



Buffalo Sabres

Daily Press Clips

October 28, 2019

Ullmark makes 41 saves, Sabres beat Red Wings 2-0

By Paul Harris

Associated Press

October 26, 2019

DETROIT (AP) — The Buffalo Sabres bounced back in the best way Friday night.

Linus Ullmark made 41 saves, Sam Reinhart had a goal and an assist and the Sabres beat the Detroit Red Wings 2-0 on Friday night. Buffalo fell 6-2 to the New York Rangers a night earlier.

"I really liked the way we were able to regroup after last night," said Reinhart, who got his fifth goal. "We talked in the room about what we did wrong, and then we were able to refresh our minds and come out and play like this."

Buffalo (9-2-1) also got a goal from defenseman Jake McCabe and two assists from Jack Eichel.

"We have so much confidence in this room right now that there's no panic when we lose a game," McCabe said. "Obviously everyone was a little off last night, but we were able to refocus on tonight's game and do a lot of good things."

Jimmy Howard stopped 23 shots for Detroit, which lost its seventh straight.

"We came up short obviously. We pushed. I thought we played a pretty solid game defensively other than the one goal there," Red Wings center Dylan Larkin said. "... Just, we gotta score. You can't win a game if you don't score."

Detroit has been outscored 29-9 during its losing streak.

McCabe gave Buffalo a 1-0 lead with 8:20 left in the second period. His wrist shot from the left point got past Howard, who was screened.

McCabe's first goal of the season came after he missed most of the first period getting his face stitched up.

"I got a puck in the chin on my second shift and got my face slammed into the glass on my third shift," McCabe said. "So I've got my Halloween costume all ready."

Reinhart scored on a power play 1:15 into the third when he tipped a pass from Victor Oloffson.

Detroit outshot Buffalo 12-6 in the first period. Ullmark stopped Valteri Filppula on a breakaway around 3:20 into the game.

NOTE: Buffalo recalled D William Borgen from AHL Rochester after D Marco Scandella suffered a lower-body injury in Thursday's 6-2 loss to the New York Rangers. Scandella did not play Friday. ... Detroit recalled F Givani Smith, who made his NHL debut Friday, from AHL Grand Rapids after Fs Luke Glendening (upper body) and Justin Abdelkader (lower body) were injured in Wednesday's 5-2 loss to the Ottawa Senators. Neither played Friday.

UP NEXT

Sabres: Host Arizona on Monday night.

Red Wings: Host St. Louis on Sunday night.

Detroit hosts Buffalo, aims to stop home skid

By Associated Press

October 25, 2019

Buffalo Sabres (8-2-1, first in the Atlantic Division) vs. Detroit Red Wings (3-7-0, seventh in the Atlantic Division)

Detroit; Friday, 7:30 p.m. EDT

BOTTOM LINE: Detroit plays Buffalo looking to break its three-game home slide.

Detroit finished 32-40-10 overall and 9-15-4 in Atlantic Division games during the 2018-19 season. The Red Wings recorded 379 assists on 224 total goals last season.

Buffalo finished 33-39-10 overall and 11-12-5 in Atlantic Division play in the 2018-19 season. Goalies for the Sabres allowed 3.1 goals on 32.8 shots per game last season.

The matchup Friday is the first meeting of the season for the two teams.

Red Wings Injuries: None listed.

Sabres Injuries: Jimmy Vesey: day to day (upper body).

Defenseman Brandon Montour rejoins Sabres following hand injury

By Lance Lysowski

The Buffalo News

October 27, 2019

Brandon Montour had only been cleared to hold a stick for approximately one week when the defenseman rejoined the Buffalo Sabres for practice Sunday in KeyBank Center.

The 25-year-old does not have a definitive timeline to return to game action – coach Ralph Krueger wants Montour to regain his timing through practice – however, his presence was a significant development for the Sabres before their game Monday night against the Arizona Coyotes.

Montour, after all, had a career-high 35 points in 82 games between Anaheim and Buffalo last season. He can give the Sabres a significant boost at 5 on 5 and the power play. Yet Montour stepped onto the ice shortly after the team announced that defenseman Marco Scandella will miss two to three weeks with a lower-body injury, and winger Jimmy Vesey is listed on the injury report as week to week with an upper-body injury.

With Scandella out and Montour getting acclimated to game speed, the Sabres recalled defenseman Will Borgen from Rochester before practice Sunday. Montour, whom the Sabres acquired from Anaheim last February, expressed excitement for being one step closer to making his season debut.

"I didn't think too much of it right off the hop but a little more serious than I thought and took, obviously, a little more time than I wanted, but I'm happy to be back," Montour said of his hand injury, which he suffered during a preseason game in Columbus on Sept. 17.

Montour isn't quite sure how the injury occurred. He recalled having trouble gripping his stick and learned through an X-ray the following day that the issue was more serious than expected. The timing was particularly frustrating for Montour.

He spent much of his offseason recovering from an MCL sprain that sidelined him for Canada's run to the gold medal game in the IIHF World Championship. Montour only had four training camp practices prior and played 17:24 during the 4-1 loss to Columbus.

The injury did not keep Montour off the ice for long. He was able to skate with Dennis Miller, the Sabres' head of rehab and development, but did so without a stick for approximately one month.

"You can imagine how frustrating and how tough that was," Montour said. "But at least I can still skate and whatnot. But an injury like this or what happened with surgery and stuff, it's all about patience and a matter of time before it gets fully healed."

Montour sat through the Sabres' team meetings while recovering, which provided him with a clear understanding of how Krueger wants them to play defensively. However, he needs to get his timing back and understanding concepts is different than executing them on the ice. The Sabres intend to be patient with Montour. He was one of eight defensemen skating during practice Sunday.

"He's been sitting in on all the meetings that we've had, so he's up to speed on all the adjustments we've made, corrections, what we see as learners and confirmers of how we want to play," Krueger said. "He's been a part of that. But it's still a lot different when you have to put it into action."

"It's day to day to see him get integrated here. We've got no timeline on the re-entry. It's the first day, once again, and we'll build on this."

Montour figures to be a prominent part of the Sabres' plans this season. Montour, who was acquired for a first-round draft pick and defenseman Brendan Guhle last February, had 10 points in 20 games with the Sabres. John Gilmour, who played 17:28 during a 2-0 win over Detroit on Friday, is expected to fill in for Scandella until Montour is ready.

"It starts with practice, I guess," Montour said. "This is day one for me. I only had three days of camp with the team, so I'm trying to get in the swing of things as quick as I can. Obviously, it's going to take time and an adjustment to play at this level again. I think with the skating and the preparation and the staff, how we work together and worked out and got as fit as I can without playing in a hockey game, I think we're right there."

Phil Housley returns to Buffalo, reflects on lessons learned from coaching Sabres

By Lance Lysowski

The Buffalo News

October 27, 2019

When the Arizona Coyotes took a lap around the KeyBank Center ice at the sound of Rick Tocchet's whistle Sunday morning, Phil Housley jokingly began to chase defenseman Jason Demers.

Housley, grinning while wearing a Coyotes track suit, slowed his pursuit and circled back to run players through their next drill. The 55-year-old Hall-of-Fame defenseman appeared to be in his element, instructing the Coyotes' power play while standing at center ice, the same spot he orchestrated practices for two years as the Buffalo Sabres' coach.

This isn't Housley's first time using the visitors' locker room or bench in Buffalo. He will stand behind the latter when he faces his former team Monday night. However, Housley returned this time under far different circumstances. His replacement, Ralph Krueger, has the Sabres (9-2-1) tied for the league lead with 19 points.

Housley's former team's success hasn't caused him to reflect on what went wrong last season, though.

Those thoughts raced through his mind in the weeks and months following his firing last April. And while Housley explained, in hindsight, there are a number of changes he should have made as the Sabres' coach last season, he doesn't have any interest in expressing those thoughts publicly. Instead, Housley wishes his former players well, plans to learn from his two seasons as coach in Buffalo and remains focused on his new position as an assistant under Tocchet in Arizona.

"It's just one of those things, it's part of the business," Housley said. "I understand that. In hindsight there are a lot of things you probably could have changed, but that's the part of being a first-time head coach and you learn from that. I think if you asked any coach that has been relieved they'd have a lot of thoughts – what could they have done differently. But that's in the past now and I'm looking forward right now to coaching in Arizona."

Housley, who was drafted sixth overall by the Sabres in 1982 and played eight seasons for the organization, added that it's "great" to return to Buffalo. He's enjoyed learning under Tocchet, a former teammate with the Washington Capitals, and establishing relationships with a promising defense corps that includes Oliver Ekman-Larsson.

The wounds from last season run deep, though. Housley guided the Sabres to a 10-game win streak last November and first place in National Hockey League. He was touted as a potential candidate for the Jack Adams Award and served as a mentor for Rasmus Dahlin. His young roster, which lacked depth and struggled to rebound from injuries to the blue line, went 16-33-8 following the win streak to miss the playoffs for an eighth consecutive season.

Housley was dismissed following a 7-1 win over Detroit in the season finale. He wasn't sure if another team would call with a job offer. Housley considered taking a year off or placing phone calls to gauge interest. Meanwhile, Tocchet was trying to find someone to coach the Coyotes' defense and power play. In addition to his relationship with Housley, Tocchet spoke with Sabres General Manager Jason Botterill, whom he worked with during their time in Pittsburgh.

Housley's hiring was announced by Arizona shortly after the NHL draft in June, giving him plenty of time to reflect on his time in Buffalo, which included a 58-84-22 record over two seasons. So, what would he change about last season?

"Those are things I'll just keep to myself," Housley said. "There's no use. It's not going to benefit me right now to explain myself. I'm looking forward to tomorrow's game and trying to finish this road trip off the right way."

The Sabres had a negative-47 goal differential last season, as they struggled to prevent high-danger scoring chances. Under Krueger, Buffalo already has three shutouts – including two by Carter Hutton in consecutive starts – and a plus-11 goal differential through 13 games. Players who struggled under Housley – most notably, Marco Scandella and Vladimir Sobotka – have provided consistent production, particularly without the puck.

Sabres players have spoken repeatedly about Krueger's system allowing them to use their creativity and skill with the puck. They can rely on their instincts, as opposed to feeling robotic on the ice, particularly in the defensive zone. Rasmus Ristolainen described the Sabres' defensive play as being "on the same page," compared to last season. Botterill also told the media that Krueger's "clear message" has resonated with the players.

Housley when asked about a possible disconnect with the players: "I have no comment on that."

"He obviously has a special mind for the game," Kyle Okposo said of Housley following practice Sunday. "Any defenseman that has over 1,000 points knew how to play the game. He saw the game in a unique way as a very elite player in the league and you kind of take bits of pieces of that, how he saw the game, and the interactions we had. You learn from every coach you have. You never stop learning, no matter how old you are."

Entering play Sunday, the Coyotes had allowed the second-fewest goals in the NHL, despite losing defenseman Niklas Hjalmarsson to injury. Additionally, their power play – which is Housley's specialty – ranked 15th in the league. Arizona is 6-3-1 with a plus-9 goal differential. Tocchet called his defensemen "the heartbeat of our team" and said Housley can coax more out of the group.

Even Tocchet was surprised when he noticed how much time and effort Housley puts into preparing for each game. However, game plans are meaningless without earning the trust of players. Housley began calling Coyotes defensemen shortly after he was hired and has already made an impact on young players such as Jakob Chychrun, a 21-year-old amid his fourth NHL season.

"Howie's great," Chychrun said. "He's definitely a guy who was a heck of a player in this league and a very good offensive player, so it's nice to just have good conversations with him and try to continue to grow my game offensively and from the power play. He's been great. It's still early in the year and we're still working on a lot of things, but I think he's going to be great throughout the season."

Ekman-Larsson added: "Obviously it's a little bit different than last year with some stuff that you need to get used to. ... Obviously we know he was a good player and played a lot of games, so he knows what he's talking about. It's been great so far."

Housley also views his position in Arizona as a valuable learning experience. The Coyotes have emerged as a contender since Tocchet became coach in 2017-18. The two talk routinely about how to approach different situations during games and what the day-to-day message should be. Housley has been particularly impressed with Tocchet's ability to relate to players and manage different personalities.

Though Housley wishes to not dwell on how his time as Sabres coach ended, he learned several lessons that will remain with him, including managing people, building relationships, making decisions and delivering a message every day. He wishes his former team well and will carry their shared experiences with him in Arizona.

"It's great," Housley said of his return. "Obviously, they're playing very good hockey right now and it's good to see them having success. I have nothing but good things to say about Buffalo. But I'm happy to be with Arizona, coaching with Rick and John MacLean and Corey Schwab – all guys I played with. So it was an easy transition for me, a good group of players in there and they're finding ways to win."

