

BOSTON BRUINS vs. BUFFALO SABRES

Wednesday, November 19, 2008

TD Banknorth Garden; Boston MA

Game Time: 7:00 p.m. ET

NESN and WBZ Radio

Tonight's Game

The Bruins host the Sabres tonight in the third of six games between these teams this season and the second of three games of this season's series at TD Banknorth Garden. The Bruins are 11-3-4 overall this season with a 5-1-1 record on home ice. The Sabres are 9-5-3 overall this season with a 4-2-2 record on the road. The Bruins are 5-1-2 vs. Northeast Division opponents this season and they are 6-1-4 overall vs. Eastern Conference foes. The Sabres are 2-2-0 vs. Northeast Division teams this season and they are 6-4-2 overall vs. Eastern Conference opponents.

Lifetime Series

The Bruins are 109-98-29-5 lifetime vs. Buffalo with the Sabres holding a 786-783 scoring edge in those 241 games. The Bruins are 66-39-14-1 lifetime vs. the Sabres in Boston with a 433-353 scoring advantage in those 120 contests. These teams have split the first two games of this season's series thus far with Buffalo winning the first game with a 3-2 shootout victory in Buffalo on Oct. 21 and the Bruins taking the rematch with a 3-1 win in Boston on Nov. 8. The Bruins are 5-2-3 in their last ten games overall vs. the Sabres.

Fun Facts vs. Buffalo: These teams have never made a trade between the two organizations ... Five of the last ten games between these teams have been decided in overtime or shootout ... Shane Hnidy (seventh pick, 173rd overall, 1994 NHL Entry Draft) and Dennis Wideman (ninth pick, 241st overall, 2002 NHL Entry Draft) were both drafted by Buffalo but neither played for the Sabres ... Matt Hunwick (Nov. 10, 2007), David Krejci (Jan. 30, 2007) and Petteri Nokelainen (Oct. 5, 2005) all played their first NHL games vs. Buffalo ... Phil Kessel scored his first NHL goal vs. the Sabres on Oct. 21, 2006 ... Shawn Thornton recorded his first NHL point with an assist vs. Buffalo on Oct. 13, 2002.

Recent Bruins Games

The Bruins have taken points out of their last seven games at 6-0-1 with a 5-1 victory over Dallas on Nov. 1, a 5-2 victory vs. Toronto on Nov. 6, a 3-1 win over Buffalo on Nov. 8, a 2-1 shootout victory in Chicago on Nov. 12, a 6-1 win over Montreal on Nov. 13, a 3-2 shootout loss at NY Rangers on Nov. 15 and a 3-2 victory in Toronto on Nov. 17. They have taken points out of ten of their last 11 contests at 9-1-1 and have outscored their opponents by a 35-17 margin in those 11 games with their lone regulation loss in that span a 3-2 loss in Calgary on Oct. 30. The Bruins are 10-2-3 in their last 15 games overall.

Recent Sabres Games

The Sabres are 1-3-1 in their last five games with a 5-4 overtime loss to Atlanta on Nov. 7, a 3-1 setback to Boston on Nov. 8, a 4-3 win vs. St. Louis on Nov. 12, a 6-1 loss to Columbus on Nov. 14 and a 5-2 loss in Pittsburgh on Nov. 15. They are 3-5-1 in their last nine games after opening the season at 6-0-2.

Upcoming Bruins Games

All games are televised on NESN and broadcast on WBZ Radio unless otherwise noted. All start times are Eastern.

The Bruins will conclude this two-game home stand hosting Florida on Nov. 21 (7:00 p.m.). They will then face the Canadiens in Montreal on Nov. 22 (7:30 p.m.) and the Sabres in Buffalo on Nov. 26 (7:00 p.m.).

Upcoming Sabres Games

The Sabres next return home to Buffalo for a four-game home stand, hosting Philadelphia on Nov. 21, NY Islanders on Nov. 22, Boston on Nov. 26 and Pittsburgh on Nov. 28.

Bruins Injuries

Andrew Ference: Fractured right tibia suffered Nov. 13 vs. Montreal.

