

MARTIN HANZAL NETS TWO AS COYOTES EDGE LA KINGS

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Photo credit: Juan Ocampo/NHLI via Getty Images

Game 15; 9-6-0

LOS ANGELES — Sporting their vintage gold jerseys as part of their **Legends Night** series, the **Los Angeles Kings** did not quite have enough to beat their division rivals as the **Arizona Coyotes** came out with the 3-2 victory. The win gives the **Desert Dogs** their second win over the Kings this season but while they did lose, the silver-and-black did put forth a better effort than they did one month ago.

The evening began with the honouring of the Kings' longtime radio broadcaster **Nick Nickson**, who gave the **STAPLES Center** faithful a warm speech, emphasizing how important the fans have been over the course of his 35-year career with the organization. Nickson was inducted into the **Hockey Hall of Fame** this past weekend in Toronto upon being awarded the prestigious **Foster Hewitt Award** for his years of outstanding service in broadcasting. But when the game started, it was back to business.

The Kings got off to a promising start — and a feel-good one at that — as hard-working captain **Dustin Brown** was able to score his first goal of the season, beating netminder **Mike Smith** in front 5:54 into the contest to put the home team up. Brown cashed in on a feed in front from **Drew Doughty** with **Tanner Pearson** picking up the second assist.

Arizona, however, answered back as **Martin Hanzal**, who led his team in points without a single goal entering Tuesday, changed that by netting his first past **Jonathan Quick**. Despite being outshot 10-4, the Coyotes were able to enter the intermission tied.



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In the second, the Kings regained their lead at exactly five minutes into the frame. On the power play, the Kings were pressing hard when **Jamie McBain** fed **Tyler Toffoli** who made no mistake on Mike Smith, roofing his 10th to put the Kings by a 2-1 count. **Alec Martinez** helped out with the other assist. But again, the Coyotes answered and again, it was from the stick of Martin Hanzal.

Just shy of the halfway mark of the second, a pressing Arizona side finished off their opportunity as Hanzal backhanded his second of the night up and over Quick to tie the contest once again.

After the Coyotes outshot the Kings 15-11 in that second period, the home team took back the momentum in the third as they outshot Arizona by a 14-6 margin. Unfortunately for Los Angeles, it didn't matter as the lone goal in the frame came off the stick of ex-King **Brad Richardson**, who got his stick out to tip his second past a fooled Quick giving the visitors their first lead of the night. It was a lead that they would not relinquish as the Coyotes came away with the victory, their second in as many nights.

It was a very special night for Nick Nickson and even a nice night for Dustin Brown whose hard work thus far this season pays off for his first goal. Unfortunately, it came in a losing effort but the Coyotes certainly deserve credit for fighting hard for the two points. Coming off an overtime win in Anaheim on Monday night, the Dogs were a tired bunch but stayed the course and were able to outlast the Kings for their second win at STAPLES Center this season.

Brayden McNabb had some difficulty defensively on this night as the defenseman surrendered the puck to Martin Hanzal for his first of the night. However, one King who looked impressive was **Nick Shore**. Despite not registering any points, Shore was consistently visible on the ice, fighting for pucks and crashing the net. We certainly hope to see more efforts like this from No. 21 in the near future.

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In goal, **Mike Smith** may not have been quite as dominant, or as busy, as he was back on Oct. 9 but he was nonetheless a difference-maker, standing tall late as he helped extinguish a late Kings push to tie. Smith made 33 saves in the win.

As for now, the Kings will hope to rebound as they next prepare for Thursday night when they play host to the **New York Islanders**.