Dale Hawerchuk's cancer battle on the minds of alums prior to Heritage Classic

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 26, 2019

Hall of Famer and former Sabres center Dale Hawerchuk has revealed that he's battling stomach cancer, the reason he took a leave of absence last month as the coach of the OHL's Barrie Colts.

Hawerchuk's fight became a topic for Winnipeg and Calgary alumni at an NHL Legacy Luncheon Friday in advance of Saturday night's Heritage Classic game outdoors between the Flames and Jets in Regina, Saskatchewan. The conversation started with Calgary defenseman Jamie Macoun recounting the teams' 1985 playoff series won by Winnipeg in four games – even though Macoun broke Hawerchuk's rib with a cross check.

"He's in a fight for his life," former Calgary captain Lanny McDonald, now the chairman of the Hockey Hall of Fame, said of Hawerchuk. "I spoke to Dale two weeks ago and reminded him of being knocked down by Jamie, encouraged him that, even though he's been knocked down many times in his life, this is one fight that he'll find a way to get back up and win all over again.

"In a spare moment, in your thoughts and prayers, make sure you say a couple for Dale Hawerchuk."

Hawerchuk had 385 points in 342 games for the Sabres from 1990-95, including a pair of seasons where he surpassed 90 points. He had 929 points in nine years with Winnipeg before joining the Sabres in the blockbuster 1990 trade that sent Phil Housley to the Jets. He was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 2001 after finishing his career with Philadelphia in the 1997 Stanley Cup final against Detroit.

"For some reason the Lord put me in this kind of fight and I'm ready to fight it," Hawerchuk, 56, told TSN last week. "I want to live to tell the story."

Hawerchuk said he is currently undergoing chemotherapy to shrink his tumor so doctors can then perform surgery and remove what's left.

"The chemo has hit me pretty hard," he said. "I do it one week and it breaks the body down and then the next week I take a break and build my body up so I can do it again. I have to do that for two months. I really struggle to eat and have a feeding tube, but the last few days I've been able to eat a little bit, too. You've got to keep your nutrition up."

Hawerchuk is Barrie's longest-running coach, entering his 10th season with the team. One of Hawerchuk's top players there is 2018 Sabres draft pick Matej Pekar.

"An illness like this can definitely put things in perspective," Hawerchuk said. "My surgeon told me I've got a hell of a battle on my hands, but I'm young and healthy everywhere else. Like anything in life, you just got to dig in and go for what your goals are. It's kind of no different than trying to make the NHL. Who knew if I could make it, right?"

Bruins marching on

This corner checked in on the Bruins last week in Toronto prior to a playoff-like overtime loss to the Leafs and there's no Stanley Cup hangover there. Boston went into Saturday's Cup rematch with St. Louis 6-1-2.

"So far it's worked out," said coach Bruce Cassidy. "I don't think we've played our best hockey by any stretch. Our record is probably a product of really good special teams, some timely scoring and really good goaltending. We're not as tight (defensively) as we typically are.

"We're giving up more than we typically do, so we've got some areas we have to progress on but I think that's normal throughout the league. Whether you're the last-place team, a finalist or the winner, you're always building your game early on. There's going to be holes."

Red-hot winger David Pastrnak said it's been easier than he thought to move on.

"It's like when you read the book and turn the page," deadpanned Pastrnak. "It stinks and will stink forever. But just look forward now and we have a great team. We can't concentrate on last year. It's a long way now to get where we were then. We just want to try to get better every game."

Cassidy said his team has done a good job quickly getting past the disappointment of its Game 7 loss to St. Louis.

"You've got to turn the page," Cassidy said. "There's a lot of good memories from last year, a lot of good things to build on. But we didn't win. So we're like 30 other teams: We want to get back there and win."

"We're motivated to get back. We might have more problems in the middle of the year in those dog days because of the fatigue from last year. I think out of the gate, we've been fine."

Torts loves 3-on-3

Columbus coach John Tortorella loves overtime and wants to see more of it. "I don't know what we're waiting for to get rid of the shootout stuff," Tortorella said. "I know they are worried about the time ... it's not going to last that long. If it goes past five minutes, it's not going to be many more minutes after five. I think it's just dynamite."

While I tend to agree with Tortorella here, the players don't want any expansion of overtime in the regular season. The theory is the top players would take most of the added ice time. And fans seem to love the shootouts. In every arena I go to when the game goes to the skills competition, the fans in all corners of the building are on their feet. Hard to imagine the league would ever do away with that.

Around the boards

- Penguins coach Mike Sullivan seems to be in lockstep with Sabres coach Ralph Krueger when it comes to morning skates, as his team has cut back on them as well. Sullivan called them the most overrated practice in hockey. Said the two-time Stanley Cup coach: "Why does the whole league have morning skates? It reminds me of why my mother cut the sides of the hams off before she cooked them. And I asked her ... she said, 'Cause that's how my mother taught me.'

"So I asked my Grandma. I said, 'Why do you cut the sides of the hams off before you put them in the oven?' She said, 'Well, that's easy. I didn't have a pan that was big enough.' So that's my analogy of morning skates."

- Still waiting for the Leafs to figure things out and stop looking average. After Friday's 4-1 win over San Jose, they were 6-4-2 heading into Saturday's game in Montreal.

Said center Auston Matthews after Tuesday's 4-2 loss in Boston: "I think it's just not good enough. We need to be better. I think it comes from the leadership group. I need to be better. All of us need to be better. I think we need to look each other in the eye and hold each other accountable and put this game aside, take a couple steps forward and be better for one another."

- Detroit captain Dylan Larkin (two goals, five assists) after his team fell to 3-8 with its 2-0 loss to the Sabres Friday night: "I haven't been good enough offensively or defensively. You want to point fingers, point it right at me. I have to be way better for this team and carry the load up front and put the puck in the net."

- That big expansion fee and shiny new arena in Seattle comes with a price tag. The unnamed team that opens play in 2021 started appointments to view and reserve 2,600 club seats on Thursday and said they will run from \$12,540 to \$15,620 per season (\$285-\$355 per game). And you have to reserve at least a three-year commitment. The team hasn't revealed regular ticket prices yet, other than to say season tickets will start at \$50 per seat per game, which is certainly much more expensive of a cheap seat than most teams.

After an 11-game wait, John Gilmour seizes opportunity to crack Sabres' lineup

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 26, 2019

John Gilmour's 11-game wait ended Friday night in Detroit. There was no rust in his game whatsoever. It was as if Gilmour was back in the preseason, freely skating the puck up ice and getting it out of his zone.

If Gilmour is the Buffalo Sabres' seventh defenseman, they've quickly developed some strong depth on the back end.

"I felt confidence. I've been with this club day to day and I just felt really good," Gilmour said after making his Buffalo debut during the 2-0 win over the Red Wings in Little Caesars Arena. "I was confident jumping in."

The Sabres used the same six defenders in going 8-2-1 to open the season, so Gilmour was relegated to extra work after practice and to taking morning skates, when most of his teammates now skip them.

He finally got in Friday in place of Marco Scandella, who missed the game with a lower-body injury. The Sabres said Scandella is day to day so it's uncertain if Gilmour will return to the press box or stay in the lineup for Monday's visit by the Arizona Coyotes to KeyBank Center.

Gilmour played 17:28 Friday while paired with Colin Miller. He had three shot attempts, two on goal, and a 53% Corsi rating at 5-on-5. There were no spectacular plays, no hideous gaffes. It would be easy to say it was a good thing that his game was not noticeable.

But that wasn't really the case. Coach Ralph Krueger brought up Gilmour's play unprompted during his postgame meeting with reporters.

"Often the players without points go lost and missing," Krueger said. "But if you look at Johnny Gilmour coming in after multiple weeks of not playing and playing at that level and that pace, we're really happy with the 'D' group today."

With Scandella out, the Sabres seized the opportunity to shuffle their defense pairs some in the wake of Thursday's 6-2 loss in New York, which saw Miller and Rasmus Dahlin struggle mightily. Dahlin was minus-3 in that game for just the third time in his NHL career.

Dahlin took Scandella's spot alongside Henri Jokiharju and, after one rough turnover in the first period, had a strong bounce-back game. He posted a 61% Corsi rating while playing 18:25.

Krueger used the term "world class" to describe the work of his first pair. Rasmus Ristolainen played 26:01 with five hits and three blocks while Jake McCabe played 18:15 and scored Buffalo's first goal after missing 10 minutes of the first period to get stitches in his chin and above his eye.

Gilmour, meanwhile, isn't taking his NHL time for granted. After all, the New York Rangers gave him only five games last year even though he had scored 20 goals and was an AHL All-Star at Hartford.

"When the team is doing so well, it still feels good even if I'm not in the lineup," he said. "I'm still rooting for the squad. We're real hot and that's good."

"It's been a great experience, learning every day being around such high-caliber people. I'm just growing with it and having a lot of fun with it at the same time."

...

Linus Ullmark made 41 saves to earn the shutout Friday. It was Buffalo's third shutout of the season in 12 games – already one more than it had all of last season.

The Sabres were off Saturday and will return to practice Sunday morning. Defenseman Will Borgen, who joined the team in Detroit as an extra in case of an injury in the pregame warmups, was returned to Rochester Saturday so he could play in the Amerks' game Saturday night at Syracuse.

Sabres keep the bad feelings from festering, bounce back to blank Red Wings

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 25, 2019

DETROIT -- For several years, bad performances have carried from one game to the next for the Buffalo Sabres. Sometimes even from one week to the next week. And the one after that.

That mentally porous mentality is quickly going away. A dozen games into this season, the Sabres have yet to lose two in a row. Their response to tough nights has been significant. They simply refuse to let a losing streak overtake them.

Thursday night in Madison Square Garden, they were shoddy with the puck all over the ice and got drubbed, 6-2, by a New York Rangers team that had dropped five straight and was quickly running afoul of its fan base.

With no time to work out the kinks after that one, the Sabres jumped right back in against another wounded opponent here Friday night. Just like last week in Los Angeles, they made things look much better.

Sam Reinhart had a goal and an assist, Linus Ullmark made 41 saves and there were solid contributions up and down the lineup as the Sabres blanked the downtrodden Detroit Red Wings, 2-0, in Little Caesars Arena.

At 9-2-1, Buffalo is back atop the NHL's overall standing and got a split of a road back-to-back set for the second time in two weeks.

Said coach Ralph Krueger: "For me, that was the most enjoyable win of the season, under the circumstances of having lost our way in phases of the game yesterday that were quite disappointing, and how in such a short period of time they were able to reconnect with our game."

"We always have the mentality you don't want to lose two in a row. That's an obvious thing for us," said Ullmark, who posted his third career shutout and first of the season. "You want to get on the winning track right away. You don't want to get those second and third and fourth losses. You want to keep the train rolling at all times."

The Red Wings outshot the Sabres, 12-3, over the first 17 minutes but didn't break through as Ullmark's key stop of a Valteri Filppula breakaway kept the game scoreless.

"Looking at the game now afterwards, it was huge," Ullmark said. "Some days you make those saves and some days you don't. But I've got full faith in my boys in front of me that even if I don't make the save, we're still going to win."

Still, a goalie making a save like that is huge for a team that you think would have been wobbly from Thursday night. Not necessarily so, said Reinhart.

"I liked the way we were able to regroup this morning, talk a little and watch a little bit about last night," Reinhart said. "Refresh our mind, come back and we were ready to play tonight."

Reinhart made a big play by tipping the puck to Jake McCabe, whose wrist from the left circle at 11:40 of the second period opened the scoring. Reinhart then deflected home a luscious Victor Olofsson pass at 1:15 of the third to give the Sabres breathing room.

Jack Eichel did dirty work on both goals, especially down low and on the wall on the McCabe goal. Olofsson added a foolproof screen of goalie Jimmy Howard on that one as well.

"The goal doesn't happen if 'Olie' take his eyes away," McCabe said. "I could have shot it anywhere in that net because he couldn't see it. That's the kind of hockey we needed to play tonight. Our top line delivers like that."

Eichel, who had just one point on the road in his first six games away from KeyBank Center, got the job done in this one and the coach was suitably thrilled by his captain's two assists.

"The first one was just a goal created on will," Krueger said. "That wall battle he gave it all and that's the captain we need to step up and make a difference to tip this game in our favor. He really came out as a leader today."

The Sabres protected the lead over the last 10 minutes through Ullmark. Whereas the shots on goal were once 25-24 in Detroit's favor, they ended the game 41-25 as the Red Wings pressed hard over the final 10 minutes to get 16 of the game's final 17 shots.

Rasmus Ristolainen (26:01 of ice time, three blocks) made one key save in the final minutes but Ullmark made nine of his own over the final 2:32.