Bruins Recent Transactions (Last 30 Days)

Nov. 4: Vladimir Sobotka returned to Providence/AHL.

2008-09 Overtime (1-0) and Shootouts (1-4):

Oct. 15: Boston 3 at Montreal 4/SO ... Boston Goal: Tim Thomas ... Montreal Goal: Carey Price
Boston Shooters: Phil Kessel (No), Patrice Bergeron (No), Michael Ryder (No)

Montreal Shooters: Andrei Markov (No), Alex Tanguay (Yes)

Oct. 20: Pittsburgh 2 at Boston 1/SO ... Boston Goal: Tim Thomas ... Pittsburgh Goal: Dany Sabourin

Boston Shooters: Phil Kessel (Yes), Patrice Bergeron (No), Michael Ryder (No), David Krejci (No), Marc Savard (No)

Pittsburgh Shooters: Kris Letang (No), Petr Sykora (Yes), Sidney Crosby (No), Miroslav Satan (No), Evgeni Malkin (Yes)

Oct. 21: Boston 2 at Buffalo 3/SO ... Boston Goal: Manny Fernandez ... Buffalo Goal: Ryan Miller

Boston Shooters: Phil Kessel (No), Patrice Bergeron (No), David Krejci (Yes), Zdeno Chara (No), Marc Savard (No)

Buffalo Shooters: Ales Kotalik (No), Drew Stafford (Yes), Derek Roy (No), Jason Pominville (No), Thomas Vanek (Yes)

Oct. 27: Boston 1 at Edmonton 0/OT ... Dennis Wideman scored on Dwayne Roloson at 3:18 of OT

Nov. 12: Boston 2 at Chicago 1/SO ... Boston Goal: Tim Thomas ... Chicago Goal: Nikolai Khabibulin

Boston Shooters: Blake Wheeler (Yes), Phil Kessel (No), P. J. Axelsson (Yes)

Chicago Shooters: Jonathan Toews (No), Patrick Kane (Yes), Dave Bolland (No)

Nov. 15: Boston 2 at NY Rangers 3/SO ... Boston Goal: Tim Thomas ... New York Goal: Henrik Lundqvist

Boston Shooters: Blake Wheeler (No), Phil Kessel (No), P. J. Axelsson (No), Patrice Bergeron (No)

New York Shooters: Nigel Dawes (No), Nikolai Zherdev (No), Fredrik Sjostrom (No), Chris Drury (Yes)

Bruins Fun Facts

November Birthdays: Shane Hnidy turned 33 years old on Nov. 8.

With an 11-3-4 record and 26 points through their first 18 games this season, the Bruins are off to their best 18-game start since the 2003-04 season when they had 26 points on a 10-2-3-3 record ... Boston won their 19th game that season for 28 points at that mark.

Boston's current five-game home win streak is their longest such stretch since a 5-game home span from Mar. 6-24, 2003 ... The Bruins also had an eight-game home win streak that season from Nov. 2-29, 2002.

Tim Thomas has a 6-1-1 record with a 1.34 GAA (11 GA in 493 mins) and .958 save percentage (250 of 261 shots) in his last eight games ... He was named the NHL's Second Star for the week of Oct. 27-Nov. 2 with consecutive 1-0 shutouts (at Edmonton on Oct. 27 and at Vancouver on Oct. 28), had his shutout streak snapped at 154:43 in a 3-2 loss in Calgary on Oct. 30 and earned a 5-1 victory over Dallas on Nov. 1 during that span ... He became the first Boston goaltender with consecutive shutouts since Byron Dafoe on April 3-5, 1999 ... It was just the second time in NHL history that a goaltender posted 1-0 shutouts in consecutive road games (Florida's Craig Anderson, March 2-4, 2008).

Manny Fernandez has won his last three games and has taken points out of his last five starts at 4-0-1 with a 1.97 GAA and .932 save percentage (136 of 146 shots) in that span.

Marc Savard has a three-game assist streak in progress with five assists in that span and he has 1-11=12 totals in nine of his last 11 games ... Savard has assisted on four of Boston's ten game-winning goals this season.

