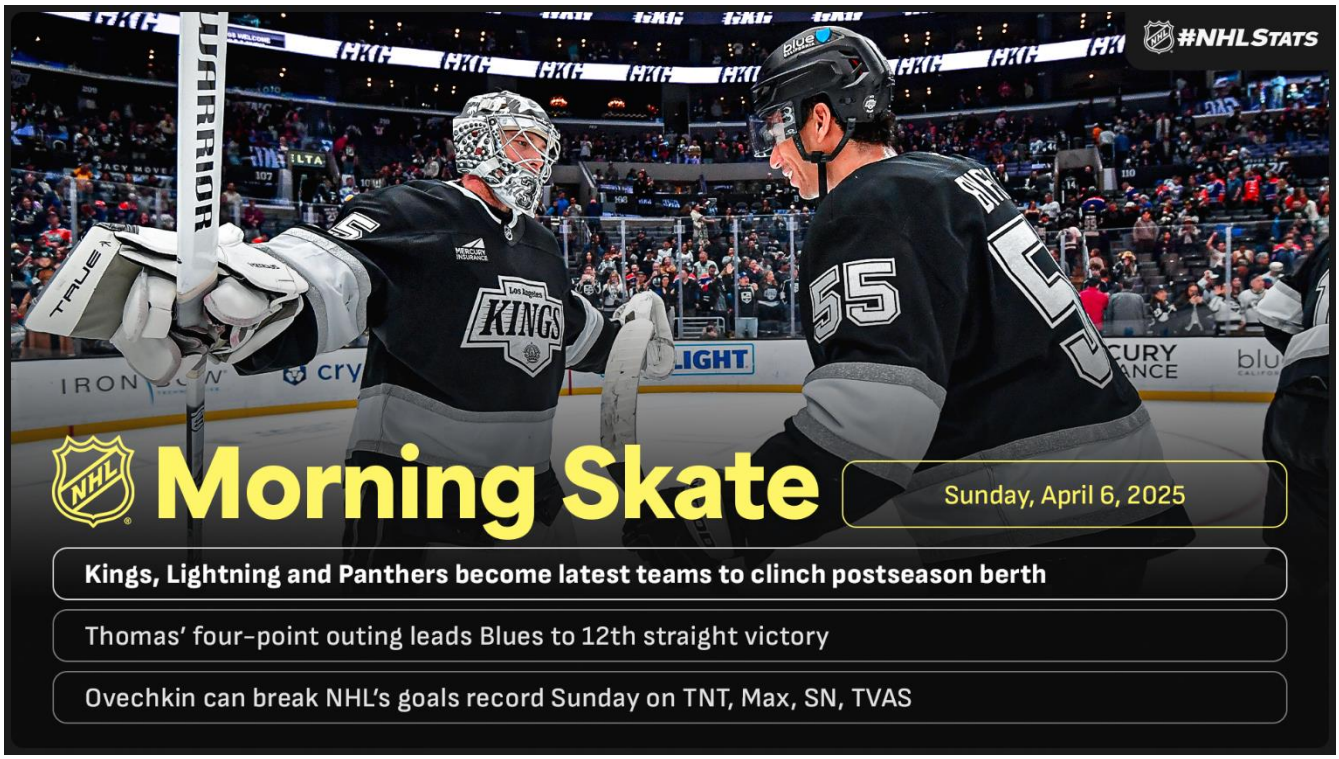
NHL MORNING SKATE – APRIL 5, 2025



* Three teams clinched a berth into the 2025 Stanley Cup Playoffs Sunday, including the Kings, Lightning and Panthers, bringing the total number of spots secured to double digits.

* **Robert Thomas** posted a four-point outing to help the Blues set a franchise record with their 12th straight win and boost their positioning in the first Wild Card seed in the Western Conference after sitting in 25th place in the NHL's overall standings on Nov. 24.

* **Alex Ovechkin** can complete The Gr8 Chase and achieve a feat once believed to be unreachable during the opener of an NHL on TNT tripleheader today.



