

LA KINGS' WIN STREAK SNAPPED, FALL TO SABRES IN OT

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Game 29; 19-8-2

BUFFALO — They may have lost three-straight and sit next-to-last in the **Eastern Conference**, but the **Buffalo Sabres** have had the **Los Angeles Kings'** number in the Queen City. Since the 1992-93 season, the Sabres have gone 12-1-1 against the Kings at home, and on Saturday, they improved to 13-1-1 with a thrilling 2-1 overtime victory, snapping Los Angeles's six-game winning streak.

The Kings were outplayed for much of their game but they were able to score first.

At the 4:47 mark of the opening period, **Anze Kopitar** skated in on a 2-on-1 with **Marian Gaborik**, making a crisp pass to No. 12 who cashed in on his sixth, beating a spawled **Linus Ullmark** to give Los Angeles the early lead. **Tanner Pearson** helped out with the second assist.



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Just over two-and-a-half minutes later, though, the Sabres responded as **Jamie McGinn** backhanded his sixth in front past **Jhonas Enroth** to tie the game. The goal came on the power play with **Jordan Nolan** serving a penalty for interference. That and a tripping call against **Andy Andreoff** a few minutes later would be the only penalties handed down on this night.

In the first, the Sabres outshot the Kings by a 12-3 margin. It was the lowest shot output the silver-and-black had in a period this season. The Kings did get seven in the second but continued to be outshot and outplayed. However, in the dying seconds of the middle frame, Los Angeles caught a break.



With 11 seconds remaining in the period, the Sabres appeared to have taken the lead as defenseman **Jake McCabe** took a nifty **Jack Eichel** pass to roof one up and over Jhonas Enroth. Kings head coach **Darryl Sutter**, however, used his coach's challenge as Buffalo captain **Brian Gionta** appeared to be just offside. Sutter was right and the call was overturned leaving the game tied.

The Kings used the break to pick up the pace in the third, evening their shot total with Buffalo at eight but Linus Ullmark was solid in goal — just like Enroth — keeping the game knotted up. So, for the second time in as many nights, the Kings were headed to overtime.

The Kings had some chances to win in the extra frame but Ullmark stood tall. Then, at the 3:19 mark, **Ryan O'Reilly**, who has assisted earlier in the game, made a great effort around a stretched-out **Alec Martinez** to roof his 10th, while falling to the ice, to win the game for the Sabres, ending their losing streak and, at the same time, Los Angeles's winning streak.

While it certainly is disappointing to see the Kings' six-game winning streak come to an end, they can certainly take some comfort in knowing that their point streak remains intact at nine games. After all, it wasn't for Darryl Sutter's challenge, the silver-and-black may have been leaving Buffalo empty-handed.

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The Kings certainly got outplayed by a faster team on this night but Jhonas Enroth, despite not playing in a while, showed no signs of rust as he was instrumental in gaining said point for his team making 29 saves en route to the defeat. Ryan O'Reilly continues to succeed in his maiden season with the Sabres notching two points on this night.

Despite not being able to contain O'Reilly in overtime, Alec Martinez was a warrior defensively for Los Angeles as he blocked six shots. **Milan Lucic** continues to be a heavyweight for the Kings as he led the way with five hits. **Michael Mersch**, in his second **NHL** game, saw his ice time increase to 14:32 while recording a shot and a hit.

It was a loss but a hard-fought loss for the silver-and-black. With the point, the Kings improve to 40 on the year, marking just the fourth time in franchise history that they reached the plateau in under 30 games. The Kings did it in 28 games in 1980-81 and 1992-93 and 29 games in 2013-14 and this season. They are now 2-0-1 on their road trip as they head north of the border for three games. The first of which will come on Monday night in Canada's capital when they visit the **Ottawa Senators**.

