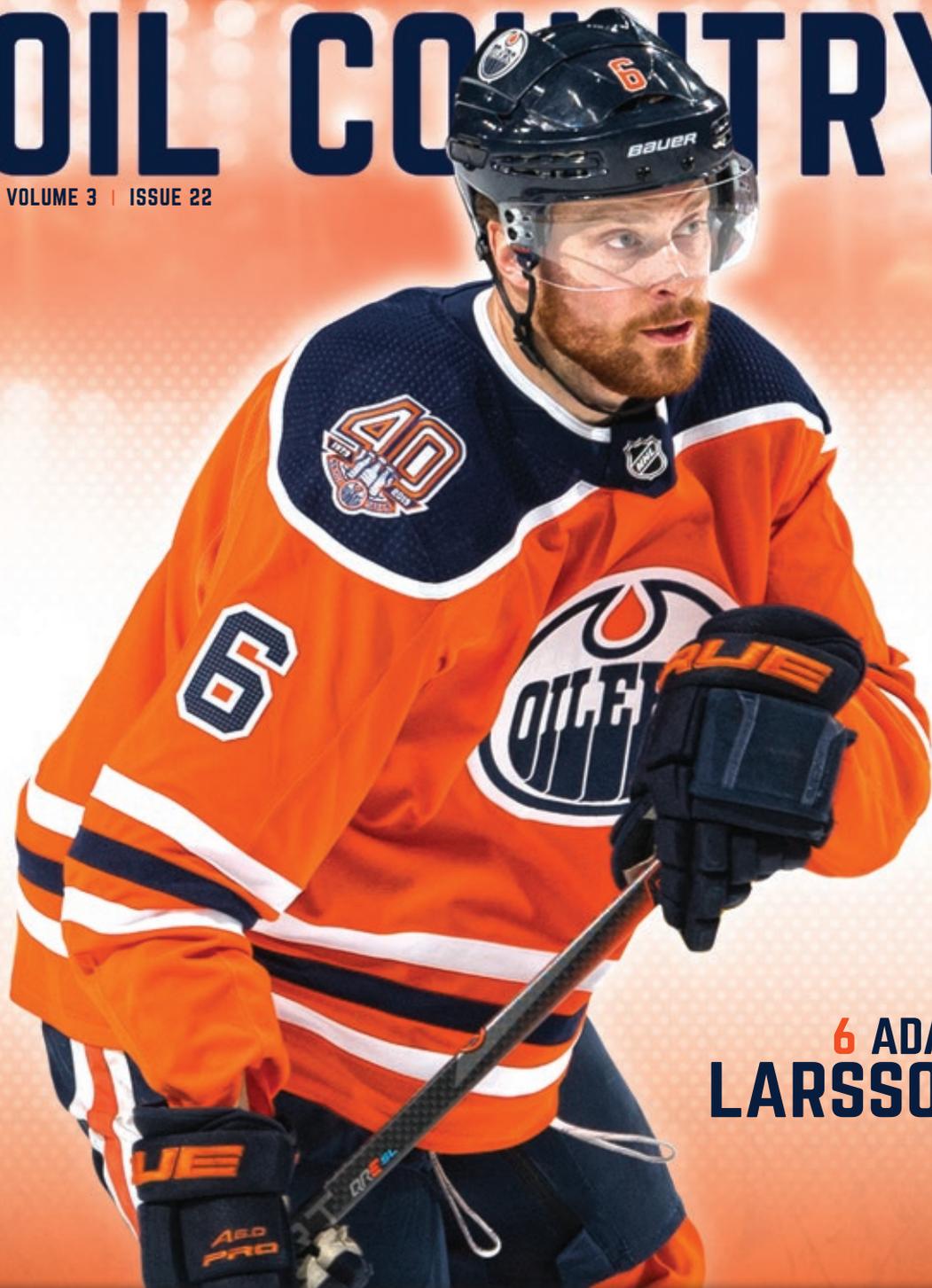


OIL COUNTRY

VOLUME 3 | ISSUE 22



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INSIDE OIL COUNTRY

THE OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE EDMONTON OILERS



9 THE CHIASS

What a whirlwind seven-month stretch it's been for Alex Chiasson. The veteran forward went from hoisting the Stanley Cup with the Washington Capitals to becoming a free agent searching for his next destination to signing a PTO contract for Oilers training camp to emerging as one of the team's most pleasant surprises so far this season, setting a new career high for goals before the mid-mark of the campaign.

41 CEREBRAL

Dr. Dhiren Naidu dons a tremendous number of different figurative hats as a physician in Edmonton. In addition to serving as the Oilers Head Team Physician, Naidu has the same role with the Eskimos and Golden Bears football teams, is President of HealthPointe Medical Centre, is an Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine at the University of Alberta, and is in the midst of monumental concussion research.

53 YEAR IN REVIEW

From Connor McDavid's magnificent second-half surge resulting in back-to-back Art Ross and Ted Lindsay honours, to selecting Evan Bouchard 10th overall at the NHL Draft, to starting the season in Germany and Sweden for the NHL Global Series, to four new coaches manning the bench, to first-half heroics from Alex Chiasson and Mikko Koskinen, there was no shortage of intriguing 2018 storylines in Oil Country.

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FREEZE FRAME

The Battle of Alberta was won in blue back on Sunday, Dec. 9 at Rogers Place as the Oilers donned their retro jerseys and defeated the rival Calgary Flames 1-0. Connor McDavid scored his 16th goal of the season, assisted by Leon Draisaitl and Alex Chiasson, while Mikko Koskinen turned aside all 24 shots he faced between the pipes.





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With Reid Wilkins

ROSTER 101



22 TOBIAS RIEDER

HOMETOWN: Landshut, Germany in the Bavaria region about an hour's drive away from Munich

NICKNAME: Tobi

WHY DO YOU WEAR #22? I wore it when I was a little kid, because my dad used to wear it, but when I came to North America it was always either taken or retired, so this is actually the first year I got to wear this number in the NHL.

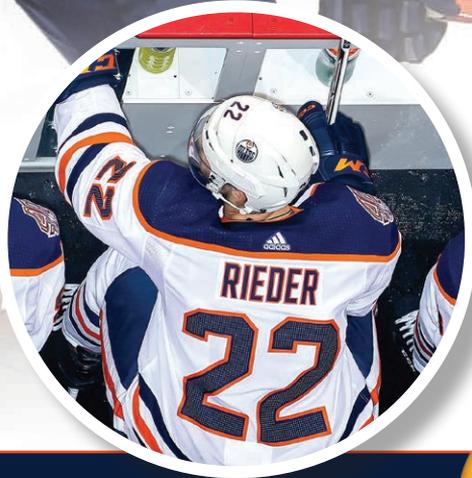
IF YOU COULD HAVE DINNER WITH ANYONE, DEAD OR ALIVE, WHO WOULD IT BE? Will Ferrell

WHAT IS YOUR MOST PRIZED POSSESSION? Any of the gear I got when I was part of Team Europe at the World Cup.

WHAT IS YOUR SECRET TALENT? I'm a pretty good soccer player. I play a lot in the summer with my friends back home.

HOW DO YOU LIKE TO SPEND YOUR OFF DAYS? My girlfriend and I foster dogs, so it gets a little rowdy with them on off days.

WHAT IS YOUR GREATEST HOCKEY MEMORY? Scoring in my first NHL game on a pass from Shane Doan was something I'll never forget.



FAVOURITES

SPORT OTHER THAN HOCKEY? SOCCER

TV SHOW? TWO AND A HALF MEN

VACATION DESTINATION? ITALY

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THE CHIASS

BY CAIT MACPHAIL

Fans are rarely privy to the exact ins and outs of player signings, contract negotiations, or trade formulations – whether it be exactly how they come to be or any close-calls or near-misses along the way.

Hockey insiders across broadcast networks can offer insight or a small window to a world fans clamor for a glimpse into. Look no further for proof than some of hockey's most influential pundits who command more than one million Twitter followers that hang on every character of every tweet about anything from the "inside".

These media personalities can supply the slivers that satiate an appetite for real-time, behind-the-scenes info, but in reality, these talks are held close to the chest on the sides of agents, players and teams for obvious reasons.

It's not just leading up to those loud signings on July 1 where this delicate process plays out. Dictating the future of any player takes time, diligence and forethought from many perspectives.

And as Alex Chiasson embarked on the second professional tryout (PTO) experience of his career this fall in Edmonton, he knew that process of patiently combing for the right fit is key, while also keeping in mind that once your blades hits the ice for that next opportunity, nothing is certain.

He is no stranger to this.

"You're taking two suitcases, a suit, a couple shirts, a backpack and off you go. But you're still not really sure where you're going to end up," said the forward.

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While the 28-year-old made earning a spot with the Oilers the priority, he was not blind to the realities of fighting for a contract this way. You're showcasing in one city, but others with interest can keep a keen eye. A year earlier, he was rolling into the Washington Capitals training camp under the same circumstances.

"Obviously you're trying out for one team, but you're also trying out for every other team in the NHL."

The Oilers announced on Sept. 10 that they had signed the Quebec native to a PTO. With a goal of rounding out their forward group, in addition to some off-season signings, the organization opted to bring in the versatile winger to compete for a contract. If he earned that, the next step would be vying for playing time against a mix of burgeoning prospects and other vets in the Oilers system.

So far, it's two big checkmarks for Chiasson in Edmonton – and with a pleasant influx of offence to boot.

The big winger's resumé came with a documented nose for the blue paint. His ability to go the net, jump on loose pucks and still have hands adept enough to finish in tight has largely been what's earned him his paycheques in the NHL. It's always a part of why, despite not signing more than a one-year contract for the last four seasons, he's continued to find a niche on an NHL team every season of his career.

The 6-foot-4 winger was selected 38th overall in the 2009 NHL Draft by the Dallas Stars. His customary post-draft interview

showed a very recognizable Chiasson, despite being just 18 at the time. With his new Stars cap affixed to his head, there's something else recognizable about him, and it's how he describes his own personal style of play.

"When I play physical, it's when I score goals. It's weird to say, but that's the way it is. I like to go to the net hard and play physical."

Fast-forward nearly a decade later to just his second game with the Oilers, who upgraded his PTO to a one-year deal signed on Oct. 2.

After watching the team's first five games from the press box as a healthy scratch while the Oilers forward group worked out its early-season identity, it took only a few periods in his second appearance to show why he earned his latest contract.

Chiasson shouldered a Pittsburgh defender to the ice in the corner, curled off the boards, fired a shot on net, shoved his way to the middle, gloved down his own rebound and, while falling, potted a beautiful wrister under that bar for one of the prettiest first goals you'll see a PTO-turned-depth-signing score with their new club.

The words of 18-year-old Chiasson on draft day were echoed in the replay of how his first Oilers goal developed. A physical play in the corner resulting in Chiasson netting one from the dirty area in front. It was nothing if not a calling card for the journeyman winger. He would go on to

score his second of the season in that same game and thus, Chiasson's tenure with the Oilers had begun.

His personal journey through the NHL is a unique one. Beyond his entry-level deal with Dallas, Chiasson has worked his way through five other clubs on successive one-year contracts. Rarer than that is a player who is not only on a fifth-consecutive one-year deal but one that has contributed consistently enough to stay at the NHL level throughout the entire process.

The forward seemingly filled a role every step of the way and his work ethic is well-documented.

Having coached him not only as a rookie in Dallas, but again during the forward's one-season stint with the Calgary Flames, there may not be anyone who knows this fact better than Oilers assistant coach Glen Gulutzan, who was key in Chiasson's recruitment to Edmonton.

"It was a continual dialogue throughout the summer," said Gulutzan about his off-season chats with Chiasson. "He's one of those guys... He does everything right. He comes to practice hard, he's a great pro. He's just one of those guys you need on your team that gives you real stability.

"Ultimately we were glad he chose to come here."

In so many words, Gulutzan described exactly why the Oilers were interested in adding Chiasson. They wanted to give him the opportunity to be the type of new-look role player the Oilers could use. In addition, his consistency as a five-on-five offensive contributor in a bottom-six role was not overlooked by an Oilers team who sought more scoring depth.

Being reunited with a trusted coach was on the list of pros for Chiasson in Edmonton.

"I trust his experience and his thoughts and value on different things," Chiasson said of Gulutzan.

"I think he knows the type of player I can be. It's been great to have him on my side so far. I know where I stand with him, he's pretty honest with me, at the same time, he's always helped me put myself in a position where I can be successful."

As days ticked off the calendar this past summer, Chiasson assessed his options. The Oilers weren't the only ones expressing interest, so some weighing and measuring had to be done.

"When (Oilers GM) Peter (Chiarelli) called, I looked at the guys on the team and where I could fit in," said Chiasson about when the Oilers first came knocking. "I believe in my ability and I thought this would be the best place for me to come and play."

continued on page 13





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Chiasson admits that, despite being in similar positions in past off-seasons, the process is often both arduous and stressful at times. Pushing your chips in on a PTO opportunity is a leap of faith, one Chiasson was comfortable taking in Edmonton. Still, waiting until September gave the forward some time to evaluate.

"It was kind of really late (to sign a PTO). I think, personally, in the way things happened this summer, I kind of waited until the end to see where could have been the best fit."

His shortened summer proved to be a crossroads for Chiasson — an off-season where his recent past and impending future collided in a big way. Chiasson was part of the 2018 Stanley Cup champion Washington Capitals and on Sept. 2, he got his own day with hockey's Holy Grail. And like many NHLers do when it's their turn, he took the Cup back to where it all began for him in Quebec City.