KUEMPER HELPS KINGS BECOME 10TH TEAM TO CLINCH POSTSEASON BERTH

After **Darcy Kuemper** blanked the Oilers in a crucial head-to-head meeting between Pacific Division clubs and the Flames fell to the Golden Knights later in the night, the Kings (44-23-9, 97 points) clinched a postseason berth for the fourth consecutive year and 34th time in franchise history. The last time the club made the playoffs in four straight years was 2010 to 2014, a span which featured the franchise capture its two Stanley Cup championships (2014 & 2012).

* Kuemper became the fifth goaltender in the NHL's expansion era (since 1967-68) to allow two or fewer goals in 13 *consecutive starts* following **Miikka Kiprusoff** (16 GS in 2003-04), **Dwayne Roloson** (14 GS in 2003-04), **Martin Brodeur** (14 GS in 1997-98) and **Dominik Hasek** (13 GS in 1993-94).



SUNSHINE STATE LOCKED IN FOR 2025 STANLEY CUP PLAYOFFS

The Lightning (44-26-6, 94 points) and Panthers (44-28-4, 92 points), who occupy the second and third spot in the Atlantic Division, both clinched a berth into the 2025 Stanley Cup Playoffs on Saturday.

* The Lightning locked in their eighth consecutive postseason berth by virtue of the Devils defeating the Rangers during the afternoon and then they earned a point against the Sabres despite falling to the club in a shootout. Tampa Bay has made three trips to the Stanley Cup Final since 2020 and is one of three franchises with five appearances in the Final since their inaugural season in 1992-93 (also DET: 6 & NJD: 5).



* The reigning Stanley Cup champion Panthers clinched their sixth straight playoff berth by virtue of the Devils defeating the Rangers in regulation and the Maple Leafs besting the Blue Jackets. The Panthers will look to become the 10th franchise to win the Stanley Cup in back-to-back seasons and fourth in the past 30 years. Seventeen of the past 18 reigning champions have qualified for the postseason.



BLUES SET FRANCHISE RECORD WITH 12TH STRAIGHT WIN

Robert Thomas (1-3—4) continued his stretch of success since the NHL returned from the 4 Nations Face-Off and propelled the Blues (43-28-7, 93 points) to a franchise-record 12th straight win and a four-point cushion on the Wild (41-29-7, 89 points) for the first Wild Card position in the Western Conference. St. Louis, which sat in 25th place in the NHL's overall standings through games played Nov. 24, 2024, became the 20th team in League history to register a win streak of at least a dozen contests.



* Thomas registered his third three-assist game in the past two weeks and leads the NHL in scoring since play resumed following the 4 Nations Face-Off (8-26—34 in 22 GP). He is one of three players with at least 30 points during that span (also: **Nick Suzuki**: 12-19—31 & **Nikita Kucherov**: 12-22—3).

* **Jim Montgomery** has guided the Blues to one of the NHL's best records since taking the helm on Nov. 24 (34-16-6, 74 points) and became the sixth head coach in League history to post a 12-game win streak in his first season with a team. The others: **Kris Knoblauch** (16 GP in 2023-24 w/ EDM), **Andrew Brunette** (13 GP in 2021-22 w/ FLA), **Tom Johnson** (13 GP in 1970-71 w/ BOS), **Bruce Boudreau** (12 GP in 2016-17 w/ MIN) and **Bob Hartley** (12 GP in 1998-99 w/ COL).

PASTRNAK, GEEKIE POST FIVE POINTS APIECE IN SWAYMAN'S 100TH CAREER WIN

David Pastrnak (3-2—5) and **Morgan Geekie** (1-4—5) were all over the score sheet Saturday as they both factored on all five of Boston's goals while **Jeremy Swayman** stopped 39 of 40 shots for his 100th career victory. Pastrnak capped the night with his first career natural hat trick to bring him to 40 goals for the fourth straight season and fifth overall – tied with **Rick Middleton** (5) for the second most in franchise history, behind only **Phil Esposito** (7).