Chuck Kobasew has played the last five games after missing 12 games with a fractured leg suffered in the season opener on Oct. 9 in Colorado ... Kobasew had 1-1=2 totals Nov. 8 vs. the Sabres, including the game-winning goal, and added two assists Nov. 13 vs. Montreal ... He has 1-5=6 totals in his six games played this season.

Tim Thomas faced the Bruins first penalty shot against of the season Nov. 12 in Chicago ... Patrick Sharp was awarded the first overtime penalty shot in Boston history and Thomas made the save at the 2:44 mark of OT ... Thomas is now three for six in career penalty shots.

Blake Wheeler scored his first career hat trick in just his 13th career NHL game on Nov. 6 vs. Toronto ... That was the fastest hat trick by a Bruins rookie since Craig Janney netted three in his fifth NHL game on Mar. 12, 1988 vs. Quebec ... Wheeler had changed his number from 42 to 26 effective on Nov. 6 vs. Toronto.

Of the 22 players on the current Bruins roster, eight were acquired by the team via trade, seven were drafted by the team and seven were signed by the Bruins as free agents.

P. J. Axelsson is the longest-tenured Bruin as he enters his 11th season with the team since playing his first NHL game with Boston on Oct. 2, 1997.

Phil Kessel carries the team's longest current iron-man streak into tonight's game at 143 regular season games, dating back to Jan. 9, 2007 at Ottawa. His last regular season game missed was Jan. 6, 2007, the final game of 11 he missed following a testicular cancer diagnosis and surgery.

Chuck Kobasew is playing his 300th NHL game tonight.

Patrice Bergeron is one point short of his 200th NHL/Bruins point milestone.

P. J. Axelsson is three goals short of his 100th NHL/Bruins goal milestone.

Marc Savard is four points short of his 600th NHL points milestone.

Milan Lucic is five games shy of his 100th NHL/Bruins game milestone.

Dennis Wideman is six points short of his 100th NHL points milestone.

The Bruins have 16 sets of back-to-back games this season - six each home-road and road-road, three road-home and one home-home. They have completed three of these sets thus far and are 2-0-1 in the first game of these sets and are 2-0-1 in the second game of these series as well.

The Bruins have completed five of their 29 season series ...They are 0-1-0 vs. Calgary; 1-0-0 vs. Colorado; 1-0-0 vs. Dallas; 1-0-0 vs. Edmonton; and 1-0-0 vs. Vancouver.

The Players

6–Dennis Wideman–D

- Has 3-1=4 totals in his last six games with 1-1=2 totals Nov. 6 vs. Toronto and single goals each Nov. 8 vs. Buffalo and Nov. 15 at NY Rangers.
- Has 5-3=8 totals in his last 13 games, including the overtime goal at 3:18 of the extra session Oct. 27 in Edmonton.
- Has two multiple-point games, both two-point efforts.

11–P. J. Axelsson–LW

- Is three goals shy of his 100th NHL/Bruins goal milestone.
- Scored the deciding shootout goal in the 2-1 victory in Chicago on Nov. 12.
- Snapped a four-game scoreless stretch with an assist Nov. 1 vs. Dallas.
- Has missed three games to injury (3-muscle spasms, Oct. 18-21).

12–Chuck Kobasew–RW

- Has 1-3=4 totals in his last five games with the game-winning goal and an assist Nov. 8 vs. Buffalo and two assists Nov. 13 vs. Montreal.
- Has played the last five games after missing the previous 12 games with a fractured right leg suffered Oct. 9 in Colorado.
- Has three multiple-point games.
- Has missed 12 games to injury (12-Leg, Oct. 11-Nov. 6).

16–Marco Sturm–LW

- Has 5-3=8 totals in his last nine games with an assist Oct. 28 at Vancouver, two goals Nov. 1 vs. Dallas, two assists Nov. 6 vs. Toronto, a goal Nov. 12 in Chicago and two goals Nov. 13 vs. Montreal.
- Has four multiple-point games, all two-point efforts including two two-goal contests.