An emotional journey was capped in the off-season with Chiasson parting ways with not only the Cup, but with the Capitals organization as well, who opted not to offer him another contract with some other negotiations taking priority given their cap situation.

Not seven days later, Chiasson was packing his bags and hopping on a flight to Edmonton for his next PTO opportunity.

He admits separating himself from the emotional turbulence of a Stanley Cup run and almost immediately having to turn the page was not easy, but he is no stranger to adapting. On potentially his fifth NHL club before turning 30, he was more so a pro at it.

Though it wouldn't be long for his past and present to collide again.

After giving Oilers management every reason to keep him in the lineup after his first few appearances, his third game saw his former teammates from Washington roll into town.

They brought with them Chiasson's Stanley Cup ring. Chiasson entered the visitors dressing room at Rogers Place following the Oilers pre-game skate donned in orange and blue, where, in a short and touching gesture, Capitals captain Alexander Ovechkin presented Chiasson with his sparkly hardware.

The former Cap said a few heartfelt words and exchanged some quick hugs and thank-yous with old teammates and emerged from the dressing room with the box clutched in his hand. Some local media asked him if he could show off his new token. Chiasson admitted his hand was still shaking as he placed the ring back on his right ring finger to show the camera.

What would be an impactful and emotional moment for any Cup champion had to have a short shelf life for Chiasson that day. In a few hours, he was set to go up against the same group he battled to a championship with just months before.

He didn't disappoint.

Chiasson broke over the Capitals blueline that night and fired a long-range wrister that beat Braden Holtby over the shoulder for this third goal in two games. The Oilers went on to beat the defending champs 4-1.

The media contingent converged on Chiasson's locker room stall after the game. He was hard-pressed to keep the smile off his face and was quick to describe just what kind of day he had.

"I don't think I've had a day with ups and downs like that in emotion," said Chiasson.

"It was super emotional for me to go back into that locker room and have Ovi hand me the ring... Going back home today, it was kind of awkward. Trying to move away from what had happened this morning and in the past and focus on the game, it couldn't have been a better outcome."

Chiasson isn't unfamiliar with having to "turn the page," as he describes it, and that night, as he spoke candidly about his day, it became clear the winger had taken an important step in separating the past and ingratiating himself in a new organization.

When talking about what kind of player the Oilers were getting in Chiasson, Gulutzan mentioned something specific that has become apparent during the forward's time in Edmonton.

"Once he feels comfortable in his surroundings, he's going to work really hard every day and he has the ability to score," said the Oilers assistant coach.

Chiasson has fit the bill exactly and with even a little more on the offensive side. In his first 20 games with the Oilers, he had tallied 11 goals, just two shy of his career-high with Dallas in 2013-14.

It wasn't just a familiarity with the player's skillset that piqued the Oilers interest. Chiasson was bringing in something that can't be charted via analytics.

"You can see it right away in him. He knows that it takes to win. He was a part of a team in Washington that transformed into a machine that won the cup. I think he understands the subtleties," said Gulutzan.

Chiasson also spoke to this sentiment when asked what he thought he could bring to a young team in Edmonton looking to get back to the post-season.

"I think that's one thing I have going for me," said Chiasson. "Being a part of that group last year, it takes every guy and every guy has to do their jobs to the best of their ability."

Chiasson scored a huge playoff goal for the Caps in Game 7 of their series against Pittsburgh, but he's well aware players in similar roles as his don't have to be filling the back of the net to be highly effective in the battleground of post-season play.

continued on page 15

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He recalls a recent situation in Edmonton that Oilers fans would remember vividly.

“When you’re in the playoffs, in the second round, a Zack Kassian is important. I watched Kass play two years ago in the playoffs and he was a big difference for that team and that’s what you have to realize,” said Chiasson.

He often pauses when he speaks in interviews. It becomes apparent that he’s simply processing the next well-thought-out answer. He’s honest with an air of quiet confidence. It’s the voice of a well-travelled journeyman of over 400 NHL games who finds his role and embraces it over and over again, one who has earned every opportunity he’s been given, even when it comes with the pressure of proving your worth on the legs of a one-year commitment.

So far, he’s done just that with the Oilers, endearing himself to not only the fans, but clearly coaching staff and management as well.

After taking the reins in mid-November, new Oilers Head Coach Ken Hitchcock had a few games to assess the roster in front of him. It took him less than a week to see what was to like about the player that is Alex Chiasson.

“He goes to the net, stays at the net and can score at the net. All of his goals are scored in close. Right now, Alex is one of the best on the team at that,” said Hitchcock.

After a hard-fought divisional battle to open the team’s December schedule with a win over Las Vegas during Hockey Night in Canada action, Chiasson sat down with Scott Oake and Louie DeBrusk post-game for a customary After Hours segment, usually reserved for a player that might be generating a little buzz at that moment.

Chiasson fit the bill, having been elevated to the Oilers top line with Leon Draisaitl and Connor McDavid for the few games previous after finding consistent scoring success in the early-going.

He discussed what was expected – a little bit about the past, a little bit about his present and, of course, a little bit about the nomadic nature of his career thus far. Despite what is behind



him and what could potentially be in front, Chiasson speaks like a man living in the moment.

“It feels like I’m getting rewarded for my play and my effort the last couple years,” said Chiasson, as he watched some of his Oilers highlights on the screen in front of him.

“It’s not always been easy for me as a player. I’ve changed a lot of teams, I’ve had to move around and I’ve gotten used to packing my luggage... But so far here, it’s been good.”

On pace to smash his career numbers offensively while quickly becoming a fan-favourite in Oil Country, the chase for “Chiasser” as he continues to prove, yet again, that he was worth taking a chance on. ♦

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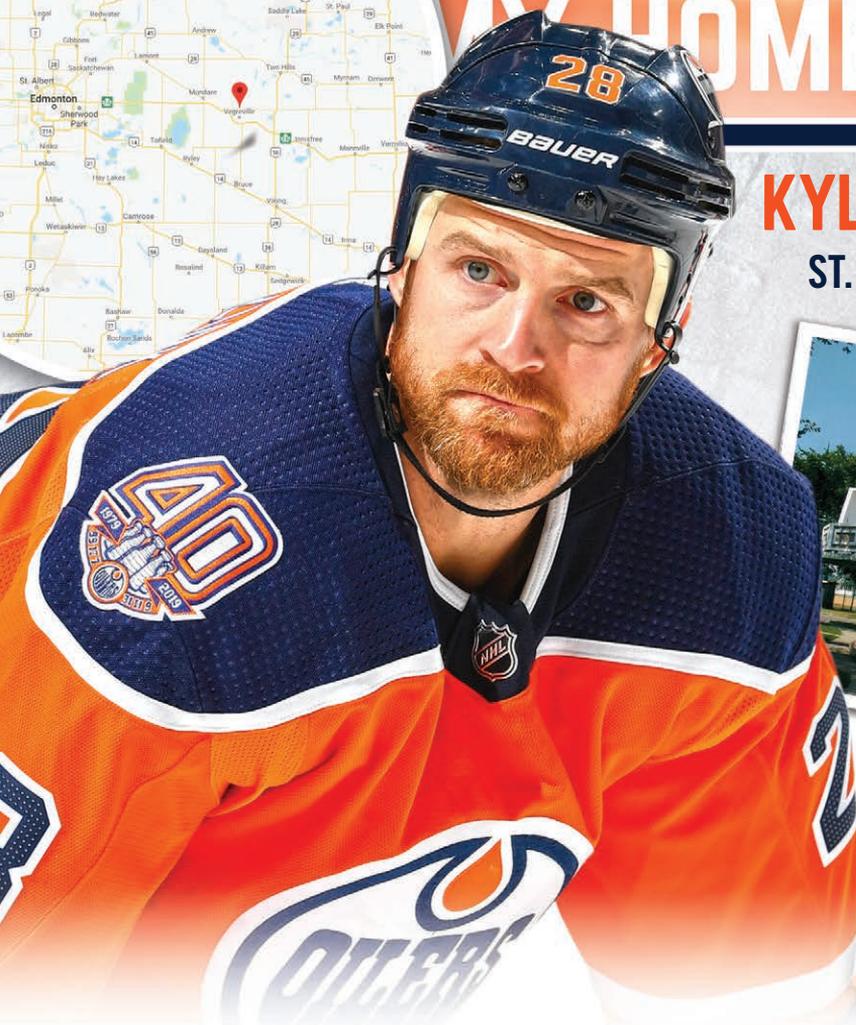
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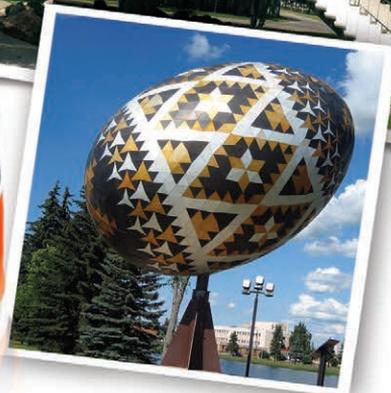
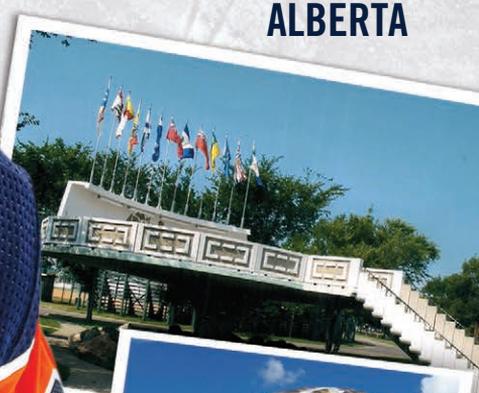
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MY HOMETOWN



KYLE BRODZIAK ST. PAUL & VEGREVILLE ALBERTA



HOW DID YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ARRIVE IN ST. PAUL & VEGREVILLE?

My grandparents on both my mom and dad's side were farmers just outside of St. Paul before both families moved into town. I lived in St. Paul until I was seven years old and then we moved to Vegreville. I definitely consider both my hometown.

WHAT IS YOUR ST. PAUL & VEGREVILLE MINOR HOCKEY STORY?

I played one or two years of minor hockey in St. Paul and the rest was in Vegreville until Bantam AAA when I played in Fort Saskatchewan, and then after that I went to Moose Jaw in the WHL.

FACT: BRODZIAK'S NHL CAREER HAS COME FULL CIRCLE AS HE WAS ORIGINALLY SELECTED BY THE OILERS IN THE SEVENTH ROUND OF THE 2003 NHL DRAFT AND PLAYED FIVE SEASONS WITH THE ORGANIZATION BEFORE GETTING TRADED TO MINNESOTA IN JUNE 2009.

WHAT WAS YOUR MINOR HOCKEY HIGHLIGHT?

I remember winning a couple of league championships in peewee and bantam when I was in Vegreville, so those were definitely big highlights at the time.

WHAT ARE ST. PAUL & VEGREVILLE'S MOST FAMOUS LANDMARKS?

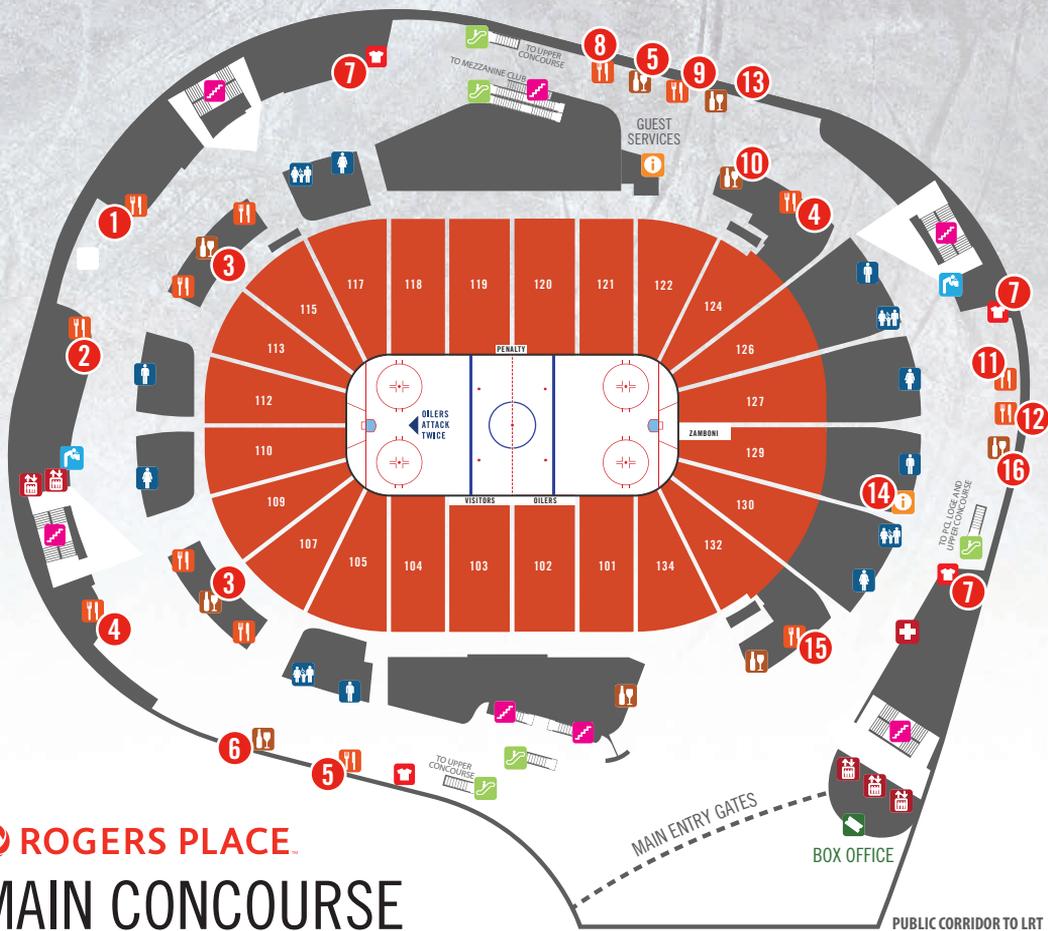
The UFO landing pad in St. Paul and the big pysanka (Easter egg) in Vegreville.

