincent Trocheck and James Reimer continued to torment their former team, lifting the Carolina Hurricanes to their fifth straight victory with a 4-2 win over the Florida Panthers on Sunday night.

Trocheck, who was traded to Carolina just over a year ago, scored for the fourth time this season against the Panthers. Nino Niederreiter, Sebastian Aho and Warren Foegele also had goals for the Hurricanes, who have won eight of 10 home games (8-1-1) this season.

"We didn't really have any lulls in the game," Hurricanes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "I like the fact that we hung in there. Didn't get frustrated, just kept playing."

Reimer, who made 21 saves, came to Carolina less two years in ago in a trade from Florida. He's 3-0-0 since against the Panthers.

MacKenzie Weegar and Mason Marchment scored for Florida, which had a five-game points streak snapped. Chris Dreidger made 22 saves for the Panthers.

Trocheck scored just eight seconds into the Hurricanes' first power play of the game. At that point with 4:05 to play in the opening period, Carolina had as many goals as the Panthers did shots on goal.

"We played a full 60 minutes," Trocheck said. "I think this one was the best of the last four."

Trocheck has four goals during his five-game points streak.

"He has found a home," Brind'Amour said. "It's no different than any job. When you're feeling good about and where you fit, you have success. You don't expect him to score at this rate, but we'll take it for as long as we can."

Niederreiter took a pass from Martin Necas and beat Dreidger, who had been under siege early in the second period. Niederreiter has 11 goals, posting at least one against every Central Division team except for Tampa Bay.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

Carolina is 3-0-1 against the Panthers this season. This was the first meeting decided in regulation.

"They're a well-structured team," Panthers left wing Jonathan Huberdeau said. "It's always tough to play against them."

The Panthers got on the scoreboard when Weegar blasted the puck between Reimer's pads with 9:19 left in the second period.

Aho posted the team's second short-handed goal of the season 38 seconds into the third period. Foegele extended the lead to 4-1 slightly more than three minutes later.

The Hurricanes took advantage of special teams situations.

"You've got to make quick plays," Panthers coach Joel Quenneville said. "We had some good looks. We didn't have enough of them. Not enough clean possession time."

Florida won 6-2 at Nashville on Saturday, while the Hurricanes hadn't played since Thursday night.

MILESTONE MOMENT

Panthers defenseman Keith Yandle appeared in his 1,000th career game. He's in his 15th season in the league and his fourth season with the Panthers.

His accomplishment was recognized with an announcement during a break in the first period.

Yandle has played 890 consecutive games for the longest active streak in the league and the third-longest stretch in NHL history.

HIM AGAIN

Trocheck has scored in each of Carolina's four matchups with Florida this season.

He's the first player in the Carolina (and former Hartford) organization to score in his first four games against his ex-team following a trade since the NHL began tracking that information in 1991-92.

"I think it's just the luck of the draw on that one," Trocheck said of the topic. "Obviously it's nice to get one against the former team. There's motivation every night."

Trocheck, who has a goal in four of the last five games, has a team-leading 13 goals this season. Florida doesn't have a player with a double-digit goal total.

MORE TIME OFF

Hurricanes winger Teuvo Teravainen missed the game for undisclosed reasons. He had returned from a seven-game absence because of a concussion to play Thursday night in a victory against Detroit. He logged 14½ minutes in that game.

Brind'Amour said the latest time off might be related to the previous injury.

"Whenever you have those kinds of injuries, nobody really knows," he said.

UP NEXT

Panthers: Play at Columbus on Tuesday and Thursday.

Hurricanes: Stay home for games Tuesday and Thursday vs. Nashville.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021



SB NATION
CANES COUNTRY

Canes storm past Cats for fifth straight win

The Carolina Hurricanes defeated the Florida Panthers 4-2 Sunday night at PNC Arena to earn their fifth-straight win.

By Ryan Henkel

The Hurricanes won their fifth-straight game in a row as they defeated the Florida Panthers 4-2 Sunday night at PNC Arena.

The team played a complete game that saw goals at even strength, on the power play and shorthanded and a full desperation effort to preserve the lead at the end.

Teuvo Teravainen was listed as a game-time decision coming into the match, but he did not draw in for the game. Teravainen played on Thursday in his first game back since missing the previous five before that due to a concussion, so there may be some lingering symptoms he is still battling. In his place, Steven Lorentz drew back into the lineup.

The first 10 minutes of the game was about as interesting as watching the resurfacing of the ice. Each team managed only one shot through the first 12 minutes of play, even despite each team having a full power play within that time.

However, the game gained a little mojo during the Canes' second power play opportunity. Before the penalty on Florida could even be announced, it was none other than Vincent Trocheck in close to extend his point streak to five games.

Receiving a puck while next to the goal, he quickly turned and whipped the puck in far-side on Chris Driedger. Trocheck has now scored in every game he's played against his former team.

In terms of the overall power play, it's now scored in five-straight games and is clicking at over a 30% success rate and is top-five in the entire league.

The game's physicality began to rise slightly as frustrations with either side's inability to get through at 5-on-5, but with a constant cycle of calls, the game was difficult to find a flow in for the first.

In the second period though, the Canes got their skates under them. A few different rushes led to great opportunities, but nobody was breaking through the Florida netminder.

That was until Nino Niederreiter got an open look.

Starting from the defensive zone, Martin Necas took the puck and, with his elite skating, transitioned the puck up through the neutral zone. When he got to the O-zone, he drew both Panthers' defenders into the center to defend against him.

As both collapsed, Necas saw the chance and dished it across to Niederreiter in the left-circle and with that open look, Nino sniped it home to give the Canes a 2-0 lead.

The Panthers would get right back into the game though off an offensive-zone faceoff a bit later, as defenseman MacKenzie Weegar bombed a shot from the blueline right through Reimer's five-hole.

That goal seemed to wake the Hurricanes up a bit as they started to really go at Florida from there, but even despite great chances again and again, Carolina couldn't bury them in that period.

The Canes had carry-over penalty time to open the third, but they looked like the team with the man-advantage.

After a Brock McGinn and Jordan Staal shorthanded chance was stopped, the puck got cleared back into Carolina's zone.

From behind his own net and with ample time, Jaccob Slavin hit the stretch pass to the opposite blueline where Jordan Martinook and Sebastian Aho had set up. Martinook got the pass across to Aho and he waited just long enough to get Driedger to move and rung it around the top of the cage for the shorthanded tally.

And shortly after that, Warren Foegle broke loose from a defender and slid a puck in five-hole to extend the lead to 4-1.

Florida found one more goal, an easy back-door feed for Mason Marchment by Jonathan Huberdeau, but nothing after that.

The Carolina Hurricanes locked it down and battled through a sequence of desperation saves even while facing a 6-on-4 late in the period.

The win extends the Hurricanes' winning streak to five and they'll look to keep it going as they take on the Nashville Predators on March 9 at PNC Arena.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

They said it: Brind'Amour, Trocheck, Aho, Foegele on the win

The Carolina Hurricanes defeated the Florida Panthers 4-2 Sunday night at PNC Arena. After the game, head coach Rod Brind'Amour as well as Vincent Trocheck, Sebastian Aho and Warren Foegele spoke to the media via Zoom.

By Ryan Henkel

The Carolina Hurricanes played their most complete game in about two weeks Sunday night, topping the Florida Panthers 4-2 thanks to goals from Sebastian Aho, Vincent Trocheck, Warren Foegele and Nino Niederreiter.

Trocheck, Aho, Foegele and Rod Brind'Amour spoke to the media after the win; here's a full breakdown of everything they had to say:

Rod Brind'Amour

On this being a complete game: It was a good effort all the way. We didn't really have any lulls. There wasn't a lot going on for stretches, but it was because there was no room. Both teams were playing on top of each other, and I liked the fact that we hung in there, didn't get frustrated, just kept playing and then made some big plays when we had to.

On the desperation up two goals at the end: That was great to see. We're up two, it's not like one, but the desperation was there. There was a lot of sell out. Everyone was sacrificing. That's team stuff. You've got to have that if you're going to be successful. So that was really encouraging. It was a positive night all the way around.

On Vincent Trocheck: He's got a lot of confidence. I think he's a good player. He's figured out how we need to play. I think he's found a home. It's no different than any job, I think when you're feeling good about yourself and where you fit, I think you have success. Obviously you don't expect him to score at this rate, but we'll take it for as long as we can.

On Martin Necas: That's an asset, for sure. That's that game-changing ability that he has. You'd like to have that on your team. He's never lacked for confidence, really. He's always had a lot of that. But that's also what makes him a good player. You've got to have the confidence to make plays. It's my job to make sure he doesn't try them all the time, teach him the time and place. But it's his job to do that, and he's been good.

On a two-day break: It's that mental break, and it's not even a break. We're talking one day off, and then we had a practice. But it's just getting a day where the guys can stay home and have a life for a little bit of time, I think just kind of recharge the batteries, then we're right back on the grind. Did it help tonight? Maybe. We weren't great, but we certainly were good. And we were good throughout the game. That's what was positive.

On Teuvo Teravainen and if he had symptoms pop up: That's exactly what's going on. Whenever you have those kind of injuries, nobody really knows how long it's going to be. Is he going to be a couple days? A week? We've had things go on in the past for a long time with this stuff. We always err on the caution with the players, you have to. Unfortunately right now, he's kind of in the middle of

something that doesn't feel great. So hopefully turns really quickly and we'll get him right back.

Warren Foegele

On the decision to do Storm Surges as a salute to front-line workers: I think we wanted to somehow give back and give our gesture to appreciate all the front-line workers that are helping us out here. Just continuing to do the storm surge and to appreciate them is just a small gesture of saying thank you to them.

On playing with Sebastian Aho: It's nice to play with one of our best players. You're just trying to work hard every game and support him out there, give him the puck. That was a great play by [Brock McGinn] to chip it out to me, but for me it's just trying to stick to my game with whoever I play with, and just try to be a complimentary player.