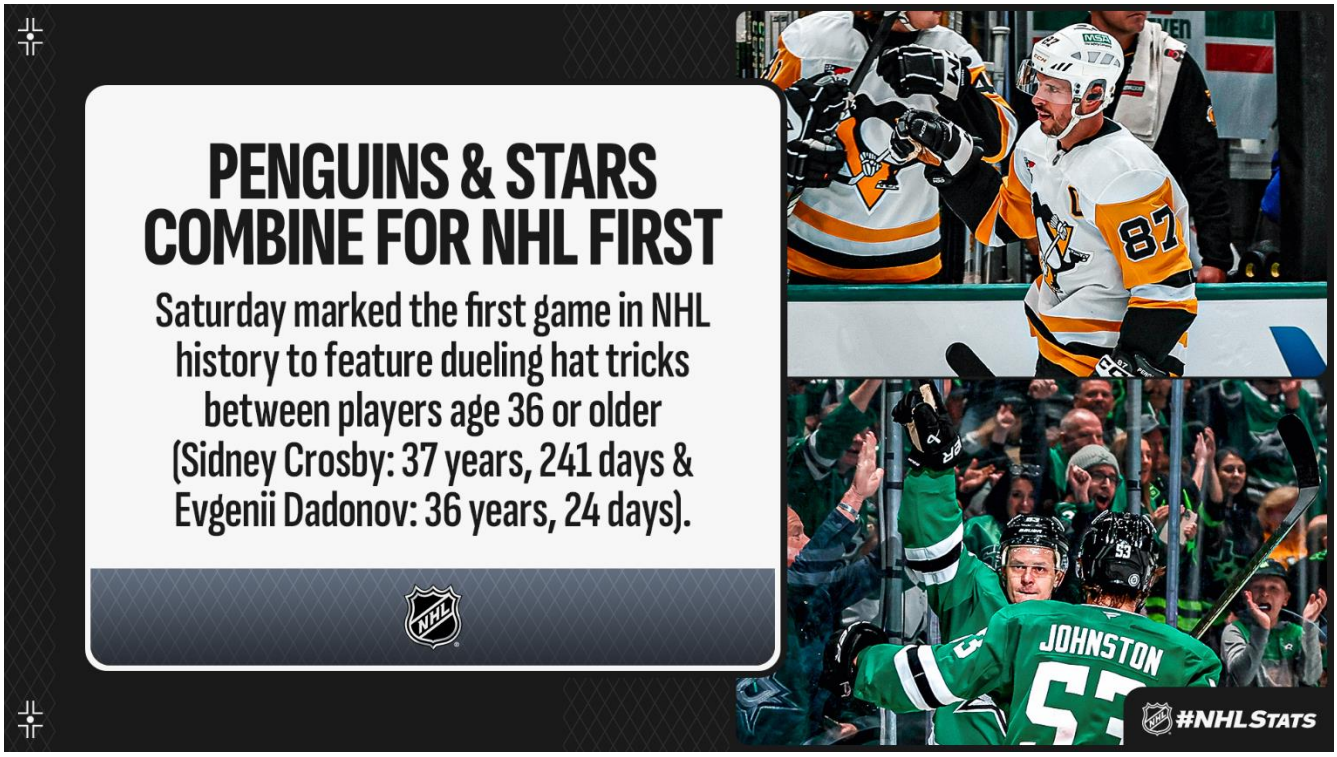
* Pastrnak and Geekie have now factored on eight straight Bruins goals dating to April 1 – only **Ray Bourque** (9 from Jan. 2-6, 1994) and **Phil Esposito** (9 from March 6-12, 1974) have a longer stretch with the club. Meanwhile, the duo also became the fourth pair of teammates in the past 20 years to each factor on five straight team goals in a single game, following **Nathan MacKinnon** and **Mikko Rantanen** (5 on Jan. 24, 2024), **Ales Hemsky** and **Dustin Penner** (5 on Oct. 22, 2009) as well as **Daniel Alfredsson** and **Jason Spezza** (5 on Feb. 9, 2008).

* Swayman (187 GP) became the 10th goaltender in Bruins history to record 100 career wins and the fourth fastest to reach the mark, behind only **Frank Brimsek** (150 GP), **Tiny Thompson** (158 GP) and **Gilles Gilbert** (181 GP).