WHAT DID YOU DO FOR FUN AS A CHILD?

We played a lot of road hockey and a lot of hockey on the pond as well. I also golfed quite a bit with my buddies when we were kids.

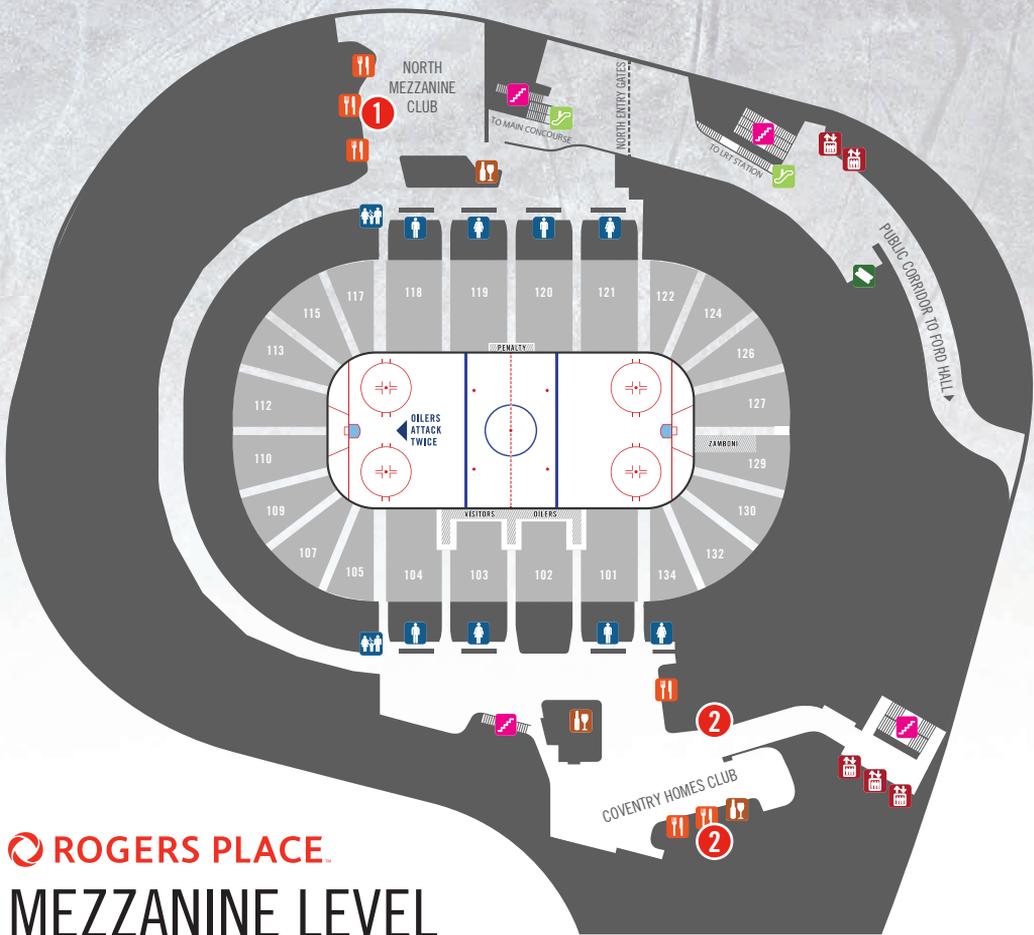
DO YOU STILL SPEND ANY TIME THERE?

I still have lot of family in St. Paul like my grandparents and a few aunts, uncles and cousins, and my mom is still in Vegreville so we visit her a lot.



ROGERS PLACE. MAIN CONCOURSE

- 1 BOBBY NICK'S GRILL**
Inspired by Bob Nicholson, this is our take on the gourmet burger and a must-try item.
- 2 104 AVE FOOD CO.**
104 Ave Food Co. is a treat for the senses! Combining fan favourites options and delicious signature dishes, you're sure to find something for everyone.
- 3 MOLSON CANADIAN FAN DECK**
Chef attended carving stations creates a unique and sophisticated experience. This upgraded food and beverage location let's guests know they are in for something special.
- 4 PIZZA 73**
Not only does Pizza 73 have the most popular flavours of pizza but it also has a rotating monthly feature pizza that everyone needs to try!
- 5 DRAUGHT**
Rogers Place has a wide selection of draught beer to choose.
- 6 LINK 72**
Link 72 is an innovative take on a classic fan favourite. Our signature dogs have something for every fan.
- 7 THE OILERS STORE**
- 8 ALBERTA SMOKED**
To celebrate Alberta beef, our chefs pick the choicest local cuts, smoke them in house and hand carve them. Enjoy!
- 9 URBAN CURRY**
Curry done the Rogers Place way. This modern take on Indian cuisine will offer guests a taste that is both unique and delicious.
- 10 MOTT'S CAESAR HOUSE**
You can't mess with perfection and here we keep the Caesar classic.
- 11 ICE CAFÉ**
Everyone has a sweet tooth and we want to tempt yours with our freshly baked warm cookies and edible cookie dough.
- 12 HIGH LEVEL NACHOS**
As the name suggests, nacho fans will love this spot! Enjoy this arena favourite with a variety of premium toppings, including smoked brisket and pulled pork.
- 13 DRAUGHT**
Rogers Place has a wide selection of draught beer to choose.
- 14 GUEST SERVICES**
- 15 WHYTE AVE BISTRO**
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- 16 WRAPPED**
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ROGERS PLACE. MEZZANINE LEVEL

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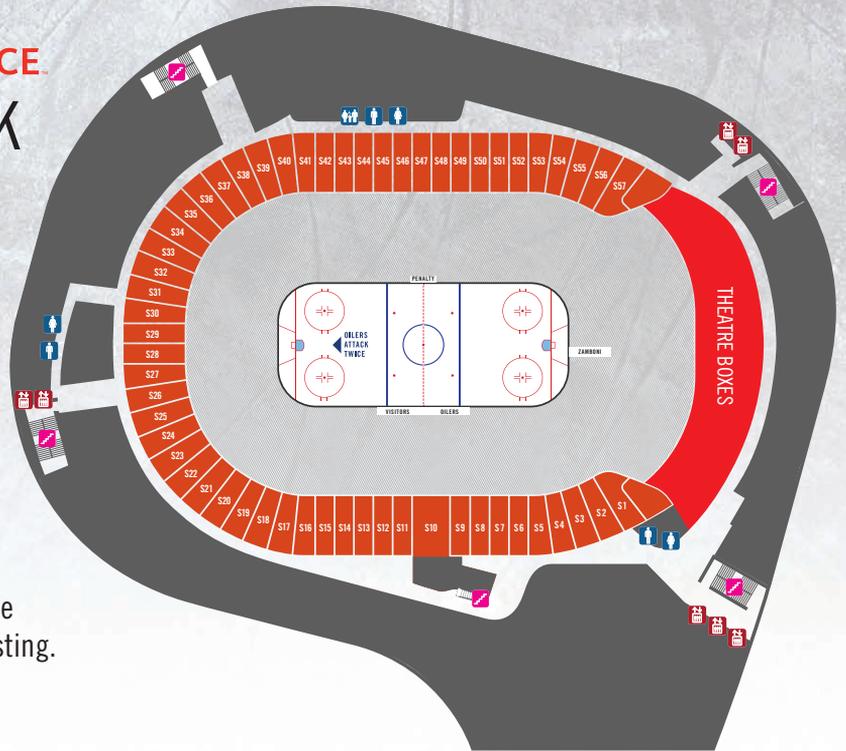
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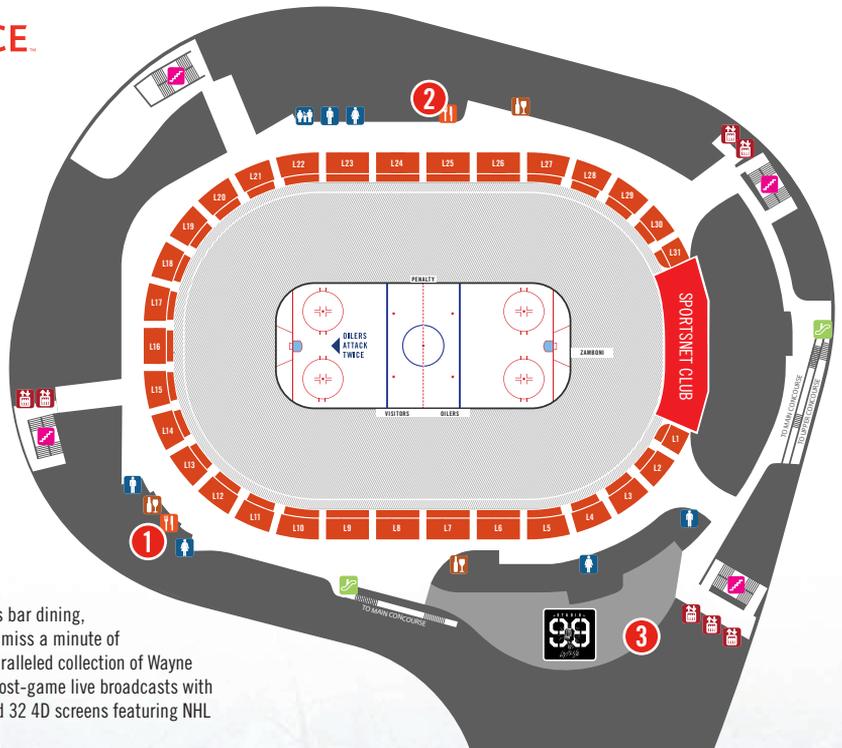
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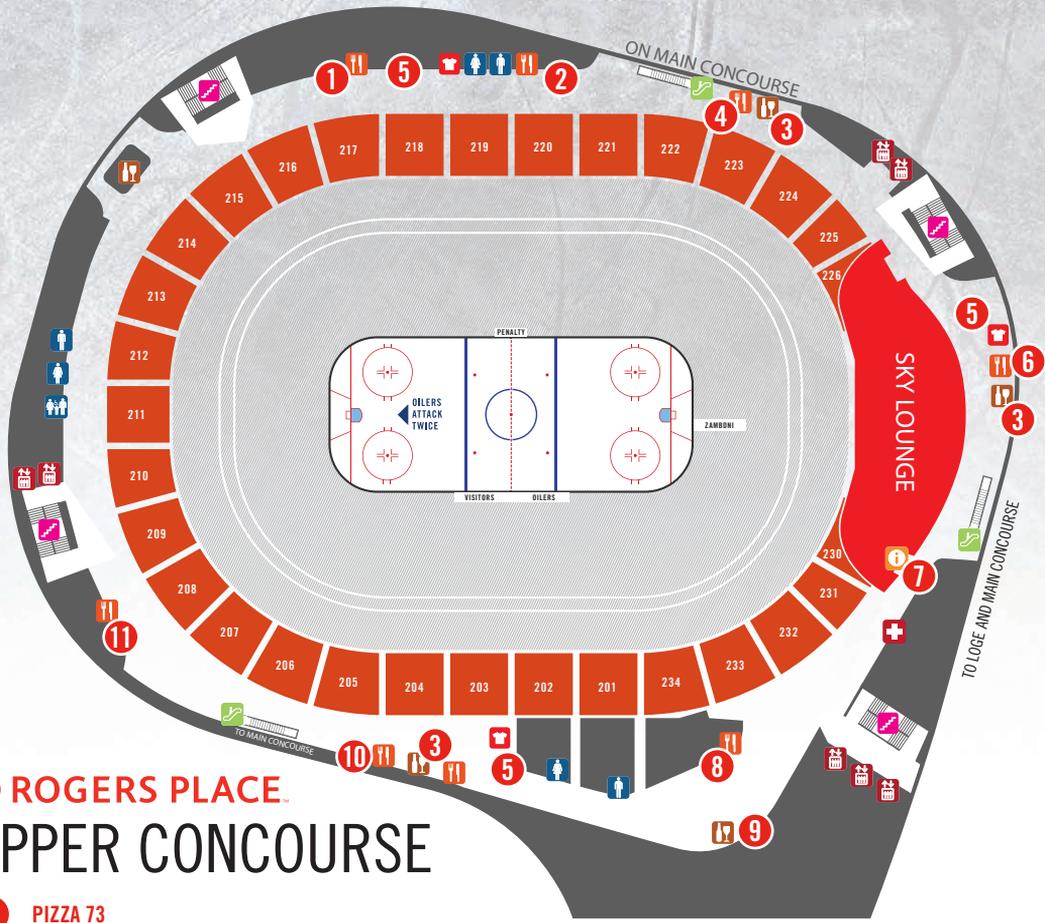


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- 2 RIVER VALLEY GRILL**
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- 3 STUDIO 99**
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- 3 DRAUGHT**
Rogers Place has a wide selection of draught beer to choose.
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- 5 THE OILERS STORE**
- 6 HERITAGE EATS**
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- 8 JASPER AVE EATERY**
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Not only does Pizza 73 have the most popular flavours of pizza but it also has a rotating monthly feature pizza that everyone needs to try!

