



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*Saturday, March 16, 2013*

## **Regier takes long view on Grigorenko's demotion**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

March 16, 2013

Darcy Regier got to know Mikhail Grigorenko the past three months as a player and person. The Sabres' general manager believes Grigorenko will grow into a top-line center who will shine in Buffalo.

The 18-year-old isn't ready to do that now, however.

The Sabres sent their top prospect back to the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League on Friday, temporarily ending his NHL stay after 22 mostly uneventful games.

"There's been benefits for us," Regier said in First Niagara Center. "There's benefits for him. We got to know his game. He got to know us. He has a very good understanding of what he needs to do, and he gets to go back and he's going to have the opportunity to practice and work on those things."

Grigorenko had one goal and five points while averaging just 9:44 of ice time. He impressed the Sabres during a brief training camp after putting up 29 goals and 50 points in 32 games with the Quebec Remparts. The junior team has one regular-season game remaining before starting the playoffs.

"It is big news and a big surprise for us," a Remparts spokesman said by phone.

Regier expects the 12th overall pick in the 2012 draft to resume his role as the Remparts' go-to guy.

"At some point in his NHL career, that's what we're going to expect here out of him, but it's not fair to look for that out of an 18-year-old," Regier said. "He surprised all of us by being here for the length of time he has been here. Depending on how far they go in the playoffs, he will return here at the end of the season."

T.J. Brennan also departed Friday as the Sabres shipped the defenseman to Florida for a fifth-round pick in this June's draft. Brennan's hot start in Rochester didn't translate to Buffalo, as the Amerks' leading scorer during the lockout had just one goal in 10 games with the Sabres.

Brennan, 23, was usually Buffalo's seventh or eighth defenseman, but the team figured he would not clear waivers to return to Rochester. He had 14 goals and 35 points in 36 games with the Amerks. The Sabres picked him in the second round in 2007.

"We weren't able to get him in our lineup," Regier told the Rochester Democrat and Chronicle while watching the Amerks host Albany. "Obviously, if somebody's prepared to pay a draft pick, he wasn't going to clear waivers."

The oft-traveled draft pick acquired by the Sabres originally belonged to the New Jersey Devils and was sent to Los Angeles before going to the Panthers.

Like Brennan, Grigorenko's role with the Sabres has been miniscule since Feb. 9. He topped 10 minutes of ice time just twice in 11 games and was scratched five times. He'd been relegated to a fourth-line role and played just 4:51 against the New York Rangers on Tuesday.

It's not what the Sabres hoped for after they decided to keep the Russian rookie past his five-game tryout and use up the initial year of his entry-level contract.

"Really it was about whether or not he was going to be able to get his minutes up to a level where he could continue the development," Regier said. "What drove the decision was we really were using him in a fourth line-type role where we were hoping to get him in to create some offense. But his minutes really probably topped out at 10 minutes, and in the end he's got an opportunity to go back to Quebec and be the go-to guy."

The Sabres, who host the Ottawa Senators this afternoon, are near the bottom of the NHL. It's created a thought process that maybe they should use Grigorenko and other young players extensively to get them used to the league.

"The bind you get into is it's a team game, it's a team sport," Regier said. "You can only go so far to give the individual something at the expense of the rest of the team. ... A teammate recognizes whether someone is gratuitously given something or has earned it, and you need to keep the team concept in place."

While hesitant to call the decision to start the year with Grigorenko an "experiment," Regier admitted he wasn't sure how things would turn out. Though Grigorenko failed to establish himself or last the entire season, the GM doesn't view it as a failed experiment.

"You can view these things as an accumulation of knowledge and skills," Regier said, "and utilizing what you've learned to take to the junior and build on that and then come back here at some point. It's all about the mind-set and the perspective that individual holds versus being a victim, which is largely about, 'I can't believe this happened to me.'"

"Based on my conversations with him, I think this has been a very good thing because I think he's got a very good mind-set."

Based on the Sabres' spot in the standings, Grigorenko won't be the last player to depart (or arrive) in Buffalo. But Regier says not to expect widespread change.

"I'm not in a blow-it-up mind-set," he said. "Blowing up to me means blowing up, nothing left. No, I'm not in that mind-set, but I am in the mind-set that organizationally we have to find a way in order to win a championship to acquire more top players."