"There were a lot of 'flank' shots," Ullmark said, noting how his defense kept the Red Wings to the side. "'Risto' made a terrific block at the end and gets the puck out deep. Those little details make a huge difference in the end."

McCabe's details saw him miss the final 10 1/2 minutes of the first period as he was getting his face stitched in multiple spots. But he was philosophical about what it all meant.

"I got a puck in the chin my second shift and I got my face slammed into the glass my third shift so I might have a new Halloween costume I guess," a smiling McCabe deadpanned. "But it's well worth the two points."

The Wraparound: Sabres 2, Red Wings 0

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 25, 2019

DETROIT – Sam Reinhart set up one goal and scored another Friday night while Linus Ullmark made 41 saves as the Buffalo Sabres dumped the reeling Detroit Red Wings, 2-0, at Little Caesars Arena.

The Sabres improved to 9-2-1 by bouncing back from Thursday's ugly 6-2 loss in New York. They have yet to lose two games in a row this season. Detroit, meanwhile dropped to 3-8 and has lost seven straight. The Red Wings have been outscored, 29-9, in that stretch.

The first goal: McCabe got the Sabres going at 11:40 of the second period on a simple wrist shot that beat Detroit goalie Jimmy Howard on the short side. Jack Eichel wiped out Detroit's Tyler Bertuzzi along the left-wing boards and Reinhart tapped the puck back to McCabe, who made no mistake.

On the board: It was McCabe's first goal of the season. That leaves Henri Jokiharju, Jimmy Vesey, Colin Miller, Rasmus Ristolainen, Evan Rodrigues and John Gilmour still looking for their first goals of the season.

Creating space: The Sabres made it 2-0 at 1:15 of the third as Reinhart collected his fifth goal of the season on a power play, tipping home a strong pass from Victor Olofsson.

In the net: Ullmark was particularly sharp in the first period as Detroit had 12 of the game's first 15 shots on goal. His best save came on a breakaway by Valteri Filppula, who stole the puck from Marcus Johansson at the Detroit line and broke down the ice alone. It was Ullmark's first shutout of the season and third of his career. He made 21 saves in the third period, several with the Red Wings playing at 6-on-5 and 6-on-4.

The missing: Vesey (upper body) and Marco Scandella (lower body) both missed their first games of the season. McCabe played just 3:44 in the first period and sat out the final 10 1/2 minutes after getting stitches about the eye.

Cracking the lineup: Rodrigues made his fifth appearance of the season, taking Vesey's spot in the lineup. Defenseman Gilmour, a healthy scratch for the first 11 games, made his Buffalo debut in place of Scandella.

Shifting the defense pairs: Gilmour opened the game with Miller while Rasmus Dahlin played with Jokiharju after posting a minus-3 rating for just the third time in his career Thursday in New York. Ristolainen and McCabe stayed together, although McCabe left for repairs.

Coach Ralph Krueger on giving Gilmour a chance: "He's been working extremely hard and has been a positive spirit right through the 11 games. He's very deserving to be in."

Not at home on the road: Eichel entered the game with just one point in six games on the road this season -- but assisted on both goals. His 13 points in KeyBank Center (6-7) leave him tied with Edmonton's Connor McDavid for the NHL lead in home points (13).

"People don't understand how when you're an elite player, every night is a hard night. Every shift on the road is a hard shift," Krueger said. "It's hard for us as coaches to free him for that. His line needs to spend more time in the offensive zone, get more cycling going and have a little more patience. Sometimes they're looking for chances every time they cross the blueline and it's not going to work that way on the road. There's gotta be some long grinding shifts to create offense."

Milestone watch: Johansson played his 600th career NHL regular-season game. The first 501 were spent in Washington, with 77 in New Jersey, 10 last year in Boston and now 12 with the Sabres.

Next: The Sabres returned home immediately after the game and will take Saturday off. They practice Sunday to get ready for their next game, Monday's visit to KeyBank Center by the Arizona Coyotes.

Victor Olofsson using 'whippy' stick to transform Sabres' power play

By Lance Lysowski

The Buffalo News

October 25, 2019

There is an audible gasp inside KeyBank Center when the puck is headed toward Victor Olofsson on the power play. The opposing goalie slides to that side of the net, and defenders scramble to try to block the one-timer slap shot that has quickly become feared around the National Hockey League.

Olofsson has transformed the Buffalo Sabres' attack on the man advantage with his quick release and uncanny accuracy, even when there's little time for him to decide where to shoot.

If teams are caught cheating to stop Olofsson, they'll give Jack Eichel a quality scoring chance. If Eichel receives added attention in the left-wing circle, Rasmus Dahlin has a clear look at the net from near the blue line. While there were concerns about Olofsson's size when he was selected 181st overall by the Sabres in 2014, he has always terrorized opponents with his shot.

However, the 24-year-old winger's greatest weapon has evolved with the use of a "whippy" stick that helps him generate velocity and movement, making his left-handed shot more difficult for goalies to stop.

"It goes in lots; I don't know," Sabres goalie Carter Hutton joked when asked what makes Olofsson's shot effective. "Honestly, he uses a whippy stick and these younger guys have these whippy sticks. It's really hard to pick up the release. The puck flight isn't flat. It kind of floats a bit. It's almost like a riser and it's hard to save in practice, so I can't imagine when he's bombing them on the power play and there's traffic. He's a pure goal scorer, that's for sure."

Olofsson uses a Bauer Supreme 2S stick with an 82 flex, a measurement of how many pounds of force are required to bend the stick's shaft one inch. The higher the flex, the stiffer the stick, and the stiffer the stick, the more powerful the shot. Olofsson describes his stick as "soft," meaning it bends more easily.

Olofsson was required to use a lower flex during his junior career and slowly increased the number as he's become stronger. He may experiment with an 87 in the future but doesn't intend to do so during the season. After all, too much tinkering can disrupt a player's release.

"When I shoot I usually get a lot of whip on my stick," Olofsson said. "It comes off as a sling shot, almost. That's what I want. If I have a stiffer stick I can't really get that sling-shot motion. I think that helps with the movement and it helps with my accuracy as well. When I don't have to use as much power I can get better accuracy."

Players are instructed at a young age to determine their flex by dividing their weight by two. However, heavier players across the NHL have chosen to use a lower flex to get more of a whip motion in their shot. That can help with accuracy and often adds spin, making the puck more difficult for a goalie to track.

The drawback, though, is a heavier player is going to break whippy sticks more often. Olofsson is listed at 183 pounds, yet he hasn't had issues on shot attempts. While young amateur players often follow the weight guidelines to determine flex, professionals select their number based on skill set.

For example, Olofsson uses a higher flex number because his focus is on shooting the puck, but Rasmus Asplund, his former teammate in Rochester, chose a 75 because it helps with winning faceoffs and executing passes. Defensemen are more likely to use a long, stiff stick since they need to break up passes in the defensive zone and shoot slap shots from the blue line.

"I've always used soft sticks because I've felt like that's helped my wrist shot a lot, where I don't have to use that much strength to generate power in the shot," Olofsson said. "I've mostly used the whip of the stick. I've been keeping them kind of soft and the older I've become I've went up a little bit over time."

Olofsson has used the stick to become an early candidate for the Calder Trophy. Entering play Friday, he led all NHL rookies in goals (six) and points (9), while being tied with Edmonton's James Neal for the league lead among all players in power-play goals (6). Olofsson also became the first player in NHL history to score each of his first

seven-plus career goals on the power play. The Sabres entered Friday with the fourth-best power play in the league.

Additionally, only three rookies in franchise history recorded more points through their team's first 10 games of the season: Rick Martin (1971-72), Phil Housley (1982-83) and Hannu Virta (1982-83).

"It's refreshing for them, I'm sure, and good for our league to see a young player like that score," Los Angeles Kings coach Todd McLellan said of Olofsson.

Hockey equipment brands allow players to customize stick length, degree of curve to the blade and location of the kick point, which is the area in a stick that flexes most. Olofsson's Bauer Supreme 2S has a mid-kick point, a design that helps generate maximum power and allows him to create that sling-shot effect. Despite having to use a CCM brand stick while playing for Rochester -- the American Hockey League is amid a five-year partnership with the company -- Olofsson produced 30 goals last season.

"He has a very whippy stick," Sabres goalie Linus Ullmark said. "The release of the puck comes in a little different. The timing can be different. I don't think many guys use one like that. ... There are a lot of big boys in this league, so not a lot of them can play with an 82, either. Those guys have a little bit more power into the stick, so it can become too whippy. It would be like shooting a banana, so it would break apart."

"He's got a high-end shot, and everybody respects that, and the guys he plays with understand that," Sabres coach Ralph Krueger said of Olofsson. "The opposition is getting ready for it here and there, but you can't cover it all the time. We're very pleased to have that weapon in our artillery."

The success of Olofsson's shot goes beyond his physical gifts. He also has an innate ability to determine where he wants to shoot the puck before he receives a pass. He'll monitor a goalie's tendencies and picks his spot based on the situation. A quicker release is required if a cross-ice pass forces the goalie to move from one side of the net to the other. Olofsson has been tasked by Krueger to find different ways to make an impact, particularly on the power play.

Olofsson needs to become unpredictable, and while he is making an effort to get to the net for what Krueger calls "ugly goals," the rookie will always have that sling shot in his arsenal.

"With sticks there are so many options these days," Asplund added following a recent practice in Rochester. "You can choose whatever you want. You can tell the brand what you want and he's found what he wants. That shows. It's awesome to see that shot, to watch it every day on a daily basis. It's pretty special."

Sabres game day: Quick turnaround produces trip to see broken Wings

By Mike Harrington

The Buffalo News

October 25, 2019

Matchup: Buffalo Sabres (8-2-1) at Detroit Red Wings (3-7-0)

Where: Little Caesars Arena

When: 7:30 p.m.

TV: MSG

Radio: WGR 550

Actual lineup news coming: The Sabres' forward lines and defense pairs have been mostly unchanged for the first 11 games, save for Evan Rodrigues' uneventful four-game stint in place of the injured Conor Sheary. That will change tonight.

Marco Scandella (leg) and Jimmy Vesey (upper body) both left Thursday's 6-2 loss in New York with injuries in the second period and neither returned to the game, although Scandella was on the bench for the third period and was held off the ice. Late Friday afternoon, the Sabres ruled both of them out of tonight's game and said they would be re-evaluated this weekend.

With no forward callup, it means Rodrigues will come back into the lineup to play in Vesey's spot with Sheary and Casey Mittelstadt.

The team called up defenseman Will Borgen from Rochester on Friday morning but he will simply be an extra defenseman. John Gilmour will make his Buffalo debut after being a healthy scratch for 11 straight games.

Bouncing back: The Sabres have yet to lose two in a row this year and will be trying to avoid that fate in the wake of Thursday's clunker in the Big Apple.

"The growth process doesn't change depending on a score of a game," Krueger said afterward. "We are still making mistakes. We made mistakes in past games and we were able to find ways to win. Today, we just couldn't recover from the hole we dug ourselves into. We didn't show the Rangers enough respect and they punished us for it and we will learn from that."

"Truthfully, it's just one loss. Whether we lost 10-1 or 2-1, it doesn't matter," said goaltender Carter Hutton. "It's one loss and we have to move on. I think we have a lot of experience and maturity in this room and Ralph as the head coach is going to keep the boys focused."

Broken Wings: Detroit is 3-7 and on a six-game losing streak during which the Red Wings have been outscored, 27-9, and have allowed five goals in five of the six games. Get this: Tonight is the start of a three-game homestand that features visits by defending Stanley Cup champion St. Louis and Edmonton, which owns the same 8-2-1 record as Buffalo. Yikes. On paper, not the way to turn around a losing streak.

The Sabres have won three straight in Detroit for just the second time in their history. They won five in a row here from 1979-1981.

Defenseman Danny DeKeyser and forwards Luke Glendening and Justin Abdelkader were absent from today's morning skate and will sit out tonight, with embattled coach Jeff Blashill announcing Glendening suffered a hand injury Wednesday at Ottawa and will miss 2 to 4 weeks.

Jimmy Howard (1-4, 3.88/.898) is expected to start in goal against Buffalo's Linus Ullmark (2-1-1, 3.18/.913).

Detroit is just 25th in the NHL on the power play (4 for 33) and 26th on the penalty kill (23 of 32). The Sabres remain fourth on the PP (12 for 42) but only 18th on the PK (27 of 34).

Unbalanced lineup: Anthony Mantha (7 goals), Darren Helm (4) and Tyler Bertuzzi (4) have combined for 15 of the Wings' 23 goals. Mantha likely will switch lines tonight to skate with slumping Andreas Anthanasiou, who has no goals and a minus-11 rating thus far after scoring 30 goals last year.