On the Panthers: Every game means so much, because everyone's in the same division. But you can tell that there's something brewing here for sure. You're playing the same team eight times this year. You can see there at the end, the emotions are up. It's part of one of the reasons why you love the game, playing with some emotion and fire. It's nice to see the guys stick up for each other out there.

Vincent Trocheck

On the Storm Surge: It's fun. It's good for the crowd. Obviously, everyone here loves it, so it's a good thing that we do to keep them involved. Especially right now. First time that everybody's getting back into the arena and it's fun.

On what's working for him: I don't know (laughs). We have a really good team. My linemates are obviously doing a lot, power play's been great.

On him scoring in every game against the Panthers: I think it's just been the luck of the draw on that one. It's nice to get one against the former team. There's motivation every night, so I don't think it's any different. Just luck of the draw.

On this win feeling a little bit more complete: I definitely feel that we played a full 60 minutes tonight. We had been struggling to get to that the last few games. This has been the best one of the last four.

On the desperation at the end being about guys fighting for each other: That's a big part of it. Our D were doing everything they could to make sure the puck stayed out of our net, especially late in the game there. Pesce and Slavin did a great job selling out on every shot and keeping us in it. It's obviously a big part of it.

Sebastian Aho

On this win feeling like a more complete one: I felt like that was a really hard fought game. Two good teams with not a lot of room out there. Every inch mattered and our mentality and the way we played was good right from the start. It was a good win.

On perhaps a new rivalry with the Panthers: It was our fourth game against them. I think it's more of just two good teams playing intense hockey. Maybe there is something brewing,



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

but it's hard to say. Sometimes the games are just the way they go. It was definitely intense and fun to play.

On what happened at the end of the game: Good question. I was on the ice with a guy on my back the whole time, so I can't tell you.

On if he anticipated the stretch pass from Slavin on his goal: I thought I was the only guy there, but we were both up there, me and [Martinook]. It was a great heads up play by [Slavin] and [Martinook] too. It was a nice pass on his backhand. But that just shows how good of a player [Slavin] is. He can make those plays time and time again.

TODAY'S LINKS

<https://www.newsobserver.com/sports/nhl/carolina-hurricanes/article249761608.html>
<https://nsionline.com/article/2021/03/hurricanes-winning-streak-at-5-after-win-over-panthers/>
<https://www.nhl.com/hurricanes/news/recap-can-es-beat-panthers-to-win-fifth-straight-game/c-322233852>
<https://www.nhl.com/news/florida-panthers-carolina-hurricanes-game-recap/c-321362554>
<https://apnews.com/article/nfl-mackenzie-weegar-nino-niederreiter-carolina-panthers-carolina-hurricanes-76b3c9589f5a3790acda98f8fa59a878>
<https://www.canescountry.com/2021/3/7/22318765/carolina-hurricanes-storm-past-florida-panthers-for-fifth-straight-win>
<https://www.canescountry.com/2021/3/7/22318787/they-said-it-brindamour-vincent-trocheck-sebastian-aho-warren-foegele-on-the-win-carolina-hurricanes>

SportScan

Articles from outlets covering the Hurricanes' upcoming opponents and league-wide news

1205301 Carolina Hurricanes

Hurricanes skate past Panthers 4-2 for fifth straight victory

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

MARCH 07, 2021 04:33 PM,

Just when it seemed every game between the Carolina Hurricanes and Florida Panthers this season would need more than 60 minutes to decide, the Canes changed things up.

The Canes battered Florida on Sunday, earning a 4-2 win at PNC Arena. Sebastian Aho scored shorthanded early in the third and a snipe on a partial breakaway from Warren Foegele put things away as Carolina picked up its fifth consecutive win and moved past the Panthers into second place in the Central Division.

In the final seconds of the game, a melee broke out in the Panthers' zone as emotions spilled over and the pushing and shoving began. The newly formed division has spawned a pretty nice rivalry — or it is a revival of the old Southeast Division rivalry?

"It's two good teams, you know, playing intense hockey," Aho said. "Maybe there's something brewing. It was definitely intense and fun to play."

And what happened at the end?

"Good question," Aho said. "I was on the ice with a guy on my back the whole time, so I can't tell you."

A TEAM EFFORT

The scuffle came soon after the Panthers pulled Chris Driedger for a 6-on-4 advantage after officials whistled the Canes' Jordan Staal for hooking. But the Canes (17-6-1) battled as if they were protecting a one-goal lead, fighting for pucks, putting sticks on sticks, and getting stops from goalie James Reimer.

"That was great to see," Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour said. "The desperation was there and a lot of sellout. Everybody was sacrificing. That's team stuff. You've got to have that if you want to be successful."

To Brind'Amour, the win Sunday was one of his team's best 60-minute efforts of the season.

"There wasn't a lot going on for on stretches, but because there was no room," he said. "Both teams were just playing on top of each other. I liked the fact we hung in there and didn't get frustrated and just kept playing and made some big plays when we had to."

In the previous three games against the Panthers, the Canes lost in overtime, won in a shootout, and won in overtime. It was that tight. But the Canes won in regulation Sunday to claim the two points.

"I definitely think we played a full 60 minutes tonight," Canes center Vincent Trocheck said.

EARLY AND OFTEN

Trocheck has now scored in all four games this season against his former team after he banged in a power-play goal in the first for his 13th



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

of the season. When Nino Niederreiter scored off the rush in the second, his 11th goal, Carolina had a 2-0 lead.

The Panthers (15-5-4) pushed back in the second. MacKenzie Weegar scored on a blast after a faceoff win in the Canes zone, and had Reimer not made his biggest save of the game it would have been tied entering the third period.

After a bad turnover by the Canes, the Panthers' Jonathan Huberdeau had the puck alone in front of the net. But Reimer, who had 21 saves, made the point-blank stop with four seconds remaining in the period.

Aho scored 38 seconds into the third for the 10th shorthanded goal of his career. That tied him with Brind'Amour for third place in franchise history — Eric Staal is the team's career leader in shorthanded goals with 16.

Foegele then struck for a 4-1 lead, busting down the ice after a lead pass from Brock McGinn to beat Driedger with a forehand.

Mason Marchment's goal for Florida in the third made it a 4-2 game, and Reimer robbed the Panthers' Gustav Forsling of a goal later in the period with a glove save while seated in the crease. Reimer had four saves in the late 6-on-4 by Florida.

The Panthers, who had defenseman Keith Yandle play in his 1,000th career game, were in the second game of a back-to-back, having won 6-2 on Saturday against the Nashville Predators.

The Canes enjoyed a rarity: two days between games after their 5-2 win over Detroit on Thursday at PNC Arena.

"It's that mental break," Brind'Amour said. "It's recharging the batteries."

News Observer LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205302

Carolina Hurricanes

What happened to Dougie Hamilton's goal scoring for the Hurricanes?

BY CHIP ALEXANDER

MARCH 07, 2021 07:00 AM

For those who may have forgotten how Dougie Hamilton scored his last goal, here's the way it went down:

The Carolina Hurricanes defenseman was stationed at the right point as a pass from Ryan Dzingel came up the wall. In pursuit of the puck was forward Liam Foudy of the Columbus Blue Jackets, but Hamilton beat him to it and quickly lifted the puck toward the net.

Mike Maniscalco, the Canes' broadcast play-by-play man, likened it to an "Eephus pitch" in baseball, a good description of the high, floating puck. Columbus defenseman David Savard, in the slot, tried to jump and swat it out of the air with a glove and appeared to get a piece. But the puck sailed past goalie Joonas Korpisalo and into the net.

That knuckler gave the Canes a 6-4 lead and was the winning goal in a 6-5 victory. The goal was also Hamilton's first in Nationwide Arena since breaking a leg there on Jan. 16, 2020.

That most recent goal came on Feb. 7, in the Canes' ninth game of the season. It is also Hamilton's only goal this season, as the curious case of Hamilton and his baffling goal-scoring drought continues.

In 23 games, Hamilton has taken 70 shots. Some have been tipped and redirected by his teammates for goals, helping him to a team-leading 15 assists this season. He had two assists Thursday in the Canes' 5-2 win over the Detroit Red Wings, when he had three shots and also blocked three shots.

But a year after scoring 14 goals in 47 games, he has just the one.

Jacob Slavin, Hamilton's defensive partner on the Canes' top pairing, said he has not sensed any frustration in Hamilton because of his lack of scoring.

"I think he's been handling it fine," Slavin said on Saturday's media call. "It's part of the game. You've got your ups, got your downs. He's been in the league for a long time. He's had his chances and they're going to start going in soon enough.

"He's just going to continue to stick with it and they're going to go in eventually, knowing the type of player he is and the ability he has to put the puck in the net. Soon enough, they're going to go in."

According to the NHL's stats, Hamilton has taken 25 wrist shots, 21 snap shots and 20 slap shots this season, along with two backhanders and two deflections — the Columbus goal was classified a snap shot. He leads the league with 36 missed shots that were wide of the net.

Canes coach Rod Brind'Amour has used the "just a matter of time" line a few times in describing Hamilton, who has averaged 14 goals in the past six seasons and scored on a career-high 8.2 percent of his shots last season.

"We obviously want him to put up numbers, but it's more important he's sound defensively," Brind'Amour said on a media call last week.

Hamilton, recently asked to assess his goal-scoring problems, said, "You can always be better, I think, trying to find spots to get looks and things like that. It took some time but I think I'm starting to get more looks recently. Hit a couple of posts and crossbars.

"It's definitely a different feel if some of those go in and you feel better about yourself. I'd definitely like to be able to produce more offense and help the team that way."

CONTRACT ON THE HORIZON

It's an important season for Hamilton. He's in the final year of a six-year contract that has paid him an average of \$5.75 million, the highest among Canes defensemen. He is scheduled to become an unrestricted free agent after the season and has stated that he hopes to stay with the Hurricanes, his third team since entering the NHL in 2012-13 with the Boston Bruins.