The trade deadline is April 3, and the NHL's general managers will gather Wednesday in Toronto for their annual meetings.

“There are a lot of calls to try and get a sense of what the market is and what the cost is going to be, so the activity is going to pick up,” Regier said. “Our focus, it’s not just about the playoffs. It’s about the ability to win a championship with the group of players you have, so that extends beyond this season.”

## **Sabres notebook: Leino finally set to go this afternoon**

By John Vogl

Buffalo News

March 15, 2013

For the first time in 11 months, Ville Leino gets to play hockey.

The Buffalo forward is set to make his season debut this afternoon when the Sabres host the Ottawa Senators. Leino has been sidelined by a hip ailment that may still need surgery during the offseason, but he's ready to go after a couple of false starts.

"It's been really annoying, a lot of frustration," he said in First Niagara Center. "It's been a tough time, but hopefully now it pays off."

Leino is expected to leap into a prominent role. The right winger practiced Friday on the second line with center Tyler Ennis and left wing Steve Ott. He also worked on a power-play unit for the second straight day.

"He can offer us a lot," interim coach Ron Rolston said. "It looks like his energy's good. He's skating well out there. His vision, his puck skills and the things he can do offensively will certainly help.

"It's his job now that he's ready to go to get in and be in a leadership role. He's a veteran player, to make sure he's out there setting the tone and working hard and showing people that the ethic is there and he wants people to follow.

"It's not coming back to save the day. It's just to come back and build, build confidence and just start playing the right way and helping our team be successful."

The 29-year-old struggled in his debut season with Buffalo, recording just eight goals and 25 points in 71 games. He was eager for a fresh start during training camp, but the start got delayed by the lockout and injury.

"I'll just try to keep it simple and try to play my hockey," Leino said. "We definitely need to be better. It's not like one man is going to change anything. We all know that. We need everybody."

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The Sabres cleared a roster spot for Leino by sending rookie Mikhail Grigorenko back to the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. Their other main options were to send Marcus Foligno or Brian Flynn back to Rochester, but both have been producing lately.

Foligno scored twice in Tuesday's 3-1 victory over the New York Rangers. Flynn, the last call-up, has a three-game point streak. Flynn has two goals and three points in his first six NHL games.

“He’s gotten better every game,” Rolston said. “He’s played exceptionally well for us.”

The Sabres hope Foligno, who had just one goal in the opening 25 games, learned from his successful outing.

“His ability to get two goals last game where before his offense wasn’t created the way he created them the other night, and that was just hard, getting to the net and getting those second opportunities,” Rolston said. “He kind of went back to the game he was playing at the end of last year to get them. Sometimes it’s just finding the way you’re supposed to be playing and then continuing to work hard and focusing on, ‘Am I getting scoring chances? If I am, I’ve just got to keep doing those things over and over, and I’ll get those opportunities.’ ”

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Construction has begun on HarborCenter in front of the arena, and the work has resulted in road closings that will disrupt regular traffic routes. Washington Street is closed between Scott and Perry streets, while Perry is closed between Main and Illinois.

## **Sabres Assign Grigorenko to Quebec**

By Greg Bauch & Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

March 15, 2013

Buffalo, NY (WGR 550) -- With Tyler Ennis and Ville Leino both healthy enough to play, the Sabres needed to clear a spot on their roster. They did so on Friday by assigning rookie Mikhail Grigorenko to his junior team in Quebec, the Quebec Remparts.

Grigorenko has picked up 5 points in 22 games in his first NHL action, including one goal.

Darcy Regier did not view this as a setback to Grigorenko, "No, I view this as an opportunity for him to keep growing, building on his experience here, building on the start in the Quebec League. He had a terrific World Junior Tournament and he surprised all of us by being here for the length of time he had been here and depending on how far they go in the playoffs, he will return here after the season."

When Grigorenko made the team they thought he would play more. Regier said, "First playing, we wanted to give him an opportunity to see whether or not he could get his minutes up to a level where he could continue the development. What drove the decision was we were really using him in a fourth line type roll where we were hoping to get him in to create some offense, but his minutes topped out at 10 minutes and in the end, he's got an opportunity go back to Quebec, be the go to guy, play 20-22 minutes."

