NHL MORNING SKATE – MARCH 25, 2018

SATURDAY'S RESULTS

Home Team in Caps
COLORADO 2, Vegas 1 (SO)
SAN JOSE 5, Calgary 1
TORONTO 4, Detroit 3
Washington 6, MONTREAL 4
Carolina 5, OTTAWA 2
FLORIDA 4, Arizona 2
NEW JERSEY 2, Tampa Bay 1
Chicago 3, NY ISLANDERS 1
NY RANGERS 5, Buffalo 1
St. Louis 2, COLUMBUS 1
MINNESOTA 4, Nashville 1
EDMONTON 3, Los Angeles 2

McDAVID TAKES LEAD IN ART ROSS TROPHY RACE

Connor McDavid (2-0—2) scored twice to boost his season totals to 38-58—96 and overtake Lightning forward **Nikita Kucherov** (37-58—95) – who had held the lead outright since Dec. 12 – for the NHL scoring lead. McDavid looks to become the first player to win the Art Ross Trophy in consecutive seasons since **Jaromir Jagr** claimed the scoring title for four straight campaigns from 1997-98 to 2000-01.



* Since Feb. 1, McDavid has collected a League-leading 23-19—42 in 26 GP – six more than the next closest player (**Evgeni Malkin**: 15-21—36). McDavid sits four points shy of his second consecutive 100-point season and aims to become just the eighth player to record multiple 100-point campaigns before his 22nd birthday. The others: **Wayne Gretzky** (4), **Dale Hawerchuk** (3), **Mario Lemieux** (3), **Sidney Crosby** (3), **Jimmy Carson** (2) and **Joe Sakic** (2).

* Saturday marked McDavid's eighth multi-goal game of the season and second in as many games. He sits two tallies shy of reaching 40 goals for the first time in his NHL career and would become the first Oilers player to do so since **Petr Klima** (40) in 1990-91.

SHARKS EXTEND WIN STREAK TO SEVEN GAMES

Brent Burns provided the primary assist on the game-winning goal by **Jannik Hansen** to help the Sharks (43-23-9, 95 points) earn their seventh straight victory, the longest active win streak in the NHL. The run marks San Jose's longest winning streak since a pair of seven-game stretches during the 2012-13 season (7-0-0 from Jan. 20-31 and 7-0-0 from March 25 – April 5).

* San Jose sits second in the Pacific Division and moved within six points of first-place Vegas (47-21-7, 101 points); the clubs will conclude their four-game season series on March 31 at T-Mobile Arena (VGK: 2-0-1; SJS: 1-1-1).



* Burns (11-49—60) reached the 60-point mark for the fourth consecutive season and became the third defenseman to hit the milestone in 2017-18, joining Washington's **John Carlson** (15-48—63) and Dallas' **John Klingberg** (7-54—61). Burns is second among all defensemen with 84-187—271 since the beginning of the 2014-15 season, five points behind Ottawa's **Erik Karlsson** (62-214—276).

MAPLE LEAFS EXTEND HOME WIN STREAK, MATCH FRANCHISE RECORDS

William Nylander scored the tying goal in the third period and **Nazem Kadri** netted the go-ahead marker with 7:26 remaining in regulation as the Maple Leafs (45-23-7, 97 points) extended their franchise-record home win streak to 13 games, the longest in the NHL this season. Toronto is third in the Atlantic Division standings.

* Toronto improved to 6-1-0 in its last seven games overall and matched its franchise record for most wins in a season, achieved in 1998-99, 1999-00 and 2003-04.

* The Maple Leafs improved to 26-8-2 (54 points) at Air Canada Centre and matched its single-season franchise record for home wins, a mark set in 2005-06 (26-12-3, 55 points).



BACKSTROM HELPS CAPITALS PAD DIVISION LEAD

Nicklas Backstrom (0-4—4) matched a single-game career high with four assists to help the Capitals (44-24-7, 95 points) improve to 7-1-0 in their last eight contests and open a five-point lead atop the Metropolitan Division standings.

* Backstrom recorded his 11th career four-assist game, the most among active players. In fact, he moved into a tie with **Bobby Clarke**, **Marcel Dionne**, **Phil Esposito** and **Peter Stastny** for the ninth-most games with at least four assists in NHL history.

