



AMALIE Arena Media Clips
Tuesday, October 24, 2023

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Lightning address their overtime shortcomings with 3-on-3 scrimmage **Eduardo Encina (Tampa Bay Times)**

TAMPA — The Lightning haven't spent a lot of time simulating 3-on-3 overtime during practice, but given their recent struggles in the extra session, it was time to work toward a solution on Monday.

As the team returned to practice at Amalie Arena, where two days earlier it lost to Toronto 4-3 in overtime, Tampa Bay spent the final session with a full-ice, long-change, 3-on-3 scrimmage.

Saturday's loss was the Lightning's fourth straight home overtime loss to the Maple Leafs, including last season's opening-round playoff series, and their ninth straight defeat decided after regulation dating back to February.

"There's times you just need reminders," said Lightning captain Steven Stamkos. "It's not something that you work on very often until you realize you haven't won in a few, and then you work on it. I bet you the next one is going to be better."

Tampa Bay has two overtime losses in its past three games, including a 3-2 setback Oct. 17 in Buffalo after tying the game with seven seconds left in regulation. In both defeats, they lost the opening faceoff of the extra period and rarely touched the puck.

"Faceoffs have obviously been a big thing in the last couple games," Stamkos said. "We haven't had the fortune of winning them, and you're chasing the game, and we've just been a little too passive, I think. We got some reminders here: Just be a little more aggressive. If we don't happen to have the puck, try to create some turnovers."

Saturday, the Lightning blew a two-goal lead with just under eight minutes left in regulation, both goals the result of turnovers leading to odd-man rushes. Lightning coach Jon Cooper said his team started playing loose in the third period, allowing the Leafs back into the game, and that carried into overtime.

"The aggressive nature of the identity of our team wasn't there," Cooper said. "And I think, in overtime, we've become a team of just being satisfied to contain, hope the goalie makes a save, grab with your glove and throw in the corner. OK, now it's our turn with the puck. And that's not the way overtime is. It's still a game of work; you have to be on top of things."

The purpose of Monday's mini-scrimmage was to emphasize the importance of pressuring the puck in overtime, even when there's more space on the ice with fewer players.

"You can't give them time and space, because there is so much more room," Cooper said. "When you stay on top of your man — the margin of skating in this league, everybody's so close — I think you're in a better spot to check when you're on top of the guy than when you give them a 20-foot gap. Now you're giving super-skilled players time to go around you, and so it can be really difficult. When you work on things and you measure things, usually you get better at it. So that's what we did (Monday).

"And then the other part of it is our puck management, and the times we did touch it we just gave it right back. And so it's kind of a recipe for disaster, basically."

Stamkos done talking contract

With the Leafs in town over the weekend, Stamkos' contract uncertainty became a topic of conversation among the Toronto media, who asked whether the situation had become a distraction in the locker room.

During last month's media day, Stamkos — who is slated to become an unrestricted free agent after this season — expressed his disappointment that the team had not engaged him in extension talks during the offseason.

Asked Monday whether he had anything else he wanted to say about the situation, Stamkos said simply, "no."

Lightning general manager Julien BriseBois has said he has no plans to discuss Stamkos' future with the team until the end of the season. BriseBois said he needs to see how the season plays out before figuring out how Stamkos might fit into a salary cap-crunched roster.

Cooper tweaks lines

The Lightning took the ice Monday with slightly altered lines, essentially flipping the second- and third-line centers from Saturday's game. Nick Paul skated between Stamkos and Brandon Hagel, and Anthony Cirelli centered a line with Tanner Jeannot and Waltteri Merela. The top line of Alex Barre-Boulet, Brayden Point and Nikita Kucherov remained intact.

Right-shot defenseman Nick Perbix was paired with Mikhail Sergachev, his third left-side partner this season. Right-shot defenseman Darren Raddysh skated with third left-side defenseman Calvin de Haan.

Quote of the day

"Maybe we don't have quite the punch we've had in our lineup in the past, but we still scored. Three was enough against Toronto. Four was enough against Detroit. You can't be breaking down the way we are and giving up the chances we are on the rush, because we're turning the puck over and expect we're going to win."

– Cooper on the continuing rash of turnovers that have continued to haunt the Lightning this season

For Tampa Bay Lightning games past regulation of late have been woe-vertime Erik Erlendsson (Lightning Insider)

TAMPA – When the Tampa Bay Lightning rolled through the 2020 postseason, overtime brought about a feeling of confidence to the team that started with a five-overtime thriller against Columbus.