Many think having the kid here was a waste. Regier is not one of them, "There's benefits for him, we got to know his game, he got to know us, he's got a very good understanding of what he needs to do and he gets to go back and have the opportunity to practice that."

As far as if he thought Grigorenko was more NHL ready Regier said, "I wasn't sure. You can't be sure until you get them in the environment. "

Many fans felt Grigorenko should've been thrown out there with the Sabres best players and put on the power play, even though it was obvious he wasn't ready. Regier said, "The bind you get into is it's a team game, it's a team sport and you can only go so far to give the individual something at the expense of the rest of the team. A teammate recognizes whether someone is gratuitously given something or has earned it and you need to keep the team concept in place."

Regier said this would've happened even if they didn't have to make a roster move.

Leino hasn't played yet this season as he has suffered through a hip injury. Ennis missed a game after being checked into the boards but, he did not suffer a concussion on the play.

The Sabres host Ottawa on Saturday afternoon at 3. The WGR 550 pregame will begin at 2.

## **Sabres finish their three day break from games**

By Paul Hamilton

Buffalo News

March 15, 2013

WGR 550 (WGR 550) -- The Sabres had three days to first rest and then get to work on their game.

Ron Rolston tends to work on themes and they can change for each game. This week it's been not losing momentum in games, especially on the power play, "That's been the importance on the focus of our power play is the ability to keep momentum whether you score or not. It's all the little small things within the game we try to keep continuing to hit with our players because we want to become a smarter team and that's one way right there, just being able to understand the momentum of games and how to control that and just the situations in a game." Rolston added, "We stuck with as many themes as we could at practice because you're dealing with probably 45 minutes to an hour out there, so if you're concentrating on something, it's going to be one thing. We've really stayed close to the same theme and then we've built off of that and lately we've added the power play stuff as more of a focal point."

Speaking of the power play, Ville Leino will play his first game of the season Saturday as he returns from a hip problem. Rolston is going to use him on the power play, "He has a lot of poise, he's got really good vision and he can make plays in small areas. He does a good job of hunting pucks down and retrieving and getting them back with his stick and entries, he has the ability through the neutral zone to make the right play or even to get it deep or make a small area play to get us into the zone."

The Sabres didn't waive anybody by noon so to activate Leino, they will have to send Marcus Foligno or Brian Flynn to Rochester or send Mikhail Grigorenko back to junior. "College coaches will realize that these junior players are getting preferred training both on and off the ice," Peca said. "So they know they're getting great hockey players and dedicated athletes."

- Helping the Sabres attract NHL free agents.

"As a player, when you're on the road, you go into a facility and say, 'This is really cool,'" Peca said, referring to his playing days. "When you're up for free agency, you think about that, and it might be the first place you want to play."



## **Sports woes offset by our civic renewal**

By Donn Esmonde

Buffalo News

March 15, 2013

Thank goodness for reality. The progress on our civic landscape is taking our minds off of the grim distraction of our pro sports teams.

Usually it is the other way around. Sports are entertainment, the diversion from the routine of daily life. When the Bills and Sabres are winning, it distracts us from the reality of a region that for years has bled jobs and people.

Welcome to role reversal.

A brightening civic picture is thankfully taking our minds off of the dim reality of the Bills and Sabres. The downtown waterfront is developing, Construction cranes abound at the Buffalo Niagara Medical Campus. Downtown is being repopulated. The outer harbor has, after half a century, been pried from the stranglehold of the Transportation Authority.

You know it makes me wanna shout. Which is more than I can say for the state of our sporting diversions.

I have lived here for more than 30 years. But I can't remember the concurrent Bills/Sabres situation ever looking this dismal. The Bills have not won a playoff game in 17 seasons. The Sabres have not taken a playoff series since 2007, and they look awful this year.

There is no excuse in pro sports for prolonged failure. Although NFL and NHL teams are owned by capitalists, the leagues' structures are decidedly socialist. A cap on player salaries largely prohibits bigger-city, deeper-pocketed owners from overspending for talent. The largest chunk of NFL revenue comes from TV broadcast rights, which are split equally among teams. Teams select incoming talent in reverse order of finish. All of it is designed to promote parity and to discourage long stretches of success or failure for individual teams.

Time and again, the Bills and Sabres buck those odds.