Hamilton now has played almost half as many games this season as he did last season, and some of his metrics proportionately are lower by comparison. He has blocked 21 shots compared to 63 last season, and has 20 hits compared to 52. He has created 11 rebounds off shots to last year's 30, according to the Naturalstattract.com hockey analytics site.

And the goals. After 23 games last season, Hamilton had 10.

Despite Hamilton's goal-scoring woes — and even with forward Teuvo Teravainen slowed by COVID-19 and then a concussion — the Canes (16-6-1) were fourth in the NHL in goals per game (3.35) and fourth in power-play percentage (30.1 percent) through Friday's games.

According to Naturalstattract.com, the Canes are among the league leaders at all strengths in Corsi percentage, which is one measure of puck possession, as well as scoring-chance percentage.

The Canes rank 17th in the NHL in five-on-five shooting percentage at 7.89 percent. But they're eighth at all strengths at 10.56 percent because of their power-play scoring, where they have an NHL-best 20.8 shooting percentage.

What does all that mean?

"I think it says we have a lot of depth for scoring," Brind'Amour said Saturday. "We have a lot of different options now whereas in the past if you shut down one or two of our top guys, it made it hard to score. Now we have a few more options."

OF NOTE



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

The Canes on Saturday signed goaltender Beck Warm to a two-year, entry-level contract. The deal will pay Warm \$700,000 in 2020-21 and \$750,000 in 2021-22 at the NHL level or \$60,000 at the AHL level for both seasons, and he received a signing bonus of \$50,000.

Warm, 21, has a 4-0-0 record, 2.25 goals-against average and .940 save percentage in four AHL games with the Chicago Wolves this season.

CAROLINA HURRICANES VS. FLORIDA PANTHERS

When: Sunday, 5 p.m.

Where: PNC Arena, Raleigh.

TV: FSCR

News Observer LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205341 Nashville Predators

Nashville Predators 4, Dallas Stars 3 (SO): Predators hang on, snap three-game losing streak

Paul Skrbina

The Nashville Predators began a franchise-high eight-game, 15-day road trip Sunday in Dallas trying to avoid their fourth loss in a row.

The start wasn't promising for the visitors, who managed just two shots on goal during the first 15 minutes, 31 seconds.

The ending was hairy, with the Predators blowing a 3-0 lead in the final 6:30 before they prevailed 4-3 in a shootout thanks to Roman Josi.

The Predators' third shot, tipped off the stick of Mikael Granlund and originating with Filip Forsberg, was good for a power-play goal and a rare lead in the first of two makeup games between the teams because of the winter storms that hit Dallas.

Their sixth shot, a couple of minutes later, was good for a Calle Jankrok goal and a 2-0 lead, the second time this season they've held such a lead after one. They led 3-0 after two, just the third time they've taken a lead into the third.

The Predators continued to change their lineup, most notably having Rem Pitlick centering the second line in his second NHL game. He earned his first career point with a secondary assist on Jankrok's goal.

Roman Josi probably wanted to let the expletives fly after he had a goal taken away in the second when Granlund was called for interference with 7:23 remaining in the period.

Less than a minute later, Eeli Tolvanen upped the score back to 3-0 with his fifth goal of the season. It was Tolvanen's fourth power-play goal this season.

With Juuse Saros on injured reserve, Pekka Rinne started for the second consecutive game and made 35 saves, including 15 high-danger chances against. His biggest save against from his stick in the shootout against Joe Pavelski.

Radek Faksa, Pavelski and Jason Robertson scored during a six-play minute span in the third for the Stars, the last of which came with 57 seconds left in regulation to tie it.

Dallas, which fell to 7-8-5 and has lost 11 of 13.

The Predators, who improved to 11-14-0, were coming off a 6-2 loss to the Panthers to complete a 2-3 homestand.

Big number: 10. Power-play goals scored by the Stars' Joe Pavelski, tops in the NHL.

Big name: With two assists Sunday, Forsberg has 26 points in 25 games this season.

On the wire: Recalled forward Rem Pitlick and defenseman Ben Harpur from the taxi squad. Reassigned defenseman Alexandre Carrier to the taxi squad.

Next: At Carolina Hurricanes, 6 p.m. Tuesday, PNC Arena, Raleigh, N.C., Fox Sports Tennessee, 102.5-FM.

Tennessean LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205342 Nashville Predators

Roman Josi, Nashville Predators more than 'frustrated' as team hits road in search of answers

Paul Skrbina

Roman Josi stopped himself mid-four-letter word.

The Nashville Predators captain, normally collected, was describing his role in his team's struggles after another loss Saturday, this time the KO came by the count of 6-2 against the Florida Panthers.

"We need to figure it out quick," he said after the Predators' third consecutive defeat. "Everybody's gotta look in the mirror. I gotta be ..."

That's when the expletive nearly slipped past his lips.

Josi apologized and finished by saying he has to be better, everybody has to be better.

At this point, the Predators would be better off to be good than lucky.

They have been neither this season, meaning at this point they could look like a very different team by the time they return home from their two-week, eight-game trip.

There are a lot of reasons -- the penalty kill, the power play, the lack of offense.

One of the most glaring problems, though, hasn't been how they've finished but how they've started -- from behind, mostly.

Sixteen times in 24 games the Predators have allowed opponents to score first. It happened most recently Thursday against the Florida Panthers, when they lost 5-4.

It could have been much worse. The Predators were down 3-0 less than a minute into the second period.

"We were lucky to be in the game in the first," said forward Viktor Arvidsson, who went 15 games between goals before scoring during Saturday's 6-2 loss, the team's third three-game losing streak of the season.

The bad luck showed when they had two goals disallowed Thursday, but the fact they didn't wake up until the third period -- a recurring theme this season -- is alarming.

The Predators scored first Saturday, then allowed four consecutive goals.

Such familiar scenarios beg the question: Are the Predators sticking around and not quitting to stay in games late or is their third-period success a product of other teams letting up a bit because they are ahead?

There's no quantitative answer to that.

The Predators are 1-11 against the Panthers, Lightning, Hurricanes and Stars, the four teams they will play on this trip, which could ultimately define which direction this season goes.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

"The record is what it is," coach John Hynes said. "We're aware of that."

And the Predators appear to be what they are -- not a very good team. A team with injuries piling up. Matt Duchene (three to five weeks) joined Ryan Ellis (four to six weeks), Juuse Saros and Luke Kunin on injured reserve Saturday.

They were 10-14-0 going into Sunday's game against the Stars.

Hynes went on to talk about taking things one game at a time. Not looking too far ahead.

Josi took a page out of that book, too, when asked about the possibility of the team that left Nashville not being the same team that returns.

"I don't know," he said. "I'm worrying about my own game. I'm worrying about our team, our game, the way we play. The rest is something I'm not really worrying about."

Which is part of the problem. If the Predators can't figure out what's going wrong, a solution seems improbable. A selloff leading up to the April 12 trade deadline seems inevitable.

A possible rebuild this summer seems more likely.

General manager David Poile pointed to the team's 7-0 loss to the Stars early this season as a possible turning point, saying the team became "very fragile, very fast" after that.

Poile could very well be busy beginning a makeover during the next couple of weeks.

"When desperation hits we're playing great," said forward Filip Forsberg, who had 24 points through 24 games and was a rare bright spot in an otherwise dim season. "It's obviously something we've said a few times before.

"I don't think frustration is the right word. We have to be better. We know it has to change. It's happened before and we're aware of it. ... We just have to figure it out."

Thing is, it might be too late.

Tennessean LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205322 Detroit Red Wings

Detroit Red Wings midseason grades: A few disappointments, but not as many as you'd think

HELENE ST. JAMES

The enthusiasm with which the Detroit Red Wings began the pandemic-shortened 2020-21 season dissipated within a week.

That's when COVID-19 forced five players who were in the opening night lineup into a two-week quarantine. The Wings lost two players from their second line, and four power play guys, and just like that, an encouraging 2-2 start crumbled into an eight-game skid. They also lost their best goaltender for two weeks.

Two games shy of the midpoint, the Wings are 7-16-3. While that matches last season's record after 26 games, the Wings have played better.

The Wings have looked noticeably better defensively; there have been some blowouts, but on the whole they are keeping the score close. Scoring is still an issue, but the lines that looked so good during training camp didn't even last past two games because of the pandemic.

The power play has been atrocious, going through an 0-for-40 stretch that's left the overall percentage at 10.7, worst in the NHL. Individual

players have disappointed, none more so than Anthony Mantha. Others, like Bobby Ryan and Filip Zadina, have been bright spots in what has been a dreary and challenging first half of the season.

G Jonathan Bernier

Age: 32.

Stats: 6-5-0, .910 save percentage, 2.94 goals-against average in 13 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$3 million salary cap hit.

The word: He consistently has given his teammates a chance to win, withstanding barrages and high-percentage shots. He has been their MVP of the first half, and the Wings missed him when he was sidelined two weeks by injury.

Grade: A-minus.

F Tyler Bertuzzi

Age: 26.

Stats: Five goals, two assists, even rating in nine games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$3.5 million salary cap hit.

The word: He was off to a great start, with a 0.78 points-per-game average, but hasn't played since leaving the Jan. 30 game with an upper-body injury. The Wings miss his rambunctious style, grit and his net-presence.

Grade: A-minus.

F Mathias Brome

Age: 26.

Stats: One goal, minus-9 in 23 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$925,000 salary cap hit.

The word: Brome brings speed and hustle, but considering he's been on the top line and on the power play, his lack of production is a disappointment, and shows he's better suited to a role in the bottom six.

Grade: C-plus.

D Danny DeKeyser

Age: 30.

Stats: One goal, two assists, even rating in 17 games.

Status: Signed through 2021-22 at a \$5 million salary cap hit.

The word: He hasn't fully regained his pre back-surgery (Dec. 2019) form, and maybe never will. Still a solid defender, but he can't be the workhorse he once was.

Grade: C.

D Christian Djoos

Age: 26.

Stats: Two goals, four assists, minus-10 in 22 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$1 million salary cap hit.

