



The latest Ducks news from the OC Register sports staff

Pronger, Selanne deliver for Ducks

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ANAHEIM — Thanks to a Teemu Selanne goal 34 seconds into overtime Wednesday night, the Ducks ultimately secured the two points they needed to maintain any realistic hope of reaching the Stanley Cup playoffs.

A 4-3 victory over the Nashville Predators at Honda Center moved the Ducks within three points of the Edmonton Oilers, who hold the eighth and final post-season position in the NHL's jumbled Western Conference, but it did not necessarily represent a job well done.

Holding a lead late in the third period, the Ducks (33-31-6) surrendered Nashville winger Joel Ward's second goal of the game at 17:15, a re-direction of a Shea Weber shot past Ducks goaltender Jean-Sebastien Giguere that enabled the seventh-place Predators (35-30-6) to get to overtime and gain themselves a valuable point.

"I'm not very happy with how we played," Selanne said. "When you get that lead, 3-2, you should not let the other team score any more. That was really disappointing, but obviously, the two points, we needed that. We have to be happy with that.

"It's a long road, and we know we have to be better."

Ultimately, the Ducks will live for at least another day because of a nice connection between defenseman Chris Pronger and Selanne, two long-time rivals who became teammates in 2006, won a Stanley Cup together in 2007 and displayed remarkable synergy on the winning goal.

Pronger's slap pass from above the right-wing faceoff circle resulted in his second assist of the night, and his 600th career point. Selanne, below the left circle, gained his 1,200th career point by deftly deflecting the puck past Nashville goalie Pekka Rinne.

"That was a great pass by Prongs," Selanne said.

Pronger had put the Ducks on the power play by drawing a tripping penalty on Predators center Vernon Fiddler at 19:11 of the third period.

"I had to give Teemu time," Pronger said. "We kind of made eye contact and were going to try that tip play. Scotty (Niedermayer) was going toward the net, drawing their guy over there. I just needed to pump fake to get a lane open, and Teemu did the rest."

Selanne's 574th career goal, which vaulted him past former New York Islanders star Mike Bossy into 18th place on the all-time NHL list, was the third of the night for the Ducks on the power play. Rookies Andrew Ebbett and Bobby Ryan also connected, halting a Ducks cold snap of 1 for 28 with the man advantage.

"It's been kind of a dry run for our power play," Ducks coach Randy Carlyle said. "It's good that it delivered. It won us the hockey game."

Corey Perry scored a first-period goal for the Ducks, while Ryan Getzlaf added two assists. The line of Perry, Getzlaf and Ryan combined for 11 shots in a tremendous effort dampened only by the fact they were on the ice for Ward's tying goal.

Still in 12th place in the West, the Ducks visit the Phoenix Coyotes on Thursday in what looms as another virtual must-win situation.

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"We've dug ourselves a pretty good hole," Pronger said. "We're the only ones who can dig ourselves out. You can't hope for other teams to beat so-and-so on any given night. There are too many variables and too many teams vying for what essentially is turning into probably one playoff spot.

"We have to worry about ourselves and not worry about any help. We're probably not going to get it."

NOTES

Ryan, who also had an assist, tied the Ducks franchise rookie record of 45 points, set by **Dustin Penner** in 2006-07. ... Defenseman **Bret Hedican**, who has missed seven consecutive games and nine of the past 11 because of back trouble, saw renowned back specialist **Dr. Robert Watkins** and was considering having a second medical injection to try to bring about improvement, Carlyle said.

THREE STARS

1. **BOBBY RYAN**: Skating on a dominant Ducks line with Ryan Getzlaf and Corey Perry, rookie winger had a goal, an assist and a game-high five shots
2. **RYAN SUTER**: Red-hot defenseman assisted on all three Nashville goals, extending his point streak to eight games
3. **CHRIS PRONGER**: Ducks defensive ace played 27 solid minutes and picked up two assists, including one on Teemu Selanne's overtime goal

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