The buck of accountability always stops with the owner, who puts in place the management that shapes a team. The Bills have lacked inspired management since the remnants of the Bill Polian era left at the start of this millennium. The years since have been pockmarked with abysmal personnel decisions, notably a continuing failure to acquire an elite quarterback, the main ingredient for success. The Bills bypassed prime prospects in recent drafts because they overcommitted to Ryan Fitzpatrick, who was cut this week. Let the vicious cycle continue.

Sabres owner Terry Pegula has deep pockets and a community commitment. But he is apparently putting the team's reconstruction in the hands of the longtime general manager who is most clearly responsible for its decline. It will, in my view, only prolong our agony.

Welcome to Buffalo.

I have never seen a crowd cheer as shovelfuls of dirt are excavated at a construction site. Civic development is not a spectator sport. But what happens downtown, on the waterfront, at the Medical Campus and in our neighborhoods matters more than sports to our communal well-being. It is worth keeping in mind, as the Bills and Sabres wander in the wilderness.

## **Sabres deal D Brennan to Panthers for draft pick**

Associated Press

March 15, 2013

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) -- The Buffalo Sabres have traded defenseman T.J. Brennan to the Florida Panthers in exchange for a fifth-round pick in this year's draft.

The move came after Buffalo already began shuffling its roster by returning rookie center Mikhail Grigorenko to his team in the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

Brennan had one goal in 10 games this season. He also had a goal in 11 games with Buffalo last season. Selected in the second round of the 2007 draft, Brennan spent much of his first three seasons in the Sabres farm system.

The Sabres were forced to carry Brennan on their roster, because the team risked losing him for nothing by placing him on waivers.

The Panthers gave up a draft pick they acquired in a trade with Los Angeles.

## **Sabres return C Grigorenko to Quebec Junior team**

By John Wawrow

Associated Press

March 15, 2013

BUFFALO, N.Y. (AP) -- Two months later, Buffalo Sabres rookie center Mikhail Grigorenko proved he's not NHL-ready just yet.

Rather than continue providing him limited ice time in Buffalo, the Sabres elected on Friday to return Grigorenko to his Quebec Major Junior Hockey League team, the Patrick Roy-coached Quebec Remparts.

General manager Darcy Regier refused to call the demotion a setback for the 18-year-old Russian-born player, who was selected 12th overall in the NHL draft in June.

"I think this is an opportunity for him to keep growing and building on his experience here," Regier said. "It was an experiment. I think there certainly are benefits. He has a very good understanding of what it's going to take to play in the National Hockey League going forward."

The move came as a slight surprise, after Grigorenko made the team out of training camp. And he made a good enough impression for the Sabres to keep him on their roster after five games, which is when his three-year entry level contract kicked in.

Grigorenko was never able to find his niche on a struggling team that, at 10-14-3, currently ranks 29th in the NHL. Buffalo is also in transition after coach Lindy Ruff was fired last month.

Relegated to playing on the fourth line, Grigorenko had one goal and four assists in 22 games while averaging 9:44 of ice time, among the lowest on the team. He was a healthy scratch five times, including a three-game stretch from Feb. 17-21.

Regier said he had been considering making this move for a few weeks. And it became necessary when the Sabres had to free up a roster spot to activate forward Ville Leino from injured reserve. Leino has missed the first 27 games with a hip injury, and is set to return Saturday, when Buffalo hosts Ottawa.

Grigorenko, who opened the season in Quebec, will rejoin the Remparts who have one regular-season game left before preparing to open the playoffs next week. The Sabres will have the opportunity to bring Grigorenko back to Buffalo, or assign him to AHL Rochester, once the Remparts are eliminated from the playoffs.

"In the end, he's got a terrific opportunity to go back to Quebec, be the go-to guy and play 20-22 minutes," Regier said.

Regarded as a skilled play-maker and smooth skater, Grigorenko was enjoying a solid season in Quebec. He still ranks tied for 66th among the league's scorers with 50 points (29 goals, 21 assists) in 32 games.

Regier said Grigorenko understood the team's decision, and expects the player to learn from his first taste of NHL experience.

"He has a very good understanding of what he needs to do, and he gets to go back and have the opportunity to practice and work on those things," Regier said. "No one gets to go through a career without dealing with a little adversity. And so it'll build for him as well.