Overtime was so comfortable to the Lightning, they even won the shootout against Washington in the tune up game before the postseason began. Tampa Bay played a total of 216 minutes of overtime in that 2020 run and became the first team in NHL playoff history to win each of the clinching games in the opening three rounds in overtime.

The Lightning played two overtime games (but really it was three-plus) in the opening round against Columbus, winning both including Game 5 on Brayden Point's winner 5:14 into the clinching game. Tampa Bay played two overtime games against the Bruins in the second round, winning both, with Victor Hedman's double-overtime goal in Game 5 sending the Lightning to the conference championship. The conference championship series saw two more games of overtime against the Islanders, Tampa Bay dropped game 5 but Anthony Cirelli scored the winner in Game 6 to send the Lightning to the Stanley Cup Final.

The Final brought about, you guessed it, two more overtime games with Tampa Bay winning Game 4 on Kevin Shattenkirk's winner for a 3-1 series lead, though the Lightning did drop Game 5 in double overtime on a Corey Perry winner.

Since then it feels as if the Lightning paying retribution for all that overtime success because right now, overtime feels like a lost cause. Tampa Bay has dropped both overtime games this season – and barely touched the puck in either of those games – and lost all three OT games in the opening round series last season to Toronto, with all three of those at Amalie Arena. Going back to last season, Tampa Bay has won one of the past 10 games decided in overtime.

“We got the Bronx cheer I think at one point when we first touched the puck.”

– *Jon Cooper*

Is there anything in particular sending things sideways, or might it just be the law of averages catching up to them?

“Things like that happen and you probably had a pretty good stretch before that if you go back and look at it,” Lightning captain Steven Stamkos said.

Fair enough, so let's take a quick look back at it.

A GOOD RUN, BUT NOT RECENTLY

Despite dropping four of the final five overtime games in the regular season last year, Tampa Bay did finish with an overtime record of 8-6. But, in the 2022 playoffs, the Lightning lost all two overtime games in the Stanley Cup Final to Colorado, though they did beat Toronto in Game 6 in Round 1 to force a Game 7. During the regular season, Tampa Bay went 12-8 in games decided after regulation.

During the shortened 2021 season, Tampa Bay was 7-3 during the regular season but lost all four playoff overtime games, including Game 4 of the Stanley Cup Final with a chance to win the title.

So, since the end of the 2020 playoffs, the Lightning overtime record in the regular season is a combined 27-19 including this season, but in the postseason they have dropped nine of the past 10 games in overtime (10 of 11 if you include Game 5 against Dallas in 2020). Overall, that gives Tampa Bay a combined overtime record of 28-29 in overtime in the past three seasons, plus six games.

Those type of numbers combined with the poor showings in the two overtimes to date prompted the Lightning coaching staff do implement part of practice on Monday to a 3-on-3 mini-scrimmage, something that doesn't happen very often.

"Sometimes you just need reminders," Stamkos said. "It's not something that you work on very often until you realize you haven't won in a few and then you work on it. I bet you the next one is going to be better."

IT STARTS IN THE DOT

The biggest issue in the two overtime games this season has been puck possession – the Lightning have barely had any. And it's started with the faceoff to start the overtime as Tampa Bay has lost both of them.

In Buffalo, Anthony Cirelli, who is at 62-percent on the young season, lost it and Tampa Bay never touched the puck. Against Toronto, Cooper sent out Luke Glendening, who had won 10-of-12 faceoffs during regulation, to start the overtime but he lost it and it took Tampa Bay nearly two minutes to gain any sort of puck possession, of which they didn't do much and only had one shot attempt in the overtime.

The lost faceoff to start overtime has been the genesis of the first two OT games this season.

"That's a big part of it but not to the point of what it's been the two overtimes for us never to touch the puck," head coach Jon Cooper. "We got the Bronx cheer I think at one point when we first touched the puck so that says something."

AGGRESSIVE, NOT PASSIVE

But the faceoff is just the starting point, it doesn't directly result to giving up the winning goal.

"The aggressive nature of the identity of our team wasn't there," Cooper said. "I think in overtime we've become a team of just being satisfied to contain, hope the goalie makes the save, grab it with your glove, throw it in the corner and now it's our turn with the puck. That's not the way overtime is, it's still a game of work. You have to be on top of things. You can't give them time and space because there is so much more room. When you do that against a plethora of skilled players eventually it's going to end up in your net and that's what happened."

