





NHL MORNING SKATE – DEC. 24, 2025

	WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 24	
<h1>MORNING SKATE</h1>		
Byram's first overtime goal extends Sabres' winning streak		
McDavid's 5-assist night and Draisaitl's hat trick lift Oilers to victory		
NHL Morning Skate will return on Dec. 28 following the break - happy holidays!		 #NHLStats

* The surging Sabres secured an overtime victory versus the Senators and joined a rare list of teams with a seven-game winning streak headed into the holiday break.

* **Connor McDavid** moved six points ahead of **Nathan MacKinnon** in the Art Ross Trophy race and enters the hiatus with the League scoring lead for the fifth time in his career.

* The NHL Morning Skate will also take a break for the holidays and returns on the morning of Sunday, Dec. 28 (following the return of games on Saturday, Dec. 27).

 <h1>RESULTS</h1> TUESDAY, DECEMBER 23	 3	FINAL	6		 3	FINAL	4	
	 7	FINAL	3		 6	FINAL	2	
	 3	FINAL	2		 1	FINAL	2	
	 5	FINAL	2		 3	FINAL	2	
	 3	FINAL	1		 0	FINAL	1	
	 1	FINAL	5		 2	FINAL	7	
	 3	FINAL	2					

YULE LOG BURNS BRIGHTLY FOR SURGING SABRES HEADED INTO HOLIDAY BREAK

Bowen Byram (2-1—3) opened the scoring and buried his first career overtime goal as Buffalo recorded a [seven-game winning streak](#) for the first time since a franchise record-tying 10-0-0 run from [Nov. 8-27, 2018](#). Byram registered the second three-point game of his career and first since [Nov. 3, 2021](#) (2-1—3), which was less than eight months before he won the Stanley Cup with Colorado.

* The Sabres (18-14-4, 40 points) sit two points back of the reigning-champion Panthers (20-14-2, 42 points), who occupy the Eastern Conference's final Wild Card spot. Buffalo improved to 4-0-0 since naming **Jarmo Kekäläinen** its general manager on [Dec. 15](#).

LONGEST WINNING STREAKS ENTERING HOLIDAY BREAK		
SINCE 1972-73		
TEAM	SEASON	GAMES
COLUMBUS BLUE JACKETS	2016-17	12
MINNESOTA WILD	2016-17	10
ANAHEIM DUCKS	2013-14	9
CAROLINA HURRICANES	2022-23	8
BUFFALO SABRES	2025-26	7*



*7 OTHER INSTANCES OF 7 GP. *NHL'S LAST GAMES ON CHRISTMAS WERE IN 1971

McDAVID'S FIVE-ASSIST NIGHT, DRAISAITL'S HAT TRICK ELEVATE EDMONTON TO WIN

Connor McDavid (0-5—5) assisted on all five Edmonton goals, including three of **Leon Draisaitl**'s, and achieved several notable feats as he built a six-point lead in the Art Ross Trophy race. McDavid (23-44—67 in 38 GP) became the first player with 67 or more points entering the holiday break since 1995-96, when Penguins teammates **Mario Lemieux** (76) and **Jaromir Jagr** (68) achieved the feat.

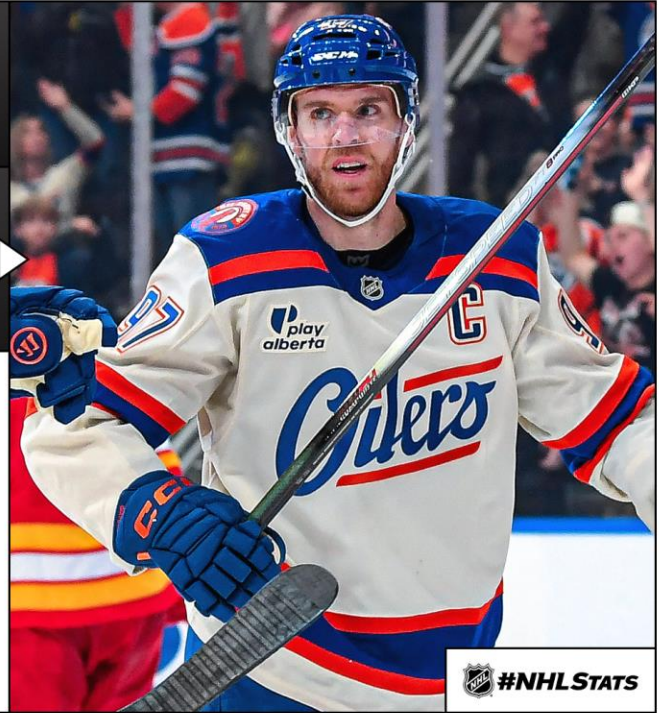
* The Oilers captain climbed into a tie with **Bobby Orr** (13) for the seventh-most [four-assist games](#) in NHL history before moving into a tie for 12th for the League's all-time [five-point games list](#). Tuesday marked McDavid's second career five-assist performance, which matched Draisaitl and **Paul Coffey** for the [second most in Oilers history](#) behind **Wayne Gretzky** (12).