"It will help him."

## **Regier on struggling Sabres: 'I'm not in a blowing-up mindset'**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
March 16, 2013

BUFFALO – With the trade deadline hitting April 3 and the Sabres mired in 14th place, general manager Darcy Regier said he has no plans to blow the team up and start fresh.

“I’m not in a blowing-up mindset,” Regier said late Friday afternoon inside the First Niagara Center. “Blowing up to me means blowing up. I mean, nothing left.”

It appears goalie Ryan Miller and wingers Jason Pominville and Thomas Vanek, the team’s biggest stars, will stay in Buffalo.

“Organizationally, we have to find a way, in order to win a championship, to acquire more top players,” Regier said.

So will the Sabres focus on this season or building for the future?

“You do both,” Regier said. “(Owner) Terry (Pegula) has stated it, and that’s our focus. It’s not just about the playoffs. It’s about the ability to win a championship with the group of players you have. So that extends beyond this season.”

Regier said he has been receiving numerous calls leading up to Wednesday’s general manager meetings.

“There are a lot of calls to try to get a sense of what the market is and what the cost is going to be,” he said. “So the activity has picked up.”

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Center Tyler Ennis, whose face was crunched into the boards from behind Sunday by Wayne Simmonds in Philadelphia, is expected to return this afternoon when the Sabres host the Ottawa Senators.

## **Sabres believe sending Grigorenko back to junior will help prospect's development**

By Bill Hoppe  
Olean Times Herald  
March 16, 2013

BUFFALO – Sending rookie Mikhail Grigorenko back to junior wasn't a snap decision the Sabres made to reach the 23-man roster limit, general manager Darcy Regier said. The team had been talking about the move for a while prior to making it Friday.

If the 18-year-old center wasn't getting scratched, he had been playing sparingly during most of his 22 NHL appearances.

"This isn't driven by a roster move," Regier said during a late-afternoon news conference inside the First Niagara Center. "This is driven by what is best for Mikhail and best for his career."

Returning the 12th overall pick in June's NHL Entry Draft to the QMJHL, a league he dominated for two seasons, gives Grigorenko "an opportunity for him to keep growing and building on his experience here, building on the start in the Quebec League. He had a terrific world junior tournament," Regier said.

"There's no straight line," Regier said about Grigorenko's development. "You don't go through zero to 100 and not miss a beat. There's adversity that he's going to deal with, and he was great."

Playing big minutes for the Quebec Remparts, who have one regular-season game left and begin the playoffs next week, will allow the Russian to be the man again instead of skating five minutes a game in the NHL.

"He surprised all of us by being here for the length of time he has been here, and depending how far they go in the playoffs, he will be here after the season," Regier said.

Still, the Sabres burned the first season of his three-year, entry-level contract for one goal and five points.

Regier doesn't quite see it like that, however.

"It was an experiment," Regier said. "There certainly are benefits. He certainly has a very good understanding of what it takes to play in the National Hockey League going forward. I think it's very important, and he agreed, that he spend as much time as possible here in the offseason training and preparing for next season."

Regier expects him to challenge for a spot again next year. While the Remparts' season is ongoing, Grigorenko can only return to the NHL as the Sabres' third emergency recall. Once the junior campaign ends, the Sabres can recall him or send him to Rochester.

Ideally, the Sabres would love to assign Grigorenko to the AHL now, although rules prohibit it.

Regier said Remparts coach Patrick Roy and the entire league are “thrilled” Grigorenko, who has 29 goals and 50 points in 32 QMJHL games, is coming back.

Having so many injuries – winger Ville Leino is returning from a hip injury this afternoon against the Ottawa Senators and must be activated – gave Grigorenko more time.

“It actually allowed us to keep him a little longer,” Regier said.

Grigorenko, who practiced with the Sabres on Friday, began the season playing as a third-liner, skating about 11 or 13 minutes. Following some brief fourth-line duty, he played a season-high 17:10 on Jan. 27, the final game before his contract kicked in.

After the Sabres kept him Jan. 29, he scored his first goal that night. But he played sporadically in games – he had spent much of his time on the fourth line with tough guy John Scott – and was scratched five times.

