

NHL MORNING SKATE – DEC. 24, 2023



The graphic features a hockey goalie in a blue and white uniform on the left, and a player in a white Chicago Blackhawks jersey with the number 98 on the right. The player is in a ready stance, holding a hockey stick. The background shows a crowd of fans in a stadium. The NHL logo is in the top left corner, and the hashtag #NHLStats is in the top right corner. The text 'Morning Skate' is prominently displayed in yellow, with 'Sunday, December 24, 2023' in a smaller font to its right. Below the main title, three white boxes contain headlines: 'Bedard, Zegras gift fans with lacrosse-style goals before holiday break', 'Stars stun Predators with first-of-its-kind win', and 'Matthews nets League-leading 27th and 28th goals in 30th game'.

Morning Skate

Sunday, December 24, 2023

- Bedard, Zegras gift fans with lacrosse-style goals before holiday break
- Stars stun Predators with first-of-its-kind win
- Matthews nets League-leading 27th and 28th goals in 30th game

* Saturday was a night of lacrosse-style goals, with **Connor Bedard** hitting “The Michigan” in front of **Wayne Gretzky** and another young star, **Trevor Zegras**, zipping one of his own into the Kraken net during his return to the Ducks’ lineup.

* The final slate of games before the League’s three-day holiday break featured a little bit of everything in addition to lacrosse-style goals, including **Craig Smith** and **Jani Hakanpää** powering the Stars to a first-of-its-kind win as well as **Sebastian Aho** and **Sebastian Aho** each finding the back of the net at PNC Arena.

* The NHL will return with another 14-game slate on Dec. 27. The next edition of the NHL Morning Skate will be released on Dec. 28 at the conclusion of Wednesday’s action.



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RESULTS

SATURDAY

	3	◀ FINAL ▶	2			2	FINAL ▶	4			4	◀ FINAL ▶	1	
	2	FINAL ▶	3			2	FINAL ▶	3			4	FINAL ▶	5	
	2	◀ FINAL SO ▶	1			5	◀ FINAL ▶	4			3	FINAL ▶	4	
	3	◀ FINAL ▶	2			5	FINAL ▶	7			1	FINAL ▶	4	
	3	FINAL ▶	5			4	FINAL ▶	7						



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FANS GIFTED WITH TWO LACROSSE-STYLE GOALS BEFORE HOLIDAY BREAK

Blackhawks forward **Connor Bedard** and Ducks forward **Trevor Zegras** both hit “The Michigan” on Saturday. The No. 1 pick from the 2023 NHL Draft did so with **Wayne Gretzky** watching in-person, while Zegras scored his after returning to the Anaheim lineup.

* Bedard’s highlight-reel goal marked his 30th point of the 2023-24 season (13-17—30 in 33 GP). He became the [ninth 18-year-old rookie in NHL history](#) and third active player among that group (also **Ryan Nugent-Hopkins**: 28 GP & **Sidney Crosby**: 29 GP) to require 33 or fewer games to collect 30 career points.



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“My daughter Emma is with me tonight and she goes ‘Dad, did you ever do that?’ and I said, no I could never do that.”

WAYNE GRETZKY ON CONNOR BEDARD'S
LACROSSE-STYLE GOAL SATURDAY



* Zegras and Bedard scored the second and third lacrosse-style goals since the League began tracking the “cradle” shot type in 2022-23, following Blue Jackets forward **Kent Johnson** ([March 24](#)). Zegras had two in the NHL before they were officially tracked ([April 1, 2022](#) & [Jan. 27, 2022](#)).



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STARS STUN PREDATORS WITH FIRST-OF-ITS-KIND WIN

Entering the third period trailing by two goals, **Evgenii Dadonov** got the Stars within one near the mid-point of the frame to set the stage for a dramatic, first-of-its kind victory. **Craig Smith** tied the game with 15 seconds remaining in regulation, followed by **Jani Hakanpää**'s stunning game winner just 11 seconds later.



* Smith (59:45) became the 13th player in franchise history to score a tying goal in the final 15 seconds of regulation in a regular-season game, while Hakanpää (59:56) scored the fifth-latest regulation go-ahead goal in franchise history behind **Brian MacLellan** (59:59 on [Jan. 27, 1988](#)), **Tyler Seguin** (59:57 on [Oct. 16, 2014](#)), **Shawn Chambers** (59:57 on [Jan. 6, 1990](#)) and **Dave Gagner** (59:57 on [Nov. 14, 1988](#)).

* The Stars earned their League-leading fifth multi-goal comeback win of the season and first in 2023-24 when trailing by two or more in the third period.

MORE HIGHLIGHTS FROM SATURDAY FEATURED IN #NHLSTATS: LIVE UPDATES

[Saturday's edition of #NHLStats: Live Updates](#) featured notes from the 14-game slate. Some highlights include:

* **Marc-Andre Fleury** (19 saves) backstopped the Wild to their sixth straight home victory and earned the 550th win of his NHL career to move within one of tying **Patrick Roy** (551) for second place on the [League's all-time list](#). Fleury also made his 998th career appearance to climb within two of becoming the [fourth goaltender in NHL history](#) with 1,000.

* **Quinn Hughes** (10-34—44 in 35 GP) recorded the 68th multi-point game of his career to tie **Alexander Edler** for the [most by a defenseman in franchise history](#) and help the Canucks (23-9-3, 49 points) open a two-point lead atop the NHL standings, while **Trevor Moore** scored the game-winning goal as the Kings (19-7-4, 42 points) kept pace.