Reinvigorated ex-Sabre Matt Moulson has eyes on 1,000 games and title

By Bill Hoppe

The Buffalo News

October 25, 2019

ROCHESTER – Sometimes Matt Moulson hears the words and tears fill his eyes.

When the former Buffalo Sabres winger left his home in Connecticut last month to begin his 14th, and possibly final pro season, his wife and two children stayed home.

After spending nearly two seasons living in Ontario, Calif., a city about 45 minutes east of Los Angeles, Moulson and his wife, Alicia, finally had enough moving.

Moulson said their daughter, Mila, 7, and son, George, 6, attended about five schools in the past three years. They needed more stability.

So Moulson has been living alone this season while playing for the Hershey Bears, the Washington Capitals' American Hockey League affiliate.

"I get a little tear-jerky when my daughter or son say that they miss me," said Moulson, whose family often visits him on the weekends. "That's tough."

Moulson's presence in the AHL, a development league, is unusual. Former stars rarely return to the minors in the twilight of their career.

The Cornell graduate scored 30 or more goals in three consecutive seasons with the New York Islanders. From the start of the 2009-10 campaign through his Sabres debut on Oct. 28, 2013, he scored 120 goals in 305 games, the 10th-highest total in the NHL during that span.

Only one AHL player, Americans defenseman Nathan Paetsch, 36, is older than Moulson, who turns 36 on Nov. 1.

Two years ago, the Sabres waived a graying Moulson and jettisoned him to the Ontario Reign, the Kings' top affiliate, after he went pointless in 14 outings to start the season.

His scoring touch gone, the Sabres were willing to eat the money they owed him over the final two seasons of his massive five-year, \$25 million contract.

Assigning him to Rochester would have taken valuable ice time away from prospects, so the Sabres loaned him to a team 2,500 miles away.

If Moulson wanted to be paid by the Sabres, he had to play where they sent him.

Moulson, however, had options last summer. He could've simply retired.

But he loved his time with the Reign. He scored 46 goals and 108 points in 117 games in his first stint in the AHL since 2008-09.

Moulson said playing for Reign coach Mike Stothers "was huge for me personally and hockey-wise."

"He was an unbelievable coach, unbelievable guy," he said. "I think everyone kind of needs that belief in you to succeed and get that confidence back. I think that was big from him.

"So, I mean, I loved every minute I played under him and with the guys in Ontario."

So Moulson decided to play another season. He signed a one-year AHL contract with the Bears on July 24.

"He went down to Ontario and really had a lot of fun playing the game," said Sabres winger Kyle Okposo, Moulson's close friend. "He really loves it again."

In a cramped hallway outside the visiting dressing room in Blue Cross Arena following the Bears' 5-1 loss to Amerks on Wednesday, Moulson sounded excited for the opportunities that another season presents.

He wants to fulfill two goals: win his first championship and play his 1,000th professional game.

Moulson has played 953 – 650 in the NHL and 313 in the AHL – so he could hit the milestone later this season.

"That's big, that's something I obviously thought about," Moulson said. "I do want to get to that mark. I think it's a good personal accomplishment.

"I mean, I don't really look at many other personal accomplishments. I want to win to a championship."

When Moulson was a prospect playing for the Manchester Monarchs, the Kings' previous affiliate, he said he learned about the Bears' rich history.

The Bears, the AHL's oldest franchise, have won the Calder Cup 11 times in their 82 years. They regularly rank among the league leaders in attendance, drawing more than 9,000 fans a game to the Giant Center.

The city, he said, reminds him a bit of Buffalo.

"Blue-collar city where people love their sports," he said.

With the Bears, Moulson has a dual role: scorer and veteran mentor. Through eight games, he has scored two goals and six points.

In the AHL, he still showcases the talents that helped him score 176 NHL goals.

Moulson never possessed blazing speed or a heavy shot. Still, he can be lethal in tight spaces around the net.

"You normally don't see a guy that can score as much as he does that doesn't blow you away with speed or doesn't blow you away with a great shot or one-timer, because he doesn't possess all those," Hershey coach Spencer Carbery said. "But he just has that unique ability to finish plays, and all of a sudden, the puck ends up on his stick and it's in the back of the net."

The Capitals also covet Moulson's ability to be a positive influence on their prospects. Carbery and Hershey center Mike Sgarbossa said Moulson carries himself like one of the guys.

"He's made a lot of money in his career; he's produced a lot in the NHL level; he's done a lot in this game and you would never know it," Sgarbossa said. "Very humble guy, very good teammate."

Carbery said: "He's just a great pro. He sets an example the way he carries himself, the way he works on his game, the type of person he is, his experiences – all that stuff. He makes it really, really easy to learn from him in a lot of different areas."

While Moulson is still a top-tier AHL scorer, he knows his playing days will likely be ending in the near future. He acknowledged this season could be his last and hopes to stay in hockey whenever the end comes.

"It crosses my mind sometimes," Moulson said. "I don't think I ever like to commit to something, kind of take it day by day."

Sabres recall defenseman Will Borgen from Rochester

By The Buffalo News

October 25, 2019

The Sabres have recalled defenseman Will Borgen from Rochester of the American Hockey League in advance of Friday night's game at the Detroit Red Wings.

The Sabres could be in need of another defenseman because Marco Scandella suffered a lower body injury in Thursday's loss to the New York Rangers. If Scandella can't play, it's possible that John Gilmour would be inserted in the lineup with Borgen being with the team as an emergency.

Borgen has played in all seven games for the Amerks after playing 71 games in Rochester last year.

Sabres' Ullmark earns a 41-save shutout in Detroit

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

October 25, 2019

(WGR 550) - The Sabres didn't seem to have too much energy on Friday in Detroit. About midway through the game, things changed thanks to Jake McCabe and the Jack Eichel line. McCabe's screened shot found the net, and from that point forward, the Sabres started moving their feet, supporting each other and getting zone time.

Eichel had some great work behind the net before McCabe's goal, and came out along the wall to Sam Reinhart. Victor Olofsson read the play perfectly and went straight to the net. He totally took Jimmy Howard's vision away, and he had no idea that McCabe even let the shot go.

Before the Sabres got going, Linus Ullmark had to be very sharp. Right off the hop, Marcus Johansson gave the puck away, giving Valtteri Filppula a clear cut breakaway. Ullmark made the save, and Johansson compounded the play by doing a drive by, allowing Andreas Athanasiou get an open rebound chance.

Ullmark had to make another big save after Rasmus Dahlin came from behind the net and right up the slot, when the Red Wings stole the puck and had the quick chance.

On a power play, Eichel couldn't handle the puck along the wall, and next thing you knew, Jacob de la Rose had a shorthanded 2-on-1 chance.

The Sabres started denying the Red Wings the zone and supported each other on the forecheck. That lasted into the third for a while.

The next goal was Olofsson in the right circle on the power play getting setup for a one-timer. He faked it and slid a perfect pass to Reinhart off the post, and he steered home his fifth goal of the season into the empty net.

As the period got late, the Sabres seemed to fall back, especially in the last three minutes when Howard was pulled. Buffalo never got possession and 10 of the Red Wings' 21 shots in the period came in those three minutes. Two of those minutes came during a 6-on-4 power play chance.

Ullmark made 41 saves to get his first shutout of the season. It's funny that he made 20 saves in the first 40 minutes, followed by 21 saves in the final 20 minutes.

Because of injury, John Gilmour played his first game as a member of the Sabres. The defenseman played 17:20 and had two shots on goal.

Rasmus Ristolainen played 26:01 with five hits and three blocked shots.

The win puts Buffalo at 9-2-1 for 19 points, which gives them a five-point lead over both Boston and Toronto, an eight point lead over Tampa Bay and a nine point lead over Montreal.

Don't sleep on the Arizona Coyotes, who visit the Sabres on Monday. The Coyotes are 6-1-1 after starting the season with two losses.

Ralph Krueger has given the team Saturday off.

Sabres bounce back with 2-0 win over the Red Wings

WGR 550

October 25, 2019

After a 6-2 loss to the New York Rangers on Thursday night in New York City, the Buffalo Sabres bounced right back on Friday with a 2-0 shutout win over the Detroit Red Wings at Little Caesars Arena in Detroit.

Linus Ullmark was the star of the night for the Sabres, stopping all 41 shots that he faced for his first shutout of the season. Meanwhile, Buffalo got goals from defenseman Jake McCabe and forward Sam Reinhart to support Ullmark's efforts.

It was a lackluster first period for the Sabres, mustering just six shots on goal to the Red Wings' 12 shots.

Detroit got their best chance of the period when a turnover by Sabres forward Marcus Johansson allowed Red Wings center Valtteri Filppula to go on a long breakaway. Ullmark stayed with Filppula all the way, making the save and keeping the puck out on a follow up attempt by forward Andreas Athanasiou.

The second period saw a little bit more life between the two teams, but it was the Sabres ended up getting on the board first with McCabe's first goal of the season.

The Sabres started to generate more chances in Detroit's zone, and it eventually led to McCabe's goal at the 11:40 mark of the period. After Jack Eichel was swept off the puck, it went straight to Sam Reinhart, who passed it to McCabe at the point. Victor Olofsson provided a screen in front of goalie Jimmy Howard, and the puck was able to fly right by the blocker and in.

Buffalo ended up with the advantage in the shot department through 40 minutes of action, out-shooting the Red Wings by a 14-8 total.

The Sabres opened the third period with 1:19 remaining on a power play, stemming from a hooking penalty by Red Wings forward Taro Hirose. With four-seconds remaining in the man advantage, the Sabres capped off a beautiful passing play between Eichel, Olofsson and Reinhart for the game's second goal. Eichel was able to find Olofsson with a nice cross-ice pass, and then the scoring winger quickly fed Reinhart in front of the crease, where he re-directed the pass past Howard for his fifth goal of the season.

The Red Wings tested the Sabres in the third period with 21 shots on goal as they desperately attempted to get back into the hockey game. However, Ullmark stood on his head, turning away all 21 shots in the period, as well as 41 in the contest for his third win of the season.

GAME SUMMARY

Scoring Summary:

First Period:

BUF: NONE

DET: NONE

Second Period:

BUF: 11:40 - Jake McCabe (1) (Sam Reinhart, Jack Eichel)

DET: NONE

Third Period:

BUF: 1:15 - Samson Reinhart (5) PP (Victor Olofsson, Jack Eichel)

DET: NONE

Penalty Summary:

First Period:

BUF: NONE

DET: NONE

Second Period:

BUF: 0:50 - Victor Olofsson (High-Sticking - 2 min.)

DET: 6:50 - Andreas Athanasiou (Tripping - 2 min.); 19:19 - Taro Hirose (Hooking - 2 min.)

Third Period:

BUF: 9:34 - Kyle Okposo (Interference - 2 min.); 17:50 - Colin Miller (Tripping - 2 min.)

DET: 6:23 - Trevor Daley (High-Sticking - 2 min.)

Shots:

BUF: 25 (6, 14, 5)

DET: 41 (12, 8, 21)

Goalies:

BUF: Linus Ullmark - 41 saves

DET: Jimmy Howard - 23 saves

Power Plays:

BUF: 1-for-3 (33.3%)

DET: 0-for-3 (0%)

Three Stars:

1. Linus Ullmark (BUF)
2. Sam Reinhart (BUF)
3. Jake McCabe (BUF)

What's next:

The Sabres return home to prepare for a Monday night matchup with the Arizona Coyotes at KeyBank Center. Faceoff is set for 7 p.m. with the Paul William Beltz Pre-Game Show starting at 6 p.m. with Schopp and the Bulldog at (716) Food and Sport.

The Sabres rule out Scandella and Vesey against Detroit

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

October 25, 2019

(WGR 550) - The Buffalo Sabres announced that forward Jimmy Vesey and defenseman Marco Scandella are both out for Friday's game against the Detroit Red Wings. Both players will be evaluated back in Buffalo after the team gets home from the Motor City.

That means that forward Evan Rodrigues and likely defenseman John Gilmour will be inserted into the lineup

The Sabres have Saturday off.

The Sabres will try to extend Detroit's six-game losing streak

By Paul Hamilton

WGR 550

October 25, 2019

(WGR 550) - As the Sabres prepare for Detroit on Friday, both teams are nursing injuries. Marco Scandella and Jimmy Vesey couldn't finish Thursday's game in New York, so if both are out, the Sabres didn't have an extra player. That necessitated the call up for Will Borgen from Rochester.

Borgen played four games with the Sabres last season. This year with the Amerks, the defenseman has played in all seven games down there and rolled up 27 minutes in penalties. Chances are good that John Gilmour will play his first game as a Sabre and Evan Rodrigues slides in for Vesey, leaving Borgen as the extra in case of an injury during the warm-up.

Detroit announced on Friday that Luke Glendening, Danny DeKeyser and Justin Abdelkader are all out hurt.

