



# **Buffalo Sabres**

## **Daily Press Clips**

*January 23, 2018*

## **Eichel scores in OT to give Sabres rare win in Calgary**

Associated Press

Jan. 23, 2018

CALGARY, Alberta (AP) — It took some extra time, but Jack Eichel finally solved Mike Smith.

On his 13th attempt and seventh shot on goal of the night, Eichel scored 1:30 into overtime to give the Buffalo Sabres their first win at Calgary in more than 14 years, 2-1 over the Flames on Monday night.

Eichel one-timed a pass from Rasmus Ristolainen for his 19th of the season, putting through Smith's pads with a wicked one-timer that came shortly after Ryan O'Reilly beat Troy Brouwer on a faceoff deep in the Flames' end.

"I thought the faceoff at the end was a good opportunity for us to get a quick shot," Eichel said. "I said to (Ristolainen), try to get it in the middle and then I'll try to open up for a one-timer."

That's exactly how it played out.

Flames center Mikael Backlund watched helplessly as he tried to get back into the play after exiting the penalty box. He had taken a holding the stick penalty with 33 seconds left in regulation and his penalty had just expired as Eichel scored.

"I was pretty nervous in the box, hoping they wouldn't score. When I saw the clock run down, I was pretty excited to get on the ice and then they score," Backlund said. "A tough way to end the game and a tough way to let the guys down."

The goal extended Eichel's point streak to six games (four goals, six assists).

"I'm shooting the puck a little bit more, trying not to fine-tune things," he said. "That and just trying to work, get in on the forecheck a little more and get to the net."

Scott Wilson also scored and Chad Johnson stopped 32 shots to help Buffalo snap a four-game road losing streak and get its first victory on the Flames' home ice since Oct. 18, 2003.

Johnson, making his first start against his former team, improve to 2-8-3 on the season.

"Obviously there's more motivation there and a little more desire," he said. "Not stick it to them, but when they play me I'm sure they want to compete a little bit harder knowing me and I want to compete a little bit harder knowing them."

Matthew Tkachuk scored for the Flames, who are 7-0-2 in their last nine. Mike Smith finished with 31 saves.

Calgary went into its bye week on a seven-game winning streak. Since they returned they've scored one goal in each game in a pair of overtime losses at home.

"We had some momentum going into it and then you come out of it, we're still getting some points, but I don't think we've played up to where we were before the bye," Smith said. "I think it's mental, more than anything, and just getting back going and getting back into the rhythm of things."

Buffalo's 30th-ranked power play had two chances to win it inside the final five minutes of regulation and while they didn't convert, the tying goal came shortly after the second man advantage expired.

Mikael Backlund's holding the stick penalty with 33 seconds left continued into overtime where Calgary killed it off, but the Sabres kept possession, leading to Eichel's goal.

The Sabres struggling penalty kill had given up 10 goals on its previous 24 chances and the trend continued eight minutes into the first period as Calgary scored on its first power play of the night.

After drawing the penalty, Tkachuk scored the goal on a deflection. Stationed in front of the net, he opened up his stick and swatted Johnny Gaudreau's pass out of the air and past Johnson.

The lead lasted just 24 seconds though with the Sabres converting a turnover. Mark Jankowski's pass from his own corner glanced off the stick of Travis Hamonic and right to Scott Wilson skating through the slot. Wilson fired a wrist shot past Smith for his second of the season.

Gaudreau was the most dangerous Flames player with five shots on net, but he couldn't solve his former teammate. Johnson stuck out the pad to stop him on a dangerous backhand on one rush. Gaudreau had a couple of wraparounds that almost led to goals but Johnson shut the door on both of them.

"(Johnson) was the best player tonight for us. He made some huge stops at times," O'Reilly said. "He was making huge stops and gave us a chance. It was nice to see him get the victory for us."

NOTES: Calgary made one lineup change, inserting Marek Hrivik on the fourth line in place of rookie Andrew Mangiapane. ... Buffalo RW Nicholas Baptiste made his first appearance since being recalled from Rochester of the AHL on Friday.

UP NEXT

Sabres: At Edmonton on Tuesday night.

Flames: Host Los Angeles on Wednesday night.

## Sabres look good, feel good with rewarding victory

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

January 23, 2018

CALGARY – There haven't been many postgame celebrations for the Buffalo Sabres, so each one is special. This one, however, could be tough to top.

The hugs for Chad Johnson were tighter and longer than usual. The pats on Jack Eichel's helmet were more pronounced and enthusiastic than normal.

Everyone knew it was a meaningful game for the goaltender and the team. For once, everyone responded.

Johnson stopped 32 of 33 shots and Eichel scored the game-winner in overtime as Buffalo earned a 2-1 victory over Calgary on Monday. It was Johnson's first win since October, and the high-fiving players were well-aware.

"We were most happy because we got the win for Johnny," Eichel said in Scotiabank Saddledome. "He's in his hometown here. I guess he's been on the wrong side of some bad efforts by us this year, and I think we feel for him.

"It was awesome. We know how sensational he was in this game and how bad he wanted it. I'm really excited to see him get a win here."

Buffalo Sabres



@BuffaloSabres

We know you want to see that again.

And again, and again.. It's an @EASPORTSNHL OT winner from @JackEichel15! 🐾

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Adding to the excitement was a rare complete effort. The Sabres played solid from start to finish and end to end. They looked nothing like the team that lost, 7-1, to Dallas on Saturday.

They looked like an NHL team.

"I can't say enough about how we competed from the start to the finish," Johnson said. "That's what we've needed, and that's what you need to win hockey games. You have to play hard right from the start to the end no matter the score, whether you're up two, down two.

"We really competed on pucks. We were in shot lanes. The D were battling in front of me. It was a hockey game. That was, I think, the first one I've been a part of this year. It felt like a normal hockey game."

Typical Sabres games feature terrible turnovers, uninspired efforts and lackadaisical attitudes. This outing featured respectable play in all zones, although the goal output was still low.

"It was a great response," coach Phil Housley said. "Everybody contributed."

They all contributed to the postgame party. The Sabres gathered along the boards after Eichel buried a one-timer with 1:30 gone in overtime, just two seconds after a Calgary penalty ended.

The initial hugs were for Eichel, who scored his 19th goal and extended his point streak to six games. The heartier ones were for Johnson, who improved to 2-8-3 after not winning since Oct. 15 in Anaheim.

"It means a lot," Johnson said. "Obviously, it's been a tough year. I felt good with my game. It's been mentally challenging this whole season not really getting some bounces. It's hard not to want to just change everything: change the gear, change your style.

"But (goaltending coach Andrew Allen) has been good for me telling me to stay the course and the results will come. To be able to get rewarded, not have some fluky goals or hear post and post and in, just things like that, to have a really good hockey game played in front of me and to get rewarded with the result was huge for me and huge for my confidence."

While the game will linger with Johnson, the Sabres (12-26-9) don't have time to bask in the glory. They visit Connor McDavid and the Edmonton Oilers on Tuesday. If they revert to previous form, this fun night will essentially be meaningless.

"If the guys make a choice and compete and play for each other, we're a really good hockey team," Housley said. "We've shown it in the past. We have to be more consistent. We have to get ready for another tough game against Edmonton, who's been waiting since Saturday, so we've got to enjoy this but refocus and continue to play the way we did tonight."

The way they played Monday was inspiring for the guys in the dressing room.

"There's a minute left and we get a power play, you're thinking, 'Hey, this could be it. I could get a win here and we could pull this out,'" Johnson said. "We've had times where we've played with a lot of compete throughout a game but never the full 60 minutes. I think if we could just really challenge ourselves next game to just bring that again, that's going to be the key. That's what it comes down to because that's the hardest part about this game is bringing that every night.

"There was that compete in everybody's legs and their heart. To be a part of that and just be part of a normal game from start to finish – not just sloppiness or whatever it is – to be part of a normal hockey game, I felt good. I felt really good."