17–Milan Lucic–LW

- Has 1-2=3 totals in his last three games with a goal Nov. 13 vs. Montreal and two assists Nov. 17 in Toronto.
- Has two multiple-point games, including his first career hat trick in a career-high 3-1=4 effort Oct. 25 vs. Atlanta.

18–Stephane Yelle–C

- Has 2-2=4 totals in two of his last three games, matching his career-high for points in a game with a 2-1=3 effort Nov. 13 vs. Montreal, including the game-winning goal, and adding an assist Nov. 15 at NY Rangers.
- Has 3-4=7 totals in his last 11 games.
- Played his first game as a Bruin Oct. 9 in Colorado ... Scored his first goal & point as a Bruin Oct. 25 vs. Atlanta.

21–Andrew Ference–D

- Has missed two games with a fractured right tibia suffered Nov. 13 vs. Montreal.
- Recorded his first multiple-point game of the season with two assists Nov. 6 vs. Toronto, including his 100th career NHL assist.
- Has missed two games to injury (2-Leg, Nov. 15-17).

22–Shawn Thornton–LW

- Matched his career-high for points in a game with a 1-1=2 effort Nov. 13 vs. Montreal, his first goal of the season.
- Has 1-3=4 totals in his last 11 games.

26–Blake Wheeler–LW

- Had his three-game point streak stopped Nov. 8 vs. Buffalo with 4-2=6 totals in that span ... Had a goal Oct. 30 at Calgary, added his first two NHL assists Nov. 1 vs. Dallas and scored his first career hat trick in just his 13th NHL game Nov. 6 vs. Toronto ... It was the fastest hat trick by a Bruin rookie since Craig Janney scored three in his fifth career game on Mar. 12, 1988 vs. Quebec.
- Has two multiple-point games.
- Scored his first NHL goal in his first NHL game Oct. 9 in Colorado ... Was the first Bruin to accomplish that feat since Andy Hilbert vs. Toronto on Dec. 20, 2001.
- Changed his number from 42 to 26 on Nov. 6.

29–Petteri Nokelainen–C

- Has not dressed for the last five games after playing in the previous six games.
- Has not dressed for eight games (coach's decision).

30–Tim Thomas–G

- Has taken points out of his last five games at 4-0-1 with a 5-1 win vs. Dallas on Nov. 1, a 5-2 victory over Toronto on Nov. 6, a 2-1 shootout win in Chicago on Nov. 12, a 3-2 shootout loss at NY Rangers on Nov. 15 and a 3-2 win in Toronto on Nov. 17.
- Is 6-1-1 in his last eight games with a 1.34 GAA and .958 save percentage (222 of 231 shots) in that span ... His last regulation loss was a 3-2 setback in Calgary on Oct. 30, earned a
- Has taken points out of ten of his 12 starts this season at 7-2-3.
- Faced his sixth career penalty shot Nov. 12 in Chicago, stopping Patrick Sharp in overtime ... He is now three for six in career penalty shots faced.
- With the consecutive 1-0 victories, he became the first Boston goaltender with consecutive shutouts since Byron Dafoe on April 3-5, 1999 .. It was just the second time in NHL history that a goaltender has posted 1-0 shutouts in consecutive road games (Florida's Craig Anderson, March 2-4, 2008).
- 2008-09 Shootouts: 1-3 (5 goals/14 shots).
- Was named the NHL's Second Star for the week of Oct. 27-Nov. 1 with a 3-1-0 record, 0.99 GAA and .970 save percentage in four games that week.
- Has dressed as backup for six games.

33–Zdeno Chara–D

- Has 2-2=4 totals in four of his last six games, scoring his first goal of the season Nov. 6 vs. Toronto, adding single assists Nov. 12 in Chicago and Nov. 13 vs. Montreal and a goal Nov. 15 at NY Rangers.
- Played his 700th NHL game Nov. 6 vs. Toronto.

34–Shane Hnidy–D

- Has played the last three games after missing the previous three games to injury.
- Recorded his first point of the season with an assist Oct. 23 vs. Toronto.
- Did not dress Oct. 15 in Montreal (coach's decision).
- Has missed three games to injury (3-lower body, Nov. 6-12).