The Sabres lost just their second regulation game against the Rangers on Thursday night. After their first regulation loss in Anaheim, the team rebounded with a 3-0 win in Los Angeles.

In the last three games, the power play has gone stale again, going 1-for-11. The penalty kill has had two good games in a row, killing 6-for-6.

The loss to the Rangers knocked the Sabres out of the NHL's top spot. They're now third with a points percentage of .773. Edmonton is also .773, while Boston is .778 and Colorado is .833.

Since Carter Hutton played in New York, my guess is Linus Ullmark will get the call in Detroit. Ullmark has allowed seven goals in his last two starts, and overall is 2-1-1 with a 3.18 goals-against and .913 save percentage.

Victor Olofsson is third in the NHL with seven power play points. That means he only has two 5-on-5 points playing with gifted passers like Jack Eichel and Sam Reinhart. Eichel has seven power play points and seven even strength points. Reinhart has three power play points and five points during 5-on-5.

Jake McCabe leads the NHL with 30 blocked shots.

Eichel is seventh in the league with 106 faceoffs won. He is also third in the NHL with 112 faceoffs lost.

Buffalo is 8-2-2 in their last 12 against Detroit, and 6-3-1 on the road. In their last six in Detroit, the Sabres are 5-1-0.

Marcus Johansson will play in his 600th NHL game on Friday. Johansson has only taken nine shots this season, which gives him a shooting percentage of 44.4%. That's second in the league.

To say the Red Wings are struggling would be an understatement. Detroit has lost six straight games and seven out of eight. The No. 5 has been prevalent in their goals-against as in five of the six losses, they've given up five goals.

The Wings have only scored seven goals in their last five games. In his last three starts, Jimmy Howard has given up 13 goals. Overall, he's 1-4-0 with a 3.88 goals-against and .898 save percentage.

Anthony Mantha had a red-hot start to the season, scoring six goals in his first four games. He's had one in his last six since then. Overall, Mantha does have 11 points in 10 games. Dylan Larkin only has seven points in 10 games.

Join Schopp and the Bulldog, as well as Brian Koziol for pre-game coverage starting at 6:30.

After two trying seasons coaching the Sabres, Phil Housley found ‘the juices started flowing again’ with the Coyotes

By John Vogl

The Athletic

October 27, 2019

BUFFALO, N.Y. — Phil Housley knows he made mistakes as the Sabres’ head coach.

“In hindsight, there’s a lot of things that you probably could have changed,” Housley said Sunday in his first visit to KeyBank Center since being fired in April. “But that’s the part of being a first-time head coach. You learn from that. I think if you ask any coach that has been relieved, they’d have a lot of thoughts of, ‘What could they have done differently?’”

So ... what could Housley have done differently?

“Those are things I’ll just keep to myself, you know?” said Housley, who is on the Arizona Coyotes’ bench as Rick Tocchet’s assistant. “There’s no use. ... It’s not going to benefit me right now to explain myself.”

There’s plenty of blame to go around from last season. The Sabres won 10 in a row early, which gave players an inflated sense of their true ability. Bad habits and beliefs never disappeared even as the plummet in the standings occurred.

There was also a disconnect between Housley’s ideas and what happened on the ice. When the Sabres announced their search for a new coach, they talked of a “commanding presence” and “communicative ability.” The Sabres, 9-2-1 entering Sunday, are often asked, “What’s the difference from last year?” The common refrain is along the lines of, “We know what we’re supposed to be doing out there.”

“I have no comment on that,” said Housley, who expanded on what he learned as a first-time bench boss.

“Just the day-to-day operations of managing people, making decisions and the message that you have each and every day. Those are things that you find out through experience that are really, really important. You try to connect as close as you can to the players. I think the relationships are really important. ... So, those things I’ll take with me.”

Though it took only a couple of months to land a new job, the 55-year-old really wasn’t sure what was next after Buffalo.

“You sort of think about what you could have done differently and you don’t know if you’re going to be back in the game,” he said. “And I didn’t really know if I wanted to get back because of what happened. But three teams called me right around the draft — they were all from the southern belt — and the juices started flowing again. You want to get back into it, and I’m glad I landed in Arizona.”

Housley has been a longtime acquaintance of Tocchet, who is friends with Sabres general manager Jason Botterill. Despite just firing Housley, Botterill recommended the coach.

“He was really impactful with me hiring him,” Tocchet said. “Our heartbeat of our team is our defense, and I felt that Phil could really bring it to another level.”

Housley handles the Coyotes’ defense and works with the power play. Arizona has started 6-3-1, ranks third with just 2.20 goals allowed per game and has a 15th-ranked power play at 21.2 percent.

“There’s things he knows about the game that we don’t, and it’s easy to listen to a guy like that,” said Coyotes defenseman Alex Goligoski. “He’s done a good job managing the bench. He’s showing confidence in everyone. He’s rolling us over and it’s been good.”

“If there’s a time we should get up in the play and we didn’t, he’ll point that out. In the offensive zone, he likes getting the D up high and wide and moving.”

One of the Sabres' on-ice problems during Housley's stay was puck possession. His ideas on how to keep the puck are being praised in Arizona.

"He's been good at working with us and putting some stuff in our head that maybe we're not used to that will allow us to have possession a little bit more," Goligoski said. "There's certain situations where we don't have to force pucks north when we're just going to give it back to them. He's been good showing us that. There's times when we can bring a puck back in the D-zone and we can come out of the other side instead of jamming it up and giving them the puck back. He's really been working with us on that."

"He shows us a lot of video," defenseman Jason Demers said. "We have a lot more motion. He doesn't want us to be stationary, which I think is good. We have a lot of mobile D and a lot of guys that have good shots, so it's added a nice new element to our D corps."

Demers described Housley as "super quiet, soft-spoken." Fellow defenseman Oliver Ekman-Larsson said Housley is a "humble guy." While those are great traits for an assistant coach, it hints at some of the communication troubles as the head coach in Buffalo. During one-on-one teaching moments with the Sabres, it was clear Housley could get his message across. When the whole group gathered for on-ice chats, attention waned and messages didn't connect.

Botterill solved that by hiring Ralph Krueger, whose presence is as commanding as it comes.

"Obviously, they're playing very good hockey right now, and it's good to see them having success," Housley said.

The transactions have worked for the Coyotes, too, whose new assistant has helped them get off to a good start.

"I know the way Phil is," Tocchet said. "He preaches the stuff I preach. He's a really prepared guy. I knew he was prepared. I didn't know he was this prepared. Watch a lot of video. He's got the power-play guys more focused, I think. We had a really good stretch with the power play, and I think a lot of it is detail with Phil."

Though Housley didn't get the results he wanted during his two seasons on the Sabres' bench, finishing with a 58-84-22 record, he still smiled when arriving in Buffalo. Because of a scheduling quirk, the Coyotes are spending four nights in the city. It feels like home for Housley, who played the first eight seasons of his Hall of Fame career in Buffalo.

"This place always had a big piece of my heart because I started my career here," Housley said. "I started my head coaching career here, so I've always loved the people of Buffalo. They've been very good to me and that's not going to change."

The Athletic's Craig Morgan contributed to this story.

Phil Housley happy for Sabres' success, doesn't want to dwell on past

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

October 27, 2019

BUFFALO – After the Sabres fired Phil Housley on April 7, he wasn't sure if he wanted to coach again.

Housley's dismissal after two losing seasons hit him hard. The Sabres, a team he starred for in the 1980s, and Buffalo are close to his heart.

The Hall of Fame defenseman desperately wanted to lead the Sabres back to glory.

"It's funny, because you sort of think of what you could've done differently," Housley said Sunday inside KeyBank Center, where the Arizona Coyotes prepared for Monday's game against the Sabres, his first visit back. "You don't know if you're going to be back in the game, and I didn't really know if I wanted to get back, because of what happened."

These days, Housley, 55, seems happy in his gig as an assistant coach, a role he previously enjoyed for four seasons with the Nashville Predators.

Housley warmly greeted some familiar faces when he spotted them outside Arizona's dressing room Sunday. He smiled and was upbeat during his six-minute chat.

"This place will always have a big piece of my heart, because I started my career here, I started my head coaching career here, so I've always loved the people of Buffalo," he said. "They've been very good to me. That's not going to change."

Still, Housley wouldn't revisit the past much. When asked about what he could've done differently or any disconnect with his players, he politely declined to answer.

The Sabres have changed dramatically under new coach Ralph Krueger, morphing into the NHL's biggest early-season surprise at 9-2-1.

As their terrific record indicates, the Sabres have improved in all facets of the game.

Players have lauded Krueger's communication skills and how his new system allows them utilize their instincts. They're no longer overwhelmed with Xs and Os.

"They're playing very good hockey right now and it's good to see them having success," Housley said. "I have nothing but good things to say about Buffalo. But I'm happy to be with Arizona, coaching with Rick and John MacLean and Corey Schwab – all guys I played with. So it was an easy transition for me."

Housley, of course, enjoyed some fleeting success here, most notably a 10-game winning streak last November. But the Sabres quickly fell apart, and the same team that had ranked first overall fell out of the playoff race.

Housley likely would've kept his job if the Sabres hadn't imploded down the stretch, losing 15 out of 16 games in March and early April.

"In hindsight, there's a lot of things you probably could've changed, but that's the part of being a first-time head coach, and you learn from that," he said.

After leaving Buffalo, Housley said he had "mixed emotions" running through his head.

"I was thinking about taking a year off, I was thinking about, 'Do I make some calls?'" he said.

Then Housley said three teams called him around the NHL Draft in late June.

"They were all from the southern belt," he said. "The juices started flowing again, you want to get back into it."

The Coyotes, a team coached by Tocchet, his former teammate with the Washington Capitals, hired Housley on June 26.

Tocchet said he spoke to Housley, people in Nashville's organization and Sabres general manager Jason Botterill, his friend from their days together with the Pittsburgh Penguins.

"He was very impactful in me hiring him," Tocchet said of Botterill.

Tocchet said Housley "preaches the stuff I preach."

"He's a really prepared guy," he said. "I knew he was prepared; I didn't know he was this prepared."

Naturally, Housley runs Arizona's defense and power play.

Housley's work with Nashville's blue line, perhaps the league's best a few years ago, helped him become a hot head coaching candidate.

"Our heartbeat of our team is our defense," said Tocchet, whose Coyotes have started 6-3-1. "I felt that Phil could really bring it to another level."

The Coyotes' defense, led by Oliver Ekman-Larsson, is a "veteran core trying to add more offense to our attack," Housley said.

Tocchet said Housley has brought more focus to the power play. He attributes its improvement – the Coyotes rank 15th after finishing 26th last season – to Housley's attention to details.

Housley has also started establishing relationships with his new players. Coyotes defenseman Jakob Chychrun said Housley is "easy to talk to."

"That's huge, just to be able to relate with the guy and just have normal conversations sometimes," Chychrun said. "It doesn't always have to be hockey. It's nice to come to the rink and have a refreshing conversation, something different."

Sabres lose Marco Scandella to injury as Brandon Montour nears return

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

October 27, 2019

BUFFALO – For three or four weeks after Brandon Montour injured his left hand, the Sabres defenseman would dress in his full gear and skate around the ice without a stick.

"You can imagine how frustrating and how tough that was," Montour said after returning to practice today inside KeyBank Center.

Montour, out since Sept. 17, couldn't grip a stick at first. But he has graduated to full-contact practices and is officially day-to-day.

"I felt like a hockey player again," Montour said.

That's good news, because a lower-body injury will sideline Sabres defenseman Marco Scandella two to three weeks, the team announced today.

Scandella has been a strong contributor throughout the Sabres' torrid start. He was hurt in Wednesday's 6-2 road loss to the New York Rangers.

Meanwhile, winger Jimmy Vesey, who suffered an upper-body injury Thursday, is week-to-week.

To add defense depth, the Sabres recalled Will Borgen from the Rochester Americans this morning. They also summoned Borgen on Friday before sending him down.

Defenseman John Gilmour, a healthy scratch the first 11 games, replaced Scandella for Friday's 2-0 road win against the Detroit Red Wings.

Montour, 25, has endured a frustrating five or six months.

He hurt his knee playing for the Team Canada at the World Championship after last season. Then he injured his hand in his preseason debut in Columbus just days into training camp.

"I focused all summer with getting my knee healthy and feeling good going into the year and then obviously a little freak accident happens like this," Montour said. "I didn't think too much of it right off the hop, but (it was) a little more serious than I thought and took, obviously, a little more time than I wanted."

At first, Montour said, he didn't think his hand injury was serious.

"I just couldn't handle my stick, couldn't grip my stick, so I took the rest of the night off," he said. "I went for an X-ray the next day and sure enough, there was something wrong it."