## **Sabres Notebook: Johnson embarrassed; Kane excited about playoff chance**

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

January 22, 2018

CALGARY – Entering the game, this was not the ideal homecoming for Chad Johnson.

"I think everybody, especially at this point halfway through the season, is just disappointed, embarrassed by how things have gone so far," the Buffalo Sabres goaltender said Monday morning.

There was no way for Johnson to sugarcoat things as he returned to Calgary, the city where he spent his childhood and played last season. Disappointment and embarrassment abound for the last-place Sabres and their struggling netminder.

"We're trying to stick together, but it's been a really tough year personally and as a team," Johnson said in Scotiabank Saddledome.

Johnson entered Monday's start against the Calgary Flames with a 1-8-3 record for an 11-26-9 club. He hadn't won since Oct. 15, and his .877 save percentage ranks 58th of the 60 goaltenders who have appeared in 10 games.

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It's far from what the 31-year-old envisioned when he returned to Buffalo. He went 22-16-4 with a .920 save percentage for the Sabres in 2015-16. He went 18-15-1 with a .910 for the Flames last season. Those numbers include a red-hot start of 13-4-1 with a .932 save percentage that helped Calgary make the playoffs.

"That's what makes it tough about this year," Johnson said. "The last two years I've kind of had my game and the results. ... I was where I wanted to be. Now it's tough really to get that. I think everybody is that way on this team."

Playing for the lowest-scoring team in the NHL will hurt any goaltender's numbers, but Johnson hasn't helped himself. He's allowed three goals or more in 11 of his 17 appearances, contributing to a 3.85 goals-against average.

Johnson entered the season with a career GAA of 2.44.

"Every game you can get in, you have something to prove," Johnson said. "Everyone has something to prove, especially when we're in last place in the league right now. A lot of guys on this team are fighting for contracts, fighting for positions, fighting for new teams, fighting for whatever you're looking to do."

"There's going to be changes."

Johnson is among those fighting for a contract and, given his age, a career. He signed a one-year, \$2.5 million deal with the Sabres during the summer, but those figures will be hard to replicate come July 1.

He was hoping a return to Calgary could propel him toward a solid second half and a brighter future.

"This is always special being able to play in your hometown," Johnson said. "Obviously, having played here and having some success and friends on the team still and in the organization and stuff, it's always exciting to be back here, but a little more special knowing last year and how it went."

\* \* \*

Evander Kane figures to get a lot of attention this week. He's entering three hockey hotbeds in western Canada, including his hometown of Vancouver.

The time in the spotlight started in Calgary, and the Sabres forward delivered.

The discussion was how an inevitable trade could land Kane in his first playoff series. His smile stood out in a dressing room that hasn't seen many happy times.

"I come into the season every year, as I've done since I've started, hoping to play in the playoffs and envisioning that," said Kane, a nine-year veteran. "For me, it's taken a long time. I'm always looking forward to that opportunity. I think that's my type of hockey. I think I'm built for that as a player. Unfortunately, I haven't had the opportunity to showcase that."

"For me, the prospect of that happening is obviously exciting. You have that excitement going into every year."

Kane is essentially the only player on the Sabres who's guaranteed to enjoy a playoff race. The pending free agent will be moved to a contender before the Feb. 26 trade deadline while the Sabres rebuild again.

"We didn't have the start obviously to the season that we wanted," Kane said. "We had some guys starting off hot, some guys starting off a little slower. It's tough when you don't get off to a good start to make up that ground."

"For us, it's just kind of snowballed. We've had some bad luck, and there's been some nights also that we haven't competed the way we need to do at this level. For us, it's important to start playing with that confidence and swagger and that attitude because at this point we have nothing to lose and we've got everything to prove."

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Nick Baptiste was in the Sabres' lineup for the first time since Nov. 14.

"I'm excited," the right winger said. "It's been a little while since I've been back up, but coach is giving me an opportunity to step in here, and I'm excited to take advantage of it."

The Sabres recalled Baptiste from Rochester on Friday, but he watched from the press box Saturday as Dallas dismantled the Sabres, 7-1. He stepped in for Benoit Pouliot, who was scratched for the third time in seven games.

Baptiste skated with center Evan Rodrigues and left wing Jordan Nolan.

Baptiste had no points in his first four appearances with the Sabres while averaging 8:02 per night. He skated just 5:38 on Nov. 14 in Pittsburgh before being sent back down to Rochester. Baptiste has seven goals and 17 points in 34 games with the Amerks and insists he learned from his ill-fated recall.

"It was good to get in some games," he said, "but now I feel like I've improved my game and I've made strides to try and keep myself up here as long as possible."

## **The Wraparound: Sabres 2, Flames 1 (OT)**

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

January 22, 2018

CALGARY – Chad Johnson gave the Sabres a chance to win. Jack Eichel made sure they did.

Eichel ripped home a one-timer with 1:30 gone in overtime Monday, delivering a much-needed pick-me-up to Buffalo in the form of a 2-1 victory.

Johnson, a Calgary resident who had a solid season for Calgary last year, stopped 32 of 33 shots in his homecoming. The Sabres celebrated heartily with their goaltender in Scotiabank Saddledome.

To say the Sabres improved from their previous game would be a huge understatement. They had a lot to prove after Saturday's 7-1 shellacking by Dallas, and they followed up with an impressive road game.

Buffalo improved to 3-9 in overtime and ended a two-game losing skid.

Warm-up: The Sabres' power play, which went 3 for 8 in the previous two games, had two chances to win this one. Buffalo failed to get a shot when Michael Stone went for interference with 4:14 remaining.

Calgary's Mikael Backlund departed for holding the stick with 32.5 seconds left, and the overtime carryover paid off, though the goal was even strength as it came just as Backlund exited the box.

Short return: Defenseman Nathan Beaulieu returned to the Sabres' lineup after missing two games with an illness, but he lasted just 3:11 before being escorted to the dressing room for a concussion check.

Curtis Lazar reached out for a knee-on-knee hit on Beaulieu, and the defenseman challenged the Calgary forward. Lazar was a willing participant, landing a couple of quick punches and driving Beaulieu's chin into the ice during the takedown.

Beaulieu looked dazed as he rose to his skates and headed toward the penalty box. Officials quickly sent him to the trainers' room instead.

Beaulieu did not return.

Quick shot of power: The Sabres took the first penalty, a tripping call on Jake McCabe with 6:51 gone, and the Flames capitalized. Johnny Gaudreau fired from the left circle, and Matthew Tkachuk tipped it home from his usual spot in front of the net.

The assist was the 40th of the season for Gaudreau.

Quick tie: The Flames had trouble with the puck in their own zone, and it took only 24 seconds for the Sabres to make it 1-1. Scott Wilson picked up a turnover in the slot, and he fooled goaltender Mike Smith with a low shot that went five-hole with 8:24 gone.

Wilson's goal was his second in 15 games with Buffalo.

Leg up: The Sabres' top line of center Jack Eichel, left wing Zemgus Girgensons and right wing Kyle Okposo had an impressive second period. Smith was even more impressive in keeping them off the scoreboard.

Eichel buzzed around the zone to get free for a shot from the slot, and the rebound went directly to Girgensons. Smith quickly thrust out his right pad, stoning the winger to keep it 1-1 with seven minutes gone in the second.

Eichel, Girgensons and Okposo combined for nine shot attempts during the middle period.

No goals: Johnson made 12 saves and Smith stopped seven shots during the second, sending the teams into the third period tied at 1-all. Calgary had a 25-19 shot advantage after two periods and a 33-31 edge after regulation.

Buffalo entered the night 2-4-2 when tied after 40 minutes. The Flames were 5-5-4.