DUELING HAT TRICKS AT DALLAS AMONG NOTES IN #NHLSTATS: LIVE UPDATES

Saturday's edition of #NHLStats: Live Updates featured more notes from the 13-game slate. Some highlights include:

* **Sidney Crosby** and **Evgenii Dadonov** had dueling hat tricks during the Penguins' victory versus the Stars, with Crosby extending his point streak to 12 games and tying the longest in NHL history by a player age 37 or older. Crosby (37 years, 241 days), who recorded his 13th career 30-goal season, became the second-oldest player in franchise history with a hat trick behind **Mark Recchi** (38 years, 353 days on Jan. 20, 2007 & 38 years, 31 days on March 4, 2006). With every hat trick this season, AstraZeneca will donate $3,000 to the Hockey Fights Cancer Fund of the V Foundation up to $300,000.



* **Reilly Smith** scored with 29 seconds left in the extra frame for his fourth overtime goal with the Golden Knights – the fourth most in franchise history – as Vegas (46-22-8, 100 points) reached the 100-point mark for the third time since its inaugural season and matched the second-fewest games to the plateau in team history (also 76 GP in 2022-23), following 2017-18 (74 GP).

* **Nick Suzuki** scored in his fourth straight game and moved within three of his second consecutive 30-goal season to help the Canadiens (37-30-9, 83 points) create a four-point lead over the Rangers (36-33-7, 79 points) for the second Wild Card spot in the Eastern Conference. The Canadiens earned their League-leading 10th third-period comeback win of 2024-25, which is tied for the second most in a campaign in franchise history (also 10 in 2018-19 & 2006-07) behind 2016-17 (12).

* **Auston Matthews** capped a Maple Leafs victory with a ninth straight 30-goal campaign, **Anthony Stolarz** (25 saves) posted his second shutout of the season and **Mitch Marner** (0-1—1) became the third different player in franchise history with a 70-assist season as Toronto (47-25-4, 98 points) opened up a four-point cushion on top spot in the Atlantic Division. Matthews became the first U.S.-born player in NHL history with nine consecutive 30-goal campaign and broke a tie with **Pat LaFontaine** (8 from 1985-86 – 1992-93).