Coach Ralph Krueger said Montour has been participating in all team meetings, so he understands how the Sabres want to play.

"But it's still a lot different when you have to put it into action," he said. "It's day-to-day to see him get integrated here. We've got no timeline on the re-entry."

Montour scored three goals and 10 points in 20 games last season after arriving in trade from the Anaheim Ducks on Feb. 24.

Sabres' Marco Scandella, Jimmy Vesey out against Red Wings

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

October 25, 2019

Injuries will sideline defenseman Marco Scandella and winger Jimmy Vesey tonight against the Detroit Red Wings, the Buffalo Sabres announced this afternoon.

Scandella (lower body) and Vesey (upper) were hurt in Thursday's 6-2 loss to the New York Rangers, the start of a two-game road trip.

The Sabres said the players will be evaluated this weekend in Buffalo.

Defenseman John Gilmour, a healthy scratch the first 11 games this season, and winger Evan Rodrigues will likely move into the lineup.

Update: Gilmour and Rodrigues will play.

The Sabres also recalled defenseman Will Borgen from the Rochester Americans this morning.

Update: The Sabres sent Borgen back to the Amerks on Saturday morning.

Sabres recall Will Borgen from Amerks

By Bill Hoppe

Olean Times Herald

October 25, 2019

After losing defenseman Marco Scandella in Thursday's 6-2 road loss to the New York Rangers, the Buffalo Sabres recalled Will Borgen from the Rochester Americans this morning.

Sabres coach Ralph Krueger told reporters in New York that Scandella is day-to-day with a lower body injury.

The Sabres play tonight in Detroit against the Red Wings.

Borgen, 22, could just be insurance for the Sabres. John Gilmour has been a healthy scratch as the seventh defenseman for the first 11 games this season.

Borgen played four late-season NHL games last year. He has zero points in seven contests with the Amerks this season.

Sabres rebound to top Red Wings 2-0

By Jenna Callari

WKBW

October 25, 2019

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WKBW) — The Buffalo Sabres have once again rebounded from a loss, topping the Detroit Red Wings 2-0 on Friday night. They improve to 9-2-1 on the season.

Jake McCabe struck first with a goal in the second period. Sam Reinhart added another later in the third after tipping in a shot from Victor Olofsson on the team's power play. Jack Eichel assisted on both of the goals. Linus Ullmark gets credited with the shutout, making 41 saves.

The Sabres will be back at home on Monday when they host Arizona.

Ullmark shutouts Red Wings in 2-0 win

By Nick Filipowski

WIVB

October 25, 2019

BUFFALO, N.Y. (WIVB) – Linus Ullmark turned away all 35 shots he faced against the Red Wings to help get the Sabres bounce back and get back in the win column with a 2-0 win Friday night in Detroit.

With the victory Buffalo improves to 9-2-1 overall.

After a sluggish first period in which the Blue & Gold were credited with one scoring chance, Jake McCabe fired home his first goal of the season to break the scoreless stalemate in the second.

Sam Reinhart would add a power play goal, his fifth of the season, to extend the lead to 2-0 at the start of the third period.

Clinging to their two goal lead in the final minutes of regulation and with Detroit pressing to strike with a 6-on-4 opportunity, the Blue & Gold locked down on defense while Ullmark continued to stand tall in the crease to preserve the win.

Krueger has Sabres playing connected during fast start

By Dan Rosen

NHL.com

October 27, 2019

NEW YORK -- Play connected.

It's a phrase Jack Eichel and his Buffalo Sabres teammates can't miss. On this night, it's written on a sign adorning the door to the visitors dressing room at Madison Square Garden. It's talked about wherever the Sabres go thanks to new coach Ralph Krueger.

"That's a big message from Ralph, being connected, being on the same page," said Eichel, the Sabres captain. "It's more than just being on the ice. It's off the ice, locker room, weight room, everything we do we try to be together as much as we can as a group. It's important."

It's working.

The Sabres, who have the longest Stanley Cup Playoff drought in the League at eight seasons, have been one of the surprising success stories early in the season.

They're first in the League with nine wins and tied for first with the Washington Capitals with 19 points.

"I just think the connection between the room and the coaching staff has been a really good one so far," Eichel said. "The guys, we have some confidence in our game right now."

But they're not getting ahead of themselves. That is a significant step in maturity for the Sabres from last season.

The Sabres were in first place in the NHL on Nov. 28 last season after defeating the San Jose Sharks 3-2 in overtime for their 10th straight win the night before. They were 17-6-2 through 25 games, good for 36 points, red-hot and feeling invincible even though only three of their 10 consecutive wins came in regulation.

They crashed, winning 16 of their final 57 games, finishing 22 points out of a playoff position. Former coach Phil Housley was fired April 7, the day after the season ended. Krueger was hired on May 15.

"The pain of last year is an opportunity for us as a group," Krueger said. "The group had success, went through an extremely painful phase. That's when winners are born, when you have pain and how you react to it."

Eichel said the Sabres are staying grounded now largely because of what they experienced last season.

"We're trying to figure out the best way to stay as even-keeled as possible through an 82-game year," he said. "When we win a game, enjoy the win for that night and move on to the next game because it just comes so fast in this league."

Added forward Jeff Skinner: "I know guys realize there is a lot of season left and we have to keep improving, keep getting better. That's been the mentality, as it should be. Whatever your record is at this point in the season, there [are] still 70 games left so you have to find a way to keep improving because that's what the League does."

The Sabres' maturity is showing in their play, which has been consistent and to the point of Krueger's play-quick system, which has been their hallmark this season.

They are putting teams on their heels because of how fast they get the puck off their sticks and how quickly they play in transition.

"The overall system that he's tried to implement here has been the quicker the forwards get back, the quicker the 'D' can get them the puck, the quicker we can to the offensive side of things," Eichel said. "It's been one of our strong suits this season, being able to transition the puck quick and get on the other team as quick as possible

and not let them set up. The times we have had trouble or struggled a bit it's been due to the lack of effectiveness of our transition game."

They struggled against the New York Rangers on the road Thursday and lost 6-2. They got it back Friday and defeated the Detroit Red Wings 2-0 at Little Caesars Arena.

"Often the team speed you create through those [puck] movements are because players are pre-positioning themselves to be options and we can support each other all the way up the ice," Krueger said. "That's been happening here regularly. We're solving pressure."

They're connected.

"Every team is looking for that," Skinner said. "Every team wants to have five guys on the same page at all times."

The Sabres, who play the Arizona Coyotes at KeyBank Center on Monday (7 p.m. ET; NHLN, TVAS, MSG-B, FS-A PLUS, NHL.TV) have it now. They believe it's sustainable, but they won't take it for granted.

"Staying humble is so important, and the way you do that the best is if you keep that picture really small and you stay in the moment, work on the next task that you have, make sure that the most important thing for you is to improve," Krueger said.

"This group is all in on all of those things. If you see a little less work in practice, you've got to ring a bell. That hasn't happened. If you see a little less concentration in the meetings you have to scream, and if somebody doesn't do the work that has no statistics on defense, you need to react. But that hasn't happened. Those are all good signs that the group understands and respects the situation we're in."

Ullmark makes 41 saves, Sabres shut out Red Wings

By Dave Hogg

NHL.com

October 25, 2019

DETROIT -- Linus Ullmark made 41 saves for the Buffalo Sabres in a 2-0 win against the Detroit Red Wings at Little Caesars Arena on Friday.

His biggest might have come in the first period, when he stopped Valtteri Filppula on a breakaway at 3:16.

"As the game turned out, that ended up being a huge save," Ullmark said. "I was just trying to stay in front of him and make myself big. You make that save some of the time, and they score some of the time. Today, it worked out in my favor."

Sam Reinhart had a goal and an assist, and Jack Eichel had two assists for Buffalo (9-2-1), which won for the seventh time in nine games, one night after losing 6-2 at the New York Rangers.

"We weren't good with the puck last night, especially on our line," Reinhart said of his combination with Eichel and Victor Olofsson. "Tonight, as a group, we were much better. We created more shots, both on 5-on-5 and the power play."

The Sabres haven't lost back-to-back games this season, something Ullmark attributes to coach Ralph Krueger.

"We've had three losses, and none of them have carried over," Ullmark said. "Last year, that wasn't always the case. Ralph is doing a good job of communicating that we just need to put those in the past and focus on the game plan for the next game."

Jimmy Howard made 23 saves for Detroit (3-8-0), which has lost seven games in a row.

"I thought we played a pretty solid game defensively, but we didn't score," Red Wings forward Dylan Larkin said. "You can't win a game if you don't score. We need a win in the worst way, just to get our confidence back."

The Red Wings have been outscored 29-9 in the losing streak, but coach Jeff Blashill thought they took a step forward against the Sabres.

"If we play that game 10 times, we win nine of them," Blashill said. "The chances were 21 to seven in our favor, and you aren't going to lose many games like that. We were making things happen. We just can't get anything to go in."

Jake McCabe, who missed much of the first period after sustaining a facial injury, scored through a screen to give the Sabres a 1-0 lead at 11:40 of the second period. It was his first goal of the season.

"I got a puck to the chin on my second shift and got my face slammed into the glass on my third shift," said McCabe, sporting stitches in multiple places. "I guess I've already got a costume for Halloween."

Reinhart made it 2-0 at 1:15 of the third period, deflecting in Olofsson's pass for a power-play goal.

"Everyone talks about Vic's shooting, but he's already able to break down defenses and get the puck to the net," Reinhart said. "He had a guy coming at him, but he used his movement to get a lane and hit me with a pass."

Ullmark made 21 saves in the third period, including nine after the Red Wings pulled Howard with 3:05 to play.

"Linus was great, especially down the stretch, but what really sets both of our goaltenders apart is their puck-handling," McCabe said.

For two of those minutes, Detroit had a 6-on-4 advantage after a Colin Miller penalty, and it was practically 6-on-3 for almost a minute after Eichel lost his stick.

"The puck was flying around, but our guys were blocking a lot of their chances," Ullmark said. "[Rasmus Ristolainen] blocked one shot right in front of the net and then cleared it in the same motion. Those were huge."

They said it

"For me, that was the most enjoyable win of the season, given the circumstances. We lost our way in phases of the game yesterday in ways that were quite disappointing, and in a short period of time they were able to reconnect with our plan and really shut down their scoring chances." -- Sabres coach Ralph Krueger

"We were a lot better defensively and we didn't crumble when they made it 2-0 early in the third, but we need a win bad. We have to find two points. We need better goaltending, we need better play in the defensive zone, and we need to score. It's everything." -- Red Wings goalie Jimmy Howard

Need to know

Sabres forward Marcus Johansson played his 600th NHL game. ... Howard dislodged the net during a third-period penalty kill, but Reinhart kept the play going by immediately putting it back into position. ... Red Wings forward Givani Smith had two shots on goal in 11:01 in his NHL debut.

What's next

Sabres: Host the Arizona Coyotes on Monday (7 p.m. ET; NHLN, TVAS, MSG-B, FS-A PLUS, NHL.TV)

Red Wings: Host the St. Louis Blues on Sunday (5 p.m. ET; ESPN+, FS-D, FS-MW, NHL.TV)

Sabres at Red Wings preview

By Dave Hogg

NHL.com

October 25, 2019

SABRES (8-2-1) at RED WINGS (3-7-0)

7:30 p.m. ET; FS-D, MSG-B, NHL.TV

The Game

The Detroit Red Wings will try to end a six-game losing streak when they play the Buffalo Sabres at Little Caesars Arena on Friday.

Detroit started the season 3-1-0 but hasn't won since, and has been outscored 27-9 during its losing streak. The Red Wings have allowed at least five goals in five of their six losses.

The Sabres will go for their seventh win in their past nine games. They had their three-game winning streak end with a 6-2 loss to the New York Rangers at Madison Square Garden on Thursday.

Players to watch

Sabres forward Casey Mittelstadt has five points (three goals, two assists) in his past four games.

Red Wings forward Tyler Bertuzzi has three points (one goal, two assists) during a three-game point streak.