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* **Nathan MacKinnon** (0-1—1) collected an assist to extend both his overall and season-opening home point streak to 18 contests. MacKinnon tied **Peter Stastny** (18 GP in 1981-82) for the [fourth-longest point streak in Avalanche/Nordiques history](#) and established a franchise record for longest season-opening home point streak, surpassing **Mats Sundin** (17 GP in 1992-93) and Stastny (17 GP in 1980-81).

LONGEST SEASON-OPENING HOME POINT STREAKS

NHL HISTORY

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	GP
WAYNE GRETZKY	LAK	1988-89	40
BOBBY ORR	BOS	1974-75	25
WAYNE GRETZKY	EDM	1983-84	23
PHIL ESPOSITO	BOS	1973-74	23
BERNIE FEDERKO	STL	1983-84	20
WAYNE GRETZKY	EDM	1982-83	20
NATHAN MACKINNON	COL	2023-24	18
NEAL BROTEN	MNS	1989-90	18



* **Artemi Panarin** (1-0—1) found the score sheet in his 300th game with the Rangers and **Chris Kreider** (1-1—2) scored his [41st career game-winning goal](#) in overtime to help New York (23-8-1, 47 points) build on its lead atop the Metropolitan Division. Panarin (118-267—385 in 300 GP) owns the most points by a player through their first 300 contests with the franchise and 24 more than the next closest (**Mark Messier**: 113-248—361 in 300 GP).

* **Sebastian Aho** and **Sebastian Aho** each scored a goal in the Islanders' 5-4 win against the Hurricanes. Another notable pair of NHL players with the same first and last name that both scored a goal in the same game were **Greg Adams** and **Greg Adams** ([April 1, 1989](#), [April 5, 1987](#), [Feb. 1, 1986](#) & [Nov. 30, 1985](#)).


* **Jordan Kyrou** (2-0—2) scored two of five consecutive Blues goals in the third period as St. Louis rallied to produce a three-goal, third-period comeback win for the [fourth time in franchise history](#) and second against Chicago (also [Dec. 14, 2019](#)). Every season but one in the past decade has seen at least one team overcome a three-goal, third-period deficit and *win in regulation*; 2020-21 stands as the only exception. Edmonton (Nov. 26, 2022: 4-3 W at NYR) and Dallas (Nov. 23, 2022: 6-4 W vs. CHI) both did so in 2022-23.

* **Auston Matthews** (2-1—3) continued his red-hot goal-scoring stretch, notching his 13th and 14th goals [since Dec. 1](#) to become just the fifth different player in franchise history to score as many in a single calendar month alongside **Rick Vaive** (4x; most: 17 in Jan. 1983), **Babe Dye** (4x; most: 15 in Feb. 1921), **Frank Mahovlich** (15 in Dec. 1960) and **Wendel Clark** (14 in Nov. 1993).

MOST GOALS THROUGH 30 GAMES PLAYED IN A SEASON

SINCE 1990-91

PLAYER	TEAM	SEASON	GOALS
CAM NEELY	BRUINS	1993-94	34
MARIO LEMIEUX	PENGUINS	1992-93	32
JAROMIR JAGR	PENGUINS	1996-97	30
MARIO LEMIEUX	PENGUINS	1995-96	30
KEVIN STEVENS	PENGUINS	1992-93	30
ALEXANDER MOGILNY	SABRES	1992-93	30
PAT LAFONTAINE	SABRES	1991-92	29
BRETT HULL	BLUES	1990-91	29
AUSTON MATTHEWS	MAPLE LEAFS	2023-24	28
BRETT HULL	BLUES	1991-92	28



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QUICK CLICKS

- * [Lacrosse-style goals in the NHL from before this season](#)
- * [NHL teams deck out in festive outfits to celebrate holiday season](#)
- * [Kelly Chase](#) receives support from [Wayne Gretzky](#), standing ovation at Enterprise Center
- * [2023 Year in Review by #NHLStats \(through Dec. 14\)](#)
- * [#NHLStats Pack: 2024 Discover NHL Winter Classic](#)



NHL RETURNS WEDNESDAY WITH ANOTHER 14-GAME SLATE

The NHL will now take a three-day holiday break before returning with another 14-game day on Wednesday, Dec. 27, including national broadcasts in Canada (Senators at Maple Leafs on Sportsnet & TVA Sports) and in the U.S. (Bruins at Sabres on TNT & Max).

NHL SCHEDULE		WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 27			
7:00 PM ET		MSGSN2, BSOH	7:00 PM ET		MNMT, MSG 2
7:00 PM ET		BSSUN, BSFL	7:00 PM ET		TVAS, SN
7:30 PM ET		MAX, TNT	7:30 PM ET		SN-PIT, MSGSN
8:00 PM ET		BSWIX, BSN, BSDET	8:00 PM ET		BSSO, BSSO
8:00 PM ET		BSSWX, BSMW	9:00 PM ET		SCRIPPS, ALT
9:00 PM ET		NBCSCH, TSN3	9:30 PM ET		TVAS, SN360, SNW, ROOT-NW
10:00 PM ET		SCRIPPS, BSSD, BSSC	10:00 PM ET		BSW, NBSCA

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