Lineup swap: Nick Baptiste, recalled from Rochester on Friday, played his first game for the Sabres since November. Benoit Pouliot was scratched for the third time in seven games.

In addition to the Eichel unit, the Sabres' lines featured Wilson-Ryan O'Reilly-Sam Reinhart, Evander Kane-Johan Larsson-Jason Pominville and Jordan Nolan-Evan Rodrigues-Baptiste.

Defenseman Victor Antipin was a healthy scratch while Josh Gorges was sick.

Counting the house: The Flames announced 18,349 tickets sold as fans in red jerseys filled the old building.

The City of Calgary and Flames ownership are in a bitter dispute over a new arena, with each side demanding the other kick in cash. The Saddledome, which opened in 1983, still has at least one fan.

"You come into this building, and it's just one of the great old barns that are still here," said Sabres coach Phil Housley, who played five seasons for the Flames. "I had a lot of really good times here with the Calgary Flames and the relationships that you make. This building is a landmark going back into the '80s.

"I'm just glad that we're able to play in this building."

Next: The Sabres will finish their 11th of 16 back-to-backs Tuesday when they visit Connor McDavid and the Edmonton Oilers. The Sabres are 2-6-2 so far during the second night.

## Sabres Prospects: Twenty-goal scorers and hot returns from World Juniors

The Buffalo News

By Amy Moritz

January 22, 2018

Three Buffalo Sabres prospects have hit the 20-goal mark this season with their respective clubs while two others are impressing in their post-World Junior Championship experience.

Let's start with the benchmark for goals – Cliff Pu, Victor Olofsson, and Vasily Glotov have all reached the 20-goal mark.

Olofsson, the 22-year-old winger, is tied for first in the Swedish Hockey League with 21 goals in 36 games playing for Frolunda HC. In his third season in the SHL, the highest level of pro hockey in his native Sweden, Olofsson has set career bests in goals and total points (33).

Glotov, a center with the Shawinigan Cataractes, ranks 13th in the Quebec Major-Junior League with 23 goals this season. He is on a five-game goal-scoring streak and has goals in six of the seven games he has played in January. Last season, Glotov scored 15 goals with 35 assists in his first season in the QMJHL.

Pu, meanwhile, is settling in with his new team in the Ontario Hockey League after the London Knights traded him to the Kingston Frontenacs earlier this month. Pu, who had a breakout season with the Knights in 2016-17 with 35 goals and 86 points got off to a slow start this season.

In his last season of junior eligibility, Pu has scored 16 goals with 45 points through 36 games with London. In his first game with Kingston, he put up a four-point night with three goals and one assist. Pu scored his 20th goal of the season on Jan. 18.

Meanwhile, defenseman Vojtech Budik and forward Marcus Davidsson are parlaying their World Juniors experience into production for their respective teams.

Budik, playing with the Prince Albert Raiders in the Western Hockey League, is on a career-high four-game point streak. He had the first two-goal game of his WHL career on Jan. 19 and scored the game-winner in overtime against Medicine Hat on Jan. 20. He has 15 points (six goals, nine assists) in his last 15 games and is tied for the team lead among defensemen with 20 points this season.

Prince Albert Raiders



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Budik played for the Czech Republic which finished fourth at the World Juniors, the country's best finish at the tournament since winning bronze in 2005.

Davidsson, who played a fourth-line role for Sweden in their silver medal finish at the World Juniors, has 13 points (five goals, eight assists) for Djurgarden in the SHL including notching his first three-point game in the pro league. He ranks third among the league's junior-aged players in scoring.

Rochester Americans: The Amerks are finding ways to get points. And while everyone in Rochester would rather be winning games, the points are adding up, keeping the Amerks in second place in the American Hockey League Eastern Conference standings.

Rochester has just one win in its last five games – a 4-1 win against the Charlotte Checkers on Saturday. In the last five, the Amerks picked up points with two shootout losses and one overtime loss.

Rookie C.J. Smith continues to lead the Amerks with 14 goals and 23 assists for 37 points. Veteran and team captain Kevin Porter has 27 points (12 goals, 15 assists) tied for second with defenseman Zach Redmond.

Brendan Guhle, who suffered a lower body injury last week, played once in the last three games. Hudson Fasching had two assists in a 5-4 overtime loss to Charlotte on Sunday, ending a five-game point drought.

Rochester travels to Toronto to meet the first-place Marlies at 7 p.m. on Friday. The Amerks then play at the Belleville Senators on Saturday. They next play in Blue Cross Arena on Feb. 2 when they host the Marlies at 7:05 p.m.

## WHL

Brandon Hagel (forward, Red Deer Rebels): The left winger has seen goals and 18 assists in 31 games. The Rebels are last in the Eastern Conference with just 10 wins in 46 games played.

## OHL

Austin Osmanski (defense, Peterborough Petes): The East Aurora native has one goal and 12 assists through 43 games. He has a minus-seven rating, has 54 penalty minutes and 61 shots on goal.

## NCAA

William Borgen (defense, St. Cloud State): The junior was selected to the U.S. Olympic Team, one of four current college players on the 2018 roster. Borgen is having an impressive year on the Huskies blue line while notching 10 points (one goal) in 22 games.

Christopher Brown (forward, Boston College): Registered his sixth assist of the season in the Eagles' 5-2 win over New Hampshire on Jan. 14. Has 12 points on the season.

Jacob Bryson (defense, Providence): The sophomore registered two assists in a 3-1 win over Connecticut on Jan. 18. He has 19 points with one goal in 26 games for the Friars, ranked 10th in the latest USCHO.com poll.

Ivan Chukarov (defense, UMass): Has five assists in 15 games as the Minutemen are 11-11-1 overall.

Casey Fitzgerald (defense, Boston College): Has four points in his last five games to give him four goals and nine assists this season. At 11-9-3, Boston College is ranked 16th.

Connor Hurley (forward, Minnesota): After three seasons at Notre Dame, Hurley transferred to the University of Minnesota. He will sit out this season per NCAA transfer rules and have one year of college eligibility left for the 2018-19 season. In 98 career games for the Fighting Irish, Hurley had 48 points (14 goals, 34 assists).

Casey Mittelstadt (forward, Minnesota): Had his third multi-point game of the season with a goal and assist in the Gophers' 2-1 win over Michigan State on Jan. 20. In his first 24 collegiate games he has seven goals and 13 assists as Minnesota is 15-12-1 and ranked 13th.

Brett Murray (forward, Penn State): The sophomore has five points (one goal) in 17 games. The Nittany Lions are 13-10-3 and ranked 14th.

Philip Nyberg (defense, UConn): Has been held without a point in his last seven games. Has two goals and one assist through 15 games.

Judd Peterson (forward, St. Cloud State): The senior has three goals and nine assists for the Huskies, who fell from third to fifth in the national poll.

Linus Weissbach (forward, Wisconsin): A native of Sweden, the 19-year-old freshman tallied his seventh goal of the season in a 5-0 win at No. 1 Notre Dame on Jan. 21. He has 17 points in 24 games.

Maxwell Willman (forward, Brown): The senior has not played since Dec. 1. He has one goal and four assists in nine games.

## Europe

Rasmus Asplund (forward, Farjestad BK): In 37 games in the SHL, he has six goals and 19 assists.

Oskari Laaksonen (defense, Ilves): Has three goals and 11 assists in 37 games in the Under-20 league (Jr. A SM-Liiga).

Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen (goalie, LeKi): Finished the World Juniors with a 3.13 goals against average and an .879 save percentage in five games for Finland. In 20 games with LeKi in Finland he has a 2.70 goals against and a .915 save percentage.

## **Baptiste gets first shot with Sabres since November**

The Buffalo News

By John Vogl

January 22, 2018

CALGARY – After the worst loss of a rough season, lineup changes were a no-brainer. Nick Baptiste is among those who will benefit.

The right winger will be in the Sabres' lineup for the first time since Nov. 14 when Buffalo visits the Calgary Flames on Monday night.