They said it

"We have been making mistakes. We made mistakes in past games and were able to find ways to win. Today we just couldn't recover from the hole we dug ourselves into. This is not a big problem." -- Sabres coach Ralph Krueger after the loss to the Rangers on Thursday

"This is the goal from Day One. You are always working to get to this moment. I was excited to get the call but I'm not sure it is really going to hit me until I get on the ice in a Red Wings jersey. The first person I called was my brother (Tampa Bay Lightning center Gemel Smith), because we've waited so long to both be here." -- Red Wings forward Givani Smith, who will make his NHL debut

Sabres projected lineup

Victor Olofsson -- Jack Eichel -- Sam Reinhart
Jeff Skinner -- Marcus Johansson -- Vladimir Sobotka
Conor Sheary -- Casey Mittelstadt -- Evan Rodrigues
Zemgus Girgensons -- Johan Larsson -- Kyle Okposo

Rasmus Dahlin -- Colin Miller
Jake McCabe -- Rasmus Ristolainen
William Borgen -- Henri Jokiharju

Linus Ullmark
Carter Hutton

Scratched: John Gilmour

Injured: Brandon Montour (hand), Zach Bogosian (hip), Matt Hunwick (neck), Marco Scandella (lower body), Jimmy Vesey (upper body)

Red Wings projected lineup

Tyler Bertuzzi -- Dylan Larkin -- Darren Helm
Anthony Mantha -- Valteri Filppula -- Andreas Athanasiou
Evgeny Svechnikov -- Frans Nielsen -- Taro Hirose
Christoffer Ehn -- Jacob de la Rose -- Givani Smith

Patrik Nemeth -- Trevor Daley
Mike Green -- Filip Hronek
Madison Bowey -- Dennis Cholowski

Jimmy Howard
Jonathan Bernier

Scratched: Alex Biega, Adam Erne

Injured: Luke Glendening (upper body), Danny DeKeyser (lower body), Justin Abdelkader (lower body)

Status report

The Sabres did not have a morning skate. Borgen was called up from Rochester of the American Hockey League on Friday after Scandella was injured against the Rangers. Vesey is out after being injured during the second period Thursday. ... Smith was recalled from Grand Rapids of the AHL after Abdelkader and Glendening were injured during a 5-2 loss against the Ottawa Senators on Wednesday. Glendening is expected to miss 2-4 weeks while Abdelkader is considered day-to-day. ... DeKeyser, who was injured during a 5-2 loss to the Vancouver Canucks on Tuesday, is expected to be out two weeks.

Stat pack

Johansson will play in his 600th NHL game. ... The Red Wings have scored more than two goals once in their past eight games.

Taro lives...at Artvoice, and now a new book

By Andrew Kulyk and Peter Farrell

Artvoice

October 26, 2019

From time to time we here at the Artvoice sports desk are asked the question, "Who exactly is Taro?"

"Taro Sez" is a postscript to many of our hockey columns, offering a salient point or random quip on whatever topic at hand. But invoking "Taro" is our way of keeping alive a unique and dynamic chapter of Buffalo Sabres lore. Read the official record and you will learn this... Taro Tsujimoto was a forward, chosen by the Buffalo Sabres in the 7th round of the 1974 NHL entry draft. Listed at 5 feet, 8 inches, weighing 180 pounds, and shooting right-handed, he played for the Tokyo Katanas of the Japanese professional hockey league.

"Oh, and he didn't actually exist," said Paul Wieland.

Wieland was a synonymous name with the Buffalo Sabres for over a quarter-century, serving as Public Relations Director then Communications Director from the team's inception in 1970 until 1996, the final season at the old Memorial Auditorium.

His status and position with the team became almost legendary... he reported directly to Sabres team president Seymour Knox III and founding partner Northrup Knox.

Among his accomplishments? He patched together a remote television truck from a local television station and premiered a package of home games on International Cable, in the days when cable television was a novelty. He hired some guy named Rick Jeanneret to do the play by play for those telecasts, taking on the position of color commentator himself. He served as a practice goalie during team skates, to give ailing starting goaltender Roger Crozier an opportunity for rest. (referring to Wieland.. "Just slightly better than a board", quipped former coach Floyd Smith).

But the jokes, the practical jokes. They defined Wieland's life throughout most of his school days and professional career. And one of the biggest and best remembered pranks for the ages was the selection of Taro Tsujimoto on the NHL's biggest stage. It is a story that resonates to this day.

"What was great about working for the Buffalo Sabres is that they pretty much gave us the latitude to do whatever we wanted," remembers Wieland. "From the day I was hired and showed up at training camp in Peterborough, Ontario in 1970, I got the sense just from meeting Punch (Imlach, first Sabres head coach and general manager) that there was a culture here that would enable us to do fun things."

Over the years, the April 1st press releases, coinciding with April Fools Day, became much anticipated events amongst the media, not just in Buffalo, but throughout the league. But few were more stunt worthy than the unveiling of "Sliderex", a new plastic ice surface that would render the need for actual ice surfaces obsolete.

"We invented Sliderex as a product from a farm in Nova Scotia, and it just so happened that right around that time the Aud's floor was being torn apart for new piping and infrastructure. So we dutifully sent out the Sliderex press releases by mail, that's how it was done at the time, scheduled to hit media and press desks right on April 1," recalls Wieland.

Only by some happenstance, the release arrived at the door of WGR Channel 2 a day early. Then sports director Ed Kilgore led the newscast that night, breathlessly claiming "a Channel 2 exclusive", touting the new plastic ice to the world. He then later expounded on the story during the telecast's sports segment. "My wife and I were sitting at home watching, and we were in tears from laughing so loud," said Wieland.

Wieland took his prank a step further, calling Kilgore that night to rebuke him for running the story prior to the official April 1 announcement date. "I challenged Ed and asked him 'how did you get a hold of this information?'" said Wieland. "Ed didn't back down, stating 'I have other sources inside your organization, Paul', while I knew that there couldn't be any such sources, because Sliderex didn't exist. It was a product of my imagination," Wieland recalled.

For WGR-TV and their sports director, it had to be one of their most humiliating on-air episodes ever. Wieland and the Sabres p**ned the media. Kilgore fumed. Presumably, all was forgotten when Channel 2 obtained broadcast rights for Sabres games several years later and Kilgore became a part of the on air telecast crew.

"Taro Lives", the latest book written by Wieland and published by RPSS Publishing of Buffalo, New York, talks about Sliderex and much, much more, as Wieland, a colorful storyteller, delves into his life and career across many platforms and career stops. The book serves as more of an autobiography, and one has to get to Chapter 10 before the Sabres stories come into focus, and even further before the legend of Taro comes to life before the readers' eyes.

Wieland's recollection of the genesis of Taro Tsujimoto was that he was but one hand into the creation. And it all occurred during the 1974 NHL Entry Draft.

Back in those days, the draft bore little resemblance to the extravaganza that it is today. "The entire event was staged over the phone, with league commissioner Clarence Campbell running the proceedings and all 14 teams calling in their choices. In fact, we'd have to get through a round before the teams would even learn who was selected, then things would move on to the next round," said Wieland.

So the draft that year had slowed to a crawl, and everyone in the Sabres war room was getting exasperated. And the prank of all pranks began to take shape. "I think it was John Andersen (Director of Scouting) who suggested that we pick just any player who isn't draft eligible, just to gum things up further. I jumped right in, suggesting we make up a fictional player," said Wieland.

At that point, Andersen, for whatever reason, chimed in suggesting the fictional player would hail from Japan, since they did, after all, have professional hockey. Now they needed a name. "I passed by this store in Elma every day named 'Tsujimoto's Oriental Arts and Gifts'. Their owner was of Japanese descent and the inspiration for our player. Now we needed a common first name, and with some quick staff research, deemed 'Taro' as a common boys name. Coach Floyd Smith was on board and Imlach was almost giddy at the idea and gave his thumbs up. We now had our plan in place," Wieland recalled.

The last step, a team name. "Katanas" was chosen, loosely translating to "Sabres" from Japanese. And when it was finally time for the Sabres turn, the team announced "Buffalo selects Taro Tsujimoto from the Tokyo Katanas." Wieland even spelled out the name letter by letter for the league commissioner.

A bewildered Clarence Campbell repeated the name and affiliation and asked for further clarification. "The four of us in the war room back in Buffalo did all we could to suppress our laughter," said Wieland as he began laughing while reminiscing about that day and how it all went down.

The prank went even further. Now Wieland had to send out press releases profiling Tsujimoto and the rest of that year's draft picks, all others of whom were real, including Lee Fogolin who was selected 11th overall and Danny Gare, 29th overall. Both would become future NHL All Stars and today Gare's #18 banner graces the rafters of the KeyBank Center.

The Buffalo News and other outlets presented Taro as a real individual. By the time training camp rolled along, trainer Rip Simonick even created a locker with sticks, skates, and a #13 jersey for Tsujimoto, warning other players and prospects that the guy was coming to take some player's job away. Reporters and TV journalists asked plenty about this mysterious player from a faraway exotic locale, and Imlach would reply "I'm waiting to hear from his agent."

There was never any formal announcement by the Sabres revealing the prank. Eventually, the players figured it out, and as the Sabres made their amazing run in 1974-75 all the way to the Stanley Cup finals, Simonick even kept appearances up, keeping the Tsujimoto cubicle prepped in the dressing room from time to time.

"After a while, everyone pretty much figured out that Taro was just a myth," said Wieland. "But the legend lived on".

The team passed out bumper stickers to season ticket holders with their playoff tickets, reading "Taro Sez think Stanley Cup", written partly in Japanese. Most prolific were a group of patrons, led by superfan Dave Hyzy, who

became the "Phantom Sign Painters". For just about every game, they would festoon the balcony rim at the Aud with a clever Taro quip which was often a play on words. "We loved those guys. They kept the legend going," said Wieland.

Today Wieland still teaches communications and broadcasting part-time at St. Bonaventure University in Olean, but remains very much engaged with the team and its spirit even from afar. "Truth be told, I stopped watching much these past couple seasons, the games got hard to take," Wieland admitted. "But I like what I see in these guys and definitely they're moving in a better direction now."

And if the Sabres actually win the Stanley Cup? "I'd be out there celebrating as loudly as any fan," Wieland replied.

Wieland's new book is available on Amazon. And for the many fans who are old enough to remember those halcyon Sabres days of the team's inception, this coming Saturday will be "70s night", against the New York Islanders. This will be the first of the themed decades nights that the team plans this year as part of their Golden Anniversary celebration.

Wieland will join his hire and former broadcast partner Rick Jeanneret in the booth to call the second period of action. It will be must see TV.

TARO SEZ...

Taro asked to send along this message to Chris Bandura, Sabres Vice President of Public Relations, and Media Relations coordinators Ian Ott and Chris Dierken:

"Taro Sez: While the idea of Taro-like pranks to some may bring enjoyment, try any of this today and it will mean unemployment."

Sayonara and see you in Stockholm.

Montour returns to practice with Scandella expected to miss 2-3 weeks

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

October 27, 2019

Brandon Montour smiled wide as he sat inside the KeyBank Center dressing room on Sunday, having just completed his first practice with teammates in more than a month.

"I felt like a hockey player again," Montour said. "It's been a while. It's good to be back and kind of get with the team and get that feel again."

The practice marked Montour's first skate with the team since he sustained a hand injury in Columbus on Sept. 17, the second game of the preseason. The defenseman had spent the summer rehabbing a knee injury that occurred during the IIHF World Championship in May.

The nature of this injury was different in that it allowed Montour to skate throughout his rehabilitation process, though his patience was tested. He estimated he was skating for three or four weeks with full gear and no stick.

"You can imagine how frustrating and how tough that was," he said. "But at least I can still skate and whatnot. An injury like this or what happened with [knee] surgery and stuff, it's all about patience and a matter of time before it gets full healed."

Montour's return came shortly after the Sabres announced they would be without defenseman Marco Scandella for an estimated two to three weeks. Scandella sustained his lower-body injury during the second period of the team's game at Madison Square Garden on Thursday.

John Gilmour made his Sabres debut in place of Scandella against Detroit on Friday, tallying two shots in 17:20. Shot attempts were in Buffalo's favor, 10-9, with Gilmour on the ice at 5-on-5.

Coach Ralph Kruger felt that Gilmour's performance after being scratched for the first 11 games was a testament to the Sabres' defensive depth.

"Our whole D corps has been outstanding," Krueger said. "It shows and speaks to the depth. You never want to test it, but when it happens you enjoy being able to see what's there. So, there's always something good and bad and that is the situation here.

"We get to see a little bit what our depth is quite early into the season. You have to feel comfortable when you see Johnny Gilmour step up and play a game like that."

The Sabres added another reinforcement by recalling William Borgen from Rochester on Sunday morning. Borgen had previously been recalled Friday but spent Saturday playing in the Amerks' overtime victory in Syracuse.

As for Montour, the Sabres will focus on getting him up to speed in practice before placing him back in the lineup. The defenseman credited his skating and off-ice work with helping him stay prepared from a conditioning standpoint, though pace and timing are always an adjustment coming off injuries.

"He's been sitting in on all the meetings that we've had, so he's up to speed on all the adjustments we've made, corrections, what we see as learners and confirmers of how we want to play," Krueger said. "He's been a part of that. But it's still a lot different when you have to put it into action.

"It's day-to-day to see him get integrated here. We've got no timeline on the re-entry. It's the first day, once again, and we'll build on this."

