

TOFFOLI HOT STREAK, SEVEN-STRAIGHT WINS HIGHLIGHT SOLID OCTOBER FOR LA KINGS

👤 Ryan Cowley 📅 November 1, 2015



Photo credit: Brian Donogh/Winnipeg Sun/Postmedia Network

It did not get off to an auspicious start for the **Los Angeles Kings**.

After a much-needed rest this summer, the Kings kicked off the 2015-16 regular season with three-straight losses. Worse, they were outscored 12-2 over that stretch. After their third loss of the season — to the **Vancouver Canucks** — on Oct. 13, some were suggesting that netminder **Jonathan Quick**, who looked shaky early on, should be traded, or general manager **Dean Lombardi** being fired. Both suggestions were ludicrous to say the least but some fans simply let their frustrations get the best of them. Even head coach **Darryl Sutter** was quickly losing popularity. In fact, in relation to the latter, a couple of fans even suggested the theory that the Kings were playing poorly on purpose to get Sutter canned. Whatever the case was, the silver-and-black did not look like they belonged with the rest of the pack. But then...

On Oct. 16, the Kings played host to a then-unbeaten **Minnesota Wild** squad and, while skeptics were predicting another loss, the optimists knew how much of a confidence boost it would be for the Kings to beat the Wild — and they did thanks to **Anze Kopitar**'s OT-winner. From there, the Kings kept winning — first edging the **Avalanche** and then quieting the **SAP Center** as **Jhonas Enroth** made 39 saves in his Los Angeles debut to beat **San Jose** by a 4-1 count.

After Enroth's performance, Jonathan Quick was back in goal the next night, stopping all 40 shots against the **Carolina Hurricanes**. Then, just a few nights later, Quick made a last-second glove save on **Connor McDavid** to preserve his team's win in Edmonton.



Getty Images Sport
Rocky W. Widner/NHL

A victory in **Winnipeg** was next followed by an exciting Halloween matinee overtime win over the 7-1-1 **Nashville Predators** to close out the month.

[View image | gettyimages.com](#)

That three-game losing streak to start the season seems nothing short of a distant memory now. Those opening games were difficult to watch as no one seemed to be on the right track while chemistry lacked between linemates. But the early struggles of Jonathan Quick, the defensive corps and even some of the newer Kings like **Milan Lucic** and **Christian Ehrhoff** started to erode.

In reeling off wins in five-straight starts, Quick posted a phenomenal 0.99 goals-against average to go in hand with a .966 save percentage with a shutout for good measure. While Lucic struggled on the top line with Anze Kopitar and **Marian Gaborik**, he was then joined by **Tyler Toffoli** and **Jeff Carter** instead, where the line created instant chemistry.



Getty Images Sport
Stephen Dunn

[View image | gettyimages.com](#)

In 10 games this month, Tyler Toffoli scored nine goals while Milan Lucic, subject of derision by many skeptical Kings fans during the summer and very early in the season, ended October with a five-game point streak, tallying two goals and five assists overall.

Jeff Carter, meanwhile, capped off his October with a thrilling overtime-winner vs. Nashville on Halloween, tying Toffoli for the team lead in points with 10.

Drew Doughty, while he has yet to score a goal this season, has been a defensive dynamo, registering key blocked shots (including the set-up to Carter's said OT-winner) and adding seven assists. Yet, as valuable as Doughty has been on the defensive side, the same can be said — possibly more so — for **Alec Martinez** and **Jake Muzzin** who led the way for the silver-and-black in October with 21 and 16 blocked shots, respectively. **Brayden McNabb** wasn't too far behind with 14 blocked shots.

In addition to his aforementioned point-streak, Milan Lucic is earning his keep in the physical arena, dishing out a team-leading 29 hits with dark horse **Trevor Lewis** finishing a close second with 24. Captain **Dustin Brown**, the usual leader for the Kings in hits, rounded out his team's top-three with 22.

At 53.5 per cent, **Nick Shore** has led the way in faceoffs with Anze Kopitar right behind at a mark of 52.2 per cent. Milan Lucic has even showed strength in this department, going 50.0 per cent in October.

After struggling mightily on the man-advantage in their first three games, the Kings have scored six times on the power play since then, but have allowed a total of seven



power-play tallies — not a terrible number but one that could see some improvement.



[View image | gettyimages.com](#)

The Kings were fortunate enough to be healthy for much of the month. However, defenseman Christian Ehrhoff left Saturday's game with an upper-body injury and did not return. The Kings and their fans hope to have the veteran blueliner back as soon as possible, although his history of injuries does warrant a good reason for said concern.

Kicking off in **Chicago**, the Kings do not have an easy opening to the month of November. However, their October was stellar as they showcased a solid work ethic, good team chemistry and their usual resilience. After falling 0-3-0 to start the year, the silver-and-black were on a mission to make the best of their remaining month and that is exactly what they did.

Behind the likes of Quick, Toffoli, Doughty and Lucic just to name a few, the Los Angeles Kings finished the regular season's first month on a high note. With 14 points, they equaled their total from last October but did do one win better at seven.

With a promising October now behind them, here's to a just-as-promising November for the Los Angeles Kings.