

LA KINGS' TLC LINE PROVIDES TENDER LOVIN' CARE IN STRONG NOVEMBER

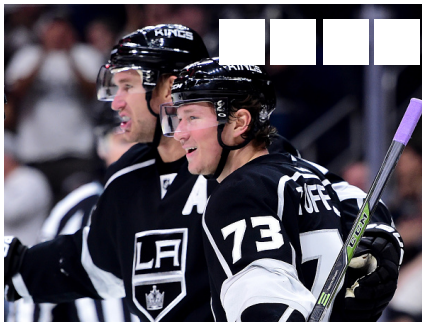
👤 Ryan Cowley 🕒 November 30, 2015



Nov 23, 2015; Sunrise, FL, USA; Los Angeles Kings center Tyler Toffoli (73) celebrates his goal with defenseman Drew Doughty (8) and defenseman Brayden McNabb (3) and left wing Milan Lucic (17) in the first period of a game against the Florida Panthers at BB&T Center. Mandatory Credit: Robert Mayer-USA TODAY Sports

There was no seven-game winning streak this time but the **Los Angeles Kings** had a successful November nonetheless. While they did spend the first half alternating wins and losses, the Kings equaled their October total of seven wins, bettering their point total by one — thanks to a shootout loss in **Tampa Bay** — as they went 7-5-1 in November. But while October was an introduction, November helped set the tone not only for the Kings but many teams around the league. For the silver-and-black particularly, a positive tone was set.

The TLC Line of **Tyler Toffoli**, **Milan Lucic** and **Jeff Carter** were the most productive offensively as a unit. The trio combined for 13 goals and 29 points in November with Carter leading all Kings with 12 points (six goals, six assists). Lucic finished right behind Carter with five goals while Toffoli lead all Kings with eight assists. Former **That 70's Line** mate **Tanner Pearson** finished November just behind Toffoli in the latter category with seven helpers. Notable mentions in the offensive category belong to **Anze Kopitar** (four goals, six assists), **Alec Martinez** (three goals, three assists) and **Jake Muzzin** who cashed in with six assists this month.



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But while they do have plenty of outlets to light the lamp, the Kings are not as notorious for scoring goals as they are for their defensive prowess. Alec Martinez led all Kings in November with 26 blocked shots while **Drew Doughty** finished not too far behind with 21. Martinez even chipped in physically with nine hits. Doughty was also a physical force this past month but their efforts paled in comparison to **Dustin Brown** and **Trevor Lewis** who each registered 28 hits in November. Defenseman **Brayden McNabb**



did one better with 29 but for the month, he finished a distant second to Milan Lucic who dished out a whopping 57 hits over the last four weeks.

Fans who were skeptical upon Lucic's arrival to Los Angeles are gradually learning to love the big man, and for good reason. In November, Lucic has proven to be a timely playmaker in addition to having the ability to create much-needed traffic in front of the opposition's net. His physical presence is just gravy as far as this writer is concerned.

In the special teams department, despite having a bit more difficulty on the penalty kill as of the late, the Kings are still generally successful when shorthanded. In November, the Kings had 46 penalties, successfully killing off 39 of them for an 84.7 percentage. On the power play, the Kings haven't been quite as effective. In 35 opportunities, the silver-and-black only managed to score seven times for a 20.0 per cent rating. The latter is one area where the Kings could see some improvement in for December.

In goal, **Jonathan Quick** has been better than his November numbers have indicated. On paper, Quick has been on-and-off but on the ice, he has been integral in his team's victories. Even in losses, No. 32 has been gallant.

This past month, Quick went 5-4-1 with a 2.43 goals-against average and a not-so-spectacular save percentage of .909. Neither of the latter stats are terrible but they're not great either. Still, after watching him in action in November, it is difficult to blame Quick for these numbers. Less time in the penalty box, for one, should definitely help those numbers dip in December.



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Speaking of staying out of the box, the Kings have taken quite a few undisciplined penalties this past month. Too many delay-of-game calls and too many offensive-zone infractions may not always hurt the silver-and-black on the scoreboard so much, but they didn't impeded any on-ice momentum the club had. The season, though, is still young so there's plenty of time to right that ship — although sooner would be better than later.

As for **Jhonas Enroth**, he has played admirably in the backup role. In November, he went 2-1-0, stopping 89 of the 93 shots he faced for a slender 1.20 GAA and a stellar save percentage of .957. Enroth even earned a shutout this month in **St. Louis** in addition to shutting down the **Carolina Hurricanes** in relief of Quick last weekend. He may not be expected to see much in-game action this coming month or even overall this season,^



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but Enroth has been nothing short of reliable for the silver-and-black, which is quickly turning him into a fan favourite.

Had this been written before Saturday's contest, most would have agreed that **Marian Gaborik** has been the most disappointing of all the Kings this past month. In November, he had just two goals and an assist. On Saturday, though, Gaborik stepped up his game, scoring on a critical turnover late to tie the game before scoring again in overtime to defeat the formidable **Chicago Blackhawks**. Having doubled his goal total for the entire month, the Slovakian already made up for his prior underachievement.

While they haven't necessarily been disappointing, it would be nice to see **Andy Andreoff** have better end results for his efforts. He is much more visible on the ice than he was last season, so that it definitely a plus. Hopefully December sees a few more goals and assists for the native of Pickering, Ontario.

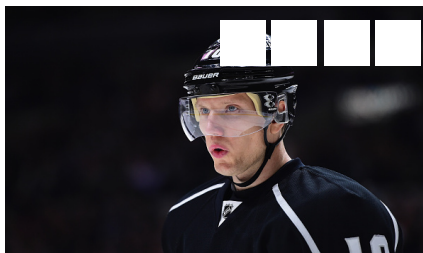


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Entering the new month, many fans would like to see a bit more of **Jordan Weal** who has yet to really establish an identity with the Kings having played in just a small handful of games thus far. The same can be said for defenseman **Derek Forbort** who can definitely improve on his defensive game in the process.

Christian Ehrhoff has been one player who has received mixed reviews from Kings fans. Some aren't too happy with the German blueliner's performance thus far, although this writer is content. Ehrhoff's efforts especially lately, have been conspicuous as he works hard along the boards while being aggressive in creating plays and opening lanes. With that said, the veteran could definitely see some improvement but overall, it's so far, so good. Ehrhoff, by the way, recorded three assists in November including a key helper on Saturday.



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Overall, it's been a strong November for the Los Angeles Kings. They exit the month atop the **Pacific Division** standings and while they do have some issues that need addressing, the silver-and-black are in good shape and heading in the right direction. To make matters even better, **Dwight King**, who has yet to play this season due to a broken foot, is very close to returning to the lineup.

As good as November has been to the Kings, fans will be hoping that December will be even kinder. After all, considering all of the off-ice drama mixed in with their playoff miss last spring, the Kings certainly deserve a promising conclusion to 2015 — and you can bet they will be as determined as ever to make that so.