Lines at practice

68 Victor Olofsson - 9 Jack Eichel - 23 Sam Reinhart

53 Jeff Skinner - 90 Marcus Johansson - 17 Vladimir Sobotka

71 Evan Rodrigues - 37 Casey Mittelstadt - 43 Conor Sheary

28 Zemgus Girgensons - 22 Johan Larsson - 21 Kyle Okposo

19 Jake McCabe - 55 Rasmus Ristolainen
58 John Gilmour - 33 Colin Miller
26 Rasmus Dahlin - 10 Henri Jokiharju
3 William Borgen - 62 Brandon Montour

40 Carter Hutton
35 Linus Ullmark

Borgen assigned to Rochester

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

October 26, 2019

The Buffalo Sabres announced this morning that defenseman William Borgen has been assigned to the Rochester Americans of the AHL.

Borgen was recalled Friday morning to serve as the extra defenseman for Buffalo's game against the Detroit Red Wings. Defenseman Marco Scandella missed the game due to a lower-body injury, giving John Gilmour the opportunity to play in his first game of the season. Gilmour served as a healthy scratch for the first 11 games of the year.

Linus Ullmark made 41 saves in the 2-0 win and head coach Ralph Krueger lauded the efforts of his defense.

"If you look at Johnny Gilmour coming in after multiple weeks of not playing and playing at that level and that pace, we're really happy with the D group today and what they did to help Linus with the shutout," Krueger said.

The Amerks are in Syracuse tonight for the first game of a back-to-back set this weekend.

The Sabres' next game is Monday when they host Arizona at KeyBank Center.

Sabres rebound with shutout victory over Red Wings

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

October 25, 2019

DETROIT - The Buffalo Sabres have found an ability to positively respond after a disappointing loss. The only two regulation games they've lost so far this season have come on the front half of a back-to-back set, and they've come back both times with shutout victories the next game.

Back on Oct. 16, they opened a three-game road trip with a disappointing 5-2 loss in Anaheim. The next night, they blanked the Kings 3-0 on the strength of a superb defensive effort.

Last night, Buffalo fell into an early hole to the New York Rangers at Madison Square Garden and ultimately lost 6-2.

The team regrouped on Friday and came away with another shutout - their third of the season - this time in the form of a 2-0 win over the Detroit Red Wings at Little Caesars Arena.

"We've just got confidence in here. There's no panic," alternate captain Jake McCabe said. "We lose a game, we didn't have our best night, obviously, everyone was a little off, and we just refocus and focus on the next game.

"The past is the past. Focus on that next shift, that next period. When you really narrow your focus, you can do a lot of good things."

Buffalo is now 9-2-1 on the season and has yet to lose back-to-back games.

"You always have the mentality that you never want to lose two in a row," goaltender Linus Ullmark said. "That's an obvious thing for us. You want to get on the winning track right away. You don't want to get those second, third, fourth losses and get in a slump. You want to keep the train rolling at all times."

Ullmark made 41 saves, including 21 in the third period to earn his first shutout of the season. McCabe and Sam Reinhart scored for Buffalo.

"For me, that was the most enjoyable win of the season under the circumstances of having lost our way in phases of the game yesterday that were quite disappointing," head coach Ralph Krueger said.

"...They were the better team early in the game, there's no question about that, but midway through the game, you could feel it tipping. We got our game going and were able to neutralize them and eliminate almost any scoring chances until we got the lead.

"Then Linus helped us weather the storm. But overall, I thought we built an excellent game off the back-to-back and a game that's really going to strengthen us mentally moving forward."

The Sabres found themselves shorthanded with 2:10 left in regulation and had to go up against Detroit's 6-on-4 attack for an extended period of time.

"It's nice that we have a two-goal lead. Linus is making that first save and you've just got to clear up pucks and clear up sticks, especially with two extra bodies in front," McCabe said. "We stuck to our structure and got the job done."

Scoring plays

McCabe got Buffalo on the board with 8:20 remaining in the second. The play started when Jack Eichel won a neutral zone draw and then eventually brought the puck into the Detroit zone down the right wing, then around the net and back up the left-wing halfway.

Eichel battled with Dylan Larkin and Tyler Bertuzzi and as he was falling down along the boards, got the puck to Reinhart, who sent it back to McCabe.

Waiting patiently for a shooting lane, McCabe took his shot and with Victor Olofsson screening, the puck made its way past Jimmy Howard shortside to give the Sabres a 1-0 lead.

"The first one was just a goal created on will," Krueger said of Eichel's play on that shift. "There was a wall battle, he gave it all and that's the captain we need to step up and make the difference to tip this game in our favor. He really came out as a leader today in so far as understanding more and more what it takes to win in the National Hockey League. He's setting the example."

Buffalo started the third period on the power play and used the fresh sheet of ice to their advantage. At the 1:15 mark of the period - and with 5 seconds remaining on the man advantage - Reinhart capitalized on a crisp passing play. Eichel zipped the puck cross-ice to Olofsson, who sent it over to Reinhart to deflect it in.

Reinhart now has five goals on the season while Eichel collected his fifth multi-point game of the season and his first on the road.

Eichel has 13 points (4+9) in 11 games against the Red Wings since the beginning of the 2016-17 season, including eight points (2+6) in six meetings in Detroit. He has recorded at least a point in each of the last six matchups between the teams.

Ullmark's first shutout of the season

Ullmark was busy in net, particularly in the first period when Detroit outshot Buffalo 12-6. He made a number of big saves including this one on Valtteri Filppula:

He also faced a flurry at the end of regulation when Buffalo was trying to kill off the penalty.

Ullmark was credited with five saves in the final 1:51, but he was quick to point out the efforts of his defense, particularly a block by Rasmus Ristolainen with 39 seconds left that led to a clear.

"The boys are busting. They're tight. It's not just the D corps that's tight, it's all the boys in here," he said. "We're cheering for each other a lot more than we used to do. We're keeping the mindset of just going forward and cheer on us and try to pick everyone up. It's everybody for the team and all for one."

The Sabres' next game is Monday night when they'll host the Arizona Coyotes at KeyBank Center. The GMC Game Night pregame show will begin at 6:30 p.m. on MSG with faceoff scheduled for 7 on MSG and WGR 550.

At the Horn: Sabres 2 - Red Wings 0

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

October 25, 2019

In the dressing room after their loss to the New York Rangers on Thursday, members of the Sabres spoke about flushing that game and moving on to the next one.

They responded with a 2-0 victory over the Detroit Red Wings at Little Caesars Arena on Friday, improving to 9-2-1 this season. Linus Ullmark made 41 saves for his first shutout of the season, including several key stops to preserve a scoreless tie when the Red Wings made an early push in the first period.

Jake McCabe and Sam Reinhart scored goals for the Sabres. Reinhart also tallied an assist, giving him 10 points (5+5) in 12 contests this season. Jack Eichel added a pair of helpers.

What happened

Ullmark kept the Red Wings off the board during a first period in which they outshot the Sabres, 12-6. He stopped Andreas Athanasiou from in tight on the first shift of the game. Less than five minutes later, he used his blocker to rob Valtteri Filppula on a breakaway chance.

The goalie's performance set the stage for McCabe to open the scoring at the 11:40 mark of the second. McCabe - who had left the game to receive stitches above his eye during the first period - scored with a shot from the point while Victor Olofsson battled to screen Howard down low.

Olofsson also factored into Buffalo's next goal, which came late on a power play to begin the third. Jack Eichel passed through traffic to the rookie forward, who found a seam to hit Reinhart at the back door at the 1:15 mark of the period.

Ullmark preserved the shutout late, preventing the Red Wings from scoring on a 6-on-4 advantage in the final minutes of the contest.

What it means

The Sabres are now 3-0-0 after losses this season. They're also 9-2-2 against the Red Wings since the beginning of the 2016-17 season, including a 6-1-0 record in Detroit.

Ullmark, meanwhile, joins in on the shutout fun after Carter Hutton earned back-to-back shutouts earlier this month. The Sabres have relied on both their goaltenders as they've navigated a busy schedule through an early part of the season. Ullmark now has three wins in five starts, with one of his two losses coming in overtime.

On the injury front, defenseman John Gilmour made his Sabres debut in place of Marco Scandella, who missed the game with a lower-body injury. Skating on a defense pair with Colin Miller, Gilmour tallied two shots in 17:20.

The Sabres will evaluate Scandella and forward Jimmy Vesey, who missed the game with an upper-body injury, this weekend.

Roll the Highlight Film

Ullmark set the tone less than five minutes into the game when he stoned Filppula on a breakaway.

Up next

The Sabres return home to host the Arizona Coyotes on Monday. Coverage on MSG begins at 6:30 p.m., or you can listen live on WGR 550. The puck drops at 7.

Gilmour to make season debut tonight against Detroit

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

October 25, 2019

DETROIT - Defenseman John Gilmour earned a spot on the Buffalo Sabres roster out of training camp and has patiently waited for his chance to enter the lineup. Tonight against the Detroit Red Wings, he'll make his season debut.

The Sabres are 8-2-1 on the season and coming off a loss to the New York Rangers last night. In that game, both forward Jimmy Vesey and defenseman Marco Scandella had to leave due to injuries, and neither will play tonight.

That opens the door for Gilmour and forward Evan Rodrigues, who will make his return to the lineup.

Gilmour spent the past three years with the Rangers organization and signed a one-year deal with Buffalo on July 1. He was named to the 2018-19 AHL First All-Star Team last year after finishing the season among the AHL's top 10 defensemen in goals (2nd, 20), assists (8th, 34), points (2nd, 54) and game-winning goals (2nd, 5).

Gilmour's demeanor through the first 11 games of this season has left a positive impression on Sabres coach Ralph Krueger.

"In training camp, he definitely pushed himself into the spot that he's in. He earned it by his performance in the preseason games," Krueger said.

"Then of course you get tested in this type of situation - being on the sidelines, working extra after single practice, and skating when the others aren't and pregame skates and so on - and he's just been the ultimate professional.

"He's been nothing but supportive of his teammates and when the group's together, you don't know that he's a player that's not playing, which is a real good sign of character."

Defenseman William Borgen was recalled from the AHL on Friday and will serve as the seventh defenseman against the Red Wings. Krueger said he considers Scandella day-to-day with a lower-body injury.

Linus Ullmark will start in goal and will try to help the Sabres get back on the right foot. Last night, the Rangers snapped a five-game losing streak with their 6-2 win over Buffalo. New York led 3-0 after the first period and the Sabres will look to ensure that the Red Wings, who have lost six in a row.

"Again, we play a team that's going to be all in, has a lot of speed, a lot of skill," Krueger said. "[They're] very similar to the Rangers, actually, in a lot of ways and now we need to manage it better tonight."

The Buick Game Night pregame show starts at 7 p.m. on MSG, and Dan Dunleavy and Rob Ray will have the call at 7:30 on MSG and WGR 550.

Scandella, Vesey will not play in Detroit

By Jourdon LaBarber

Sabres.com

October 25, 2019

The Sabres have announced that forward Jimmy Vesey (upper body) and defenseman Marco Scandella (lower body) will not play tonight against the Detroit Red Wings.

The two players will be evaluated by doctors in Buffalo this weekend.

Scandella and Vesey both left Thursday's game against the New York Rangers in the second period. Vesey did not return; Scandella joined the team on the bench coming out of the second intermission but did not skate a shift in the third.

The Sabres traveled with a 13th forward in Evan Rodrigues and a seventh defenseman in John Gilmour. They added another defenseman this morning, recalling William Borgen from AHL Rochester.

Sabres coach Ralph Krueger is scheduled to speak with the media in Detroit around 6 p.m. Follow @BuffaloSabres on Twitter for updates, and tune into MSG for coverage of tonight's game beginning at 7. The puck drops at 7:30.

Sabres recall Borgen from Amerks

By Chris Ryndak

Sabres.com

October 25, 2019

The Buffalo Sabres announced this morning that the team has recalled defenseman William Borgen from the Rochester Americans of the AHL.

Borgen, 22, has dressed in all seven of Rochester's games this season, logging seven shots, 27 penalty minutes, and a plus-2 rating.

He made great strides in his first full pro season last year, where he recorded 14 points (3+11) in 71 games for the Amerks. His play earned him a recall at the end of the season, and he skated in four NHL games with Buffalo, averaging 16:33 of ice time and three hits per game.

In last night's loss to the New York Rangers, neither forward Jimmy Vesey nor defenseman Marco Scandella were able to finish the game due to injuries. Forward Evan Rodrigues and defenseman John Gilmour are on the trip, but neither played against New York.

We'll find out later today from head coach Ralph Krueger what lineup changes will be made. Buffalo plays the Red Wings tonight at Little Caesars Arena.

Faceoff from Detroit is scheduled for 7:30 p.m. The Buick Game Night pregame show will begin at 7 on MSG.