"I'm excited," Baptiste said in Scotiabank Saddledome. "It's been a little while since I've been back up, but coach is giving me an opportunity to step in here, and I'm excited to take advantage of it."

The Sabres recalled Baptiste from Rochester on Friday, but he watched from the press box Saturday as Dallas dismantled the Sabres, 7-1. He'll step in for Benoit Pouliot, who will be scratched for the third time in seven games.

Baptiste was with center Evan Rodrigues and left wing Jordan Nolan during the morning skate. His goals are simple.

"Playing with a ton of speed, chipping pucks in, being physical, shooting the puck," Baptiste said. "Obviously, we have tons of skill on this team, and I'm just going to try and come in and bring a lot of energy, bring a lot of pace and try to make it tough on their defense.

"A big part of my game is backchecking and disrupting their attack, so I've got to make sure I'm on my horse and making sure I'm doing things to help our defense out."

Baptiste has no points in four appearances with the Sabres while averaging 8:02 per night. He skated just 5:38 on Nov. 14 in Pittsburgh before being sent back down. Baptiste has seven goals and 17 points in 34 games with the Amerks and insists he learned from his ill-fated recall.

"It was good to get in some games, but now I feel like I've improved my game and I've made strides to try and keep myself up here as long as possible," he said.

Defenseman Nathan Beaulieu will return to the Sabres' lineup after missing two games with an illness. Defenseman Josh Gorges is sick and will not play.

"You can talk about the Calgary Flames and the way they're playing right now, really good hockey," Sabres coach Phil Housley said. "We know what we're up against, but I think it's more about us. How are we going to respond after a loss and the way we did lose? That's what I'm looking for.

"We're on the road. We don't have to impress anybody but impress ourselves by playing a simple road game."

18h

John Vogl

✓

@BuffNewsVogl

Sabres' lines:

Girgensons-Eichel-Okposo

Wilson-O'Reilly-Reinhart

Kane-Larsson-Pominville

Nolan-Rodrigues-Baptiste

Looks like Pouliot scratched

John Vogl



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Sabres' defense:

Scandella-Ristolainen

Beaulieu-McCabe

Falk-Nelson

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John Vogl



@BuffNewsVogl

It looks like Chad Johnson, who played for Calgary last season, will start for Sabres against Flames. Johnson is 1-8-3, .878 save percentage.

## **Eichel's overtime blast lifts Sabres over Flames 2-1**

Chad Johnson stops 32 shots against his former team

WGR550

JANUARY 22, 2018

Jack Eichel was on the ice for the first 1:30 of overtime Monday in Calgary, punctuating his lengthy shift with a goal, sending the Buffalo Sabres to a 2-1 win over the Flames. Eichel's game-winner was a rocket from the near faceoff circle, his 19th goal of the season, just as a Buffalo power play expired. Chad Johnson was strong in net against his former team, making 32 saves for his first win since October 15.

The Sabres opened the game with multiple scoring chances, but Calgary jumped out to the 1-0 lead just eight minutes into the game on Matthew Tkachuk's power play goal. Camped near the Buffalo net, Tkachuk perfectly placed his stick on a Johnny Gaudreau shot, deflecting the puck up and over Johnson. The Sabres responded almost immediately as Scott Wilson took advantage of a Flames turnover 24-seconds later, beating Mike Smith for his second goal of the season.

Both teams had scoring chances throughout, but the game remained knotted 1-1 heading into the extra frame where Eichel's 10th point in six games (4 G, 6 A) sealed the Sabres' victory. Nathan Beaulieu, seeing his first action in three games following an illness, only skated for 1:15 after his head hit the ice following a scuffle with Calgary's Curtis Lazar.

### Game Summary

#### Goal Summary:

##### First Period:

BUF: 8:24 - Scott Wilson (2) (Unassisted)

CGY: 8:00 - Matthew Tkachuk (14) (PPG) (Johnny Gaudreau, Mark Giordano)

##### Second Period:

BUF: NONE

CGY: NONE

##### Third Period:

BUF: NONE

CGY: NONE

##### Overtime:

BUF: 1:30 - Jack Eichel (19) (Ryan O'Reilly, Rasmus Ristolainen)

CGY: NONE

#### Penalty Summary:

##### First Period:

BUF: 3:11 - Nathan Beaulieu (5 min., fighting). 6:51 - Jake McCabe (2 min., tripping). 13:27 - Kyle Okposo (2 min., slashing). 16:47 - Nicholas Baptiste (2 min., goaltender interference)

CGY: 3:11 - Curtis Lazar (5 min., fighting)

##### Second Period:

BUF: NONE

CGY: 17:46 - Dougie Hamilton (2 min., interference)

##### Third Period:

BUF: NONE

CGY: 15:46 - Michael Stone (2 min., interference). 19:27 - Mikael Backlund (2 min., holding the stick)

##### Overtime:

BUF: NONE

CGY: NONE

Shots on Goal:

BUF - 33 (12, 8, 11, 2); CGY - 33 (13, 12, 8, 0)

Goalies:

BUF: Chad Johnson - 32 saves

CGY: Mike Smith - 31 saves

Power Plays:

BUF: 0 of 3 (0%)

CGY: 1 of 3 (33.3%)

Three Stars:

Chad Johnson - BUF

Mike Smith - CGY

Jack Eichel - BUF

What's Next:

The Sabres return to action on Tuesday night, visiting the Edmonton Oilers for a 9 p.m. faceoff at Rogers Place. Pre-game coverage with Brian Koziol and Paul Hamilton begins at 8 p.m. on WGR!

## **Eichel Burns Flames in OT**

By Josh Reed

WIVB

January 22, 2018

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB)- Jack Eichel delivered the game-winning goal to send the Sabres to a 2-1 overtime win over Calgary. Eichel's 19th goal of the season handed the Sabres their first victory in Calgary since 2003.

The Sabres bounced back with a strong effort following Saturday's 7-1 loss to Dallas. "We were bitter about the way we played Saturday and rightfully so," Eichel said following Monday's win.

Goalie Chad Johnson dominated his former team by posting 32 saves on 33 shot attempts and Scott Wilson provided the Sabres other goal in the game.

The Sabres next game is Tuesday at Edmonton.

## Sabres top Flames in overtime

Eichel scores game-winning goal, Johnson makes 32 saves for Buffalo

by Aaron Vickers

NHL.com

Jan. 23, 2018

CALGARY -- Jack Eichel scored 1:30 into overtime to give the Buffalo Sabres a 2-1 win against the Calgary Flames at Scotiabank Saddledome on Monday.

Scott Wilson scored in the first period for the Sabres (12-26-9), who won for the first time in three games and are 2-6-1 in their past nine.

"I think that that's the way we need to play in order to win," Eichel said. "We did what we needed to do to win. Just need to find it on a consistent basis, that compete and that desperation shift in and shift out."

[WATCH: All Sabres vs. Flames highlights]

Chad Johnson made 32 saves for Buffalo to earn his second win of the season. Johnson, a Calgary native, played 36 games for the Flames last season and signed a one-year contract with the Sabres on July 1.

"There's more motivation there and a little more desire to kind of ... not stick it to them, but when they play me, I'm sure they want to compete a little bit harder knowing me and I want to compete a little bit harder knowing them," Johnson said. "It was just a fun experience and it's nice to get the win. It's been a tough year so it's nice to get a win, especially tonight in my hometown."

Matthew Tkachuk scored, and Mike Smith made 31 saves for Calgary (25-16-6), which is on a nine-game point streak but is 0-0-2 coming out of its five-day break. The Flames entered the break on a seven-game winning streak.

"In the end, you get a point again and you just keep pushing forward, but that's a game there you'd like to have two in," Smith said.