The word: He has provided an offensive threat, which the Wings don't have much of from their defense corps, but he has also made some doozy turnovers and in general needs to improve in his own end and be more assertive.

Grade: C-plus.

F Adam Erne

Age: 25.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

Stats: Two goals, four assists, minus-2 in 18 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$997,500 salary cap hit.

The word: He's been noticeably more engaged offensively than last season, but needs to step up the physicality.

Grade: C-plus.

F Robby Fabbri

Age: 25.

Stats: Four goals, five assists, even rating in 17 games.

Status: Signed through 2021-22 at a \$2.95 million salary cap hit.

The word: He missed two weeks after testing positive for COVID before the third game of the season, but had his form back within a few games. Has adapted well to playing center, and is generally good at putting himself in a position to score.

Grade: B.

F Valteri Filppula

Age: 36.

Stats: Two goals, 3 assists, minus-four in 20 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$3 million salary cap hit.

The word: He has been used mostly on a defensive line but he has also subbed onto the top line and been on the power play, so his production really should be better. He has also struggled in his own zone. Has been a healthy scratch and through waivers.

Grade: D.

F Sam Gagner

Age: 31.

Stats: Four goals, three assists, plus-3 in 18 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$850,000 salary cap hit.

The word: He didn't score until a hat trick in his 14th game (he missed two weeks in pandemic protocol), but he has been consistently involved in scoring opportunities. He has a solid work ethic, and is a good role model for younger players in the locker room.

Grade: B.

F Luke Glendening

Age: 31.

Stats: Two goals, five assists, minus-2 in 24 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$1.8 million salary cap hit.

The word: He's won 65.2% of his faceoffs, ranking first in the NHL among players who had taken at least 350 draws. A relentless defender, he has rediscovered a knack for contributing offensively (he's two points shy of his total in 60 games last season).

Grade: B-plus.

G Thomas Greiss

Age: 35.

Stats: 1-11-3, .885 save percentage, 3.37 goals-against average in 16 games.

Status: Signed through 2021-22 at a \$3.6 million salary cap hit.

The word: He played better than the stats showed in January, but didn't handle the extra workload while Bernier was out well, and struggled throughout February. Overall, he hasn't brought the stability hoped for.

Grade: C.

F Darren Helm

Age: 34.

Stats: One goal, two assists, minus-4 in 17 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$3.85 million salary cap hit.

The word: He plays hard and is good at tracking down pucks, but there's very little offensive threat in his game, even when he's subbed into the top-six mix.

Grade: C.

D Filip Hronek

Age: 23.

Stats: 10 assists, minus-10 in 26 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$714,166 salary cap hit.

The word: The team workhorse, averaging almost 24 minutes per game and playing both special teams. Often used against the opponents top line. Has a good shot and doesn't hesitate with it.

Grade: B-minus.

F Dylan Larkin

Age: 24.

Stats: Four goals, seven assists, minus-7 in 22 games.

Status: Signed through 2022-23 at a \$6.1 million salary cap hit.

The word: Had a great start with four goals and four assists the first 10 games. Then he lost Bertuzzi as a linemate, and production slipped to three assists in 12 games. Larkin, named captain before the season, sometimes tries to do too much. He has been out since Feb. 27 with an upper-body injury, and maybe the break will be beneficial.

Grade: C-plus.

F Anthony Mantha

Age: 26.

Stats: Six goals, four assists, minus-16 in 25 games.

Status: Signed through 2023-24 at a \$5.7 million salary cap hit.

The word: He's enthralling to watch when he's engaged, but he's looked lethargic for far too much of the season, not what the Wings hoped for after signing him to a big contract in November. He needs to play more to his 6-foot-5, 234-pounds size — he's on the top line, but has only four penalty minutes.

Grade: D.

D Jon Merrill

Age: 29.

Stats: Three assists, plus-1 in 20 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$925,000 salary cap hit.

The word: A good skater and hard worker, he generally plays well in his own zone. He's another who missed two weeks in pandemic protocol.

Grade: B-minus

F Vladislav Namestnikov

Age: 28.

Stats: Four goals, four assists, minus-5 in 24 games.

Status: Signed through 2021-22 at a \$2 million salary cap hit.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

The word: He has had ample opportunities to score. He's adept as a wing or center, and plays both special teams.

Grade: B-minus.

D Patrik Nemeth

Age: 29.

Stats: One goal, two assists, minus-5 in 25 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$3 million salary cap hit.

The word: He hasn't been as physical as he was last season, and he's been prone to taking careless penalties.

Grade: C-minus.

F Frans Nielsen

Age: 36.

Stats: One goal, four assists, minus-1 in 21 games.

Status: Signed through 2021-22 at a \$5.25 million salary cap hit.

The word: Weighed against his salary, his production is dismal. But weighed against how he's been used — in a bottom six role and no power play time, he's been OK. He's done a decent job defensively, with a minus rating in only three games.

Grade: C.

F Michael Rasmussen

Age: 21.

Stats: Three assists, minus-3 in 10 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at \$894,166 salary cap hit.

The word: He needs to Watch video of his March 4 performance and play with more of that physicality on a consistent basis.

Grade: C-plus.

F Bobby Ryan

Age: 33.

Stats: Six goals, seven assists, minus-9 in 25 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 with a \$1 million salary cap hit.

The word: Scored four goals his first three games, and even when production quieted, he was noticeable in creating chances and being in position to score. He's a good influence in the locker room, and is certain to garner interest at the trade deadline. Leads the team in points.

Grade: A-minus.

F Givani Smith

Age: 23.

Stats: One goal, three assists, even rating in eight games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 with a \$714,166 salary cap hit.

The word: Not currently with the team, but has certainly made a case to be in the lineup. He plays to his size (6 feet 2, 210 pounds) and has a great compete level.

Grade: B.

D Marc Staal

Age: 34.

Stats: Two goals, two assists, minus-5 in 26 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$5.7 million salary cap hit.

The word: He's come up with a couple timely goals and largely defended well, helping stabilize the back end.

Grade: B-minus.

D Troy Stecher

Age: 26.

Stats: Four assists, minus-5 in 19 games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$3.5 million salary cap hit.

The word: He and Staal formed a nice partnership until Stecher went down with an injury Feb. 19. Stands out for his consistently high competitive level.

Grade: B-minus.

F Evgeny Svechnikov

Age: 24.

Stats: Two goals, two assists, minus-2 in four games.

Status: Signed through 2020-21 at a \$874,125 salary cap hit.

The word: He was waived before the season began, and didn't get an opportunity until Feb. 27. His place in the rebuild remains murky, but good for him to make the most of a small window.

Grade: B.

F Filip Zadina

Age: 21.

Stats: Three goals, five assists, plus-1 in 19 games.

Status: Signed through 2021-22 at a \$894,167 salary cap hit.

The word: He's still young and he needs to get stronger, but after a quiet start points-wise, he has started to produce more to the pace expected. Has done a good job adding a puck-retrieval aspect to his game.

Grade: B-plus.

Head coach Jeff Blashill and his coaching staff

Blashill and his primary assistants — defenseman and penalty kill coach Doug Houda, forwards and power play coach Dan Bylsma, and goaltending coach Jeff Salajko are all on expiring contracts. General manager Steve Yzerman likely will clean house after the season, but he has backed Blashill through two seasons, recognizing the limits of the roster. Blashill doesn't have much to work with, and injuries and the pandemic have limited the lineup, but for the most part the team works hard and competes. Special teams, especially the power play, has been a sore point, though.

Grade: C.

Detroit Free Press LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205323

Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings' Dylan Larkin returns to practice, hopeful of big second half

TED KULFAN

Detroit — As the Red Wings returned to the ice Sunday for a full practice there was one big addition to the lineup: Dylan Larkin.

Now, just because Larkin took part in Sunday's practice doesn't mean he'll be ready to play Tuesday against Tampa Bay.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

But having missed the entire four-game road trip last week nursing an upper-body injury, just seeing Larkin on the ice and participating in hockey activities was a huge step forward.

"I felt pretty good," Larkin said Sunday after practice in a Zoom chat with reporters. "It's kind of a day-to-day thing. The big thing is (Monday) and see how it feels and take it from there."

Larkin is aiming to play Tuesday, but it's not a lock.

Red Wings captain gives an assessment of Michael Rasmussen's progress playing as a center as well as his improvement skating.

"I'd say that exactly," Larkin said.

Coach Jeff Blashill wasn't sure about Larkin's availability for Tuesday, either.

"We have two days to find that out," Blashill said. "I don't anticipate one way or another right now. We'll find out as we go through it. He finished the practice today, so that's a good sign."

With the Wings reaching the halfway mark of the season after Thursday's game, Larkin is hopeful the Wings can finish strongly and put a positive spin on this season.

At 7-16-3, the Wings have the exact same record as last season, when the Wings went on to finish last in the NHL.

"We have to find a way, we've stuck together, but we have to find a way to get some wins here and some positive energy," Larkin said. "I felt it was coming, but it's hard when the team is on the road and you're at home and you're not really in the room with the guys, but I know we battle for each other and we just need some results."

The Wings had a stretch where COVID-19 protocol tore through the Wings' lineup, plus key injuries decimated their depth, and lessened the impact of free-agent and trade additions in the offseason.

"You go into a season and you see the pickups we made in the summer and, yes, you hope," Larkin said of the expectations heading into the season. "(But) we knew it would be a tough year (with COVID-19) and we were going to need everyone, guys from the taxi squad and guys from Grand Rapids and a lot of them have done a good job."

"But we need our guys, we need our team to be out there and it's been frustrating in that aspect. But we knew it would be like that and we needed to be ready for everything."

Bertuzzi 'progressing'

While Larkin and Troy Stecher (lower body) were on the ice Sunday — Stecher has missed the last seven games — there was still no Tyler Bertuzzi.

And no one really knows when Bertuzzi (upper body) will return, having missed the last 17 games.

"He's progressing, moving in the right direction, but I don't have a timeline (for a return)," Blashill said. "I would just say he's progressing."