SKY LOUNGE
In this trendy premium club guests enjoy a full-service bar, in-seat beverage service and all-inclusive food through a variety of culinary choices. Following the game, your experience will be extended as the curtain is drawn and the music is turned up to transform Sky Lounge into Edmonton's most unique nightspot.



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Prize includes:

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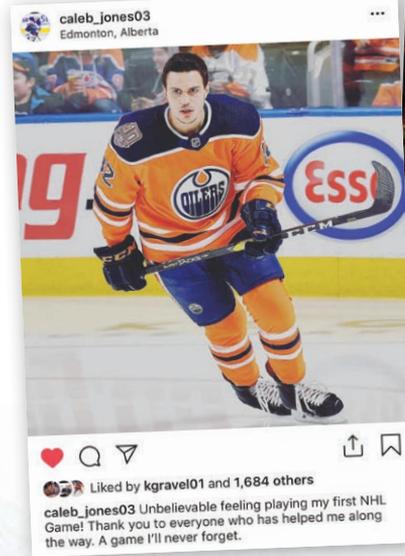
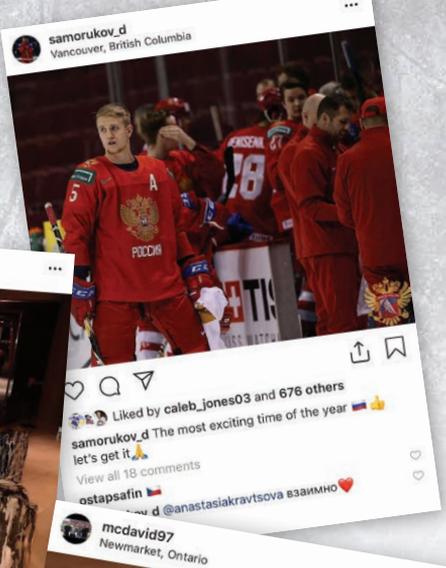
Go to www.scotiabankskaters.com for full contest details.

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THE SOCIAL SCENE

OIL



As 2018 came to a close, the Oilers spent a lot of time on the ice with a busy December schedule but were able to enjoy some activities off it as well, with many of the guys finding time to make the most of their holiday season. From trips to the World Junior Championship, to ringing in a new year and reflecting on the one that was, Oilers players and prospects kept us up to date on social media throughout the festive few weeks.



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FEBRUARY 13 - 17

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UPCOMING EVENTS AT ROGERS PLACE™



DIERKS BENTLEY
BURNING MAN TOUR
Thursday, January 24
@ 7PM

With special guests Jon Pardi, Tenille Townes
& Hot Country Knights



HARLEM GLOBETROTTERS
FAN POWERED WORLD TOUR
Saturday, January 26
@ 2PM



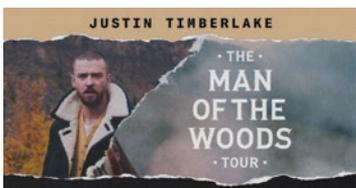
ARKELLS
RALLY CRY TOUR
Thursday, January 31
@ 7:30PM

With special guests Lord Huron



PAUL BRANDT
THE JOURNEY TOUR 2019
Saturday, February 2
@ 7PM

With High Valley, special guest Jess Moskaluke
& featuring Hunter Brothers



JUSTIN TIMBERLAKE
THE MAN OF THE WOODS TOUR
Wednesday, February 6
Thursday, February 7
@ 7:30PM



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EIGHT SHOW TIMES AVAILABLE



SNOOP DOGG
SNOOP DOGG & FRIENDS TOUR
Wednesday, February 20
@ 8:00PM

Featuring Bone Thugs-N-Harmony,
Warren G, Kurupt & Luniz



LITTLE BIG TOWN
THE BREAKERS TOUR
Sunday, February 24
@ 7:30PM

With special guests Midland & Ashley McBryde



LYNYRD SKYNYRD
LAST OF THE STREET SURVIVORS
FAREWELL TOUR
Tuesday, March 12
@ 7:30PM

With special guest Randy Bachman

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OILERS HOST HOCKEY TALKS IN SUPPORT OF MENTAL HEALTH

The Edmonton Oilers and Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation (EOCF) are proudly supporting Hockey Talks for the seventh consecutive season by designating tonight's game vs. the Carolina Hurricanes as their Hockey Talks night. Hockey Talks is an initiative that brings awareness and encourages a conversation about mental health.

The Oilers Hockey Talks initiative is part of a collective effort with 11 other National Hockey League clubs, including all Canadian teams, to alleviate the misconceptions and stigma associated with mental illness and provide information about help and resources that are available. Each will host a Hockey Talks game night from January 16 to March 17.

Representatives from the Mental Health Foundation and the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation will be located at booths on the concourse of Rogers Place to promote local mental health resources, including the new Access 24/7 program. Mental health facts and resources will also be shared throughout the game.

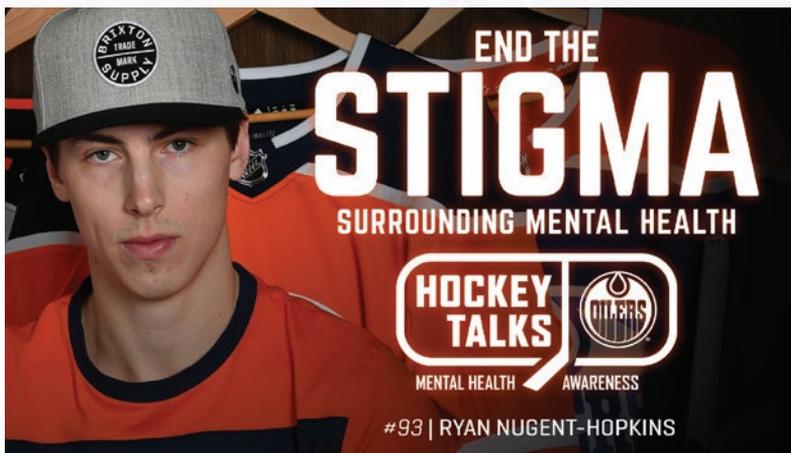
The Oilers Foundation will host Mark Korthuis, President and CEO of the Mental Health Foundation, and Andrew Otway, CEO of the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation, who will both participate in an interview during the first intermission of the game to provide information on the mental health resources available in Edmonton. Oilers players will wear Hockey Talks helmet decals throughout the night and Hockey Talks t-shirts in their pre- and post-game interviews to help spread the word.

"The Mental Health Foundation has been fortunate to receive support from the Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation in the past, and admires their ongoing commitment to mental health for our community," said Korthuis. "Everyone is affected by mental illness in some way, whether individually or through a loved one. Promoting the Access 24/7 initiative through Hockey Talks means more Edmontonians will have the tools they need to find the right help for them at the right time."

Access 24/7 will provide patients and families with a single point of contact for addiction and mental health services. This is the first program of its kind that consolidates the current access points into one "front door" where patients and families have streamlined access to multiple services, making it easier to navigate the system.

Once the centre opens in late February 2019, individuals in Edmonton can access the centre any time, day or night, to receive immediate, professional help by either walking in at the location in Anderson Hall (10959 102 Street NW) or by calling the 24/7 telephone line at 780-424-2424.

"The Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation has a strong legacy of supporting mental health initiatives in our community. Increasing the dialogue around mental health issues can make a real impact by helping decrease the stigma of mental illness and increasing awareness for the treatment and resources that are available," said EOCF Executive Director Natalie Minckler. "Access 24/7 is an amazing initiative that will benefit so many people in our community and we are proud to help spread the word through our Hockey Talks night."



The Foundation's record of support of mental health initiatives includes the Edmonton Oilers Community Foundation Family Room in the Royal Alexandra Hospital's Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit. Opened in 2015, the hockey-themed room provides pediatric mental health patients and their families a welcoming and friendly space to spend time together while at the Royal Alexandra Hospital. The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Unit houses a multidisciplinary team that specializes in assessment, stabilization and diagnosis of youth aged six to 18 years of age for both urgent inpatient care and follow-up treatment.

Fans and supporters can join the conversation and lend their voices through social media by using the hashtag #HockeyTalks. Collectively, fans will have the chance to share personal messages and messages of support to create an atmosphere of open dialogue, unification and awareness about mental health.

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GAME PREVIEW

EDMONTON OILERS vs CAROLINA HURRICANES

SUNDAY | JANUARY 20 | 2019 | ROGERS PLACE



THE CAROLINA HURRICANES MAKE THEIR LONE VISIT to Rogers Place this season as the Oilers play the second half of their weekend back-to-back that started with last night's Battle of Alberta. Tonight marks the first of two meetings between the Oilers and Hurricanes this season, as they'll also face off in Raleigh on Feb. 15. To say these teams have been evenly matched in recent years would be an understatement as they've split their last four season series, with the road team claiming victory in their two 2017-18 encounters. The teams combined for 18 goals in those two games with Carolina winning 5-3 in Edmonton and the Oilers dominating the Hurricanes 7-3 on the road. Leon Draisaitl led the way for the Oilers during the season series with a goal and three assists while Cam Talbot turned aside 30 of the 33 shots he faced to earn the victory in the 7-3 decision. Milan Lucic and Jesse Puljujarvi each had a goal and an assist in the season series while Jordan Staal had a goal and four helpers for Carolina.

PLAYERS TO WATCH

COLBY CAVE is the newest member of the Oilers as the team claimed him via waivers from the Boston Bruins on Tuesday. The 24-year-old is no stranger to Oil Country, though, as he grew up in Battleford, Sask., which is about a four-hour drive east of Edmonton. Cave played midget AAA for his hometown Battleford Stars before advancing to the WHL's Swift Current Broncos, where he was coached by Oilers alumnus Mark Lamb. Cave was captain of the Broncos for his final two seasons in 2013-14 and 2014-15, reaching the 30-goal and 70-point marks in both campaigns. He signed with the Bruins and scored a goal and four assists in 23 career NHL games before coming to Edmonton.

SEBASTIAN AHO has been developing splendidly for the Hurricanes over the past three seasons, now leading the team in goals with 21 and points with 51 through 46 games. Carolina selected the Finnish forward 35th overall at the 2015 NHL Draft, and after he spent one more season with Karpas in SM-liiga, Aho made the jump to North America in 2016-17. He scored 24 goals and 49 points as a rookie that season, finishing eighth in voting for the Calder Memorial Trophy. The centreman continued to advance last season, leading the Hurricanes in goals with 29 and points with 65. Aho was part of Finland's 2016 gold-medal World Junior team that also included Edmonton's Jesse Puljujarvi.



FORWARDS

#	NAME	POS	SHOOTS	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTH PLACE
8	TY RATTIE	RW	R	6' 0"	183	FEB 5, 1993	CALGARY, AB, CAN
12	COLBY CAVE	C	L	6' 1"	200	DEC 26, 1994	BATTLEFORD, SK, CAN
16	JUHAR KHAIRA	LW	L	6' 4"	212	AUG 13, 1994	SURREY, BC, CAN
22	TOBIAS RIEDER	RW	L	5' 11"	186	JAN 10, 1993	LANDSHUT, DEU
23	RYAN SPOONER	C	L	5' 11"	191	JAN 30, 1992	OTTAWA, ON, CAN
27	MILAN LUCIC (A)	LW	L	6' 3"	231	JUN 7, 1988	VANCOUVER, BC, CAN
28	KYLE BRODZIAK	C	R	6' 2"	205	MAY 25, 1984	ST. PAUL, AB, CAN
29	LEON DRAISAITL	C	L	6' 2"	208	OCT 27, 1995	COLOGNE, DEU
39	ALEX CHIASSON	RW	R	6' 4"	208	OCT 1, 1990	MONTREAL, QC, CAN
44	ZACK KASSIAN	RW	R	6' 3"	211	JAN 24, 1991	WINDSOR, ON, CAN
56	KAILER YAMAMOTO	RW	R	5' 8"	153	SEP 29, 1998	SPOKANE, WA, USA
93	RYAN NUGENT-HOPKINS (A)	C	L	6' 0"	184	APR 12, 1993	BURNABY, BC, CAN
97	CONNOR MCDAVID (C)	C	L	6' 1"	193	JAN 13, 1997	RICHMOND HILL, ON, CAN
98	JESSE PULJUJARVI	RW	R	6' 4"	201	MAY 7, 1998	ALVKARLEBY, SWE

DEFENCE

#	NAME	SHOOTS	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTH PLACE
2	ANDREJ SEKERA	L	6' 0"	200	JUN 8, 1986	BOJNICE, SVK
4	KRIS RUSSELL	L	5' 10"	170	MAY 2, 1987	CAROLINE, AB, CAN
5	KEVIN GRAVEL	L	6' 4"	211	MAR 6, 1992	KINGSFORD, MI, USA
6	ADAM LARSSON (A)	R	6' 3"	208	NOV 12, 1992	SKELLEFTEÅ, SWE
15	ALEXANDER PETROVIC	R	6' 4"	216	MAR 3, 1992	EDMONTON, AB, CAN
25	DARNELL NURSE	L	6' 4"	221	FEB 4, 1995	HAMILTON, ON, CAN
26	BRANDON MANNING	L	6' 1"	205	JUN 4, 1990	PRINCE GEORGE, BC, CAN
77	OSCAR KLEFBOM	L	6' 3"	216	JUL 20, 1993	KARLSTAD, SWE
82	CALEB JONES	L	6' 1"	194	6 JUN 1997	ARLINGTON, TX, USA
83	MATT BENNING	R	6' 1"	203	MAY 25, 1994	EDMONTON, AB, CAN

GOALTENDERS

#	NAME	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTH PLACE
19	MIKKO KOSKINEN	6' 7"	202	JUL 18, 1988	VANTAA, FIN
33	CAM TALBOT	6' 4"	196	JUL 5, 1987	CALEDONIA, ON, CAN

