

LA KINGS REGULAR-SEASON PREVIEW: GAME 1 VS. SAN JOSE

👤 Ryan Cowley 🕒 October 7, 2015



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Los Angeles Kings 2015-16 Regular Season: Game 1 vs. San Jose, October 7, 2015, 7:30pm PST

To say that it has been a long offseason would be the understatement of the year for the **Los Angeles Kings** and their fanbase. But the wait is finally over as the silver-and-black open the 2015-16 regular season on Wednesday night when they play host to the **San Jose Sharks**.

Fresh off their annual **Frozen Fury** exhibition in Las Vegas, the Kings will be rearing to go on Wednesday, but they will have to open the season without the services of **Matt Greene** and **Dwight King**.

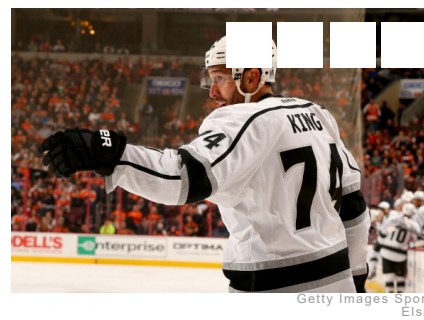
It was announced on Monday by head coach **Darryl Sutter** that King will be out for an extended period of time after blocking a shot in Vegas over the weekend against the **Colorado Avalanche**. Matt Greene is still feeling the effects of an injury suffered last week against the Avs in Denver and while he is skating, will not be ready for Wednesday night. Defenseman **Jake Muzzin** was also injured in the same game as Greene and while he is very close to a 100 per cent, will likely be a game-time decision.

When the puck drops on Wednesday night, the Kings will have some new faces. Gone are **Justin Williams**, **Mike Richards**, **Jarret Stoll** and **Slava Voynov**. In are physical goal-scorer **Milan Lucic**, defensemen **Christian Ehrhoff** and **Derek Forbort** and 2015 **Calder Cup** MVP **Jordan Weal**.

The latter is probably the most interesting addition to the silver-and-black as fans are eager to see just how he fares at the NHL level having narrowly missed the final cut to open the regular season last year. The Kings also welcome another new face in goaltender **Jhonas Enroth** to the fold, although it is likely that he will be seeing more of the bench than the ice in the foreseeable future.

But while he is **Jonathan Quick**'s new backup netminder, Enroth's predecessor will be starting in the San Jose net on Wednesday, adding a little more excitement to this rivalry in the process.

Martin Jones, who was acquired by the Sharks from Boston in June — just days after acquiring him from the Kings in the Milan Lucic deal — was named the Sharks' opening-night starter earlier this week and



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while he has had a fair deal of success as a backup, it will be interesting to see how the 25-year-old fares as a starter. In 34 games with the Kings, Jones has gone 16-11-2 with seven shutouts, a 2.03 goals-against average and a .920 save percentage. However, after his record-tying 8-0-0 career start, Jones's numbers have fizzled since then. Still, Jones, in the eyes of many, has the capability of being a number-one netminder in the NHL. So, we will have to see just how the former King will fare in San Jose.



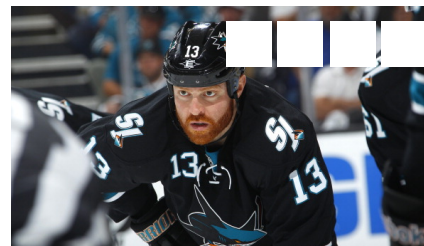
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Barring unforeseen circumstances, Jonathan Quick will get the nod in the Los Angeles goal on Wednesday. The 29-year-old is coming off a 36-22-13 campaign last year with a 2.24 GAA, a .918 save percentage and six shutouts.

As for the Sharks, they, like the Kings, are coming off a disappointing end to the 2014-15 campaign where they missed the playoffs. But with a new bench boss in **Peter DeBoer** and a new captain in **Joe Pavelski**, who has had a plethora of career success against the Kings, the Sharks are hoping to turn a corner, get back into the playoffs and ultimately find postseason success.

An interesting sidenote entering Wednesday's contest will be the absence of San Jose's problematic forward **Raffi Torres** who, on Monday, was suspended for 41 games for a hit on **Anaheim's Jakob Silfverberg** during the preseason. While Torres's absence may not directly impact the Sharks, the ramifications of his punishment may play a factor. Either way, the Kings do not have to worry about the troublesome forward and his dirty ways.

There is never any love lost between the two California rivals and 2015-16 should not be any different. If anything, due to the fact that both the Kings and Sharks missed the playoffs last year, both teams should enter this season with enormous chips on their collective shoulders, making for a unique — but extra-intense — chapter to said rivalry.



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The action starts at 7pm PST (10pm EST). We will see which club draws first blood to kick off 2015-16.

Enjoy the game!

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