*Active streak

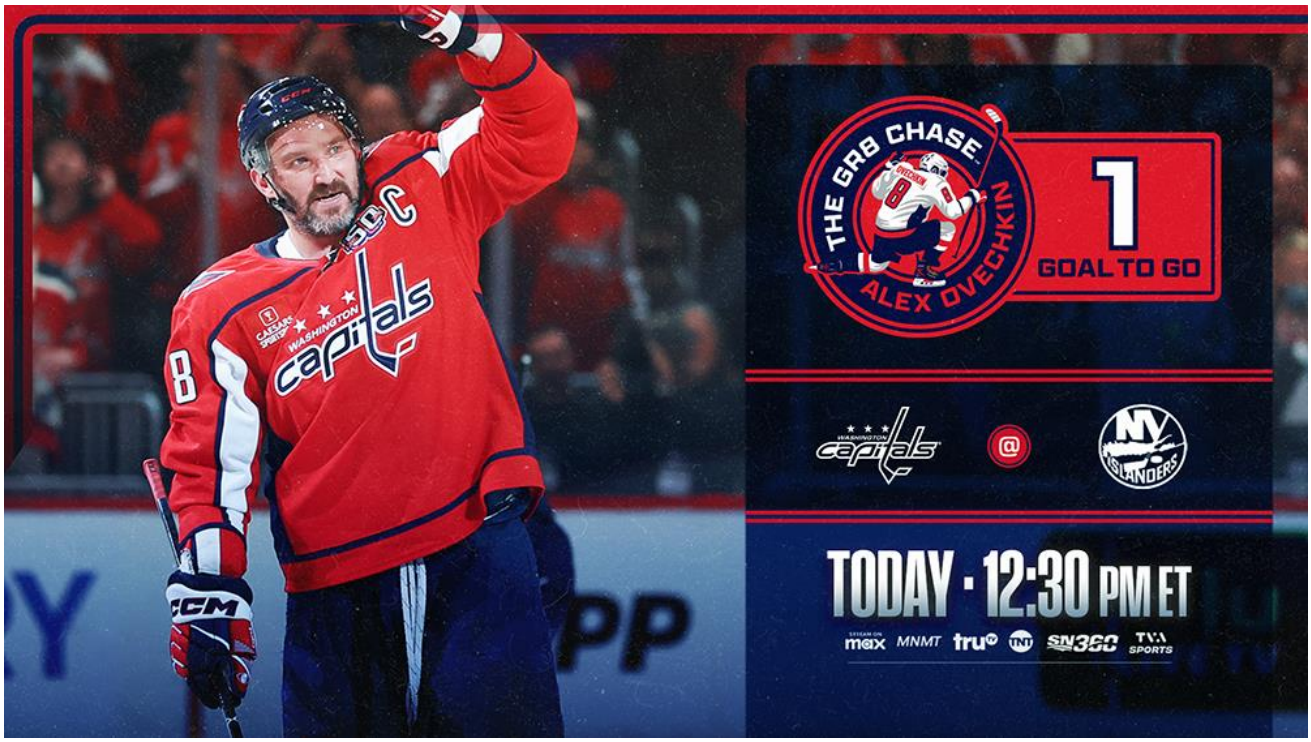
QUICK CLICKS

* Saint-Boniface named winner of Kraft Hockeyville 2025
* **Alex Ovechkin** ‘still the same big kid’ on verge of setting NHL goals record with Capitals
* Golden State Warriors star **Steph Curry** cheers on Sharks, Celebrini at SAP Center
* **Kelly Chase** 'blessed' by turnout for Puck Cancer 2nd Shift charity game
* Senators congratulated Linesperson and Ottawa native **Derek Nansen** on his final NHL game



OVECHKIN OPENS NHL ON TNT TRIPLEHEADER ONE SHOT AWAY FROM PASSING GRETZKY

Alex Ovechkin tallied twice to tie **Wayne Gretzky** for the most goals in NHL history Friday and needs one more to complete The Gr8 Chase when the Capitals (49-18-9, 107 points) clash with the Islanders (33-32-10, 76 points) during today's NHL on TNT tripleheader opener. The game is also available on Max, truTV, Sportsnet 360 (and Sportsnet+), TVA Sports and MNMT.



* Ovechkin has scored three goals against the Islanders which have propelled him ahead of a player during his climb within the top 10 on the League's all-time list – all against **Semyon Varlamov**, who has been sidelined since Nov. 29, 2024. They took place on Jan. 18, 2020 (passed **Mario Lemieux** for 10th), March 16, 2021 (passed **Phil Esposito** for 6th) and March 15, 2022 (passed **Jaromir Jagr** for 3rd).

