

NHL MORNING SKATE – DEC. 18, 2021



MORNING SKATE

Saturday, December 18, 2021

 **#NHLSTATS**




- ▶ 2022 Discover NHL Winter Classic on horizon in Minnesota
- ▶ Ovechkin, Capitals overtake first place in NHL standings
- ▶ Predators, Penguins, Lindgren extend win streaks

* Thirty-six-year-old **Alex Ovechkin** scored a goal to pull even with reigning Art Ross Trophy winner **Connor McDavid** atop the NHL scoring race.













* Nashville and Pittsburgh each notched another victory, while St. Louis goaltender **Charlie Lindgren** achieved a franchise-first Friday.

* The *2022 Discover NHL Winter Classic* will feature eight pond hockey rinks in the outfield – the most ever at an NHL outdoor game – with more than 100 players, ages 5- to 50-years old, from diverse hockey backgrounds set to take the ice as [part of the festivities](#) surrounding the Wild-Blues game on New Year's Day.

* The NHL [further delayed](#) the Flames' return to play and shut down the Avalanche and Panthers through the holiday break. The Bruins-Canadiens game scheduled for Saturday was also [postponed](#).



FRIDAY'S RESULTS

	3	FINAL	2			2	FINAL	3			1	FINAL	4	
	5	FINAL	2			3	FINAL	2			6	FINAL	5	

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2022 DISCOVER NHL WINTER CLASSIC ON HORIZON IN MINNESOTA

On-site preparations for the 2022 Discover NHL Winter Classic are officially underway after the ice plant arrived at Target Field in Minneapolis on Friday. Wild captain **Jared Spurgeon** and forward **Nick Bjugstad** joined **Mike Craig**, NHL Senior Manager of Facilities Operations & Hockey Operations, at the baseball field to mark the arrival of the world's largest mobile refrigeration unit.



* The League also released a [rendering](#) of Target Field for the New Year's Day event, with a "Lake Winter Classic" theme inspired by Minnesota's lakes, forests and longstanding history of hockey outdoors. The sold-out matchup, which will take place in primetime on TNT in two weeks, [will also feature](#) the unveiling of the final 2022 U.S. Olympic Women's Ice Hockey Team.

* The NHL Stats & Information team marked the occasion by releasing the latest [#NHLStats Pack](#), which includes outdoor game notes and a look at what makes Minnesota "The State of Hockey."

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OVECHKIN TIES NHL LEAD IN POINTS, CAPITALS OVERTAKE FIRST PLACE

Alex Ovechkin scored one of Washington's five goals to extend his point streak to seven games (3-7—10) and record his 47th point on the season overall (22-25—47 in 30 GP), tying Edmonton captain **Connor McDavid** (16-31—47 in 28 GP) for the [most in the League](#). Only one player in franchise history recorded more points than Ovechkin through their first 30 games in a season: **Denis Maruk** in 1981-82 (25-23—48 in 30 GP).

* The Capitals (18-5-7, 43 points), who fended off a Jets comeback attempt Friday, overtook first place in the NHL standings. Washington has a one-point edge on Tampa Bay (19-6-4, 42 points), Toronto (20-8-2, 42 points) and NY Rangers (19-7-4, 42 points).



MOST POINTS THROUGH 30 GAMES PLAYED IN A SEASON

► PLAYERS AGE 36 OR OLDER, NHL HISTORY

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	POINTS
MARIO LEMIEUX	PIT	2002-03	55
ALEX OVECHKIN	WSH	2021-22	47
GORDIE HOWE	DET	1968-69	42
MARTIN ST. LOUIS	TBL	2012-13	39
TEEMU SELANNE	ANA	2006-07	37
JEAN RATELLE	BOS	1976-77	37

*AGES BASED AT START OF SEASON

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PREDATORS, PENGUINS AND LINDGREN EXTEND WINNING STREAKS

* **Thomas Novak** scored on Blackhawks goaltender **Marc-Andre Fleury** to record the first goal of his NHL career and **Tanner Jeannot** tallied the overtime winner as the Predators improved to [7-0-0 in their last seven games](#) dating to Dec. 4. The last player to score his first NHL goal on a goaltender with 500 or more career wins was **Jean-Gabriel Pageau**, who beat **Martin Brodeur** on [April 12, 2013](#).