“It was about whether or not he was going to be able to get his minutes up to a level where he could continue to develop,” Regier said. “Really ... what drove the decision was we were really using him in a fourth-line type role where we were hoping to get him in to create some offense.”

Grigorenko was averaging only 9:44 on the ice each contest. He played a season-low 4:51 Tuesday, his final game.

“You have to learn to play more hockey in your shift,” Regier said. “These kids are used to having the puck a lot with their junior teams, and they’re vGrigorenko excited to be staying with Sabresery good when they do have the puck. It’s when they don’t have the puck when most of the learning takes place, combined with getting stronger and getting faster, and those are all normal things we deal with with young players.”

The Sabres couldn’t just throw Grigorenko out on the ice to see what would happen.

“You can only go so far to give the individual something at the expense of the team,” Regier said.

The Sabres’ 14th-place standing didn’t help Grigorenko’s development.

“If you’re hitting on all cylinders ... you can better support that young man,” Regier said. “We’re not in that position right now.”



## **GRIGORENKO ASSIGNED TO QUEBEC**

By Kevin Snow

Sabres.com

March 15, 2013

With Ville Leino and Tyler Ennis getting ready to return to active duty on Saturday, Buffalo Sabres GM Darcy Regier had to make a roster move. The final decision came down late Friday afternoon with the announcement that rookie forward Mikhail Grigorenko was being sent back to the Quebec Remparts of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. Grigorenko was in his first NHL season after being selected 12th overall by the Sabres in the 2012 Entry Draft.

The 18-year-old Russian center had just one goal and four assists in 22 games this season, and was averaging only 9:44 of ice time per game. He has also been a healthy scratch five times. This is the first year of Grigorenko's three-year entry level contract that he signed on July 18, 2012.

Grigorenko heads back to Quebec, where the sixth-place Remparts have two regular season games remaining on their schedule, and have already locked up a spot in the postseason. Grigorenko can come back to Buffalo – or Rochester – at the conclusion of the Remparts' season, and could also be recalled prior to that if the Sabres reach their third emergency situation.

Grigorenko was among the QMJHL's leading scorers with 50 points (29+21) in 32 games, before joining the Sabres once the lockout ended. He also had six points (2+4) in seven games for his bronze-medal winning Russian team at the 2013 World Junior Championship.

While some would consider this as a setback for the youngster's career, Regier said it was just the opposite.

“When we talked to him today – and we've been talking about this for a while – I think this is an opportunity for him to keep growing and building on his experience here, building on the start in the Quebec league,” said Regier. “He had a terrific World Junior tournament. He surprised all of us by being here for the length of time he has been here. And depending how far they go in the playoffs, he will return here after the season.”

In his 22 games in Buffalo, Grigorenko only reached double-digits in ice time 11 times. He peaked at 17:10 against Washington on January 27, but also played just 4:51 against the Rangers on Tuesday – his lowest of the season. In making the decision to send Grigorenko back to Quebec, the issue of his limited ice time weighed heavily in the final outcome.

“We wanted to give him an opportunity to see whether or not he could get his minutes up to a level where he could continue the development,” Regier explains. “Where we ended up, and really what drove the decision was, we were really using him in a fourth-

line type role. We were hoping to get him in to create some offense. But his minutes topped out at 10 minutes.

“In the end, he’s got an opportunity to go back to Quebec, be the go-to-guy and play 20-22 minutes. He’s got a terrific coach there in Patrick Roy. It’s an experience that he can build on the World Juniors, and be the go-to-guy in Quebec. And I expect that at some point in his NHL career, that’s what we’re going to expect here out of him. But it’s not fair to look for that out of an 18-year-old.”

## **Sabres return top pick Grigorenko to junior team**

NHL.com

March 15, 2013

The Buffalo Sabres on Friday returned rookie Mikhail Grigorenko to the Quebec Remparts of the Quebec Major Junior Hockey League.

The 6-foot-3, 200-pound Russian, who was chosen in the first round (No. 12) of the 2012 NHL Draft, had one goal, five points and a minus-2 rating in 22 games for the Sabres.

The 18-year-old, who earned a bronze medal for Russia at the 2013 World Junior Championship in Ufa, Russia, in January, scored his first NHL goal on Jan. 29 in a 4-3 overtime loss to the Toronto Maple Leafs.