Blashill didn't anticipate Bertuzzi would be out of the lineup as long as he has. He last played on Jan. 30.

"It's just been a longer process than what we realized and that happens sometimes with injuries," Blashill said. "So we just sit and wait until he's fully healthy and can get back at it."

Bertuzzi's absence has hurt the Wings in numerous ways.

"He's a guy who does a lot of different things," Blashill said. "When he went out he was killing penalties, he was on the power play, he was our leading scorer (five goals, seven points in nine games), he scored around the net, good defensively and he was out there at the end of games five-on-six (skaters).

"He's been a key piece for us over the years and he's a winning hockey player.

"We're missing a real good player, (but) we have to find ways to be successful without him. We're not the only team (missing players). We're not as deep as other teams, so when you miss a guy like that, it has an effect. It'll be nice to have him back, whenever that is."

Nice rest

During a congested schedule, the Wings are in the midst of four days off between games.

They had two days off the ice (Friday, Saturday), something Blashill hopes will rejuvenate the roster.

"Rest and rejuvenate, and just resetting and solidifying our structure and habits," Blashill said. "It was great, something we needed for sure. What happens during the season, and especially this season, you keep plugging along and it's hard. This gives us a chance to reset."

Detroit News LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205324

Detroit Red Wings

Farmington's Megan Keller apologizes to mom for mic'd-up hockey language

The Detroit News

Farmington's Megan Keller apologized to her mom for mic'd-up language during the Dream Gap Tour event to showcase women's hockey.

Keller, an Olympic gold medalist (2018), a four-time world champion (2015, 2016, 2017, 2019) and a top candidate to play in the 2022 Winter Games in Beijing, was featured in a video segment by Bauer Hockey at Madison Square Garden last week.

Keller, who will be back on the ice for Team New Hampshire on Sunday at the United Center in Chicago, had two assists in the mic'd-up game against Minnesota. She was also in the lineup for New Hampshire's 4-1 loss on Saturday.

In the video at Madison Square Garden, Keller says, "But let's win this (bleep) hockey game," and "No brakes here. Let's (bleep) score."

Later, on her Twitter account, Keller said, "Sorry for the bleeps mom."

The tour was started by the Professional Women's Hockey Players Association and consists of the top women's hockey players in the world.

The Dream Gap tour aims to promote the establishment of a new North American women's league, preferably in partnership with the NHL.

Detroit News LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205325

Detroit Red Wings

Red Wings' Filip Zadina: 'Shoot more and good things will happen'

Updated Mar 05, 2021; Posted Mar 05, 2021

By Ansar Khan

One bad period cost the Detroit Red Wings again on Thursday in a 5-2 loss at Carolina, their third in a row.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

But at least they got a pair of goals from someone who needs to put the puck in the net. Filip Zadina ended an 11-game drought by scoring twice from the right face-off circle, his sweet spot on the ice.

Zadina, 21, has done a better job of winning puck battles this season, but getting rewarded for his work is important. It is a much-needed confidence boost for the sixth overall pick in the 2018 draft, a key part of the club's core moving forward.

"When you're a guy who scores, confidence is a critical thing," coach Jeff Blashill said. "For those pucks to go in is important for him. Both were really good goals and hopefully he can continue to build on that.

"He's played really hard most of the season. He's done it the right way. He tries to play from the defensive side of the puck. He tries to check for his chances, and he's done a real good job of that. He's just got to stay on it."

Zadina has three goals in 19 games. He missed seven games from Jan. 22 to Feb. 3 due to COVID-19.

"I felt really good. I felt fresh," Zadina said. "Scored a couple of goals, which I'm really glad for. I didn't score for a long time and now this. I'm happy with what I did on the ice, but unfortunately, we lost, so it's kind of disappointing. We got to be better in the third period."

Zadina registered a career-high six shots on goal. He plans to be more aggressive in that regard.

"Sometimes the puck's going the way you want, and you get the puck on your stick and just feel like you want to shoot, and you see the option to shoot the puck, and that's what I did, and got to probably do that more often," Zadina said. "More focus on shooting the puck.

"I'm really glad for those goals. Hopefully, they will keep coming. Just got to shoot the puck more and good things will happen."

Bad closers

The third period has been by far the Red Wings' worst. Carolina scored three unanswered goals, including a pair just 2:05 apart, by Jordan Staal and Jesper Fast, within the first three minutes to take a 4-2 lead.

"We felt good the first two periods and then we gave up a couple chances and they scored," Zadina said. "They were going hard at us and we didn't have time probably to make the plays. They probably wanted to score goals more than us. We were sloppy the first couple minutes (of the third) and it cost us the game."

The Red Wings have been outscored 38-20 in the third period.

Overall, Blashill was pleased with his team's performance, saying it was much better than their previous two games.

"They had gotten momentum from the goal in the second (by Martin Necas at 18:45) and pushed early in the third and that's unfortunate, but your next shift you got to build back momentum," Blashill said. "I think we've done a fairly good job of that."

Calculated risk

Blashill pulled goaltender Jonathan Bernier for the extra skater with 5:15 remaining in the third. Nino Niederreiter scored into the empty net just 10 seconds later to seal the outcome.

"It was a calculated risk and I lost on the risk," Blashill said. "We don't score very easy and it was an advantageous situation for us with the icing. We ended up winning the face-off, but we got to do more with the puck there. It's a calculated risk and when those decisions end up in your net then it looks like a bad decision."

Svechnikov summit

Brothers Evgeny and Andrei Svechnikov played against each other for the first time. Andrei, the second overall pick in 2018 and a young star in the league, had a goal and an assist. Evgeny, the 19th overall pick in 2015 who is trying to establish himself in the NHL, had an assist, giving

him four points in four games (two goals, two assists) since making his Red Wings season debut on Saturday.

"(Evgeny) created a real good chance on the power play late," Blashill said. "I thought he did a solid job. I'm sure it was an emotional night. He's an emotional kid, a great person, and I'm glad he had a chance to play against his brother."

Michigan Live LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205315

Columbus Blue Jackets

Takeaways from Blue Jackets' 5-0 loss to Dallas Stars include another setback, controversial goal and 'sloppy' finish

Brian Hedger

The Dallas Stars' Joel Hanley (44), Jason Dickinson, center, and Nick Caamano, right, celebrate a goal scored by Dickinson in the first period of the Blue Jackets' 5-0 loss Saturday in Dallas. The Blue Jackets challenged the play for goaltender interference, but the goal was upheld.

Somebody stop this whirling season for the Blue Jackets.

They'd like to get off the ride, if only to regroup after a 5-0 loss to the Dallas Stars on Saturday at American Airlines Center in Dallas.

Rather than earning their first three-game winning streak, the Blue Jackets dropped back under .500 at 10-11-5 and now have 30 games left in this 56-game middle-distance race to catch the Chicago Blackhawks, who are fourth in the Central Division and six points ahead of Columbus, in one fewer game, for the final playoff spot.

"I just think we have to understand what we're up against," Blue Jackets captain Nick Foligno said. "We have to go on a run here, plain and simple. We're fighting for our playoff lives right now, so that, to me, is the urgency we need to have. Every single play matters. They just had that urgency a little bit more. (The Stars) are a team that hadn't won in a while and we should've been just as hungry."

It's a good point.

The Stars were reeling after the Blue Jackets handed them a fourth straight loss Thursday to begin a two-game series in Dallas. They'd also gone 1-8-4 since opening with a four-game winning streak and have endured a COVID-19 outbreak, the postponement of games during power outages in Texas and several key injuries.

The Blue Jackets, meanwhile, won their previous two games after a five-game winless skid that prompted questions about coach John Tortorella's job security.

General manager Jarmo Kekalainen answered those questions Tuesday by giving his coaching staff a vote of confidence, but time keeps ticking in what's been a star-crossed season to this point.

"We haven't had a lot of success here either, of late, so you know ... two (wins) is great, but we need to get on three, four, five, six in a row," Foligno said. "We have to find a better recipe for success. ... We're trending in the right direction. I just hope (this) is a good reminder to everybody how crucial every single minute of the game is in the position we're in as a team. We have to find a way to string a bunch of wins together."

Here are more takeaways:

Tough ruling

The Stars scored the first goal 2:24 into the game and soon led 2-0 because of it.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

Jason Dickinson got his stick on a rebound in the Blue Jackets' crease and shoved it under goalie Joonas Korpivalo's left pad. Tortorella challenged for goaltender interference after viewing replays and consulting with his assistants.

The overhead replay showed Dickinson's stick contact the puck inches in front of the pad and shoving both it and the goalie's leg over the goal line. That's often ruled goaltender interference, but the league upheld the goal by citing Rule 69.7, which states in part:

"In a rebound situation, or where a goalkeeper and attacking player(s) are simultaneously attempting to play a loose puck, whether inside or outside the crease, incidental contact with the goalkeeper will be permitted, and any goal that is scored as a result thereof will be allowed."

So, there we have it. Now we know.

The Blue Jackets were assessed a delay-of-game penalty and the Stars made it 2-0 on Joe Pavelski's power-play goal 45 seconds later.

"I think it's offside, but you can't see the puck (on entry into the zone)," Tortorella said.

"But if you're going to tell me that pad wasn't shoved in, and what was told to me was that it was a play on the puck and that's why it's a good goal, I just do not even comprehend that.

The puck is there, but the pad is shoved in and the puck goes in behind it. So, that's the call we make. And if it happened again, I'd make the same call."

Rough start

The Stars also pinned the Blue Jackets into their own zone for much of the first period. The Jackets finally got a push in the final 10 minutes, including a late rally, but still trailed 2-0 at the first intermission.

It was only the eighth time in the Blue Jackets' first 26 games they didn't score first.

"We get double-whacked with two goals, we're in a hole, but I still think we had a number of good forechecking shifts," Tortorella said. "I thought we played pretty well in the second period. They have two or three (scoring) chances. They score a goal. We just don't score. We can complain about the play at the beginning of the game, but we still don't score a goal to try to go against that."