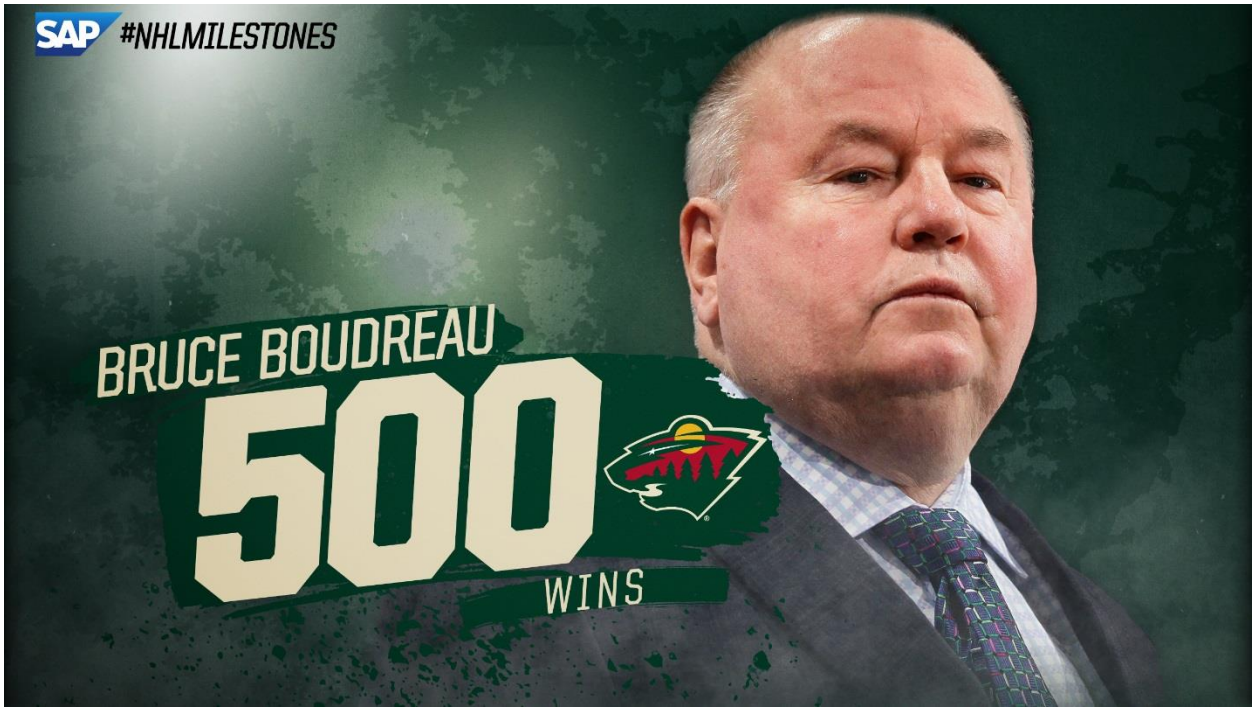
* The Capitals improved to 13-0-2 in their last 15 regular-season road games against the Canadiens dating to Nov. 28, 2009 (MTL: 2-11-2), the longest road point streak versus one opponent in franchise history.

ZUCKER SHINES FOR WILD, BOUDREAU EARNS 500TH WIN

Jason Zucker (1-1—2) scored to reach the 30-goal mark for the first time in his career to help the Wild (42-24-8, 92 points) earn a victory and snap the Predators' 15-game points streak (12-0-3). Minnesota, who hold the No. 3 seed in the Central Division, earned their third win in four contests to open a two-point cushion on the Avalanche (41-26-8, 90 points).

* Zucker and **Eric Staal** (39-33—72) are just the fourth set of Wild teammates to score at least 30 goals in the same season and first since **Marian Gaborik** (42) and **Brian Rolston** (31) in 2007-08. The Islanders (**Anders Lee** and **John Tavares**) and Penguins (**Evgeni Malkin** and **Phil Kessel**) are the only other clubs with multiple 30-goal scorers this season.

* Head Coach **Bruce Boudreau**, who led Minnesota to a franchise-best 49-25-8, 106 points in his first season with the club in 2016-17, reached the 500-win milestone. According to Elias, Boudreau (837 GP) trails only Scotty Bowman (825 GP) for the fewest games coached to reach 500 wins.



AVALANCHE, BLUES SECURE KEY VICTORIES IN PLAYOFF PUSH
The Avalanche (41-26-8, 90 points) and Blues (42-26-8, 89 points) each secured key victories in the Western Conference playoff race:

* The Golden Knights tied the game in the third period, but **Gabriel Landeskog** scored the decisive marker in the shootout to lift the Avalanche to a 6-2-0 record in their last eight games. Colorado moved ahead of Los Angeles (41-28-7, 89 points) for the first Wild Card spot in the Western Conference.

* **Jake Allen** made 33 stops, including a highlight-reel glove save in the first period, to help the Blues (42-28-5, 89 points) snap the Blue Jackets' win streak at 10 games. St. Louis, which earned its fifth straight victory, claimed the final Wild Card spot in the Western Conference and remain within a point of Colorado; the clubs conclude their five-game season series on April 7 at Pepsi Center, with the Blues holding a 3-1-0 edge (COL: 1-3-0).