* McDavid boosted his totals this December to 12-19—31 (12 GP), a month that has seen him post four different games with four-plus points – a feat he also achieved in December 2022. The last player to have five such performances in a single calendar month was Lemieux in March 1993.



McDAVID'S MARVELOUS DECEMBER

Connor McDavid posted his third career 30-point calendar month, which tied Steve Yzerman & Jaromir Jagr for the fifth most in NHL history. He now trails only Wayne Gretzky (36), Mario Lemieux (14), Phil Esposito (4) & Bryan Trottier (4).

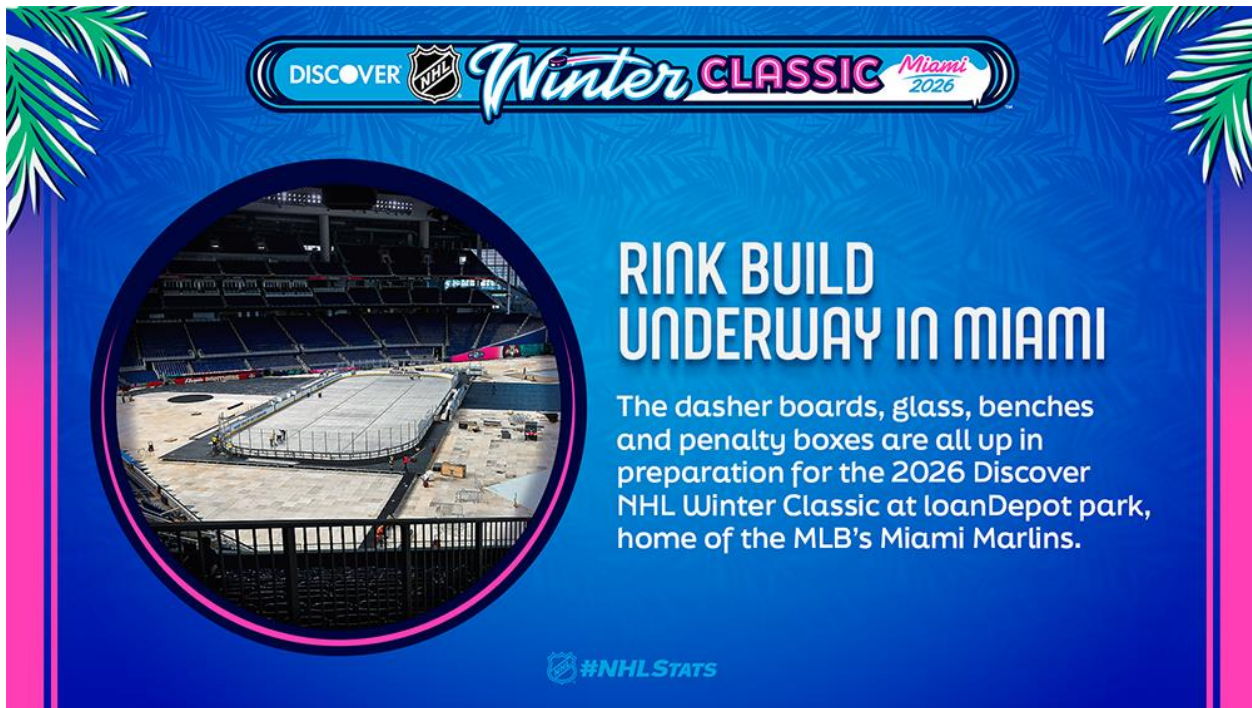


RANGERS, PANTHERS PICK UP HIGH-SCORING VICTORIES BEFORE WINTER CLASSIC

The Rangers and Panthers skated to high-scoring wins in their fourth-last games before meeting outdoors in the *2026 Discover NHL Winter Classic* on Jan. 2:

* Despite entering the final frame down 3-2, **Artemi Panarin** (1-1—2) helped the Rangers score five third-period goals to earn their largest margin of victory in a third-period comeback win since [Feb. 22, 1972](#). Panarin factored on his 99th game-winning goal with New York, which tied **Chris Kreider** for the sixth most in franchise history, trailing **Rod Gilbert** (138), **Brian Leetch** (124), **Jean Ratelle** (116) and **Mark Messier** (100).

* After entering the second intermission with a 2-0 deficit, five different Panthers players scored as Florida completed a multi-goal third-period comeback against Carolina for the second time in five days — it marked the club's third such victory this season, which is the most among all teams. The Panthers scored five in the third period for the [fifth time in franchise history](#) and first since [Jan. 31, 2013](#).



STOCKING STUFFERS

More highlights from the League's last games before its three-day holiday break, with many more in [Tuesday's edition of Live Updates](#):

* **Samuel Girard** scored Colorado's lone goal to help the League-leading Avalanche tie the second-fewest games to 60 points in a season (also 36 GP; BOS in 2022-23, SJS in 2008-09 & PHI in 1979-80), behind the 1929-30 Bruins (35 GP). Colorado (27-2-7) tied the second-[most wins before the holiday break](#), trailing only the 2018-19 Lightning (28).

* **William Nylander** (2-2—4) notched the third of his four points on [Max Domi's end-to-end go-ahead goal](#) as the Maple Leafs quelled a comeback attempt by the Penguins, which featured **Sidney Crosby** collecting his 1,080th career assist to overtake **Adam Oates** (1,079) for eighth place on the [NHL's all-time list](#).

MOST CAREER ASSISTS	
NHL HISTORY	
PLAYER	ASSISTS
WAYNE GRETZKY	1,963
RON FRANCIS	1,249
MARK MESSIER	1,193
RAY BOURQUE	1,169
JAROMIR JAGR	1,155
PAUL COFFEY	1,135
JOE THORNTON	1,109
SIDNEY CROSBY	1,080
ADAM OATES	1,079
STEVE YZERMAN	1,063



A full-page action shot of Sidney Crosby, captain of the Pittsburgh Penguins, in his yellow and black home jersey. He is wearing his number 87 and is in a ready stance on the ice, holding his CCM hockey stick. The background shows a blurred crowd in the arena stands.

#NHLSTATS

* **Dylan Larkin** tied the game with 4:03 remaining in the third period and then scored the overtime winner to reach the 20-goal mark. Detroit has two 20-goal scorers (Larkin & **Alex DeBrincat**) at the holiday break for the first time since 1988-89 (**Steve Yzerman** & **Paul MacLean**) and won its 10th game this season after scoring the winner in the third period or overtime, which is the most among all teams. The contest also featured **John Gibson** extend his win streak to eight games and become the first Red Wings goaltender since **Chris Osgood** in 2007-08 (also 8 GP) to [post a run of that length](#).

* **Lane Hutson** (0-3—3) and **Noah Dobson** (0-3—3) became the third defensemen duo in Canadiens history to each record at least three assists in the same game, joining **Andrei Markov** and **P.K. Subban** (Oct. 23, 2015) as well as **Guy Lapointe** and **J.C. Tremblay** (Feb. 12, 1972 & Jan. 6, 1971). Hutson's first helper of the night was also the 90th of his career – he became second-fastest player in Canadiens history to record 90 assists with the club (121 GP), behind only **Buddy O'Connor** (114 GP).



HUTSON HITS 90 CAREER ASSISTS QUICKLY

Lane Hutson (121 GP) became the fourth-fastest defenseman in NHL history to hit 90 career assists, behind Mark Howe (116 GP), Sergei Zubov (118 GP) and Stefan Persson (120 GP).



