

QUICK SHINES, STOPPING 45 AS LA KINGS BLANK CANADIENS

👤 Ryan Cowley 📅 December 18, 2015



Photo credit: Francois Lacasse/NHLI via Getty Image

Game 31; 20-9-2

MONTREAL — He didn't have the greatest night on Monday in Ottawa. But any doubts — and there weren't many — of **Jonathan Quick's** abilities in goal were snuffed out with a vengeance on Thursday as the 29-year-old cooled off a **Montreal** onslaught, making 45 saves to blank the **Canadiens**. The Kings' offense did enough to help their netminder, winning 3-0 at the **Bell Centre**.

After jumping out to their best start in franchise history, the Montreal Canadiens had cooled down a bit, but not enough to relinquish their lead in the **Northeast Division**. Reigning MVP **Carey Price** may have been sidelined but **Mike Condon** has proven thus far that he is just as capable of getting the job in goal done. We saw that early on as the 25-year-old thwarted some early Los Angeles attacks to keep the game scoreless.

In another storyline, **Milan Lucic** made his first return to the Bell Centre since being traded to the Kings. Playing an intense style with the loathsome Boston Bruins, the big man has been public enemy number one in Montreal for quite some time and while he doesn't don the jersey of one of the Habs' most hated rivals anymore, his presence was still enough to warrant all-night jeering. To make matters worse for the home fans, Lucic finished the evening with one assist, a plus-two rating and five hits.



Photo credit: Francois Lacasse/NHLI via Getty Image

While Condon was sharp in the Montreal goal, Quick was even better as he stopped 18 shots in the first period alone. As for the game's first goal, it didn't come until the latter half of the second period, and it was courtesy



of the visitors.

At the 14:37 mark of the middle frame, the Kings' power play was attacking and, just after the man-advantage ended, **Drew Doughty** fired a slapshot from the point that beat Condon to draw first blood for the silver-and-black. The goal, from **Tyler Toffoli**, was Doughty's fifth of the year. But the Kings weren't done as, just 1:35 later, **Jake Muzzin** made a beautiful cross-ice pass to **Anze Kopitar**, who made no mistake on his ninth to put the Kings up by a pair. **Marian Gaborik** had the other assist.

In the third, though, the Canadiens were on a mission to score. Jonathan Quick, however, had other ideas. In the final 20 minutes, Quick stood tall against multiple offensive barrages by the Habs, stopping 15 totals shots in the frame to preserve his second shutout of the season and the 39th of his career. Quick's late stand against a 6-on-4 attack was also noteworthy.

Photo credit: Francois Lacasse/NHLI via Getty Image

Gaborik then iced the game, scoring his seventh into an empty net with the ever-popular Lucic getting the assist.

The shutout actually moves Quick into sole possession of second-place on the all-time shutouts list by an American-born netminder. Quick passed **Tom Barrasso** with the feat and now trails **John Vanbiesbrouck** and Hall-of-Famer **Frank Brimsek** who each have 40. The performance was not only Quick's strongest of the season but one of his best overall.

Also with the victory, the Kings reach 20 wins in just 31 games, equaling the feat set in 1992-93 and 2013-14. In both years, the silver-and-black marched to the Stanley Cup Final. The mark was their second-fastest in club history as the 1980-81 version of the club needed just 28 games to reach the 20-win plateau.

Photo credit: Francois Lacasse/NHLI via Getty Image

From Jonathan Quick to his defense, the Kings had one of their best nights of the season thus far and it showed. They improve to 3-1-1 on their road trip as they close it out on Saturday night when they look to earn another two points at the **Air Canada Centre** against the **Toronto Maple Leafs**.