Eichel one-timed a pass from Rasmus Ristolainen by Smith just as a Sabres power play ended. Eichel has four goals and six assists in a six-game point streak, and 21 points (11 goals, 10 assists) in his past 14 games.

Wilson scores after turnover

01:04 • January 22nd, 2018

"I thought the face-off at the end was a good opportunity for us to get a quick shot," Eichel said. "I said to [Ristolainen], 'Try to get it in the middle and then I'll try to open up for a one-timer.' We tried for a quick shot."

Tkachuk redirected Johnny Gaudreau's pass over Johnson's right shoulder at 8:00 of the first period to put the Flames up 1-0. Tkachuk has 10 points (six goals, four assists) and Gaudreau has 14 (two goals, 12 assists) in the past nine games.

Wilson scored 24 seconds later to tie the game 1-1 when he beat Smith through the five-hole from the high slot at 8:24.

"I hated both goals, to be honest," Smith said. "Both goals were stoppable pucks. Any time pucks to go through you or under you, you'd like to have them back."

Johnson made a left-pad save on Garnet Hathaway at 10:42 of the second period, and Smith made a blocker save on Sam Reinhart's shot from the edge of the crease at 18:43.

Johnson made an arm save on Brett Kulak's shot at 9:40 of the third period.

"He gave us a chance to win," Eichel said. "He made a lot of real, real big saves at key times in the game. It's great to see him get a win. I thought he's played really well this year and maybe not gotten the bounces and the goal support. It's awesome to see him get a win here in Calgary."

Johnson's tough kick save  
00:32 • January 22nd, 2018

Goal of the game  
Eichel's goal at 1:30 of overtime.

Eichel's overtime winner  
01:02 • January 22nd, 2018

Save of the game  
Johnson's save on Hathaway at 10:42 of the second period.

Johnson's consecutive pad saves  
00:09 • January 22nd, 2018

Highlight of the game  
Tkachuk's goal at 8:00 of the first period.

Tkachuk's redirection PPG  
00:56 • January 22nd, 2018

They said it  
"I can't say enough about how we competed from start to finish. That's what we've needed. That's what you need to win games. It was a hockey game. I think that's the first one I've been a part of this year that felt like a normal hockey game to be a part of. It was fun to be out there and get the win." -- Sabres goaltender Chad Johnson

"We had some momentum going into it and then you come out of it, we're still getting some points. I don't think we've played up to where we were before the bye. I think it's mental more than anything, and just getting back going and getting back into the rhythm of things and the bye week can maybe put a stall on that." -- Flames goaltender Mike Smith

Need to know  
Johnson's previous win was Oct. 15 against the Anaheim Ducks. ... Smith allowed more than one goal for the first time in four starts. ... Buffalo defenseman Nathan Beaulieu left the game at 3:11 of the first period with an undisclosed injury following a fight with Flames forward Curtis Lazar. He will be re-evaluated Tuesday. ... Flames forward Jaromir Jagr missed his eighth consecutive game because of a lower-body injury.

What's next  
Sabres: At the Edmonton Oilers on Tuesday (9 p.m. ET; SNW, MSG-B, NHL.TV)

Flames: Host the Los Angeles Kings on Wednesday (10 p.m. ET; SN360, FS-W, NHL.TV)

## **Chad Johnson opted against "cushy" return to Calgary**

ERIC FRANCIS

Calgary Sun

January 22, 2018

Chad Johnson said last season was the most enjoyable one he'd ever had playing hockey.

Yet, despite relishing the opportunity to play well for his hometown Calgary Flames, the 31-year-old netminder didn't hesitate in turning down the chance to return.

"You can't come back and do people favours and be complacent with the decision," said Johnson, speaking publicly for the first time about his rationale for moving on.

"Last year was the funnest year I had in hockey, but at the end of the day it's business. I think for me to come back it would have been a complacent decision.

"I had opportunities to go different places where it would be nice and cushy just like the Flames, and I would have been able to put up great numbers. But it wouldn't have been a challenge. At this point in my career I wanted a challenge, so I picked Buffalo. I had good memories from them years before, and I had a lot of trust in the players, so my decision was based on trying to make this team better."

It hasn't worked.

Not only has the Calgary Buffaloes product been unable to grab the starting gig he figured was up for grabs between him and Robin Lehner, but the Sabres sit dead last in the NHL. Hardly cushy.

Their surprising 2-1 overtime win at the Saddledome Monday gave Johnson just his second win of the season, upping his record to 2-8-3 with a goals against average approaching four.

While the Sabres' struggles are hardly surprising, it's news to many fans that the Flames tried bringing Johnson back.

"There was an offer," confirmed Johnson, who posted an 18-15-1 record and 2.59 GAA while helping to save the season with an 11-2 first quarter run that helped the Flames erase Brian Elliott's early struggles.

"At the point it came it was a little bit too late as I had really good talks with other teams, and just better offers and situations for me personally."

Did it have anything to do with the frustration of the second half when his playing time diminished greatly and his leash was short.

"Maybe," said Johnson, who signed a one-year, \$2.5 million deal with Buffalo.

"But I understood the situation. I've always been realistic with why someone is and isn't playing. With our situation last year — I don't want to look too much into it, I want to let go of it — but I think looking at it there were two guys capable of playing. So whenever there was any kind of a mistake there was always a focus on making a change. I think when there's that instability there, whether it's through the organization, or us not playing well enough, consistency, or the media or whatever, that always plays a part in the changes.

"Ells went on a streak there — 10 or 12 games in a row he won — it was hard for me to get back into the net and I can't argue with that. I think now they've really labeled a guy and they stick with it and I think that's what they really needed — an identity."

He didn't want that identity to revolve around him being Mike Smith's caddie, which he knew as a free agent on July 1 would be the case. After all, Johnson was a throw-in for the deal that landed Smith. Two weeks later Johnson was an unrestricted free agent.

Still, his memories of his time in Calgary are cherished.

“Personally, I thought it went really well,” said Johnson, who won 11 of 13 starts last season from mid-October to mid-November to save the Flames playoff hopes.

“There were times things didn’t go my way and in this market things can get blown up – it’s just part of the fun of being in a Canadian market.

“That (successful quarter pole) stretch for me was big — to do it in front of my family and my hometown’s crowd and to be able to help get the team back into the playoffs was my goal from Day 1 when I signed with them. It really went my way and that was exciting. That’s what makes this year tough — the last few years I’ve had my game and my results where I want them to be.”

It’s clear his second stint in Buffalo has gone the opposite way, with Lehner making twice as many appearances.

“It has been a really tough year personally and as a team,” said Johnson, who came to town with an .878 save percentage.

“Guys are disappointed at this point how it has gone. Sitting in last place we’re all fighting for contracts and positions and for new teams and whatever you’re looking to do, because there are going to be changes.”

Something the veteran of six NHL clubs is all too familiar with.

## **Eichel's OT winner caps strong response from Sabres in Calgary**

by Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

Jan. 23, 2018

CALGARY - Chad Johnson couldn't help but feel like a victory was finally within reach. With 32.5 seconds remaining in a game that had been tied since the first period, Zemgus Girgensons drew a holding penalty and gave the Buffalo Sabres a shot to defeat the Calgary Flames on a power play, a possibility their goaltender had long awaited.

"I started thinking this could be it," Johnson said. "We could get a win here."

The power play bled into overtime, until - just as the man advantage expired - Jack Eichel slipped to the left circle off a faceoff win and fired a one-time shot past Flames goaltender Mike Smith to clinch a 2-1 win for the Sabres.

Eichel dropped to one knee and unleashed an emotional celebration for an emotional win. On the other side of the ice, Johnson relished a feeling he'd been missing for quite some time. He'd just earned his first victory since Oct. 15, and against his former team in his hometown at that.

"It's an awesome win," Eichel said. "We knew how emotional and how invested he was in this game. We just wanted to play a full 60 and I thought we did a good job."