* **Adam Pelech** potted the go-ahead goal with 1:15 remaining in regulation – the second [latest by a defenseman in franchise history](#) behind **Ryan Pullock** (59:19 on [Feb. 11, 2020](#)) – as the Islanders (20-13-4, 44 points) remained one point back of the second-place Flyers (19-10-7, 45 points) in the Metropolitan Division. **Trevor Zegras** (0-1—1) helped Philadelphia clip Chicago and became the first player with a nine-game point streak in his first season with the Flyers since **John LeClair** (12 GP from [March 2-25, 1995](#)).

* **Steven Stamkos** (1-1—2) ended his 1,200th NHL game with his 17th career overtime goal and moved into a tie for the [seventh most in League history](#). Stamkos also became the third player in franchise history with the winning goal in three consecutive games, following **Mike Fisher** (3 GP from Jan. 23-31, 2012) and **Steve Sullivan** (3 GP from Jan. 5-9, 2007).

* **ICYMI:** The Predators' president and chief operating officer, **Michelle Kennedy**, was highlighted in the [most-recent Women in Hockey feature](#).



QUICK CLICKS

- * ['Road To The Winter Classic' Episode 3 highlights Christmas in Florida](#)
- * [Winter Classic rink build underway in Miami for Rangers-Panthers outdoor game](#)
- * [NHL teams spread holiday cheer before Christmas break](#)
- * [Ross Johnston fined maximum for roughing in Ducks game](#)
- * [WATCH: "AI Can't NHL" in latest "The Next Golden Era Is Now" campaign spot](#)



NHL RETURNS FROM BREAK WITH RIVALRY-HEAVY NHL SATURDAY SHOWDOWN

The NHL schedule is now on a three-day holiday break before returning for the *NHL Saturday Showdown* on Dec. 27, a 13-game slate that includes 11 divisional matchups, five provincial/state rivalry games, a clash between the top two teams in the Eastern Conference (DET-CAR) and a showdown between a pair of Western Conference contenders (COL-VGK).

* Excluding the 2020-21 season when all 868 games were intradivisional, this will mark just the sixth day in League history to feature 11 or more intradivisional contests: Dec. 27, 2023 (12 of 14 GP), Oct. 11, 2025 (11 of 16 GP), Jan. 18, 2025 (11 of 15 GP), April 13, 2023 (11 of 15 GP) and Nov. 3, 2007 (all 11 GP).

SPORTSNET	6:00 PM	@	MSGSN, MSG 2
	7:00 PM	@	NESN, MSG-B
	7:00 PM	@	CBC, SNE, SNO, SNP, CITY, TVAS
SPORTSNET	7:00 PM	@	THE SPOT, SCRIPPS
	7:00 PM	@	MNMT, MSGSN2
	7:00 PM	@	FDSNDET, FDSNSO
SPORTSNET	7:00 PM	@	SN1, SNW, FDSNNO, FDSNWIX
	8:00 PM	@	KMOV-TV, MATRIX-MW, FDSNMW, FDSNSO
	8:00 PM	@	VICTORY+, CHSN
SPORTSNET	9:00 PM	@	FDSNW, KTTV, VICTORY+
	10:00 PM	@	CBC, SNE, SNO, SNW, TVAS
	10:00 PM	@	SN1, SNP, CITY, NBSCA
SPORTSNET	10:00 PM	@	SCRIPPS, ALT

A closer look at the state/provincial matchups set for Saturday and a reminder to [click here](#) for a more in-depth guide on how to watch and stream with NHL partners around the globe:

Battle of New York: Rangers at Islanders (6 ET on MSGSN, MSG 2)

Saturday will mark the 299th all-time regular-season meeting between the Rangers and Islanders. While the Rangers ([142-127-29, 313 points](#)) hold a slight edge overall (NYI: [137-133-28, 302 points](#)), the Islanders ([77-57-14, 168 points](#)) have the advantage when playing at home. In the previous meeting between the clubs this season ([Nov. 8](#)), the Islanders blanked the Rangers at Madison Square Garden backed by a 33-save shutout from **Ilya Sorokin** and a two-goal outing from leading scorer **Bo Horvat**.