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 Assistant Coach Glen Gulutzan
 Assistant Coach Trent Yawney
 Assistant Coach Manny Viveiros
 Goaltending Coach..... Dustin Schwartz
 Goaltending Development Coach..... Sylvain Rodrigue
 Video Coach Jeremy Coupal
 Skating Coach..... David Pelletier



FORWARDS

#	NAME	POS	SHOOTS	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTH PLACE
8	SAKU MAENALANEN	RW	L	6' 4"	207	MAY 29, 1994	KEMI, FIN
11	JORDAN STAAL (A)	C	L	6' 4"	220	SEP 10, 1988	THUNDER BAY, ON, CAN
13	WARREN FOEGELE	LW	L	6' 2"	198	APR 1, 1996	MARKHAM, ON, CAN
14	JUSTIN WILLIAMS (C)	RW	R	6' 1"	184	OCT 4, 1981	COBOURG, ON, CAN
20	SEBASTIAN AHO	C	L	6' 0"	176	JUL 26, 1997	RAUMA, FIN
21	NINO NIEDERREITER	RW	L	6' 2"	218	SEP 8, 1992	CHUR, CHE
23	BROCK MCGINN	LW	L	6' 0"	187	FEB 2, 1994	FERGUS, ON, CAN
37	ANDREI SVECHNIKOV	RW	L	6' 2"	195	MAR 26, 2000	BARNAUL, RUS
42	GREG MCKEGG	C	L	6' 0"	194	JUN 17, 1992	ST. THOMAS, ON, CAN
48	JORDAN MARTINOOK	LW	L	6' 0"	196	JUL 25, 1992	BRANDON, MB, CAN
64	CLARK BISHOP	C	L	6' 1"	199	MAR 29, 1996	ST. JOHN'S, NL, CAN
71	LUCAS WALLMARK	C	L	6' 0"	178	SEP 5, 1995	UMEÅ, SWE
79	MICHEAL FERLAND	LW	L	6' 1"	217	APR 20, 1992	SWAN RIVER, MB, CAN
86	TEUVO TERAVAINEN	LW	L	5' 11"	191	SEP 11, 1994	HELSINKI, FIN

DEFENCE

#	NAME	SHOOTS	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTH PLACE
19	DOUGIE HAMILTON	R	6' 6"	229	JUN 17, 1993	TORONTO, ON, CAN
22	BRETT PESCE	R	6' 3"	206	NOV 15, 1994	TARRYTOWN, NY, USA
27	JUSTIN FAULK (A)	R	6' 0"	217	MAR 20, 1992	SOUTH ST. PAUL, MN, USA
44	CALVIN DE HAAN	L	6' 1"	195	MAY 9, 1991	CARP, ON, CAN
57	TREVOR VAN RIEMSDYK	R	6' 2"	192	JUL 24, 1991	MIDDLETOWN, NJ, USA
74	JACCOB SLAVIN	L	6' 3"	207	MAY 1, 1994	DENVER, CO, USA

GOALTENDERS

#	NAME	HEIGHT	WEIGHT	DATE OF BIRTH	BIRTH PLACE
34	PETR MRAZEK	6' 1"	190	FEB 14, 1992	OSTRAVA, CZE
35	CURTIS MCELHINNEY	6' 2"	203	MAY 23, 1983	LONDON, ON, CAN

Owner / Governor Tom Dundon
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Head Coach Rod Brind'Amour
 Associate Coach Jeff Daniels
 Assistant Coach Dean Chynoweth
 Goaltending Coach Mike Bales
 Video Coach Chris Huffine
 Video Coach L.J. Scarpace



STATISTICS | OILERS

STATS AS OF JAN. 17, 2019

PLAYER	GP	G	A	P	+/-	PIM	PPG	PPP	SHG	SHP	GWG	OTG	S	S%	FO%
CONNOR MCDAVID	46	29	41	70	6	16	7	22	0	0	7	1	152	19.1	46.44
LEON DRAISAITL	47	24	32	56	3	20	7	18	0	0	4	2	121	19.8	50.38
RYAN NUGENT-HOPKINS	47	15	29	44	-1	14	4	16	1	3	1	0	124	12.1	45.71
DARNELL NURSE	47	6	17	23	-4	40	1	6	0	0	1	1	117	5.1	0
ALEX CHIASSON	38	17	5	22	5	18	6	7	1	1	0	0	58	29.3	40
OSCAR KLEFBOM	31	3	12	15	1	8	1	6	0	0	2	1	93	3.2	0
JUJHAR KHAIRA	43	3	11	14	-4	36	0	0	1	2	0	0	39	7.7	41
ADAM LARSSON	47	1	12	13	-7	26	0	0	0	1	0	0	62	1.6	0
MILAN LUCIC	47	4	7	11	-8	55	1	3	0	0	0	0	47	8.5	44.44
KRIS RUSSELL	37	2	7	9	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	6.3	0
TOBIAS RIEDER	34	0	9	9	-4	6	0	2	0	0	0	0	57	0	25
ZACK KASSIAN	44	4	4	8	-4	76	0	0	0	0	1	0	55	7.3	0
TY RATTIE	29	2	6	8	0	4	0	1	0	0	0	0	48	4.2	33.33
MATT BENNING	39	1	7	8	2	25	0	1	0	1	0	0	53	1.9	0
KYLE BRODZIAK	45	4	3	7	-12	10	0	0	1	1	1	0	45	8.9	52.06
JESSE PULJUJARVI	36	4	3	7	-11	14	0	0	0	0	0	0	41	9.8	66.67
CALEB JONES	15	1	4	5	-7	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	20	5	0
RYAN SPOONER	24	2	1	3	-6	2	0	0	0	0	1	0	24	8.3	46.67
KAILER YAMAMOTO	14	1	1	2	-2	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	12	8.3	0
KEVIN GRAVEL	28	0	2	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	31	0	0
ALEXANDER PETROVIC	5	0	1	1	-5	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0
BRANDON MANNING	5	0	0	0	-2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0
COLBY CAVE	1	0	0	0	-1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	42.86

GOALTENDER	GP	GS	W	L	T	OT	SA	GA	GAA	S	SV%	SO	MIN
MIKKO KOSKINEN	25	23	14	8	0	1	708	60	2.65	648	.915	3	1,361
CAM TALBOT	26	24	9	13	0	2	740	77	3.17	663	.896	1	1,456

HURRICANES | STATISTICS



STATS AS OF JAN. 17, 2019

PLAYER	GP	G	A	P	+/-	PIM	PPG	PPP	SHG	SHP	GWG	OTG	S	S%	FO%
SEBASTIAN AHO	46	21	30	51	14	16	3	15	3	4	4	2	135	15.6	50.61
TEUVO TERAVAINEN	46	10	28	38	15	6	5	12	1	4	0	0	98	10.2	30.77
JUSTIN WILLIAMS	46	13	14	27	-15	26	6	9	0	0	1	0	126	10.3	40.66
MICHEAL FERLAND	39	13	12	25	7	24	5	9	0	0	3	0	99	13.1	30.77
NINO NIEDERREITER	46	9	14	23	-11	10	3	8	0	0	2	0	81	11.1	62.79
ANDREI SVECHNIKOV	46	11	8	19	-7	44	0	2	0	0	2	0	120	9.2	14.29
JACCOB SLAVIN	46	5	13	18	-13	10	3	4	0	1	1	0	94	5.3	0
JUSTIN FAULK	46	3	14	17	-2	33	2	5	0	0	1	0	131	2.3	0
DOUGIE HAMILTON	46	6	10	16	-13	30	1	5	0	0	0	0	147	4.1	0
LUCAS WALLMARK	46	4	10	14	-9	18	1	4	0	0	1	0	86	4.7	51.18
JORDAN MARTINOOK	46	9	3	12	-6	18	0	0	1	1	2	0	94	9.6	46.43
BROCK MCGINN	46	3	9	12	0	14	0	0	1	1	0	0	76	3.9	44.12
JORDAN STAAL	29	5	6	11	-11	16	0	1	0	0	0	0	79	6.3	56.62
CALVIN DE HAAN	46	1	10	11	8	18	0	0	0	0	1	0	72	1.4	0
BRETT PESCE	37	3	7	10	12	12	0	0	0	1	1	0	49	6.1	0
TREVOR VAN RIEMSDYK	42	2	7	9	-2	6	0	0	0	0	1	0	50	4	0
WARREN FOEGELE	46	5	3	8	-11	12	0	0	0	0	2	0	73	6.8	53.33
SAKU MAENALANEN	9	4	1	5	3	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	33.3	16.67
GREG MCKEGG	7	2	2	4	2	4	0	0	0	0	1	0	9	22.2	49.23
CLARK BISHOP	20	1	2	3	-3	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	16	6.3	46.94

GOALTENDER	GP	GS	W	L	T	OT	SA	GA	GAA	S	SV%	SO	MIN
CURTIS MCELHINNEY	18	18	11	6	0	1	523	45	2.50	478	.914	0	1,079
PETR MRAZEK	20	20	9	9	0	2	533	53	2.67	480	.901	1	1,189

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POINTS

1 N. KUCHEROV, TBL	75
2 J. GAUDREAU, CGY	71
3 M. RANTANEN, COL	71
4 C. MCDAVID, EDM	70
5 N. MACKINNON, COL	68

GOALS

1 A. OVECHKIN, WSH	33
2 J. SKINNER, BUF	30
3 C. MCDAVID, EDM	29
4 B. POINT, TBL	29
5 J. TAVARES, TOR	29

ASSISTS

1 N. KUCHEROV, TBL	53
2 B. WHEELER, WPG	51
3 M. RANTANEN, COL	50
4 J. GAUDREAU, CGY	43
5 B. BURNS, SJS	43

PENALTY MINUTES

1 D. ROUSSEL, VAN	94
2 B. MARCHAND, BOS	80
3 E. KANE, SJS	79
4 Z. KASSIAN, EDM	76
5 S. BENNETT, CGY	72

ROOKIE POINTS

1 E. PETTERSSON, VAN	42
2 C. WHITE, OTT	26
3 R. DAHLIN, BUF	26
4 J. KOTKANIEMI, MTL	23
5 B. TKACHUK, OTT	22

GOALS AGAINST AVG.

1 R. LEHNER, NYI	2.16
2 J. CAMPBELL, LAK	2.21
3 B. BISHOP, DAL	2.39
4 P. RINNE, NSH	2.43
5 T. RASK, BOS	2.44

SAVE %

1 J. CAMPBELL, LAK	.930
2 R. LEHNER, NYI	.928
3 A. VASILEVSKIY, TBL	.925
4 A. KHUDOBIN, DAL	.923
5 F. ANDERSEN, TOR	.922

GOALTENDER WINS

1 M. FLEURY, VGK	26
2 M. JONES, SJS	22
3 F. ANDERSEN, TOR	20
4 C. HELLEBUYCK, WPG	20
5 A. VASILEVSKIY, TBL	19

2018-19 WESTERN CONFERENCE

CENTRAL	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	HOME	AWAY	S/O	L10 STRK
1 WINNIPEG	46	30	14	2	62	29	160	129	+31	18-6-2	12-8-0	1-1	6-4-0 W3
2 NASHVILLE	48	28	16	4	60	27	152	124	+28	16-7-0	12-9-4	1-1	6-2-2 W1
3 DALLAS	47	23	20	4	50	23	121	124	-3	14-7-2	9-13-2	0-0	5-4-1 L3
PACIFIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	HOME	AWAY	S/O	L10 STRK
1 CALGARY	48	30	13	5	65	30	176	137	+39	15-4-5	15-9-0	0-2	7-1-2 OT1
2 SAN JOSE	49	28	14	7	63	28	175	149	+26	17-4-4	11-10-3	0-3	8-2-0 L
3 VEGAS	49	28	17	4	60	27	147	131	+16	15-4-3	13-13-1	1-1	8-2-0 L1
WILD CARD	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	HOME	AWAY	S/O	L10 STRK
1 COLORADO	47	21	18	8	50	21	159	152	+7	9-6-5	12-12-3	0-1	2-6-2 L1
2 MINNESOTA	46	23	20	3	49	22	131	134	-3	12-8-3	11-12-0	1-1	6-4-0 W1
3 EDMONTON	47	23	21	3	49	20	136	148	-12	12-10-1	11-11-2	0-3	5-5-0 W2
4 VANCOUVER	48	21	21	6	48	20	138	151	-13	10-9-3	11-12-3	1-3	4-4-2 OT1
5 ANAHEIM	47	19	19	9	47	16	113	143	-30	10-7-8	9-12-1	3-2	0-6-4 L1
6 ST. LOUIS	45	20	20	5	45	20	126	137	-11	11-13-2	9-7-3	0-1	5-4-1 OT1
7 ARIZONA	46	21	22	3	45	19	122	133	-11	9-12-2	12-10-1	2-1	5-4-1 W1
8 CHICAGO	48	16	23	9	41	16	142	179	-37	8-10-6	8-13-3	0-1	3-4-3 L1
9 LOS ANGELES	47	18	25	4	40	17	107	139	-32	11-13-1	7-12-3	1-1	4-5-1 OT1