BUF 2, CGY 1 - F/OT

03:46 • January 22nd, 2018

For Johnson and the rest of the team, the game was a far cry from their 7-1 loss to the Dallas Stars at home on Saturday. Johnson had come on in relief of Robin Lehner in that game only to allow three goals on 13 shots, and Phil Housley criticized his team afterward for their lack of work ethic.

Coming off that "embarrassing" loss, Eichel said the Sabres came to Calgary looking to play desperate. Facing a Flames team that had won seven of its last eight games, they turned in one of their most complete efforts of the season.

"I can't say enough about how we competed, from really the start to the finish," Johnson said. "That's what we've needed. That's what you need to win hockey games. You have to play hard right from the start to the end."

"... I thought tonight we really competed on pucks and we were in shot lanes. The D were battling in front of me. That was a hockey game. It was, I think, the first one I've been a part of this year where it felt like a normal hockey game to be a part of. It was fun to be out there and get the win."

Johnson's consecutive pad saves

00:09 • January 22nd, 2018

Johnson did his part to earn the win, making 32 saves. The difference from his past starts, Housley said, was that he had help. The Sabres were effective at keeping the Flames to the outside and active on the backcheck coming into their own zone.

"It was really good, the best I've seen in a long time," Housley said. "That's what it takes to win in this league."

The one goal Johnson did allow came with the Flames on the power play in the first period. He had spoken earlier in the day about former teammate Matthew Tkachuk's scoring prowess at the net front, and the young forward validated that sentiment with a high tip of a Johnny Gaudreau shot to give the Flames a 1-0 lead.

Given the way Smith played throughout - he made 31 saves - it may have been essential that the Sabres were able to respond as quickly as they did. It came off the stick of Scott Wilson, playing his first game since being promoted to a top-six role alongside Ryan O'Reilly and Sam Reinhart.

Wilson was the benefactor of a Flames turnover in their own zone and quickly beat Smith from the slot. The goal came just 36 seconds after Tkachuk's and - like the rest of the Sabres' success throughout the night - was the product of hard work, in this instance on the forecheck.

Wilson scores after turnover  
01:04 • January 22nd, 2018

"That was huge," defenseman Rasmus Ristolainen said. "They made a pretty nice play on the power play and that was a tough one, but good answer. That's what good teams do."

From that point on, the Sabres went toe-to-toe with the Flames as the goaltenders kept the game to a 1-1 tie. The line of Zemgus Girgensons, Eichel and Kyle Okposo was particularly active when it came to extending possession on the forecheck and generating offensive looks.

On two occasions, that forechecking led to penalties drawn by Girgensons, the latter of which set up Eichel's overtime winner. The goal - which came on a quick feed from Ristolainen - extended Eichel's personal point streak to six games, during which he's tallied 10 points.

More importantly, though, it capped off an impressive response from a team that was clearly frustrated with the way their last game had gone. Ristolainen was blunt afterward, saying the Sabres "should never get outworked" and that their effort needs to resemble this game on a nightly basis.

When they do play that way, they believe they're capable of beating anyone.

"I think, if the guys make a choice and compete and play for each other, we're a really good hockey team," Housley said. "We've shown it in the past. We have to get more consistent. We have to get ready for another tough game against Edmonton, who's been waiting since Saturday. We're going to enjoy this but we've got to refocus and we've got to continue to play the way we did tonight."

Beaulieu leaves with injury

Nathan Beaulieu returned Monday from a three-game absence due to an illness, already the third time his season had been interrupted either by illness or by injury. That streak of poor luck continued when the defenseman left the game after a fight with Flames forward Curtis Lazar just 3:11 into the first period.

Beaulieu immediately challenged Lazar after the Calgary forward tripped him up behind the Buffalo net.

"You watch it, he's just sticking up for himself," Housley said. "I thought the hit was questionable but that will be reevaluated tomorrow."

With the Sabres forced to play with five defensemen for virtually the entire night, Ristolainen led all skaters with 32:26 of ice time, including 4:02 on the penalty kill. Ristolainen has now eclipsed the 30-minute mark three times this season.

Up next

The Sabres continue their road trip with a game against Connor McDavid and the Edmonton Oilers on Tuesday night. Coverage on MSG-B begins at 8:30 p.m., or you can listen live on WGR 550. Puck drop is slated for just after 9.

## **Johnson gets the nod in return to Calgary**

Baptiste, Beaulieu to enter lineup

by Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

January 22nd, 2018

CALGARY - Chad Johnson is all too familiar with the experience of facing a former organization. An eight-year career spanning six NHL clubs (including two tours with the Sabres) will do that to a goaltender, although there will be an added element when he starts in net against the Calgary Flames on Monday.

The game not only marks Johnson's first matchup with the Flames since leaving their organization, it also represents a return to his hometown.

"I've had a lot of ex-teams so far along my way," Johnson said. "I think coming home, regardless if I had played for the Flames or not, it's always special being able to play in your hometown. But obviously having played here and had some success and friends on the team ... it's always exciting to be back here, but a little more special knowing last year and how it went."

Preview: BUF at CGY (1/22/18)

02:03 • January 22nd, 2018

Johnson left Buffalo to sign a one-year deal with the Flames entering last season, and for a time he assumed starting duties. He made 30 starts through Jan. 24 before giving way to Brian Elliott, who became the hot hand as the Flames made their playoff run.

Calgary is positioned to make another push for the playoffs this season, and Johnson knows what to expect: speed, strong defense and organization. It's imperative, he said, that the Sabres establish consistency in their compete level, something they admittedly lacked in their 7-1 loss to Dallas on Saturday.

How the team responds to the adversity of that loss will be a point of emphasis for Sabres coach Phil Housley.

"That's the one thing," Housley said. "You can talk about the Calgary Flames and the way they're playing right now, really good hockey. We know what we're up against. But I think it's more about us. How are we going to respond after a loss and the way we did lose?"

"That's what I'm looking for. I'm looking for what kind of response our team's going to push forward here as we move forward. Tonight's a good example."

Johnson came on in relief of Robin Lehner in the loss to Dallas, allowing three goals on 13 shots in 30:28. It was the continuation of what's been a difficult season for the goaltender, who has just one win in 17 appearances due in part to some lackluster defensive performances in front of him.

"It seems like a couple times when he's in there we haven't given our best performance even when he's been on his game," defenseman Nathan Beaulieu said. "It's unfortunate. We're not playing just for Johnny, we're playing together, and we've got to keep it in the back of our mind that he was here before and we haven't really given him an 'A game.'"

Coverage on Monday night begins at 8:30 p.m. with the GMC Game Night Pregame Show on MSG-B, or you can listen live on WGR 550. The puck drops at 9.

Scouting the Flames

Phil Housley Pregame (1/22/18)

04:09 • January 22nd, 2018

Calgary enters the evening having earned a point in eight straight games after seeing its seven-game win streak snapped with a shootout loss to Winnipeg on Saturday. The Flames are tied with Los Angeles for third in the Pacific Division with 55 points.

Instrumental to the Flames' success has been the production from their top line of Johnny Gaudreau, Sean Monahan and Micheal Ferland. The trio has combined for 34 points in their last eight games: 13 from Gaudreau (2+11), 10 from Monahan (4+6) and nine from Ferland (4+5).

According to Corsica, the line has been on the ice for 26 goals at 5-on-5 this season, which ranks third in the NHL.

"They've got probably one of the top lines in the league offensively," Beaulieu said. "They produce so well and they skate so well, so it's a big challenge for us tonight. Not just because we're playing the Calgary Flames, but because we have a lot to prove still. This year's been a lot of ups and downs and we've got to start this trip off the right way."

On the other side of the puck, Calgary has limited their opponents to three goals or less in every game since a 5-2 loss to Philadelphia on Dec. 4. They've allowed a league-best 35 goals since then, and their average of 2.67 goals-against per game ranks 10th in the NHL. Mike Smith ranks fourth among regular goaltenders with a .925 save percentage.