Grigorenko won 42 of 119 faceoffs this season for the Sabres. In 32 games for the Remparts during the NHL work stoppage, Grigorenko had 29 goals, 50 points and plus-9 rating.

"This is driven by what is best for Mikhail and his career," Sabres general manager Darcy Regier said in announcing the move.

The Sabres will welcome wing Ville Leino back to the lineup Saturday against the Ottawa Senators. Leino has yet to play a game this season because of a hip injury.

## **Sabres try to build off win, break through vs. Senators**

By Mike G. Morreale

NHL.com

March 14, 2013

SENATORS (13-8-6) at SABRES (10-14-3)

TV: SNET-E, TVA, MSG-B

Last 10: Ottawa 4-2-4; Buffalo 4-4-2

Season series: This is the third of four meetings this season with the Senators taking the opening two contests at Scotiabank Place. The Sens received goals from four different players in a 4-3 win on Feb. 5 and Craig Anderson made 42 saves in a 2-0 triumph seven days later.

Big story: The Senators have made a habit of playing tight to the vest this season minus injured stars Jason Spezza and Erik Karlsson. The team's 4-3 shootout loss to the Montreal Canadiens on Wednesday marked the seventh time in the past 12 games the Senators were tied at the end of regulation. The team has played in 10 straight one-goal games and are closing in on the NHL record of 12 set by the Chicago Blackhawks in 1997-98. The Sens have just one win in seven games, but have picked up six points over that span -- losing three times in the shootout and once in overtime.

Team Scope:

Senators: Mika Zibanejad, Daniel Alfredsson and Patrick Wiercioch scored in regulation for the Senators in a 4-3 shootout loss to the Canadiens on Wednesday. Rookie Jakob Silfverberg scored the only goal for Ottawa in the second round of the tiebreaker, but Montreal's Carey Price denied Alfredsson and Kyle Turris in the one-on-one showdown to give the Habs the victory. Ottawa goalie Robin Lehner, who lost his third straight shootout, finished with 42 saves in 65 minutes.

"It feels good in regulation and overtime, but when it comes to the shootout right now I'm not there," Lehner told The Ottawa Sun. "I can't seem to find a way in the shootout. I'm a little tired of one-point games."

Sabres: With starting goalie Ryan Miller sidelined with a sinus infection, backup Jhonas Enroth stepped in and turned aside 32 shots to lead the Sabres to a 3-1 victory over the New York Rangers on Tuesday. It was Enroth's first win since Nov. 26, 2011. Marcus Foligno snapped a 20-game scoring drought by potting a pair of goals as Buffalo won consecutive games for the first time this season. The Sabres' third line of Foligno, Brian Flynn and center Kevin Porter finished the night with three points and seven shots on goal. The game also marked the return of defenseman Jordan Leopold, who had missed the previous nine games with an upper-body injury.

Who's hot: Sabres rookie Flynn has three points (two goals, one assist) in the past three games. ... Defenseman Sergei Gonchar has a point in five straight games (six assists) for the Senators.

Injury report: Forward Milan Michalek (knee) and goalie Craig Anderson (ankle) are questionable, while David Dziurzynski (concussion), Mike Lundin (concussion), Karlsson (Achilles) and Spezza (back) are out for the Senators. ... Miller (sinus infection) and forwards Tyler Ennis (upper body) and Ville Leino (hip) are questionable for the Sabres. Patrick Kaleta is serving the last of a five-game suspension for an illegal hit from behind on Rangers forward Brad Richards on March 3.

## **Senators-Sabres Preview**

By Allan Ferguson

Associated Press

March 15, 2013

While the Ottawa Senators continue to play with a depleted roster, the Buffalo Sabres might get a handful of players back on the ice Saturday.

The Sabres will try to use that to their advantage as they seek a third straight home win and their first victory in three matchups with the Senators this season.

Among Ottawa's injured players are top goaltender Craig Anderson, reigning Norris Trophy winner Erik Karlsson, star center Jason Spezza and Milan Michalek, a 35-goal scorer last season.

Those absences have taken a toll, with the Senators (13-8-6) going 1-2-4 in their last seven games and 2-7-3 in their past 12 on the road. They suffered their second shootout loss in as many contests Wednesday, 4-3 in Montreal.