That message was delivered.

"We've just been a little too passive," Stamkos said. "We got some reminders here, just be a little more aggressive if we don't happen to have the puck. Try to create some turnovers and we'll go from there."

PRACTICE NOTES

D Calvin de Haan returned to practice after missing Friday and sitting out Saturday's game. ... Tampa Bay and Carolina enter Tuesday's games having allowed the most (Carolina at 30) and second most (Tampa Bay at 26) number of goals in the league. ... Tampa Bay changed two line combinations and two defensive pairings for practice on Monday:

Alex Barre-Boulet/Brayden Point-Nikita Kucherov

Steven Stamkos-Nick Paul-Brandon Hagel

Tanner Jeannot-Anthony Cirelli-Waltteri Merela

Mikey Eyssimont-Luke Glendening-Conor Sheary/Austin Watson

Victor Hedman-Erik Cernak

Mikhail Sergachev-Nick Perbix

Calvin de Haan-Darren Raddysh

Haydn Fleury-Zach Bogosian

Nuts & Bolts: Carolina up next on the homestand **Chris Krenn (TampaBayLightning.com)**

Everything you need to know ahead of Tampa Bay's matchup against the Carolina Hurricanes on Tuesday.

When: Tuesday, October 23 - 7 p.m. ET

Where: AMALIE Arena - Tampa, FL

TV coverage: Bally Sports (check local listings)

Radio coverage: 102.5 MHz-FM, Lightning Radio 24/7

Where to stream it: BallySports.com

Projected Lineup (subject to change)

Forwards

Alex Barre-Boulet - Braydent Point - Nikita Kucherov

Steven Stamkos - Nick Paul - Brandon Hagel

Tanner Jeannot - Anthony Cirelli - Waltteri Merela

Conor Sheary - Luke Glendening - Mikey Eyssimont

Defensemen

Victor Hedman - Erik Cernak

Mikhail Sergachev - Nick Perbix

Calvin de Haan - Darren Raddysh

Goaltenders

Jonas Johansson

Matt Tomkins

Tuesday's Matchup

The Lightning and Hurricanes are playing the first of three matchups this season and the first of two meetings at AMALIE Arena...The Bolts posted a 1-1-1 record vs. CAR last season, dropping the lone home game in a shootout and going 1-1-0 in the two road games at PNC Arena...Brayden Point (2-2—4) led Tampa Bay in goals vs. CAR last season and was tied with Steven Stamkos (1-3—4) for the team lead in points...Point has recorded six points over his last four games vs. CAR (3-3—6) and has found the scoresheet in eight of his 12 career home games vs. CAR (6-7—13)...Stamkos has picked up seven points over his last four games vs. CAR (2-5—7)...Stamkos is riding a three-game home point streak vs. CAR (2-3—5)...Nikita Kucherov has found the scoresheet in 11 consecutive home games vs. CAR (5-13—18) and has recorded at least one point in 11 of his 12 career home games vs. CAR...Kucherov has points in 18 of his 24 career contests vs. CAR (7-21—28) with points in 13 of his last 16 games vs. CAR (3-17—20)...Victor Hedman has seven points over his last 11 games vs. CAR (2-5—7)...Hedman has found the scoresheet in nine of his last 12 home games vs. CAR (4-8—12)...Mikey Eyssimont has recorded four points in three career contests vs. CAR (2-2—4)...Conor Sheary has five assists over his last eight games vs. CAR (0-5—5)...The Bolts are 6-2-2 in their last 10 home games vs. CAR and 4-4-2 in the last 10 meetings overall...The Lightning have scored three or more goals in 11 of their last 14 home games vs. CAR...Tampa Bay is 69-51-11 with 10 ties all-time vs. CAR, including a home record of 42-21-3 with three ties...Martin St. Louis (38-48—86) holds the Lightning franchise records for career goals, assists and points vs. CAR.

Injuries

Tyler Motte - Upper-body, out

Andrei Vasilevskiy - Back, out

Tampa Bay Sports Item of the Game

WEAR by Erin Andrews New Product

The WEAR by Erin Andrews collection is back by popular demand! Available in store at AMALIE Arena and online at TampaBaySports.com, while supplies last.

The Road Ahead

Thursday, October 26 vs. San Jose Sharks

Monday, October 30 vs. Seattle Kraken

Thursday, November 2 at Columbus Blue Jackets