2018-19 EASTERN CONFERENCE

METROPOLITAN	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	HOME	AWAY	S/O	L10 STRK
1 COLUMBUS	46	28	15	3	59	28	152	140	+12	14-8-2	14-7-1	0-1	7-3-0 W4
2 WASHINGTON	46	27	14	5	59	24	157	139	+18	13-7-3	14-7-2	3-1	4-4-2 L2
3 NY ISLANDERS	45	26	15	4	56	24	136	118	+18	12-7-3	14-8-1	2-3	8-2-0 W2
ATLANTIC	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	HOME	AWAY	S/O	L10 STRK
1 TAMPA BAY	47	36	9	2	74	33	191	133	+58	19-4-0	17-5-2	3-0	8-2-0 W1
2 TORONTO	45	28	15	2	58	28	161	128	+33	13-10-1	15-5-1	0-0	5-5-0 L2
3 BOSTON	47	26	16	5	57	25	136	123	+13	16-6-1	10-10-4	1-0	6-3-1 L1
WILD CARD	GP	W	L	OT	PTS	ROW	GF	GA	DIFF	HOME	AWAY	S/O	L10 STRK
1 MONTRÉAL	48	26	17	5	57	24	146	142	+4	13-9-2	13-8-3	2-0	6-4-0 W3
2 PITTSBURGH	46	25	15	6	56	24	163	137	+26	13-8-2	12-7-4	1-2	7-3-0 L2
3 BUFFALO	47	24	17	6	54	21	137	140	-3	14-6-3	10-11-3	3-1	3-6-1 W
4 CAROLINA	46	22	19	5	49	21	125	136	-11	13-7-4	9-12-1	1-2	7-3-0 L1
5 NY RANGERS	46	19	20	7	45	14	132	159	-27	12-6-5	7-14-2	5-2	4-6-0 W1
6 NEW JERSEY	46	18	21	7	43	17	137	157	-20	13-5-4	5-16-3	1-2	5-5-0 L1
7 DETROIT	48	18	23	7	43	16	136	161	-25	10-12-4	8-11-3	2-5	3-6-1 W2
8 FLORIDA	45	17	20	8	42	15	139	165	-26	8-6-5	9-14-3	2-4	2-6-2 L3
9 PHILADELPHIA	47	18	23	6	42	16	134	167	-33	10-10-3	8-13-3	2-0	3-6-1 W
10 OTTAWA	47	18	24	5	41	18	148	180	-32	12-9-4	6-15-1	0-0	3-6-1 W1



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CEREBRAL

BY PAUL GAZZOLA

Dr. Dhiren Naidu is in a meeting room on the seventh floor of HYS Centre. He stares through clear-framed glasses, buttoned up in a sky-blue dress shirt with small red paisley patterns under a grey tweed blazer.

In this setting, he's President of HealthPointe Medical Centre Dr. Naidu, who heads a physiotherapy and rehabilitation facility that provides treatment to patients with neck, back, knee, shoulder and joint pain, as well as soft-tissue issues and concussions.

It's a recovery centre possibly similar to the one he found himself in when he was 19 and had just torn his ACL, undergoing his own rehabilitation and, at that time, discovering an interest in sports medicine. It was enough to prompt his entrance into the University of Saskatchewan's medical program then continue his education in Edmonton by undergoing his specialty, physical medicine and rehab, at the University of Alberta.

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When he's not here tending to his patients, one might find Dr. Naidu, the University of Alberta Associate Professor in the Department of Medicine, Division of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, hosting lectures about the musculoskeletal block at the U of A during the months of December and January. If not heading a seminar on campus, he could be somewhere conducting research – another one of his duties as a prof at the university.

If the lab lights are off, one might catch sight of Edmonton Eskimos Head Team Physician Dr. Naidu at Commonwealth Stadium or Golden Bears Football Team Physician Dr. Naidu at Foote Field. Not only does he diagnose Canadian Football League players and university athletes, but he sits as the Research Chair of the CFL and is a member of the League's Health and Safety Medical Advisory Board.

At 41 of 41 home games, Oilers Head Team Physician Dr. Naidu can be found sitting in the stands among Oil Country's faithful. He cannot, due to National Hockey League rules, be more than 50 feet from the playing surface because in the event that an injury occurs on the ice, the doc must be close to the action. This Dr. Naidu is also part of the NHL Team Physician Society and acts as an NHL Protective Equipment subcommittee member.

Wherever he finds himself, from medical centres to sidelines, ice rinks or seminars, Dr. Naidu takes great pride in his profession and strives to provide cutting-edge rehab and research to the Oilers, Eskimos, Golden Bears and the world of collision sports.

"My role, when I get a player and they're hurt, is to diagnose and make up a treatment plan for them," Naidu, entering his 11th season as the head physician with the Oilers franchise, said.

"Whether it's Connor McDavid or whether it's a junior player or call-up player, my role is exactly the same: it's to diagnose."

But Dr. Naidu, cerebral in every sense of the word, also puts his head towards research into concussion diagnosis, prevention and treatment, sharing his discoveries with both the athletes he medicates and the scientific community he's working to advance.

Like the team on the ice, there's a team off it.

Dr. Naidu leads a group of specialists and therapists dedicated to ensuring the safety of Oilers players are the top priority. The healers collaborate when injuries are suspected or arise and communicate endlessly on game days. The Oilers Head Physician would be remiss if he didn't acknowledge his colleagues and the collaborative efforts they exert to administer proper diagnosis and treatment on a nightly basis.

"We'll have a total of two sport medicine docs at each game," Naidu, explaining the workflow of an Oilers match, began.

That could be Oilers Team Physicians Dr. David C. Reid, Dr. Jeff Robinson, Dr. Michael Wagner or Dr. John Clarke.

Robinson began his tenure with the Oilers in 2008. He, like Naidu, Clarke and Reid, serves as a physician with the Eskimos. He had also previously been involved as a doctor with many former Edmonton-area baseball teams including the Edmonton Trappers, Cracker Cats and Capitals.

If not Robinson working on a game night, it could be Dr. Wagner, a sports medicine and family physician with a particular interest in working with high-performance athletes.



From Ireland, Dr. Clarke is a retired family physician that still practices sports medicine and had formerly worked with the University of Golden Bears hockey program.

Then there's orthopedic consultant Dr. Reid, who started as a surgical consultant with the Oilers in 1988 and became a member of the medical staff in 1989. He was a physiotherapist before taking sports medicine and was the Oilers Head Physician before Naidu became part of the medical staff. Reid welcomed Naidu to the team in the 2005-06 season after Naidu worked the '04-05 NHL lockout with the American Hockey League's Edmonton Roadrunners.

"We really have docs that complement each other's skillsets," said Naidu. "My specialty is different than Dr. Robinson's. I'll have an expertise in certain areas and they will and we make sure we run things by each other."

The two sports medicine physicians present at Rogers Place on game nights will maintain communication with the rest of the medical team during games. Head Athletic Therapist T.D. Fors, Assistant Athletic Therapist Chris Davie and Massage Therapist Stephen Lines are wired with the physicians by radio, communicating constantly if an on-ice mishap occurs or is noticed.

"Our radios are attached to all the docs and to all the therapists," Naidu continued. "So, if T.D. is on the bench and he's like, 'Hey, you know what, I think this person might need you. Meet me in the dressing room,' then we'll go to the dressing room."

One physician watches the game from inside the Oilers Dressing Room to be near medical equipment. The dressing room doc will

observe with four separate camera screens available, assisting in the inspection of certain collisions. Some are broadcast angles and others are in-house views.

"If I'm in the stands, and I say, 'Hey, Dr. Wagner, can you take a look, I didn't see this play. I think the player might have hit their shoulders into the board.' So, he'll go to the computer and say, 'Yeah, you're right Dhiren, or no, it was their stick.' We have four different camera angles that we can look at as docs," Naidu elaborated.

If an injury happens during the game, Naidu and the medical team will assess the skater right at that moment. The doctors are the first people a player sees after fans watch them will their way to the bench then retreat to the dressing room. Depending on the severity of the injury, support specialists are also present on game days to provide additional assistants. Emergency meds and orthopedic surgery consultants ready to step in should cardiac, airway or bone breaks and fractures occur.

At intermission, Dr. Naidu and the physicians will converge in the Oilers medical room. It's a quiet retreat for the players during a hectic 60 minutes of action. Some of the players find solace in the med ward before returning to the ice.

"We really try to make the medical room very peaceful," Naidu said. "There are no coaches in there, there are no media in there, there's no pressure. When you come to the medical room – whether you're minus-three in a game or you have three goals – we treat you the same way."

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After the game, skaters with active afflictions will be screened by the physicians and therapists. The night ends after the last hurting player has been assessed.

Early in his tenure with the Oilers, Naidu learned how important the team within the team is. He has no shortage of stories with his colleagues, from treating injuries to winning championships to joining special event medical staffs.

Like when Jarret Stoll was playing for the Roadrunners and had been cut on his calf, causing a gruesome injury that needed attention from every physician and trainer in the vicinity.

“There are some injuries where we definitely need all hands on,” Naidu said, recalling the instance. “He was freaking out. He thought he was losing his leg and in that case, you’ve got to be pretty quick to rule out whether it’s an artery that’s bleeding, which is limb-threatening, or if it’s just a cut. Luckily that was his and we cleaned it up and we settled him down.”

Naidu was a member of the Esks medical team in 2005 when the organization won the Grey Cup, and Forss was the Head Athletic Therapist. That same season, Naidu, alongside Dr. Reid and Dr. Clarke, were in Carolina for the Stanley Cup Final.

“I thought, ‘Oh jeez, we won a Grey Cup and then now we’re in the Final. It’s going to be like this every year!’” said Naidu.

Two years ago, Naidu and Forss worked with Team North America at the World Cup of Hockey and just a few months ago, they travelled with the Oilers to Europe for the NHL Global Series.

Through all his years practicing sports medicine with the Roadrunners, Eskimos, Golden Bears or Oilers, Naidu can’t help but praise the team within the team.

“I think just as the players are on a team, the medical staff is on a team. We make sure we’re always communicating and we want to make sure players don’t get confused with what we’re saying. That’s our team.”

But when Dr. Naidu isn’t with his respective sports teams, he’s leading an innovative research one.

As an associate professor at the University of Alberta, he questioned whether his lectures and seminars on concussions were resonating with the athletes attending them. Whether or not his audience was absorbing the information and whether or not that information was being put to use when those same athletes were affected by a concussion.

Naidu teamed up with a few U of A professors and graduate students to begin research on the unknowns of the injury because of the lack of scientific literature available. Research into the awareness, the attitudes, the rehabilitation and the recognition of concussions in competitors.

“I wondered, on all the concussion presentation we do, whether we’re actually getting the message across to athletes,” Naidu, explaining an early study, started.

“We took all the athletes including pro hockey, junior hockey, CFL and university athletes, and what we did was an educational presentation. We did a questionnaire before, a short one – like 15 questions – and one after. What we found was the athletes thought you needed to be hit in the head to have a concussion.”

Concussions don’t solely stem from head contact, Naidu explained. That misconception by the athletes, along with the belief that an MRI is needed to diagnose a concussion, set the research stage.

“That was an eye-opener,” Naidu said. “So, now we have to change the way we teach people to make sure they know that yeah, you can get hit shoulder to shoulder and if your neck whips around, you can still have a concussion.”

The findings from the study altered concussion diagnosis protocols.

“It actually changed the way the baseline assessments are done now, which is kind of neat,” said fellow University of Alberta Associate Professor and the Oilers designated neuropsychologist Dr. Martin Mrazik, who’s conducted extensive research as a partner of Naidu’s.

“Because of the interview effects, they tend to minimize how many issues they may be having. But if you have them just fill out a self-report questionnaire, they tend to endorse a few more symptoms.”

Naidu, Mrazik and their research team then concentrated on athletes’ attitudes towards concussion. What do they know and how did they learn it? Do they understand the symptoms, are they willing to report them and what are the reasons for why they wouldn’t? Comparisons were made between junior athletes and pros, with some telling conclusions uncovered, deepening the pool of peer-reviewed publications.

“We said, ‘OK, who knows more about concussion?’” said Naidu. “We felt that for the most part, the pro athletes knew more but the junior and university kids still knew quite a bit. Everybody kind of knew it wasn’t good to have a concussion and they knew the symptoms but the junior athletes said that they would ignore their symptoms and play more.”

The study found that 50 percent of junior athletes felt they needed treatment after experiencing a concussion whereas 100 percent of professional athletes would seek it.

“It either tells us a couple things: that they don’t know or they’re teenagers and teenagers just make bad decisions... or is this the fact that they just want to make it to the next level and they don’t want to show they’re hurt, whereas pros are there?”

“The one thing that we found, though, is if athletes had had concussions in all three levels – whether it was junior, university or pros – then they were quite knowledgeable and they were more cautious. They learned more about it and they respected it more.”

It was another analysis which yielded attention within the sports medicine community, proving that not all the information and education shared was being retained.

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“That was published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine and was a pretty important article because it really showed that what we’re doing is giving athletes a lot of information,” said Mrazik, the lead author of the study. “But we have to be much more interactive and have to look at their attitudes and understand what leads athletes to report symptoms and why they would not report symptoms.”

Another examination looked at the King-Devick Test, a sideline concussion assessment tool used in football. In 2015, the National Football League spearheaded a multisport conference in London, UK, inviting Naidu and Mrazik to a meeting with representatives from the NCAA, NHL, World Rugby, International Ice Hockey Federation, jockeys and many more.

“Jockeys fall off horses 15 times a year, so they have lots of concussion problems,” said Naidu.

While at the symposium, the King-Devick Test was heralded as an effective diagnosis method, simple enough for youth sports coaches and parents to use on their own players and children.

Naidu and Mrazik were apprehensive. Backed by the NFL Head and Spine Committee, the Oilers head physician was the lead author in exploring the test’s applicability in concussion identification.

“It showed us that the King-Devick Test is useful but it’s not one where you should buy off the street and say your kid has a concussion,” said Naidu. “I think it was responsible in that way.”