* **Kris Letang** (0-2—2) assisted on the overtime winner by **Jeff Carter** as the Penguins extended their winning streak of six games. Carter scored the [15th overtime goal of his NHL career](#), while Letang recorded his [21st career assist in extra time](#) – the only defenseman in League history with more are **Duncan Keith** and **Nicklas Lidstrom** (both w/ 22).

* Blue goaltender **Charlie Lindgren** (26 saves) improved to 5-0-0 in five appearances since making his team debut Dec. 7 (1.22 GAA, .958 SV%). Lindgren became the first goaltender with wins in each of his first five appearances from the start of his tenure with St. Louis and third with victories in his first five *decisions*, following **Reinhard Divis** ([5-0-0 from Oct. 15, 2002–Jan. 15, 2004](#)) and **Curtis Sanford** ([5-0-0 from Oct. 19, 2002–March 6, 2003](#)).



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B L U E S

Charlie Lindgren (5-0-0 in 5 GP since Dec. 7) became the first goaltender with wins in each of his first five appearances from the start of his tenure with the Blues, eclipsing the previous mark set by Ryan Miller (4-0-0 in 4 GP from March 2-8, 2014)

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NHL PODCAST WEEKLY ROUNDUP

- * [Fantasy on Ice \(12/13\): Nick Alberga & James Harding](#) talk fantasy waiver wire pickups
- * [NHL @TheRink \(12/15\): Dan and Shawn](#) are joined by [Colton Parayko](#) ahead of the Winter Classic
- * [Soul on Ice \(12/15\): JD Ross](#) of HockeyShot talks benefits of synthetic ice; [Kwame](#) calls top goal
- * [The Chirp \(12/16\): Ryan Hartman](#) joins Millard to talk Kirill the Thrill, Winter Classic, and Olympics
- * [Fantasy on Ice \(12/16\): Pete](#) welcomes [Nick Alberga](#) of Sportsnet as new co-host of Fantasy on Ice

QUICK CLICKS

- * [#NHLStats: Live Updates – Friday, Dec. 17, 2021](#)
- * [2022 NHL All-Star Game fan vote now open online](#)
- * [Jason Spezza](#) suspension reduced to four games by [NHL Commissioner Gary Bettman](#)
- * [Tickets to 2022 Truly Hard Seltzer NHL Fan Fair in Las Vegas now on sale](#)
- * [Trevor Zegras](#) arrives at Ducks' Star Wars Night accompanied by The Mandalorian character [Grogu](#)



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MAPLE LEAFS, CANUCKS SET TO CLASH ON HOCKEY NIGHT IN CANADA

Auston Matthews and the Maple Leafs (20-8-2, 42 points) travel to Rogers Arena to take on **J.T. Miller** and the streaking Canucks (14-15-2, 30 points), winners of their last six games dating to Dec. 6.



TONIGHT'S SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 18, 2021

7:00 PM ET		@		NBCSP, SN1, CITY, SN360
7:00 PM ET		@		BSSO, BSW
7:00 PM ET		@		CBC, SN, NHLN
8:00 PM ET		@		BSET, MSG+
8:00 PM ET		@		BSSW+, NBCSCH
10:00 PM ET		@		ROOT-NW, TVAS2, CITY, SN1, SN360, SN, CBC






Stream on ESPN+ and NHL LIVE. Blackouts and other restrictions apply.

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* Matthews, fresh off recording his sixth consecutive 20-goal season to start his career, enters Saturday with the NHL's longest active point streak (10 GP since Nov. 24) and an [NHL-best 61 goals since Jan. 1](#). Only four players in the past 25 years have concluded a calendar year with more than the Maple Leafs forward's current total: **Alex Ovechkin** (62 in 2013 w/ WSH), **Jaromir Jagr** (62 in 1999 w/ PIT & 62 in 1996 w/ PIT), **Teemu Selanne** (62 in 19997 w/ ANA) and **Mario Lemieux** (62 in 1996 w/ PIT).



**Most goals in a calendar year,
U.S.-born players:**

Jimmy Carson: 63 in 1988
Pat LaFontaine: 61 in 1992
Auston Matthews: 61 in 2021
Pat LaFontaine: 60 in 1989



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* While **Bruce Boudreau** looks to become the [third head coach in NHL history](#) to win each of his first seven games with a new team, Miller has produced a team-leading 2-7—9 (5 GP) since Boudreau's arrival on Dec. 6. Only two players have recorded more points than the Canucks forward [over that span](#): Colorado's **Mikko Rantanen** (4-7—11 in 6 GP) and Ottawa's **Drake Batherson** (2-8—10 in 5 GP).