Miro image

Miro Heiskanen hadn't scored a goal before these two games against the Blue Jackets. He scored one in each game off a pair of wrist shots and both sailed through traffic before beating Korpivalo.

After breaking a goal drought of two-plus games for the Stars on Thursday, Heiskanen put Dallas up 3-0 with 6:14 left in the second period Saturday. Collecting the puck off the right-wing wall, he carried to the slot and ripped a wrist shot past David Savard's block attempt – which might've screened Korpivalo.

It was a key goal for the Stars, who led by that same 3-0 margin at the second intermission.

'Sloppy' play

The third period nearly started with a spark, but Foligno couldn't convert on two great looks in front of the net.

He sent a backhand attempt off the right post on the first and followed with another backhand that Oettinger stopped with his left pad to preserve the Stars' 3-0 lead. Things quickly unraveled for the Jackets, who were penalized three times in the third and allowed goals by Roope Hintz and Radek Faksa – who scored shorthanded with 41 seconds left.

"I don't like the way we ended the game," Tortorella said. "That's what bothers me the most is I just don't like our third period. It's just a bad taste for me, how sloppy we were. Our power play, too many men on the

ice, it's just a number of players that were sloppy. We can't afford to go about it that way right now."

Columbus Dispatch LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205316 Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets looking for ways to help Patrik Laine get his offensive engine revved up

Brian Hedger

Patrik Laine had six goals and four assists in his first 15 games after joining the Blue Jackets.

Players throughout the NHL know about Patrik Laine's shot.

It's often described as a cannon – or more specifically a Howitzer – and there isn't a goalie in the world who looks forward to facing the shots Laine launches with it.

The problem, after Laine finished with no goals and just two shots in the Blue Jackets' 5-0 loss Saturday night in Dallas, is that he hasn't launched enough of those rockets to make the kind of impact he'd provided for the Winnipeg Jets in four-plus seasons.

What's the holdup?

"Well, if I could tell you the answer right now, I'd be getting a lot more shots every game," Laine said after the Jackets' morning skate Saturday. "It's not like I have zero or one shot on purpose every game. It's just not ... something's not right, right now – and (we've) just got to figure it out. And it's not all about me on our line. We have two other good players who can shoot the puck, as well. Yeah, it would be fun to shoot more pucks, but sometimes there's just not too many chances to do so."

Laine has played most often on the left wing of the top forward line with Roslovic at center and Cam Atkinson on the right wing.

Roslovic's offense dipped to one goal, one assist and two points in his previous five games before facing the Stars on Saturday, but he's racked up five goals, nine assists and 14 points in 18 games since the trade. Atkinson, meanwhile, is the hottest guy on the team with nine goals, six assists and 15 points since scoring a winning goal Feb. 4 in the Blue Jackets' 4-3 victory over the Stars in Columbus.

Laine's presence on the opposite wing has worked as a catalyst for that stretch, drawing attention away from Atkinson and Roslovic, but the trio as a whole now must figure out how to get the Howitzer some scoring chances.

Laine has finished with two-or-fewer shots in 12 of his first 16 games as a Blue Jacket, topping three shots in games on just two occasions – including a high of six Feb. 23 in the 6-5 shootout loss to the Chicago Blackhawks.

Laine had two goals, one assist and three points in that game at Nationwide Arena, showing how important it is for the Blue Jackets to help him put more shots on net. Part of the answer is simply gaining more chemistry with Roslovic and Atkinson.

"I think it helps," Laine said. "We've had kind of a tough stretch going on. Not too much offense. But we'll figure it out and we've just got to talk about it and learn from these not-so-fun experiences and just move forward."

Other fixes, as stated by coach John Tortorella this week, include Laine using his size, strength and skill more often as a power forward and attacking opposing defenders vertically rather than horizontally.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

"I'd like to see 'Patty' go with the puck more," Tortorella said, referring to Laine's 6-foot-4, 201-pound frame. "I envision him as just an unbelievably skilled power forward. I'd like to see him bring some power to his game – and that's skating with the puck, taking people on 1-on-1."

It's something the 22-year-old star has heard during previous stops in his career, from Finland to Winnipeg.

"I get it, but it's not the first time I've heard that," Laine said. "I'm just trying to do my job out there and, you know, maybe try to be that power forward who can do a lot of things on the ice. So, (it's) not something new. I don't mind it."

Being kept off the scoresheet might be a different story.

Laine tends to run a little hot when it comes to critiquing himself on a per-game basis and he hasn't scored a goal or dished out an assist in six games.

"That's what I like about him," Tortorella said. "He knows he can be better each shift. He wants to be the best player, so the situations he goes through – and I watch it on the bench, as I'm getting to know him more and more – he's going to learn. He's going to learn how to handle it. That's something we watch. That's something I think he's going to learn to navigate through and I think he will be a better player for it, as far as going through the process."

Columbus Dispatch LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205317 Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets fall flat in bid for third straight win, lose 5-0 in Dallas after rough start

Brian Hedger

The start was a problem and things didn't get much better for the Blue Jackets on Saturday night.

The Dallas Stars scored the game's first goal 2:24 after the opening face-off, made it 2-0 just 45 seconds later on a power play that followed a failed coach's challenge and the Blue Jackets never recovered in a 5-0 loss at American Airlines Center.

"I don't like the way we finished the game," Blue Jackets coach John Tortorella said. "I think we got sloppy ... but a number of minutes in the first period and then in the second period, I thought we had some good minutes. We don't score. They do."

The Stars netted three more goals after racing out to their 2-0 lead, including one in the second period and two more in the third to end a four-game losing streak.

Dickinson, Joe Pavelski, Miro Heiskanen, Roope Hintz and Radek Faksa scored the goals for Dallas, which helped rookie Jake Oettinger, 22, record his first NHL shutout with 21 saves.

Dickinson's goal was the tipping point of a frustrating night for the Blue Jackets, who started with goalie Joonas Korpisalo for the seventh straight game and finished with rookie goalie Veini Vehvilainen making his NHL debut in mop-up duty.

That was long after Dickinson scored during a scramble in the Blue Jackets' crease. The Stars forward got his stick on the puck and shoved it into the net under Korpisalo's pad, but Tortorella challenged for goaltender interference.

His argument was based upon an overhead view on replay that showed Dickinson shove the puck and Korpisalo's left pad over the goal line.

"In my mind, it's no question that should be called back," Tortorella said. "I think it's offside (too), but you can't see the puck (on entry), so we (passed) by that. But if you're going to tell me that pad wasn't shoved in – and what was told to me was that it was a play on the puck and that's why it's a good goal – I just do not even comprehend that."

The goal was upheld citing a rule that "incidental contact in the crease" is allowed while scrambling for rebounds. The resulting penalty put the Stars on a power play for delay-of-game Pavelski quickly turned it into a 2-0 lead by shoveling a backhand shot through Korpisalo's skates from the low slot.

It was all downhill from there for the Blue Jackets (10-11-5).

Heiskanen made them pay for failing to cut into the Stars' 2-0 lead on multiple scoring chances, making it 3-0 with 6:14 left in the second period, and Dallas pushed it to 5-0 in the third on goals by Hintz and Faksa – who scored shorthanded against Vehvilainen with 41 seconds left.

Vehvilainen made three saves on the four shots he faced, while the Blue Jackets finished the game 0 for 3 on power plays. They also failed to capitalize on a number good scoring chances, including captain Nick Foligno sending a backhand off the right post just 54 seconds into the third and then backhanding the rebound into Oettinger's left pad.

It was that kind of night.

now in fifth place of the Central Division and trail the Chicago Blackhawks by six points for the final playoff spot with 30 games left.

"I thought we played some good minutes," Foligno said. "(We) just did not get the result of finishing chances when we had 'em. I hit the post on one, we have some (other) good opportunities, some good chances. We have to find ways to bury it. I mean, it's a 5-0 game, so regardless of what we want to say (about the coach's challenge), we didn't score a goal to win the game anyway. We have to find a way to get successful in here. It's crunch time."

Columbus Dispatch LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205318 Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets have issues, but recent defensive improvements are a reason for optimism

Brian Hedger

In recent wins against Detroit and at Dallas on Thursday, the Blue Jackets and goaltender Joonas Korpisalo (70) have returned to playing the kind of sticky defensive hockey that has defined them in recent seasons.

The past couple of weeks for the Blue Jackets were defined by an ugly losing streak and speculation that a coaching change might be looming.

A 1-5-2 stretch dropped Columbus below the threshold for playoff contention in the NHL's Central Division and brought whispers that coach John Tortorella might be on his way out.

But one area of the Jackets' game has resurfaced this week, in time to show they still have a pulse.

Their defensive rigidity is back.

"We're talking a lot about that," said Tortorella, who received a vote of confidence Tuesday from general manager Jarmo Kekalainen. "We truly don't have an identity. It's something we're trying to work on."

"(But) if you're going to have any chance consistently in this league, you're going to have to defend. We've improved. We need to get better."



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

They already have, at least based on the number of defensive miscues and missed assignments in the past five games. Glaring mistakes in their own zone have reduced considerably, goalie Joonas Korpisalo's play has improved and the Blue Jackets have again made it difficult for opponents to put the puck in their net.

"We feed off each other," said Korpisalo, who has only allowed nine goals in the past five games. "(Our defensemen), they make great plays and we're just building that confidence between us. That's what teamwork is ... work together for a common goal."

Not long ago, things were quite different.

Missed coverages allowed open looks and easy tap-in goals. Rebounds weren't cleared and became goals far too often. Shots tipped from all over the zone fluttered or bounced past Korpisalo and Elvis Merzlikins with regularity.

In other words, the Jackets were a defensive mess.

Such play was a shocking detour from the kind of stout defensive hockey that helped the Blue Jackets qualify for the playoffs the past four seasons. So, they're fixing it, even while other parts of the game — such as puck possession and exiting the defensive zone — remain sore spots.