35–Manny Fernandez–G

- Has won his last three games and taken points out of each of his last five games at 4-0-1 with a 1.97 GAA and .932 save percentage in that span ... Earned his first win of the season with a 4-2 victory in Ottawa on Oct. 18, a 3-2 shootout loss in Buffalo on Oct. 21, a 5-4 victory over Atlanta on Oct. 25, a 3-1 win vs. Buffalo on Nov. 8 and a 6-1 victory over Montreal on Nov. 13.
- Played his 300th NHL game with a 3-2 shootout loss in Buffalo on Oct. 21.
- Has dressed as backup for 12 games.

37–Patrice Bergeron–C

- Is one point shy of his 200th NHL/Bruins point milestone.
- Has 2-2=4 totals in his last eight games with unassisted goals each Oct. 30 in Calgary and Nov. 1 vs. Dallas, and single assists in each of his last two games, Nov. 12 in Chicago and Nov. 13 vs. Montreal.
- Has one multiple-point game, a two-assist effort Oct. 9 in Colorado.

44–Aaron Ward–D

- Has single assists each in two of his last three games, Nov. 13 vs. Montreal and Nov. 17 in Toronto.
- Played his 700th NHL game Oct. 15 in Montreal.

45–Mark Stuart–D

- Scored his first point of the season with a goal Nov. 1 vs. Dallas.

46–David Krejci–C

- Has three assists in his last seven games with an assist Nov. 1 vs. Dallas and two assists Nov. 6 vs. Toronto.
- Has three multiple-point games.

48–Matt Hunwick–D

- Scored his first point of the season with his first NHL goal Nov. 17 in Toronto.
- Has played five of the last six games ... Had not dressed for the nine games prior to that.
- Played his first Boston game of the season Oct. 15 in Montreal after his Oct. 14 recall from Providence/AHL where he had two assists in two AHL Bruins games.
- Has not dressed for ten games (coach's decision).

73–Michael Ryder–RW

- Has 2-3=5 totals in his last 11 games with an assist Oct. 25 vs. Atlanta; the game-winning goal with the game's only score Oct. 28 in Vancouver; single assists each Nov. 1 vs. Dallas and Nov. 13 vs. Montreal; and the game-winning goal Nov. 17 in Toronto.
- Has one multiple-point game.
- Opened the season with a four-game point streak with 1-4=5 totals in that span ... Had a goal Oct. 9 in Colorado, two assists Oct. 11 in Minnesota and single assists each Oct. 15 in Montreal and Oct. 18 in Ottawa.

- Scored his first goal as a Bruin in his first game as a Bruin Oct. 9 in Colorado ... The goal was the 100th of his NHL career.

81–Phil Kessel–RW

- Has 2-3=5 totals in his last seven games with a goal Nov. 1 vs. Dallas; single assists each Nov. 8 vs. Buffalo, Nov. 13 vs. Montreal and Nov. 15 at NY Rangers; and a goal Nov. 17 in Toronto.
- Has one multiple-point game, a 2-1=3 effort Oct. 18 in Ottawa.
- Had a three-game goal/point streak from Oct. 18-21 with 4-1=5 totals in that span.

91–Marc Savard–C

- Has a three-game assist streak in progress with five assists in that span and has 1-11=12 totals in nine of his last 11 games...Had two assists Oct. 25 vs. Atlanta; single assists each Oct. 27 in Edmonton (OT), Oct. 28 in Vancouver (GW), Oct. 30 in Calgary and Nov. 1 vs. Dallas; a goal Nov. 8 vs. Buffalo; an assist Nov. 13 vs. Montreal; and two assists each Nov. 15 at NY Rangers and Nov. 17 in Toronto.
- Has seven multiple-point games with his season-high a three-assist effort Oct. 18 in Ottawa.
- Has assists on four of Boston's ten game-winning goals this season.
- Had a five-game assist streak from Oct. 25-Nov. 1 with 0-6=6 totals in that stretch.
- Opened the season with a four-game point streak with 5-4=9 totals from Oct. 9-18.