Battle of Ontario: Senators at Maple Leafs (7 ET on Sportsnet, TVA Sports)

The “Battle of Ontario” resumes for the first time since the 2025 First Round which saw three of the six games require overtime before Toronto closed out the series on the road. It also marks the final matchup between captains **Auston Matthews** and **Brady Tkachuk** before they suit up with Team USA at the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026. When going head-to-head in the regular season, Matthews (17-17—34 in 26 GP) and the Maple Leafs (15-9-2) hold the advantage over Tkachuk (7-11—18 in 26 GP) and the Senators (11-11-4). However, Ottawa has won each of its last five games against Toronto dating to Dec. 27, 2023.

Battle of the Sunshine State: Lightning at Panthers (7 ET on The Spot, SCRIPPS)

The Panthers and Lightning have combined to appear in each of the last six Stanley Cup Final series (since 2019-20), with each winning the Cup twice, and will continue to put their stamp on signature NHL events in the new year with each franchise hosting the first-ever NHL outdoor games in the State of Florida. The two-time defending Stanley Cup champion Panthers will host the Rangers in the [2026 Discover NHL Winter Classic](#) on Friday, Jan. 2 at loanDepot park in Miami followed by the Lightning welcoming the Bruins for the [2026 Navy Federal Credit Union NHL Stadium Series](#) at Raymond James Stadium in Tampa on Feb. 1.

SATURDAY
SHOWDOWN

**FLORIDA RIVALRY SPILLS
OVER TO THE PLAYOFFS**

Since 2019-20, the Panthers (15-11-3, 33 points) have a slight edge head-to-head in reg. season games vs. the Lightning (14-15-0, 28 points). In the playoffs, the Lightning (2021 R1 & 2022 R2) and Panthers (2024 R1 & 2025 R1) have both eliminated their rival twice.



#NHLSTATS

Freeway Faceoff: Ducks at Kings (9 ET on FDSNW, KTTV, Victory+)

Los Angeles is set to host Anaheim for the 169th edition of the "Freeway Faceoff." The Kings have bested the Ducks in each of the [past five season series](#), though Anaheim owns the lone victory between the two clubs this season (5-4 SO W on [Nov. 28](#)). The Ducks (2007) were the first California team to win the Stanley Cup, while the Kings (2012 & 2014) are the only club from the state to win it multiple times. The Ducks and Kings both currently hold a playoff spot – the last time both teams qualified for the same postseason was in 2018.

Battle of Alberta: Oilers at Flames (10 ET on Sportsnet, TVA Sports)

The Oilers and Flames will participate in the latest chapter of the "Battle of Alberta" just four days after the most recent. Saturday marks the 26th instance of Edmonton and Calgary facing one another in consecutive games and first since Oct. 12-14, 2016. Overall, the Oilers are 16-7-2 in the second game of back-to-back matchups between the rivals and have won each of the past five under that scenario.

SATURDAY
SHOWDOWN

**STATE / PROVINCIAL
BRAGGING RIGHTS**

Saturday will mark the first time in NHL history that five state/provincial rivalry games are played on the same day: NYR at NYI, OTT at TOR, TBL at FLA, ANA at LAK and EDM at CGY.



HOCKEY NIGHT IN CANADA ALSO HAS CELEBRINI IN HOMETOWN

Hockey Night in Canada's four-game *NHL Saturday Showdown* slate will include the aforementioned "Battle of Ontario" and "Battle of Alberta" games as well as **Quinn Hughes** and the Wild visiting **Mark Scheifele** and the Jets. The Hockey Night in Canada broadcast will close with **Macklin Celebrini** (North Vancouver, B.C.) returning home to face his hometown Canucks while ranking tied for third in the NHL scoring race behind a pair of players he hopes to join on Team Canada for the Olympic Winter Games Milano Cortina 2026 in **Connor McDavid** and **Nathan MacKinnon**.

* Celebrini will be close to his home just after the holidays. In [four career games against the Canucks](#), Celebrini has recorded 1-4—5 boosted by a point in each of his appearances in Vancouver: April 14 (1-0—1 in 2-1 OTL) and Dec. 23, 2024 (0-2—2 in 4-3 L). Celebrini heads back to British Columbia in the summer where [he skates with NHL players](#) including Blackhawks forward **Connor Bedard**.

SATURDAY, DEC. 27



SPORTSNET



VS

7:00PM ET



VS

10:00PM ET



VS

7:00PM ET



VS

7:00PM ET

