

FAULK, CANES ABLE TO SLAY LA KINGS IN WILD MATINEE

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RALEIGH, N.C. — After winning three-in-a-row, the **Los Angeles Kings** now find themselves with two-straight losses, the most recent of which coming on Sunday at the hands of the **Carolina Hurricanes**. The Canes, as a result of their win, snap their five-game winless skid.

The Kings were looking to sweep their season series against Carolina after shutting them out on home ice last month. Unfortunately, a similar end result was not in the cards this time.

Like at **Joe Louis Arena** in Detroit, the Kings have had not much luck at Raleigh's **PNC Arena** in recent years, and Sunday was no exception in what was a very early game for the silver-and-black.



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3:31 into the contest, Carolina's **Brett Pesce** slapped a point shot that knuckled its way past a confused **Jonathan Quick** to open the scoring. Fast-forward to the second where, 1:48 in, **Jeff Skinner** pounced on a lucky bounce to score his fourth past a sprawling Quick. Then, approximately two-and-a-half minutes later with the Canes on a 5-on-3 man-advantage, **Justin Faulk** rifled a slapper into the top corner for his team-leading seventh. Just like that, Carolina was in control with a 3-0 lead.

For the first half of the game, the Kings were badly outplayed. The Canes were skating circles around the silver-and-black, controlling the tempo on both ends of the ice. But the Kings got a break.



Pressing to get on the board, the Kings crashed the net but at the 13:02 mark of the second, Canes' defenseman **Noah Hanifin** covered his hand on the puck in the crease in an effort to slide it to netminder **Cam Ward**. The call resulted in a penalty shot where captain **Dustin Brown** made no mistake, faking out Ward before roofing just his second of the year to put Los Angeles on the board.

Then, just 58 seconds later, **Anze Kopitar** capitalized on a turnover, going stick-side on a screened Cam Ward for his sixth to put the Kings right back in the game. **Milan Lucic** was instrumental on the goal, screening Ward to help secure the tally. Carolina's three-goal lead was suddenly cut to one.

Before the period was out, though, Justin Faulk regained the Carolina lead — again on the power play –

To start the third, the Kings put **Jhonas Enroth** in between the pipes to rest Jonathan Quick for Monday night but to also hope to provide a spark.

It worked as Anze Kopitar teed his second of the day past Ward — again, screened by Lucic — on the power play to put the Kings to within a goal once again. The goal came at 9:15 of the third with **Drew Doughty** and **Jake Muzzin** providing the assists.

*Photo credit: Gregg Forwerck/NHLI via Getty Image- but it was a bad bounce off **Alec Martinez's** skate that resulted in the goal. The Canes had their momentum back.*

The Kings pressed late to tie but it just wasn't enough as Ward and the Canes held on for a slim 4-3 victory.

While he is usually on his game, Alec Martinez was the victim of some bad bounces on this day. He was, however, still able to help out in his usual defensive ways, blocking three shots. Drew Doughty, who led his team with four blocked shots, was a workhorse on the defensive side of things, although his interference penalty proved costly on Carolina's third goal. Milan Lucic, as previously noted, was key for the Kings despite the loss with his two screens that resulted in goals. More traffic in front is what the Kings need to score more goals and the big man is addressing those needs in a big way.

Overall, it was a sluggish start for the Kings but answered with some resilience and a strong finish. They didn't get the end result they wanted but this wasn't a matter of not doing much right. Instead, the Kings did plenty right; just a few more things went wrong for them. Undisciplined penalties are mainly what went wrong for the silver-and-black. Two delay-of-game infractions against Los Angeles and 5-on-3 opportunities against them. The Canes scored twice on the man-advantage.

So, their misfortune in Raleigh continues as does their woes during the day. Thankfully for the Kings, they only have five more matinee games this season and one more early-morning (Pacific time) game — in **New Jersey** in February.

There's no time for the silver-and-black to dwell on this loss, though. They are right back to work on Monday night when they will be in Sunrise, hoping to get back in the win column against a **Florida Panthers** team they have already beaten this season.