In October, Naidu chaired a similar forum featuring many of the same representatives from the previous NFL-led convention. This time, the CFL took the lead in facilitating the meeting. Discussions were had on concussion innovations and advances, as well as mental health and its connection to the injury, which is where much of the research is heading.

“I think there’s something to be said about the genetic part of concussion,” said Naidu, noting that there is research being done. “We shifted a little bit of the meeting to also look at pre-existing conditions or family history of conditions. We called those ‘concussion modifiers’ so if you have a history of learning disability, ADHD, migraine headaches, depression or anxiety then your concussions are probably a little bit different because you already have something going on in the brain.”

Since 2012, Naidu and Mrazik merged to produce 16 peer-reviewed publications. They’ve helped unearth new insight and information in the sports medicine community, particularly regarding concussion prevention, treatment and diagnosis. Many of it within football but not necessarily exclusive to it.



“When we first started asking questions about what can we do in the field of concussions, there was a lot of unknowns about better ways to educate athletes, better ways to assess athletes and those type of things,” said Mrazik.

“That was kind of our main goal: how can we do this better? We’ve come up with some pretty interesting outcomes.”

Dr. Naidu’s neurons fire at a higher rate.

It’s the only explanation for someone that holds so many titles, from president to head physician to associate professor to research chair to committee member and lead author.

Like the neuron, the brain unit dedicated to transmitting information to other parts of the body, Naidu operates in a similar manner. He shares his research, treatment and diagnoses to the athletes and medical professionals he’s surrounded by and is constantly moving, seeking a deeper perspective or discovery.

“The team’s been very good at supporting any research we want to do or any state-of-the-art conferences we want to go to,” Naidu, reflecting on his time with the Oilers, said. “That’s helped me learn as a physician and obviously helps our athletes.”

The central nerve stimulating the doctor is his wife, Allison, and six children. Three daughters and three sons - four hockey stars, a baller and dancer - all better off because of the work of their father. There’s no stopping Naidu’s impulse, as he’s wired to advance concussion education, assessment, treatment and prevention.

“The thing about Dhiren is that he’s an incredible person to work with because he’s very smart but he’s very humble,” said Mrazik. “For me, I’m very fortunate to work with such a good thinker and good people person like that.”

“When I look back, I’m very pleased that our affiliation and our work together has really contributed to the concussion literature and to the science behind it, and earned the respect, I think, in different professional sports.” 📌



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HUNTER SPOTLIGHT

The holiday season was non-stop fun for Hunter as he kicked things off with a family skate at Rogers Place, channeled his inner Hunter Claus to deliver pizzas to lucky fans, participated in the team's annual hospital visits by entertaining families at Ronald McDonald House and sported his best tux on New Year's Eve to ring in 2019!

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IN REVIEW

2018 WAS QUITE THE CALENDAR YEAR, WITH NO SHORTAGE OF OILERS STORYLINES.

From Connor McDavid's 2017-18 late-season surge to some key off-season additions making an early impact in the current campaign, we take a look back at some of the biggest stories from the Oilers Hockey Club over the 365-day period.

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2018 IN REVIEW



THE SURGE BY MARC CIAMPA

The second-half surge of Connor McDavid to go from 13 points out of the scoring race at the end of October and tied for 43rd in League scoring to ultimately win the Art Ross Trophy six points clear of second place was an incredible Oilers story for 2018.

McDavid was tied for 10th at the NHL All-Star break with 15 goals and 54 points through 49 games, a full 10 points back of Tampa Bay's Nikita Kucherov. In the 33 games after the break, he had 26 goals and 54 points to reach 108 and take the scoring title with 18 points more than Kucherov over that span.

The Oilers captain, who also won the Ted Lindsay Award as voted by his peers as the best player in the NHL, became only the second to win the Art Ross Trophy twice by the age of 21. The other? Wayne Gretzky.

"That's really special," McDavid stated of joining Gretzky in the achievement. "It's probably one of the (only) things that I've done where I just kind of say, 'wow.'"

McDavid's second-half performance made everybody say 'wow.' Projected over an entire season, his 26 goals and 54 points in 33 games would be 64 goals and 134 points. The last time anyone in the NHL had more than 134 points in a season was 1995-96 when Mario Lemieux had 160 and while McDavid didn't achieve it over the full campaign, to sustain it for as long as he did was truly special.

Perhaps McDavid's defining moment last season was a game against Kucherov's Lightning. It was game 51 of the season, on Feb. 5. McDavid scored four goals and added a helper for a five-point night in a big 6-2 win. He vaulted himself from 13th in League scoring to third, narrowing a significant gap on his Tampa Bay target.

"This game is all about confidence and how you're feeling out there," McDavid said a day after the game. "At some point, you start feeling good and finding ways to produce."

McDavid scored 13 goals and added 8 assists for 21 points in just 14 games in that month of February along with a 22.4% shooting percentage. Unsustainable, right? As March would prove, it was indeed very sustainable as it went at a 24.5% clip that month.

Number 97 scored 13 times in 16 games in March and finished with 28 points. On March 24, in a two-goal performance against the Los Angeles Kings, he finally overtook Kucherov for top spot in the scoring race. Kucherov had held onto first since December 12.

"I don't really know what it is," he said when asked about his second-half surge. "Maybe a little bit of luck. The team (was) playing better. All of that goes into it. If the team is playing well, individual success happens."

EVAN ALMIGHTY

BY PAUL GAZZOLA

2018 IN REVIEW

Evan Bouchard didn't levitate up an ultralight beam on the American Airlines Center stage when he ceremoniously enrobed in an Oilers sweater as a member of the organization but it did feel as though the Hockey Gods were on Edmonton's side.

The Oilers 2018 first-round selection, chosen 10th overall, was a divine acquisition for a squad seeking a right-shooting, outlet-passing, offensive defenceman at a time when those types of players are heavily sought after and rarely acquired.

When Oilers President of Hockey Operations and General Manager Peter Chiarelli found himself speaking into the microphone on the NHL Draft stage with an abundance of right-shooting defenders still available, he knew which would be his chosen one.

Alas, Evan Almighty.

"There was a need there and there was a lot of defencemen that were available throughout that first round, more than usual," said Chiarelli following Day 1 of the 2018 Draft. "He's one of the guys we coveted."

The GM detailed the characteristics the Oakville, ON, product wielded not long after making the decision to call his name. The 6-foot-3, 194-pound defenceman received some high praise from Chiarelli.

"He's physically big, he's got a very good shot, he's a terrific passer and his hockey sense is terrific," said Chiarelli. "He had a terrific year and he's got a bomb of a shot. We had him really high."

As the off-season neared an end and Bouchard made his way to Edmonton to get his first taste of NHL camps and tryouts, the defender did begin to levitate – at times rising as the best player on the ice.

Bouchard showed his ability to thread long-distance breakout passes and slap bombs from the point at Oilers Development Camp. When Rookie Camp commenced, it was clear that the 19-year-old was ahead of the curve in his cohort. It was enough to warrant an invite to Oilers Main Camp.

He stayed with the Oilers for two months to open the regular season, travelling on the Oilers European trip for the Global Series against the New Jersey Devils. He would suit up in seven National Hockey League games, and wouldn't be re-assigned to the London Knights without getting his first NHL goal puck, achieving it against the defending Stanley Cup champion Washington Capitals.

The future Oilers blueliner took the assignment in stride. He rejoined his Knights to be their bonafide leader then was named to Team Canada's World Junior roster for the prestigious U-20 tournament.

"Of course, everyone that gets sent down is a little bit upset but you just need to think of the positives," said Bouchard. "I got a few games in and I learned a lot from that experience every day. I know what the coaches expect of me, I know what to work on."

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NEW DYNAMIC

BY JAMIE UMBACH

A new season brought a new dynamic behind the bench with a blend of experience and potential for the Oilers in 2018.

New assistant coaches Glen Gulutzan and Trent Yawney, both former NHL head coaches, brought their wealth of coaching expertise in player management and defence to a new setting in Edmonton.

Manny Viveiros, experienced in his own right as a player and a coach in Europe and in the Western Hockey League with the Swift Current Broncos, arrived relatively unproven but has come full circle to coach in his hometown as his first stint in the big leagues.

Add in the November appointment of another Edmonton product and the NHL's third-winningest coach all-time in Head Coach Ken Hitchcock, and you've got an entirely different Oilers bench staff this campaign.

"We targeted these three individuals for their specific talents, experience and compatible personalities," Oilers President of Hockey Operations and GM Peter Chiarelli said back in May of the assistant appointments. "We talked a lot about the group and not so much on the individuals. We went at this methodically and we were happy to get these three guys."

Yawney, who served as an assistant with the Anaheim Ducks for four seasons from 2014-18, had no misunderstandings prior to his move to Edmonton about his role developing an Oilers defensive core that includes the likes Oscar Klefbom, Darnell Nurse, and up-and-coming prospects like Evan Bouchard.

"Sometimes all you need is repetition and some refining to get your game in order, so I'm hoping to be able to establish a foundation in

all of the defenceman within the parameters of the team, allowing them to be themselves while providing the necessary components needed to compete in the NHL," Yawney said following his hiring.

"Obviously the younger guys are starting to hit their stride, so it's exciting to be a part of that."

Gulutzan swapped Alberta rivals Calgary for Edmonton to tap into the beat of the Oilers locker room, something that's become a bit of a skill for the Hudson Bay, Saskatchewan native over his 19 years of professional coaching experience.

"I think the players that have played for me would say that is my strength: just being in-tune with the locker room," Gulutzan said. "Knowing whether it's having a day off or whatever the guys need. Just being in rhythm with the team. That's kind of the way I've always coached."

"You're never as in-tune with the locker room as the equipment guys or the medical guys (as an assistant coach) but you're probably at the next level. You get a little bit more insight, you get to talk to the guys a little bit more with their guards down. You see how they're doing and feeling."

An untapped Viveiros, who won the WHL Championship with the Broncos in 2018 managing a league-best 29.8 percent power play, continues to operate making decisions by community alongside his coaching counterparts.

"We approach it as a group, we always have," Viveiros said. "The success or the failure of it lies at all of our feet."

THE GLOBAL GAME

BY RYAN FRANKSON

2018 IN REVIEW

Oil Country went international in October as the Oilers were selected to participate in the NHL Global Series that included an exhibition game in Cologne, Germany followed by the regular season opener in Gothenburg, Sweden.

Following their training camp and standard pre-season schedule that included tune-up games against familiar Pacific Division opponents like Calgary and Vancouver, the Oilers boarded a massive charter jet and flew more than 7,000 kilometres to Cologne for their final exhibition affair against the Deutsche Eishockey Liga's Kölner Haie.

Leading up to the game on Oct. 3, the Oilers scheduled several off-ice activities like team dinners, a visit to the city's famous cathedral and a downtown tour that concluded with a boat trip along the Rhine River – all led primarily by Cologne's native son Leon Draisaitl.

"I'm pretty emotionally connected to that city," Draisaitl said during an afternoon stroll with his teammates down one of Cologne's many cobblestone streets.

That emotional connection was on full display during the team's four days in Germany as Draisaitl and fellow German teammate Tobi Rieder had a chance to catch up with some of their friends from the national program who play for the Kölner Haie. The DEL squad also featured an even deeper tie for Leon as his father Peter is the head coach.

The Cologne portion of the Global Series trip reached its culmination with the exhibition match in front of a sold-out crowd of 18,400 at Lanxess Arena – the largest hockey venue outside of North America.

Of course, both Draisaitl and Rieder were in Edmonton's starting lineup, and when the announcer finally arrived at the last player on his list, all he had to do was say "Leon..." and the fans replied "DRAISAITL!" in boisterous unison.

The hair-raising, spine-chilling moment of gratitude towards the hometown hero paved the way for an exciting hockey game as Draisaitl set up Rieder for the opening goal and the Oilers ultimately battled their way to a 4-3 overtime victory.

"The fans were unbelievable," said Oilers captain Connor McDavid, reflecting on the ever-present chanting, singing and cheering from the capacity assortment of locals and tourists.

With some valuable team bonding and one last pre-season win in the books, the Oilers flew north to Gothenburg to begin preparations for the real deal – their first game of the 2018-19 campaign against the New Jersey Devils on Oct. 6.

Draisaitl and Rieder were the go-to guys in Cologne, but the attention shifted to a pair of Swedish blueliners as Oscar Klefbom and Adam Larsson had the unique opportunity to show their teammates around the second-largest city in their home country.

The trip home provided the Swedes with an opportunity to reflect on their childhoods and how their dreams of playing in the NHL

developed much later in life than those of present-day young hockey players in their homeland who have on-demand access to the game's grandest stage thanks to social media.

"When you're a kid, you're kind of looking up to the local hockey players," said Larsson, who grew up in Skellefteå in northern Sweden. "The NHL is getting more popular over here the last couple of years. Nowadays, it's so much easier to watch highlights and games."

Another healthy mix of more than 12,000 hockey fans from near and far packed Gothenburg's Scandinavium for Saturday's main event as the Oilers and Devils looked to open their respective seasons on a positive note.

A power-play goal from Milan Lucic drew the Oilers even with the Devils 1-1 through 20 minutes, but New Jersey scored twice more in the second and third periods to claim a 5-2 victory, with Draisaitl delivering Edmonton's other tally.

"I would have liked to have won this one," said Klefbom, who had many friends and family members in attendance from his nearby hometown of Karlstad. "It's really special for me and Larsson, obviously."

Looking back on the week in Europe, the Oilers certainly would have preferred to secure a victory in the season opener; however, they still played a meaningful role in the growth of the NHL on the world stage.