"It starts with their goaltender, Smith," Housley said. "You've got to keep the puck away from him. He's just like another defenseman back there and it helps their breakout, which is important. Now their D can just expand to the corners and they're out of their end quickly or he can fire it himself, so that's something we're going to have to pay attention to."

#### Projected lineup

Nicholas Baptiste will enter for the lineup for the first time since being recalled on Friday, returning to the building where he made his NHL debut in October of last season. To make room for the addition of Baptiste, Benoit Pouliot will sit as a healthy scratch.

Baptiste said he feels like a changed player, not just from his debut last season but even from the four-game stint he had with the Sabres back in November. So, what will he look to bring?

"Play with a ton of speed, chipping pucks in, being physical, shooting the puck," he said. "Obviously, we have tons of skill on this team. I'm just going to try to come in and bring a lot of energy, bring a lot of pace and try to make it tough on their defense."

Beaulieu will be back in the lineup on defense after missing the last three games due to an illness, which he said was different from the condition that forced him to miss five games in December. It appears that a bug is still making its way through the defense corps, however, as Josh Gorges has fallen ill and will not play.

The full lineup is projected to look as follows:

28 Zemgus Girgensons - 15 Jack Eichel - 21 Kyle Okposo  
20 Scott Wilson - 90 Ryan O'Reilly - 23 Sam Reinhart  
9 Evander Kane - 22 Johan Larsson - 29 Jason Pominville  
17 Jordan Nolan - 71 Evan Rodrigues - 13 Nicholas Baptiste

6 Marco Scandella - 55 Rasmus Ristolainen  
82 Nathan Beaulieu - 19 Jake McCabe  
41 Justin Falk - 8 Casey Nelson

31 Chad Johnson  
40 Robin Lehner

## **Budik remains hot for Prince Albert after stellar World Juniors showing**

by Kris Baker

SabresProspects.com

January 22nd, 2018

Prince Albert Raiders defenseman Vojtech Budik (2016, fifth round) is putting together the most productive stretch of his Western Hockey League career on the heels of his rock-solid, five-assist showing with the Czech Republic at the 2018 IIHF World Junior Hockey Championship.

Budik lit the lamp in three consecutive games last week, including a two-goal, one-assist effort Friday to earn the game's first star in a 5-1 triumph over Red Deer.

Kris Baker

@SabresProspects

Prince Albert D Vojtech Budik scores a pair of goals Friday as the Raiders down Red Deer 5-1.

8:53 AM - Jan 20, 2018

2 2 Replies 2 2 Retweets 12 12 likes

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On Saturday, Budik filled the net with the overtime goal to power the Raiders to a 3-2 win over Medicine Hat.

Kris Baker

@SabresProspects

Prince Albert D Vojtech Budik goes through the zone cycle and hits pay dirt in OT for his seventh of the year. Goals in three straight. Point-per-game player since 12/1 (14 games). #Sabres

9:40 AM - Jan 21, 2018

Replies 3 3 Retweets 16 16 likes

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Budik, who ended the week Sunday with an assist in a 4-3 overtime loss at Calgary, has captured 20 points (7+13) in 40 games this season, including 15 in his last 15 played since December 1.

The upped production couldn't come at a better time with Budik looking to earn his first National Hockey League contract prior to the June 1 deadline.

Europe

Marcus Davidsson (2017, second round) recorded the first two-goal game of his Swedish Hockey League career Thursday and added an assist as Djurgården IF defeated Brynas IF 5-1.

Kris Baker

@SabresProspects

Djurgården C Marcus Davidsson scores twice as part of the first three-point game of his SHL career. Davidsson's 13 points (5+8) rank third among the league's junior-aged skaters. #Sabres

9:28 PM - Jan 18, 2018

1 1 Reply 4 4 Retweets 20 20 likes

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Davidsson was unable to add to his stack in Saturday's 3-1 loss to Brynas, giving the 19-year-old five-goals and a career-best 13 points through 27 appearances.

Rasmus Asplund (2016, second round) got a leg up on two defenders and broke in alone for his sixth goal of the year Thursday as Farjestad BK got past Frolunda HC 4-1.

Kris Baker

@SabresProspects

Rasmus Asplund gets behind the D and streaks in for the blocker side finish. Asplund up to 25 points (6+19) in 36 games. #Sabres

9:20 PM - Jan 18, 2018

3 3 Replies 6 6 Retweets 49 49 likes

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Asplund, who was shut out in a 3-1 loss Skelleftea AIK on Saturday, has 25 points and 57 shots on goal in 37 games.

Victor Olofsson (2014, seventh round) was unable to score on any of his five shots on goal last week as Frolunda HC won once and lost once.

Despite not adding to his total, Olofsson remains tied for SHL lead for both goals (21) and power-play markers (10) through 36 games as part of his career-best 33-point campaign.

LeKi goaltender Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen (2017, second round) earned one start last week, making 20 saves before stopping two of three shootout attempts in a 3-2 defeat to KeuPa HT.

The loss drops Luukkonen to 11-7-2 with a 2.70 goals-against average and a .915 save percentage.

Defenseman Oskari Laaksonen (2017, third round) remained with Ilves' top club in Liiga, working his way into bottom-pair minutes as his club earned victories in two of three tries.

The 18-year-old righthander has appeared in six January contests in Finland's top professional league, notching one assist while averaging 11:00 of work per outing.

## NCAA

After getting blanked in Thursday's 5-4 win at Michigan State, Casey Mittelstadt (2017, first round) scored a goal and an assist Saturday as Minnesota swept the Spartans with a 2-1 victory at Madison Square Garden in New York City.

At 11:23 of the opening frame, Mittelstadt drove the center lane with speed and extended his backhand to deflect home a Brent Gates Jr. feed for his seventh goal of the year.

The two-point evening gives Mittelstadt seven goals and an even 20 points through his first 24 collegiate contests.

In Sunday action, freshman winger Linus Weissbach (2017, seventh round) equaled Mittelstadt by netting his seventh goal of the year as Wisconsin cruised past Notre Dame 5-0.

Weissbach, who on Thursday earned one assist in a 4-2 loss at Notre Dame, has captured 17 points (7+10) while appearing in 24 of the Badgers' 27 contests.

In Hockey East action, Jacob Bryson (2017, fourth round) notched a pair of assists Thursday for the sixth multi-point game of his season as Providence defeated Connecticut 3-1, and logged two shots on goal Saturday as the Friars lost the rematch 3-1 on home ice.

Bryson has continued to prove himself an effective puck circulator with 19 points (1+18) in 26 games.

Ivan Chukarov (2015, seventh round) picked up an assist Friday, wristing a shot from the right point that was re-directed for the game's first goal as Massachusetts blanked Northeastern 3-0.

Chukarov, who logged a minus-2 rating the next night as the Minutemen were on the wrong end of a 5-0 shutout loss at Northeastern, has collected five assists in 16 appearances this season.

St. Cloud State defenseman William Borgen (2015, fourth round) produced one shot on goal Saturday in the Huskies' 5-2 loss to Minnesota State, leaving the steady defender with 10 points (1+9) through 22 games.

Senior forward Judd Peterson (2012, seventh round) was kept off the scoresheet in the St. Cloud State loss to Minnesota State to stay at three goals and 12 total points in 22 outings.

Penn State winger Brett Murray (2016, fourth round) did not dress last week as the Nittany Lions were swept at Michigan by scores of 4-0 and 3-2. Murray, who has sat out seven of Penn State's last eight games, has one goal and five points in 17 games played.

Philip Nyberg (2016, fifth round) contributed three shots on goal last week as Connecticut fell to Providence 3-1 on home ice before winning the road rematch over the Friars by the same score. In 15 games, Nyberg has secured two goals, three points, and a team-best plus-five rating.