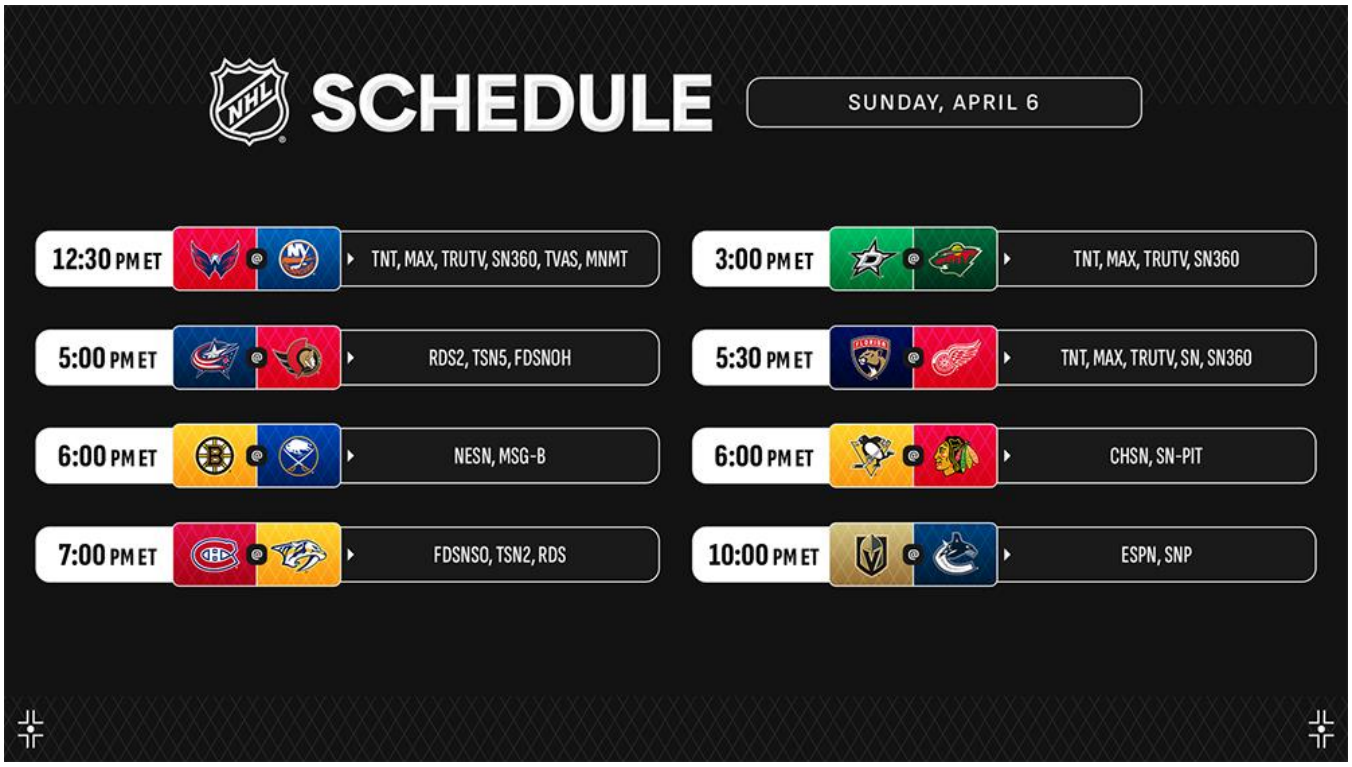
* Ovechkin has scored at least one goal against an NHL-record 182 different goaltenders but has yet to beat **Ilya Sorokin** (4 SOG in 3 GP). Gretzky's 894th and final goal was the first he ever scored versus **Wade Flaherty**, who was playing for the Islanders at the time.

* Ovechkin has scored at least one goal in all four of his appearances on TNT telecasts this season (1 on April 2, 1 on March 5, 3 on Feb. 23 and 1 on Oct. 23, 2024) and 128 of his 894 career goals in games with a local start time of 5 p.m. or earlier. His 128 career tallies in matinees are the most in League history and 16 more than the next-closest player (**Teemu Selanne**: 112).

* Ovechkin can record a goal streak of at least five contests for the 16th time in his career and tie Gretzky for the second most in League history behind only Lemieux (17x). Ovechkin can post his second run of that length this season (also 5 GP from Oct. 29 to Nov. 6, 2024), which would make him the first player in NHL history with multiple five-game streaks at age 39 or older – the only others with *one* are **Brett Hull** (7 GP from Nov. 26 to Dec. 8, 2003) and **Johnny Bucyk** (6 GP from Dec. 10-19, 1974).

* Sunday's eight-game slate also features several more intradivision matchups including the Golden Knights (46-22-8, 100 points) clashing with the Canucks (35-28-13, 83 points) on ESPN during the

finale.


SCHEDULE
SUNDAY, APRIL 6
12:30 PM ET
TNT, MAX, TRUTV, SN360, TVAS, MNMT
3:00 PM ET
TNT, MAX, TRUTV, SN360
5:00 PM ET
RDS2, TSN5, FDSNOH
5:30 PM ET
TNT, MAX, TRUTV, SN, SN360
6:00 PM ET
NESN, MSG-B
6:00 PM ET
CHSN, SN-PIT
7:00 PM ET
FDSNSO, TSN2, RDS
10:00 PM ET
ESPN, SNP