"I think we're better positioned," Tortorella said Thursday after the Blue Jackets edged the Dallas Stars 3-2 for their second straight victory. "I think prior to this game here, against Detroit (on Tuesday), we didn't give up much ... but that's a wounded hockey club we were playing. (Thursday) was a bigger test for us. This is a really good hockey club we played."

The Stars are wounded too, after being ravaged by COVID-19 during training camp and then having multiple home games postponed by an ice storm that caused an energy crisis in large swaths of Texas.

Their loss Thursday pushed a losing streak to four games and they are just 2-8-2 since opening the season with a four-game winning streak. But Tortorella's point remains.

The Red Wings have a lot less talent, again contending for the dishonor of being the NHL's worst team. Dallas played in the Stanley Cup final last summer and gave the Blue Jackets problems with a relentless forecheck during games Feb. 2-4 in Columbus.

Those two games were split, but left a vivid impression of how dominant the Stars can be when they're clicking.

Dallas won the possession battle again Thursday, generating a slight edge in scoring chances, but the Blue Jackets fended off enough to win. They also frustrated the Stars by breaking up plays with their sticks and bodies, didn't allow Joe Pavelski to easily tip shots and cleared a lot of rebounds out of dangerous areas.

"I thought we got back (to) forechecking and for the most part I think we played a really good game," Tortorella said. "(We) defended really well. Killed some penalties. So, that's a good, solid win for us."

The teams conclude their latest two-game set Saturday night in Dallas.

Injury updates

The Blue Jackets received good news on the injury front this week, after goalie Merzlikins (upper body) and forward Gustav Nyquist (shoulder) practiced Wednesday in Columbus.

It was the first practice this season for Nyquist, who underwent surgery Nov. 3 and was given a timeline of five to six months for a full recovery. It was the first practice for Merzlikins since he was injured while making an acrobatic save in a 4-2 loss to Nashville on Feb. 20 in Columbus.

Both remain on injured reserve, but Merzlikins traveled to Dallas to continue working with goalie coach Manny Legace.

Columbus Dispatch LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205319

Columbus Blue Jackets

Blue Jackets Sunday Gathering: Seeking a center, adding power to Patrik Laine's game

By Aaron Portzline Mar 7, 2021

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A collection of notes, insights, ruminations and did-you-knows? gathered throughout the week that was for the Blue Jackets:

Item #1: Kekalainen "hunting" a center

It's been six weeks since the Blue Jackets traded disgruntled center Pierre-Luc Dubois to Winnipeg. It was surmised then and remains true today that general manager Jarmo Kekalainen worked a very good trade under the circumstances, landing forwards Patrik Laine and Jack Roslovic in the deal.

But the organization's resentment toward Dubois is going to linger for years, and so could the ramifications of the trade.

Laine gives the Blue Jackets a sharpshooter, the likes of which this organization has never seen. Roslovic has already made an offensive impact, and he should only become more effective when his game gets some polish and awareness.

But from the moment the Blue Jackets traded Dubois, they were back in the market for a No. 1 center, which is a familiar spot historically for this franchise.

"It's a challenge because they're just not available," Kekalainen said this week. "You usually have to draft and develop one. We did that well with one player (Dubois), and now he's not here.

"Now we have to get back into our hunt, finding a centerman either through the draft or through a trade. They aren't available very often. There could be some available in the free agent market next summer."

One of the many failings during Doug MacLean's time as GM in Columbus was his inability to land a top center to play with Rick Nash.

MacLean's successor, Scott Howson, beefed up the position with Nash's trade to the New York Rangers in 2013, which brought Brandon Dubinsky and Artem Anisimov to Columbus. One year later Ryan Johansen slotted ahead of those two, and that's the strongest the Blue Jackets have ever been down the middle.

Kekalainen has learned some tough lessons about the importance of strong center play, but it was hoped that drafting Dubois No. 3 overall in 2016 would give the Blue Jackets a bona fide No. 1 for the next 10-15 years.

But they couldn't keep him. This past offseason, Kekalainen must have been tipped off that an offer sheet was coming for Dubois, a restricted free agent. He traded defenseman Ryan Murray and Markus Nutivaara in bargain deals on the eve of free agency to shed salary and prepare to match any offer.

It's important to realize that Dubois' willingness (desire?) to sign an offer sheet may have been the first sign that he wasn't content in Columbus. The Jackets survived that threat, but then weeks later Dubois requested a trade. You know what happened next.

"I can assure you we understand the importance of the center-ice position," Kekalainen said. "That's why we did a lot of the moves we did in the offseason, and it hasn't exactly gone as planned, I can assure you.

"We'll keep searching and doing our job and building a team. We have some very good potential center ice men growing into that role within our



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

team. But we're also going to look for ways to strengthen that position from the outside."

That's quite an admission by Kekalainen, who rarely calls his shot or puts even some of his cards on the table. And it says something about the current centers on the roster, doesn't it?

The Blue Jackets are high on Alexandre Texier, and they've been mostly pleased with Roslovic's play since the trade. Max Domi is currently playing on the wing — and not particularly well — but there's hope that he'll figure it out and return to the middle eventually.

Kekalainen's acknowledgement that he's looking outside the organization is not exactly a ringing endorsement of these three players, however. Or at least it means he doesn't think the Blue Jackets can wait for them to figure it out on both ends of the ice.

As Kekalainen noted, there are three ways to acquire a top center: trade, draft or free agency. Of the three, a trade is not only the most likely, but the most expedient. Let's look at all three possibilities:

Draft

We referenced The Athletic's Top 100 NHL players, published earlier this year, and pulled the top 20 centers out of the list. They are, alphabetically: Sebastian Aho, Aleksander Barkov, Mathew Barzal, Patrice Bergeron, Sean Couturier, Sidney Crosby, Pierre-Luc Dubois, Leon Draisaitl, Jack Eichel, Dylan Larkin, Nathan MacKinnon, Evgeni Malkin, Auston Matthews, Connor McDavid, Ryan O'Reilly, Elias Pettersson, Brayden Point, Mark Scheifele, John Tavares, Mika Zibanejad.

There are two truths that jump off the page.

First, that these players are most likely plucked not only in the first round of the draft, but within the top 10 picks of the draft. Five were No. 1 overall picks, 10 were drafted either 1, 2, or 3 overall, and 14 of the 20 were drafted among the top 10.

Second, these players rarely move. Sixteen of the 20 are still with the club that drafted them. Dubois, O'Reilly and Zibanejad were traded, while Tavares is the only one to sign elsewhere as a free agent.

Sure, the Blue Jackets could strike gold in the middle of the first round or in the second. The Islanders took Barzal at No. 16, the Bruins landed Bergeron at No. 45 and the Lightning stole Point at No. 79.

But the best chance to land a difference-making center via the draft is very early in the first round. And we all know what kind of season a franchise must endure to land one of those picks.

Free agency

Good luck with this.

The Blue Jackets haven't had much luck getting top free agents to look their way, but that's only half the battle. As noted above, big-time centers typically sign long-term contracts and rarely hit the market in their prime.

It was slim-pickings last summer, which is why the Blue Jackets went looking for a center (Domi) via trade when they were resigned to trading Anderson.

It's only marginally better looking ahead to this summer.

Edmonton's Ryan Nugent-Hopkins and Montreal's Phillip Danault can both become unrestricted free agents after this season. They would both make dramatic improvements to the Blue Jackets' roster, but are probably best seen as No. 2 centers.

One other thought about the Blue Jackets and free agency in 2022: with Laine due for a new contract — he will not come cheap, right? — and defenseman Seth Jones able to sign an extension, the Blue Jackets could be looking at two contracts that combined approach \$20 million.

We all know the oldest joke about free agency, right? It isn't free. To the contrary, it's extremely expensive when you're talking top-six difference-makers.

Trade

Kekalainen is certainly not afraid to make big trades. Marian Gaborik, Brandon Saad, Artemi Panarin, Matt Duchene and Laine are among his acquisitions since he was hired to replace Howson in 2013.

He was hired as a "drafting" GM. But, really, it's big trades that have been the constant theme of his tenure in Columbus.

With that in mind, there's no doubt he'd be willing to put together a massive package of players, prospects and picks if it meant landing a young, No. 1 center with term remaining on his contract.

But is he able?

The Blue Jackets don't have a deep prospect pool. They have intriguing prospects playing in Russia, but none of them on the cusp of making a big splash in the NHL next season.

Kekalainen can't keep trading No. 1 picks, right? They've had only two first-round picks over the last four drafts, and that has a way of catching up to a franchise.

Detroit, Nashville and Buffalo are the NHL clubs that have already sent smoke signals across the league that they're open for business, willing to trade aggressively. The list will grow, of course, as the season moves along. It reaches the midway point for most teams this week.

The Jackets don't likely want anything Nashville is selling. They already traded Ryan Johansen and opted not to re-sign Matt Duchene after seeing his two-way game late in the 2018-19 season and playoffs.

But Buffalo (Eichel) and Detroit (Larkin) are intriguing, though.

The price for Eichel would be astronomical. The price for Larkin wouldn't be nearly that high. In both trades, the Blue Jackets would almost certainly have to start with defenseman Zach Werenski, as that's a desperate need on the Sabres' and Red Wings' roster.

Item #2: Laine ... a power forward?

Laine is 6-foot-5, 205 pounds, making him one of the larger forwards in the NHL. But his size belies his game. He doesn't play as a power forward, but rather as a sharpshooter, owner of one of the biggest shots in the game.

Blue Jackets coach John Tortorella is trying to change that.

"I'd like to see Patty go with the puck more," Tortorella said. "I envision him as an unbelievably skilled power forward. I'd like to see him bring some power into his game, and that's skating with the puck, taking people on one-on-one.

"Sometimes he wants to distribute the puck. He's very good at it. I'd like to see him bring the power part of his game into it."

It can be tricky judging body language, but Laine didn't exactly seem enthralled with the idea when told of Tortorella's comment on Saturday. At best, he looked like a guy who'd heard the message too many times.