As NHL Deputy Commissioner Bill Daly said during the Global Series, "the buzz that a National Hockey League team and a National Hockey League game can create can do a lot for the sport."

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FIRST-HALF HEROES

BY CAIT MACPHAIL

This past off-season saw the Oilers make a couple of key additions to bolster their roster heading into the new campaign. As the 2018 calendar concluded, we took a closer look at two of those acquisitions that have shone particularly bright for the Oilers in the front half of the season.

The first of which came in the form of a free-agent signing on May 1 when the Oilers agreed to terms with Finnish goaltender Mikko Koskinen on a one-year deal. It's no doubt the Oilers were taking a leap of faith on the 29-year-old KHL all-star netminder that had yet to prove himself at the NHL level.

Drafted 31st overall in 2009 by the New York Islanders, Koskinen made just four NHL starts on the Island before returning to Europe. After solidifying his status overseas over the past seven years, he felt he was ready to make the jump back over the pond.

The 6-foot-7 puck-stopper was brought in to not only help lighten starter Cam Talbot's heavy workload but to create some crease competition and hopefully challenge for more than the conventional 20-25 starts most NHL backups get.

It's been so far, so good for the soft-spoken Finn, who, in his first 19 starts for the Oilers, compiled an 11-6-1 record, including three shutouts in his first seven starts on Rogers Place ice.

While his future remains unknown at the moment while in the midst of a one-year contract, the Oilers can be satisfied in knowing that the NHL potential they saw in Koskinen has paid dividends to start 2018-19.

While the Oilers off-season activity started with Koskinen's signing, it more-or-less ended with the signing of forward Alex Chiasson to a one-year deal on Oct. 3 after he attended training camp on a professional tryout basis.

After a whirlwind off-season that started after he captured the Stanley Cup with the Washington Capitals in June, Chiasson found himself in familiar, albeit uncomfortable, territory when he was left without a contract after the Caps decided to part ways with the veteran winger after their Cup run. His one-year stint in Washington was also the result of a PTO opportunity.

After fielding interest from a few different clubs over the summer, Chiasson weighed and measured his options and ultimately decided on a PTO in Edmonton, stating he felt he fit best amongst their existing forward group.

The Oilers knew what they were getting in Chiasson after he earned a contract out of training camp — a gritty, veteran depth forward who had the ability to chip in offensively around the blue paint and was heralded by Oilers assistant coach Glen Gulutzan, a former bench boss of Chiasson's in Dallas and Calgary, as a guy who “does everything right” and “knows how to win”.

What the club didn't know was that after sitting out the first five games as a healthy scratch, Chiasson would burst out of the gates with a two-goal performance vs. Pittsburgh in just his second appearance and refused to look back.

In his first 31 games in an Oilers uniform, he has tallied 16 goals and four assists — zooming past his career-high total in goals when he recorded 13 in 79 games for Dallas in 2013-14.

Chiasson has flashed his work ethic along with an ability to consistently finish close to the net as he made his case for one of the most pleasant surprises of the Oilers season through the first half of 2018-19. ♦

OFF THE ICE

The holiday season is always the busiest and most important time of the year for the Oilers to give back to the community and 2018 was certainly no exception. The festivities began on Dec. 14 with Shirts Off Our Backs presented by Rogers in support of the Christmas Bureau of Edmonton as fans purchased raffle tickets for a chance to win a jersey hand-delivered by a player. Oilers coaches and staff volunteered at Hope Mission's annual Tegler Family Banquet on Dec. 19, the team hosted its annual Inner City High Luncheon on Dec. 20, and a busy week concluded on Dec. 21 with the annual player hospital visits. Finally, the annual McCauley Cup shinny game between members of the Edmonton Police Service and youth from the McCauley neighbourhood was played on Dec. 28, including guest appearances from Leon Draisaitl, Head Coach Ken Hitchcock, Assistant Coach Manny Viveiros and Oilers alumnus Al Hamilton.





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PLAYOFF HOCKEY ON PACE TO RETURN TO EDMONTON

BY ALYSCIA WARNER

After a thrilling first half of the Western Hockey League season, the Edmonton Oil Kings are poised to give their fans something to cheer about in March and beyond as they look to achieve a berth in the playoffs for the first time since 2016.

The 2014 Memorial Cup champions enjoyed the sweet taste of success with players like Curtis Lazar, Griffin Reinhart and Tristan Jarry, but soon thereafter endured the downside that typically follows a championship run in major junior hockey.

But a few seasons of trials, challenges and high draft picks are now paying dividends for the Oil Kings, who found themselves six games above .500 (18-12-4-2) with a tie for the Central Division lead at the holiday break.

It's been a complete team effort when it comes to the success of the squad, who have received not only team-leading but league-leading production from their captain Trey Fix-Wolansky, but also a showing of depth through all four lines of forwards, the entire defence corps and in goal, from rookies and veterans alike.

As they look to maintain their steady push to the post-season, a number of exciting theme nights at Rogers Place will accompany what's expected to be an appealing slate of matchups for the club.

The Oil Kings will take part in the second annual WHL Suits Up with Don Cherry to Promote Organ Donation on Saturday, Jan. 19 at 1:30pm MT against the Calgary Hitmen. In addition providing an ever-enticing Battle of Alberta between the two teams, the game will serve as a way to build awareness for the Kidney Foundation of Canada. During the game, the Oil Kings will sport Don Cherry-inspired special edition jerseys which are sure to score a thumbs-up from all those who see them.

The Oil Kings will then host their annual Pink at the Rink game vs. the Moose Jaw Warriors on Friday, Jan. 25 at 7pm MT, where they will once again help to garner awareness and raise funds for another worthwhile cause - the fight against cancer.

Not to be outdone, the ever-popular Star Wars Night returns to Rogers Place on Monday, Feb. 18 (Family Day) when the Oil Kings take on the Medicine Hat Tigers at 2pm MT in a game where they also wear special edition jerseys, in which proceeds from a silent auction for the jerseys will go to support cancer research.

As any team knows, the months of January and February oftentimes prove to be the catalyst of the season - so come on out and support the Oil Kings as they continue their surge towards the WHL playoffs. ♣



2018-19 SEASON SCHEDULE

SEPTEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 CGY 7:00 pm	18 VAN 8:00 pm	19	20 WPG 7:00 pm	21	22
23 WPG 6:00 pm	24	25 VAN 7:30 pm	26	27 ARI 7:00 pm	28	29 CGY 1:00 pm
30						

OCTOBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	2	3	4	5	6 NJ 11:00 am DOTCHEMOURS
7	8	9	10	11 SNOL 5:00 pm	12	13 SNW NYR 11:00 am
14	15	16 SNOL WPG 6:00 pm	17	18 SN1 BOS 7:00 pm	19	20 HNIC NSH 8:00 pm
21	22	23 SNT1 PIT 7:00 pm	24	25 SNT1 WSH 7:00 pm	26	27 SNW NSH 1:00 pm
28 SNT1 CHI 4:00 pm	29	30 SNOL MIN 7:00 pm	31			

NOVEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1 SNW CHI 7:00 pm		3 HNIC DET 5:00 pm
4	5 SNW WSH 5:00 pm	6 SNW TBL 5:30 pm	7	8 SNW FLA 5:00 pm	9	10
11 SNT1 COL 7:30 pm	12	13 SNW MTL 7:00 pm	14	15	16	17 HNIC CGY 8:00 pm
18 SN1 VGK 6:00 pm	19	20 SNW SJS 8:30 pm	21	22	23 SNW ANA 2:00 pm	24
25 SNW LAK 8:30 pm	26	27 SNW DAL 7:00 pm	28	29 SNW LAK 7:00 pm	30	

DECEMBER 2018

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1 HNIC VGK 8:00 pm
2	3 SNW DAL 6:30 pm	4	5 SNT1 STL 6:00 pm	6	7 SNW MIN 7:00 pm	8
9 SN1 CGY 7:00 pm	10	11 SNW COL 7:00 pm	12	13 SNW WPG 6:00 pm	14 SNW PHI 7:00 pm	15
16 SNW VAN 8:00 pm	17	18 SNT1 STL 7:00 pm	19	20	21	22 HNIC TBL 8:00 pm
23	24	25	26	27	28	29 SNW VAN 7:00 pm
30	31 SNW WPG 7:00 pm					

JANUARY 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2 SNT1 ARI 7:30 pm	3	4	5 HNIC LAK 8:00 pm
6 SNW ANA 6:00 pm	7	8 SNW SJS 8:30 pm	9	10 SNW FLA 7:00 pm	11	12 HNIC ARI 8:00 pm
13	14 SNW BUF 7:00 pm	15	16 SNW VAN 8:00 pm	17	18	19 HNIC CGY 8:00 pm
20 SNT1 CAR 7:30 pm	21	22 SNT1 DET 7:00 pm	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

FEBRUARY 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 SN1 PHI 11:00 am
3 SN1 MTL 12:00 pm	4	5 SNW CHI 7:00 pm	6	7 SNW MIN 6:00 pm	8	9 HNIC SJS 5:00 pm
10	11	12	13 SNT1 PIT 6:00 pm	14	15 SNW CAR 5:30 pm	16 HNIC NYI 5:00 pm
17	18	19 SNW ARI 7:00 pm	20	21 SNW NYI 7:00 pm	22	23 HNIC ANA 8:00 pm
24	25 SNW NSH 6:00 pm	26	27 SNT1 TOR 5:00 pm	28 SNW OTT 5:30 pm		

MARCH 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2 SNW CBJ 11:00 am
3	4 SNT1 BUF 5:00 pm	5	6	7 SNW VAN 7:00 pm	8	9 HNIC TOR 5:00 pm
10	11 SNW NYR 7:00 pm	12	13 SNT1 NJD 7:30 pm	14	15	16 HNIC ARI 8:00 pm
17 SNW VGK 8:00 pm	18	19 SNT1 STL 6:00 pm	20	21 SNT1 CBJ 7:00 pm	22	23 SNW OTT 2:00 pm
24	25	26 SNW LAK 7:00 pm	27	28 SNW DAL 7:00 pm	29	30 HNIC LAK 8:00 pm

APRIL 2019

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1 SNT1 VGK 8:00 pm	2 SNW COL 7:00 pm	3	4 SNW SJS 7:00 pm	5	6 HNIC CGY 8:00 pm
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30				

ABBREVIATIONS

- ANA - Anaheim
- ARI - Arizona
- BOS - Boston
- BUF - Buffalo
- CAR - Carolina
- CBJ - Columbus
- CGY - Calgary
- CHI - Chicago
- COL - Colorado
- DAL - Dallas
- DET - Detroit
- FLA - Florida
- LAK - Los Angeles
- MIN - Minnesota
- MTL - Montreal
- NJD - New Jersey
- NSH - Nashville
- NYI - NY Islanders
- NYR - NY Rangers
- OTT - Ottawa
- PHI - Philadelphia
- PIT - Pittsburgh
- SJS - San Jose
- STL - St. Louis
- TBL - Tampa Bay
- TOR - Toronto
- VAN - Vancouver
- VGK - Las Vegas
- WPG - Winnipeg
- WSH - Washington

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 SNOL Televised on Sportsnet Oilers
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 SN360 Televised on Sportsnet 360
 HNIC Televised on Hockey Night in Canada
 HDIC Televised on Hockey Day in Canada
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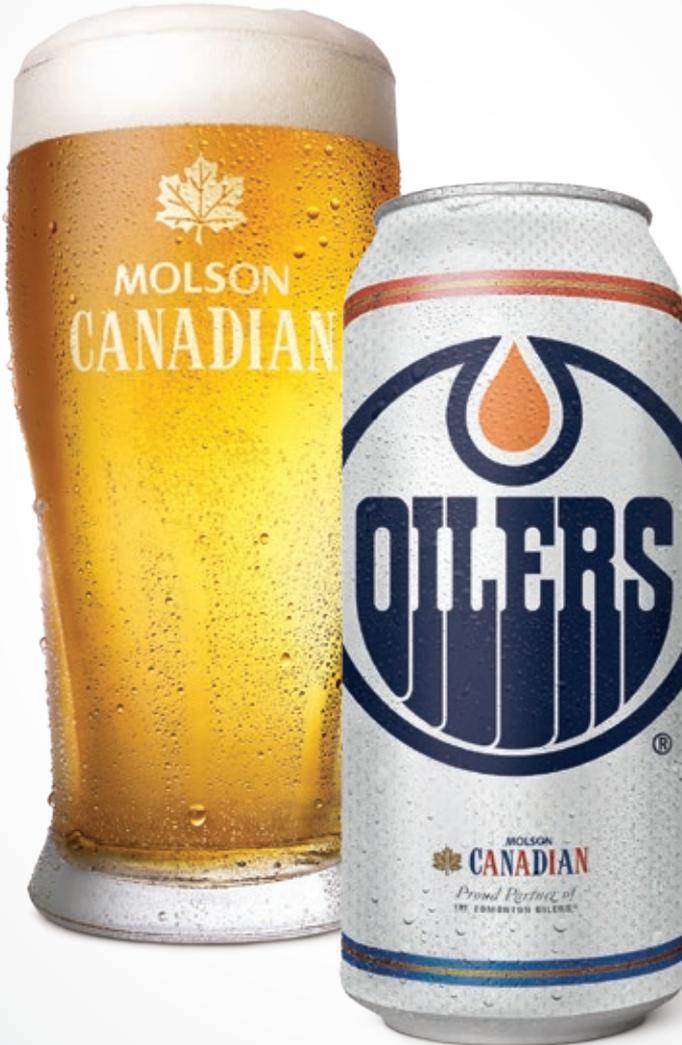


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