DEVILS, PANTHERS BATTLE FOR WILD CARD POSITION
The Devils (39-28-8, 86 points) and Panthers (38-28-7, 83 points) each secured key wins in the battle for the second Wild Card position in the Eastern Conference:

* **Nico Hischier** (1-0—1) recorded his eighth point in as many games (5-3—8) to help the Devils improve to 5-2-0 in their last seven outings. New Jersey occupies the final Wild Card spot in the Eastern Conference.

* Hischier (18-31—49), the first overall selection in the 2017 NHL Draft, moved within a point of becoming the seventh rookie in Devils/Rockies/Scouts franchise history to reach the 50-point mark in a season and first since **Adam Henrique** in 2011-12 (16-35—51).

* Down 2-0 through 40 minutes, the Panthers scored four unanswered goals to rally past the Coyotes and improve to 10-2-0 in their last 12 home games. Florida, which overcame a multi-goal deficit in the third period to win in regulation for the first time since Dec. 28, 2014 (6-4 W vs. TOR), kept pace with New Jersey and own two games in hand on the Devils.

* **Vincent Trocheck** (2-1—3) reached the 30-goal mark for the first time in his NHL career. He became the eighth different player in franchise history to score at least 30 goals in a campaign and the second in as many seasons, joining **Jonathan Marchessault** in 2016-17 (30).



ROOKIES EXTEND POINT STREAKS, JOIN ELITE COMPANY

Coyotes forward **Clayton Keller** and Rangers defenseman **Neal Pionk** each found the score sheet to accomplish franchise feats and join iconic Hockey Hall of Famers in the process:

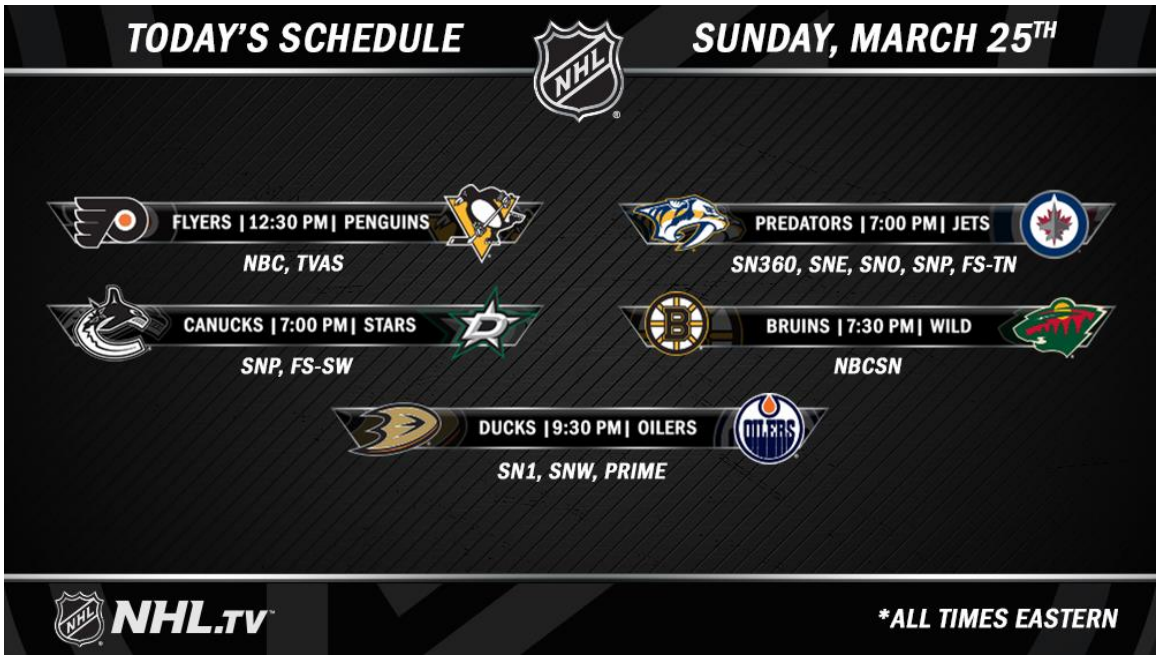
* Keller (1-1—2) extended his point streak to eight games (4-7—11), matching his career high set this season from Dec. 14-31 (3-6—9). He became the second rookie in Coyotes/Jets franchise history to record multiple point streaks of at least eight games in a season, joining **Teemu Selanne** in 1992-93 (3x).

* Pionk (1-1—2) scored the first goal of his NHL career (21 GP). He extended his point streak to seven games (1-9—10) to match the franchise record for longest by a rookie defenseman, a mark set by **Brian Leetch** in 1988-89.

QUICK CLICKS

- Hischier, Zadina prepared for NHL Draft with same Halifax host family
- **Joe Thornton** rehabs knee injury with help of 4-year-old son
- **Kyle Connor** getting hot at right time for surging Jets (via **Tim Campbell**)

SNEAK PEEK AT SUNDAY'S ACTION



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