Winnipeg coach Paul Maurice tried to shape Laine into a more physical player, too, with only moderate results.

"Yeah, I think that's kind of the way a lot of guys want me to play," Laine said. "I know I can do more as well. Big body, try to use it. I don't mind it. It's been brought up a couple of times. It's not new.

"I get it. It's not the first time I've heard that. Just try to do my job out there and maybe try to be that power forward. I can do a lot of things on the ice. So, yeah, not something new."

It's always interesting to watch the dynamic between a coach with a strong presence and a player with star power.



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

In 2006, when Ken Hitchcock was hired to take over the Blue Jackets, one of the first moves he made was to put goal-scoring machine Rick Nash on the penalty kill.

The idea, Hitchcock explained, was to make Nash a more well-rounded player and to give him a way to measure his performance each night other than whether or not he scored a goal. It worked. Nash has often credited Hitchcock for teaching him how to play a two-way game.

It's important to note that Nash was receptive to the new approach. Time will tell with Laine, who is currently mired in a six-game stretch without a point, tied for the second longest of his career.

"I don't know (Laine's) full game," Tortorella said. "We've had discussions. Like he said when he first got here and scored a couple of goals, he said 'That's how I make my paycheck. I'm pretty good at it.' He is pretty good at it, but I think there's another level to his game that he's able to get to. He has a chance to be just a terrific player. He's still a very young man.

"He has a chance to be one of those guys who's not just a really good player himself, but makes people around him better. Distributing the puck, carrying the puck, bringing people to him, taking people on ... it's part of the evolution of him as he keeps on growing as a player. He has a great opportunity and skill set and body to be able to do a lot of different things at that forward position."

Stay tuned on this one.

The week ahead

Tuesday: vs. Florida, 7 p.m.

Thursday: vs. Florida, 7 p.m.

Saturday: vs. Dallas, 5 p.m.

Snacks

Is Max Domi the next Alex Galchenyuk? Where did his game go? Earlier this season, Tortorella moved Domi from center to wing — even though the Blue Jackets are desperate for a veteran center — because he couldn't handle the two-way responsibilities of the position. On Saturday he opted not to play Domi in a game where the Blue Jackets were desperate for goals. Domi was brought to Columbus in the Josh Anderson trade to play center and provide offense. So far he's 0-for-2.

Prospect forward Trey Fix-Wolansky had a humbling first season in the American Hockey League in 2019-20. He went from an explosive junior career — 37-65-102 in 65 games with the Edmonton Oil Kings of the Western Hockey League — to making a more modest impact in his first year as a pro. He finished strong to get to 12-14-26 in 43 games with AHL Cleveland. This season, though, Fix-Wolansky seems to have it figured out. He has 4-5-9 in eight games with the Monsters, with all four goals coming on the power play.

Prospect forward Tyler Angle, a seventh-round pick (No. 212) in 2019, has scored a goal in each of his first two pro games. He scored both Friday and Saturday in the Monsters' sweep of Chicago.

The Athletic LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205411 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Flames plagued by inconsistent play again in loss to Senators

Eric Francis

March 8, 2021, 2:29 AM

You could see it in Mark Giordano's strides as he successfully chased down a player 15 years younger on an overtime breakaway.

You could see it in the diving leg save made by Juuso Valimaki late in a 3-3 game.

Unmistakable signs of desperation.

Finally, after two periods.

It was almost as if players started hearing reports that a combine driven by an infuriated farmer was spotted racing south on Hwy 2.

Darryl Sutter's actual arrival at the Dome is slated for Tuesday's practice, at which time nothing can be done about the Flames' 4-3 shootout loss to the Ottawa Senators on Sunday night.

Remaining Time -2:05

Why Flames needed to play with more desperation in loss to Senators

However, you can bet the latest in a season of inconsistent outings will be brought up by the 62-year-old holding the straight-bladed Sher-Wood.

"That's the tough part — you want to see that all the time," acting coach Ryan Huska said of the team's inspiring third period play, which erased a 3-1 deficit.

"There were a lot of good showings from a lot of different players (in the third), but at this time of year you can't just be talking about one good period."

But we are. Again.

And that's why Geoff Ward was fired Thursday, to be replaced by Sutter on Tuesday, following two more losses and an odd handful of days without him courtesy of COVID-19 protocol.

As Calgary's third loss to last-place Ottawa illustrated, the Jolly Rancher can't get here quick enough to try saving a season rapidly getting away from the Flames.

"Obviously it's a unique situation when you have a coach who's not there, but we're trying to control what we can," said Noah Hanifin, whose second goal in as many games completed an emotional comeback with eight minutes left in a final frame in which the Flames enjoyed a 16-3 shot advantage.

Remaining Time -0:55

Flames excited Sutter can help team get in right direction

"Obviously he demands success and everywhere he's went he's won. That's something we're looking forward to having in our locker room. I'm excited to see what he brings and what he expects from us. It's going to be good for our team."

As part of the team's precipitous drop in emotion and intensity from Saturday's 3-2 loss in Edmonton, the Flames failed on three first-period power plays in a game led 2-0 by Ottawa after one.

Zac Rinaldo's fight with Austin Watson injected some life into the Flames, who scored soon thereafter when Giordano's point blast tipped off a defender's skate and found its way through traffic.

Jacob Markstrom made several big saves in the second but surrendered a goal to Colin White, setting up a third in which Johnny Gaudreau's power play goal (the only conversion in eight tries) kick-started the comeback completed by Hanifin.

"Marky stops two breakaways in the second that help us get the point, but we've got to find a way to get two," said Giordano, who tracked down Drake Batherson in overtime to help send the game into a shootout eventually won by the 22-year-old Senators sensation.

Remaining Time -0:50



CAROLINA HURRICANES

NEWS CLIPPINGS • March 8, 2021

Valimaki bails out Markstrom with game-saving stop on Brown late in third period

"It stings right now — we know how important every point is. In the third we had a great push, but we've got to find a way to come out with two points. The effort is there and guys' hearts are in the right place. But the desperation really has to be from the drop of the puck."

Valimaki helped preserve the lone point late in the third after Markstrom misplayed a puck behind the net that squirted out to a wide-open Connor Brown, whose shot at the empty net was stopped by the diving defenceman, earning a hug from his netminder.

However, after Matthew Tkachuk and Tim Stutzle traded goals in the shootout, Batherson cast another pall over the Flames' season with the winner as Ottawa's fourth shooter.

We'll start to find out Thursday, when Montreal comes to town, if Sutter's arrival has come too late.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 03.08.2021

1205412 Websites

Sportsnet.ca / Coyne Schofield on fire, Roque steals show again on Secret Dream Gap Tour

Marisa Ingemi March 7, 2021, 3:28 PM

The Professional Women's Hockey Players Association continued the second edition of the Secret Dream Gap Tour this weekend with two stops in Chicago.

New Hampshire stopped Minnesota from earning the extra standings point with a shutout by scoring with 10 seconds left in the Saturday game, making it just a two-point affair. Minnesota itself was a mere extra Abby Roque goal away from doubling up on a hat trick and a five-point afternoon.

That was Saturday's 4-1 win for Minnesota at the United Center, the home of the Chicago Blackhawks and the first women's professional game at the venue.

On Sunday, Minnesota defeated New Hampshire again, this time 6-2, at Fifth Third Bank Arena, also in Chicago, to conclude the two-weekend start of the tour. The five-plus goals also earned them another standings point, putting them at eight to the two for New Hampshire.

Some new takeaways this week with more data to pull from, but the same general feel was the dominant players remained dominant and the young guns for Team USA are going to be a whole lot of fun to watch these next few years.

International Women's Day

In the week leading up to International Women's Day on March 8, Sportsnet is celebrating women in sport who chose to challenge.

Key takeaways

Nicole Hensley played one of her sharpest games since the last Olympics on Saturday, shutting down New Hampshire until the final 10 seconds.

That didn't get her team the extra point in the shootout, but in the long-term, those who want to see Hensley make a push to start in Beijing have to be pretty happy with the performance.

In two games played over the last two weekends, she has two wins and a .953 save percentage.

Annie Pankowski was left off the worlds roster and is trying to battle her way back into good standing with the Team USA program, so these games against some of her would-be teammates matter a lot.

On Saturday, she opened up with a terrific scoring chance and nabbed an assist on Roque's second goal. Nothing world-changing, but a solid showing.

There was some fun new chemistry throughout as well. Roque worked with a bunch of players, but seemed to shine particularly with Ryleigh Houston and Samantha Donovan.

Kendall Coyne Schofield and Hilary Knight weren't together the whole time, but when they were, they stood out.

Gigi Marvin and Alexa Gruschow, former NWHL rivals, also worked well together, especially in the defensive end.

Gruschow, a former NWHL MVP, hadn't netted a point until Sunday, the fourth game of the Secret Dream Gap Tour, but her defensive game has been eye-opening in general. Certainly a sleeper standout over the past two weeks.

It was another Abby Roque show.

What's there to say that hasn't been said? Roque's been far and away the standout of the tour, making an even stronger case for a bigger role come Olympics time.

She was already projected to be one of the new young stars with Team USA in Beijing, but the more we see of her, the more clear it is she's going to be a game-changer on the national stage.

She added another assist on Sunday to have 10 points over the four games.

Coyne Schofield also stood out, surprise, surprise. She's on a four-game goal-scoring streak to open the Secret Dream Gap Tour, picking up a tally in each game.

The defenders in action for Minnesota deserve some kudos as well. Known as Team Adidas, the group had just four defenders available to them. One of them, Maddie Rolfes, tallied on Saturday afternoon in place of Jacquie Greco.

That's some serious minute-eating, though, asked of that group and they showed up.

What's next

There's nothing officially scheduled next for the Secret Dream Gap Tour, but with worlds in May, there's not much time left for more events.

They do have a partnership with the Toronto Maple Leafs, and Montreal just announced a new sponsor for their hub team, so a Canadian event could be on the horizon for what could be a short tour season.

Sportsnet.ca LOADED: 03.08.2021