Maxwell Willman (2014, fifth round) remained out of the Brown lineup last week, leaving the senior forward with one goal and four helpers while playing in just nine of the Bears' 20 contests thus far.

Boston College had the week off, leaving third-year defenseman Casey Fitzgerald (2016, third round) with 13 points (4+9) in 22 appearances, and forward Christopher Brown (2014, sixth round) with 12 points (6+6) in 23 contests.

#### QMJHL

Shawinigan sniper Vasily Glotov (2016, seventh round) buried a shot high to the glove side late in regulation Saturday as the Cataractes fell to Rouyn-Noranda 3-2.

Glotov added another goal plus an assist in Sunday's 4-3 loss at Val-d'Or, giving the Russian shooter a team-leading 23 goals and 32 points in 41 contests for the last-place Cataractes.

#### OHL

Cliff Pu (2016, third round) knocked in his 20th goal of the season Wednesday as Kingston defeated Peterborough 5-1.

Pu was quiet in a 3-2 overtime loss to Hamilton on Friday, and got back on the score sheet with a helper in Sunday's 6-2 defeat at Mississauga.

Pu has 52 points in 44 games this season, including eight (4+4) in nine games since being dealt to the Frontenacs.

Peterborough defenseman Austin Osmanski (2016, seventh round) netted a cumulative minus-2 rating last week as the PEtes suffered losses to Kingston, Oshawa, and Ottawa. The stay-at-home Osmanski has amassed 13 points (1+12) in 43 games.

#### WHL

Red Deer winger Brandon Hagel (2016, sixth round) went without a point in losses to Prince Albert and Kamloops last week as the Rebels extended their winless slide to 13 games.

Hagel has two assists in four games since returning from a six-week injury absence (upper body), and season totals of seven goals and 25 points in 31 games.

For more on all the youngsters in the Sabres pipeline, check out Kris Baker's website, SabresProspects.com. You can also follow him on Twitter (@SabresProspects) for in-game updates throughout the week on any Buffalo prospects that are in action.

## Sharpen Up: January 22, 2018

by Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

January 22nd, 2018

The Sabres are on the road tonight in Calgary. Join us for the GMC Game Night pregame show starting at 8:30 p.m. on MSG. Then Dan and RJ have the call at 9 on MSG and WGR 550.

Here's what you need to know.

Buffalo was back at practice on Sunday following their 7-1 loss to the Dallas Stars on Saturday.

Sabres Now (1/21/18)

01:52 • January 21st, 2018

From the Ice Level Practice Report...

Phil Housley said following a 7-1 loss on Saturday that if the Buffalo Sabres weren't going to work hard in front of their home crowd, then they'd have to make up for it in practice. They did so on Sunday in an intense, fast-paced session at HarborCenter.

For the majority of the 45-minute practice, the Sabres skated with the puck. For the last few minutes, they skated without it.

"We don't deserve anything else," goaltender Robin Lehner said. "It's frustrating for a lot of people, because we have a structure in place, we have a game plan in place and we're just not doing it. So, we've got to practice until we learn."

Scott Wilson won a pair of Stanley Cups in Pittsburgh, and thus knows what it takes to win in the NHL. He was promoted to a line with Ryan O'Reilly and Sam Reinhart at practice on Sunday, and suggested Buffalo's issues may be more a matter of working smarter than harder.

"Any time there's arguments about compete level, obviously it's not good," Wilson said. "At the same time, I can pretty much talk for everybody that we're trying out there. It's not like we're not trying and battling."

"Obviously, coaches think we have an extra edge to our game that we need to get to and I think all the guys agree. But at the same time, we're trying to compete out there every night and get some wins for the fans and try and turn this thing around."

Tonight's matchup

From the Game Notes

Tonight's game kicks off a three-game Pacific Division road trip for the Sabres. It continues tomorrow night at Edmonton and wraps up on Thursday night in Vancouver.

After going 2-0-1 in their last three meetings, a win or overtime loss tonight would give the Sabres points in four straight games against the Flames for the first time since they went 7-0-2 against Calgary from Feb. 18, 1997 to Nov. 23, 2001. The home team has won 18 of the last 20 games between these teams, dating back to the 1999-00 season. The Sabres' last win in Calgary was on Oct. 18, 2003.

Ryan O'Reilly has 14 points (5+9) in his last 11 games against the Flames, including five multi-point efforts. He enters tonight's game on a six-game point streak against Calgary, having tallied nine points (3+6) in those six games.

Kyle Okposo has 10 points (2+8) in 10 career games against the Flames, including three two-point games in his last five meetings with Calgary.

Evander Kane has eight points (3+5) in eight career games against Calgary.

Jack Eichel enters tonight's game on a five-game point streak, with nine points (3+6) in those games.

Kyle Okposo has recorded 10 points (2+8) in his last 10 games.

Ryan O'Reilly has recorded five points (2+3) in his last five games.

Rasmus Ristolainen has nine points (3+6) in his last nine games, dating back to Dec. 29, despite getting a game misconduct after just 5:43 of ice time in one of those games. Ristolainen's nine points during that span tied for third among NHL defensemen entering play Sunday.

## Remembering Jim Johannson

Long-time USA Hockey executive Jim Johannson, who was slated to be the general manager of this year's U.S. men's hockey Olympic team, passed away suddenly on Sunday.

The hockey community took to social media to share the memories and condolences. Here's a very brief sampling:

✓

@usahockey

We are devastated to announce that USA Hockey's Jim Johannson passed away early this morning. Our heartfelt condolences go out to his entire family. JJ will be greatly missed, but always remembered for his immensely positive impact both on & off the ice. <http://bit.ly/2Du8NGr>

11:38 AM - Jan 21, 2018

165 165 Replies 1,550 1,550 Retweets 3,432 3,432 likes

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Buffalo Sabres

✓

@BuffaloSabres

Statement on the passing of @usahockey's Jim Johannson.

12:32 PM - Jan 21, 2018

Replies 45 45 Retweets 189 189 likes

[Twitter Ads info and privacy](#)

Phil Housley

✓

@philhousley6

It comes with a heavy heart hearing about the passing of my close friend JJ. One of the best leaders of @usahockey who grew our game to new heights! My thoughts and prayers are with his family and he will truly be missed, but his legacy will carry on. It's a sad day for hockey!

12:53 PM - Jan 21, 2018

8 8 Replies 113 113 Retweets 844 844 likes

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21 Jan

Jack Eichel

✓

@Jackeichel15

It has been a very difficult day attempting to process the the news of the sudden passing of Jim Johannson. Personally, JJ was a mentor and and friend that had a significant impact on me as a hockey player and a person.

JJ was the glue of USA Hockey. His presence spoke

Jack Eichel



@Jackeichel15

volumes as other USA Hockey family members can attest. His passion for the many teams and his players was beyond comparison in the sport. My heartfelt condolences to his wife, daughter, and relatives

6:01 PM - Jan 21, 2018

9 9 Replies 124 124 Retweets 1,391 1,391 likes

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Kyle Okposo



@bookerT2116

Jim Johansson was an amazing person. JJ was synonymous with USA Hockey and its leadership. My condolences to his family. You will be missed but not forgotten. Rest In Peace

2:56 PM - Jan 21, 2018

1 1 Reply 41 41 Retweets 424 424 likes

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Hudson Fasching

@Hfasching22

Terrible news to hear about the passing of Jim Johansson. He was a incredible guy who gave me some life changing opportunities. He was a great representation of everything about @usahockey. Thoughts and condolences to his family and friends.

4:10 PM - Jan 21, 2018

1 1 Reply 17 17 Retweets 155 155 likes

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NHL Public Relations



@PR\_NHL

Commissioner Bettman statement on the passing of USA Hockey's Jim Johansson. <http://atnhl.com/2DAckDa>