Defenseman Patrick Wiercioch helped his team salvage another point with his third goal in five games.

"It'd be nice to get a couple more wins. I know one point is good and we have lots of guys out, but we're playing good," goaltender Robin Lehner said. "It would be nice to have those guys, but a lot of other players are stepping up and we're playing close games. The two points would help us a little more."

Ottawa has tabbed Ben Bishop to start in net Saturday. He had yielded two goals or fewer in five straight starts before giving up five in his most recent outing, a 5-4 loss March 6 at Toronto.

The Sabres (10-14-3) have also struggled with some injuries, but they snapped a four-game skid with a 3-1 win over the New York Rangers on Tuesday.

Ryan Miller missed that game due to a sinus infection and Jhonas Enroth made 32 saves in his place. Miller may return to the crease Saturday, and Ville Leino is expected to make his long-awaited season debut.

Leino has missed the first 27 games with a hip injury. The winger signed a six-year, \$27 million contract with Buffalo before last season but registered only 25 points in 71 games after posting 53 with Philadelphia in 2010-11.

"It's been really annoying, a lot of frustration," Leino told the Sabres' official website. "It's been a tough time but hopefully it pays off now and I'm really excited to get back."

Interim coach Ron Rolston also said there's a "strong possibility" that center Tyler Ennis (head) would return after sitting out one game. Ennis has five goals in his last five games against the Senators.

Rolston, however, also announced Thursday that defenseman Alexander Sulzer is expected to miss the rest of the season after undergoing surgery to repair a torn right ACL.

Buffalo has lost five of its last six against Ottawa, including two in regulation this season. The Senators scored all of their goals in a 4-3 win Feb. 5 in the first 28:12, and they didn't need much offense in another home matchup a week later as Anderson made 42 saves in a 2-0 victory.

The Sabres, though, have earned at least one point in five straight home games against Ottawa, going 3-0-2.

Buffalo defenseman Jordan Leopold, who returned from an upper-body injury Tuesday, has four goals and four assists in his last eight games against the Senators. Ottawa's Erik Condra has four goals and two assists in his last five versus Buffalo.

The Senators might get Matt Kassian on the ice for the first time Saturday. The winger was acquired Tuesday from Minnesota.

## **Ottawa Senators tough guy Matt Kassian set to say hello to old pal John Scott of the Buffalo Sabres**

By Bruce Garrioch

Ottawa Sun

March 15, 2013

BUFFALO — Matt Kassian is looking forward to seeing his old buddy John Scott.

The two spent a little more than two seasons together with the Minnesota Wild's AHL affiliate in Houston. They'll get a chance to renew acquaintances if the 6-foot-7 Scott is in the Buffalo Sabres lineup Saturday at First Niagara Center.

"He's a good guy and a good man. We're good friends from a long, long time ago," said Kassian, preparing to make his Ottawa debut. "That being said, there's never any friends when we're on the ice. He knows that and I know that.

"If something happens, it happens. A lot of times, things are situational within the game. You want to make guys feel comfortable out there. If it's not necessary, it's not necessary.

"You don't want to have to go out and do something for no reason. You want to do everything you do on the ice with a purpose. If the need arises, I'll step up in a heartbeat. I'm sure for him, it's the same situation."

Kassian said he has worked hard to improve his game.

"You guys are going to have to see that for yourself," said Kassian. "You'll have to make your own judgements. I feel I've worked on a lot of things to be consistent, especially in my own zone. I also want to be solid in the offensive zone.

"I don't think you're going to see me doing things like (Daniel Alfredsson) does out there. At the same time, I'm not going to be afraid to take pucks to the net, get gritty down low, finish my hits, get in on the forecheck and what I do well -- a hard-nosed player who is tough to play against. You want the other team to know you're on the ice and take notice."

Kassian said he doesn't ever see fighting taken completely out of the game, which is why his role must evolve.

"It's going to be ebb and flow thing. If they ever ban boxing and the UFC, then maybe we'll see it go," said Kassian. "We've seen the evolution of it and it has evolved into something different than it was 10 or 15 years ago.

"It might continue to change a bit, but I don't think you're ever going to lose it. I think too many fans like it too much and it's too much a part of the game. It never hurts to have a little of your own policing out there and to keep the guys accountable."