



**AMALIE Arena Media Clips  
Sunday, November 12, 2023**

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## **Lightning, without Nikita Kucherov, blanked by Carolina Hurricanes**

### **Associated Press**

TAMPA — Sebastian Aho and Brent Burns each had a goal and an assist, Pyotr Kochetkov stopped 23 shots for his fifth career shutout and the Hurricanes beat the Lightning 4-0 on Saturday night.

Teuvo Teravainen and Stefan Noesen also scored as Carolina won for the sixth time in eight games. The Hurricanes rebounded after a 5-2 loss at Florida the previous night.

“We played the way we wanted to,” said defenseman Brady Skjei, who assisted on Burns’ goal. “Last night wasn’t the way we wanted to end it — we wanted to end this road trip on a high note. Everyone bought in and we played a really solid 60 minutes.”

Jonas Johansson, who shut out the Hurricanes in their first meeting, made 28 saves for the Lightning.

Tampa Bay played without forward Nikita Kucherov, who entered the game second in the NHL with 23 points, because of illness. His absence showed, as Tampa Bay struggled to generate offense for long stretches.

Kochetkov, who was 0-3-0 this season and took the loss in Tampa Bay’s 3-0 win against Carolina on Oct. 24, was sharp when he had to be and got plenty of help from his teammates, who controlled play for most of the game.

“He was solid,” Carolina coach Rod Brind’Amour said. “He looked like nothing was going to get by him tonight.”

Carolina took a 1-0 lead when Teravainen beat Johansson with a power-play one-timer from the top of the right circle 3:09 into the game.

Aho made it 2-0 at 4:32 of the second, beating Johansson from the left of the slot for his second goal in two nights.

The Hurricanes limited the Lightning to three shots on goal in the middle period.

“I think at times you just have to simplify your game and play a little bit more north-south,” Lightning coach Jon Cooper said. “We played a little too much east-west today. Carolina plays a very deliberate game, they were just a little bit quicker than us tonight and it cost us.”

Burns tipped in a pass from defense partner Brady Skjei with 8:40 left in the third to put Carolina ahead by three. It was the 248th goal of his career, tying him with Doug Mohns for ninth all-time among NHL defensemen.

“He’s been around forever, but there’s a reason for it,” Brind’Amour said of the 38-year-old. “You can’t be around that long and play at that high a level without putting in the work, the dedication to your craft. He’s one of the best ever at it.”

Noesen celebrated playing his 300th NHL game by scoring on a deflection with 2:06 to play.

Up next

Hurricanes: Host Philadelphia on Wednesday night.

Lightning: At St. Louis on Tuesday night.

### **3 takeaways from the Lightning's shutout loss to Carolina Hurricanes** **Eduardo Encina (Tampa Bay Times)**

TAMPA — The Lightning found out before Saturday's home game against Carolina that their top offensive player would be unavailable due to an illness, and without right wing Nikita Kucherov, they clearly weren't the same team.

A 4-0 shutout loss might have been their worst of the season, especially at home, where they rarely are so outmatched. But midway through the third period, boo birds filled Amalie Arena, venting their frustration with the home team.

The Lightning fell behind just three minutes into the game and were never able to get back in it. Carolina's in-your-face, deliberate game plan made every pass a challenge as the Hurricanes seemed to constantly have a stick in the way. The Lightning struggled to possess the puck, let alone create sustained pressure in the offensive zone, whether it was in 5-on-5 or on the power play. In fact, their best looks might have come short-handed.

"It's tough to create anything offensively when you don't have the puck there," Lightning captain Steven Stamkos said. "They're an aggressive team in terms of the forecheck and hemming teams in their own end, so that was probably the case."

Here are three takeaways from the latest loss:

#### **Can't replace Kucherov at the last minute**

The Lightning have won in the past without Kucherov. They played a COVID-shortened, 56-game regular season without him three years ago and were fine. But they had time to prepare for being without him. On Saturday night, they found out in the 11th hour that he wouldn't be able to play.

Everything goes through Kucherov. He controls the puck often, whether it's on entries or setting up in the offensive zone. He is the team's chief facilitator in 5-on-5 and on the power play.

This year he's taken on a bigger role as a goal scorer. He entered Saturday tied for second in the league in goals (11) and shots on goal (63). Without Kucherov, the Lightning seemed lost, especially in the offensive zone, where they struggled to find any looks in front of the net as they allowed Carolina to force them to the outside. The Lightning couldn't get the puck to their top scorers. Stamkos and Brayden Point only had two shot attempts each on the night.

The Lightning had three power-play opportunities after Sebastian Aho's goal made it 2-0 early in the second period, but they manufactured just two shots on goal in six minutes of man-advantage time.

#### **Home ice not so nice**

When the Lightning struggled on the road last season, they knew they'd be able to munch points at home. They were one of the best teams in the league on home ice.

They had earned points in all six home games going into this week. But after dropping both games of their short homestand and allowing a combined nine goals — they lost 5-3 to Chicago on Thursday — another key road trip looms.

The Lightning play at St. Louis on Tuesday and at Chicago on Thursday. Going two games without points is one thing; going four straight can drop a team in the standings quickly, and the Lightning are 2-3-2 away from Amalie Arena.

“We’ve got to get these points (at home),” coach Jon Cooper said.. “And so that’s disappointing to come out of these two games without points. And so now we’ve going to get back on the road. ... Not completely thrilled with how we got beat (Saturday). It just adds a little more pressure for us to go on the road. And we have to come together and not accept what happened these last two games.”

### **Early penalty was a game-changer**

As much as it’s about the number of penalties a team commits — and the Lightning have done a good job so far of limiting them after being one of the most-penalized teams over the past few years — it’s also about when they happen.

Fourth-line center Luke Glendening’s first-period roughing penalty proved costly. It was a peculiar call because it came after Glendening was swiping at a loose puck in traffic in front of the net before some post-whistle pushing and shoving that typically follows that type of play. Glendening shoved Carolina defenseman Dmitry Orlov to the ground in front, but it was hardly egregious enough to be the one and only call to come out of that kind of scrum.

But it might have been the biggest call of the game. Carolina needed just 19 seconds to capitalize with Teuvo Teravainen’s power-play goal, allowing the Hurricanes to do one of the things they do best: protect a lead with their lockdown style of play. Carolina is 5-2-0 when they score first and 4-0-0 when they take a lead into the first intermission.

## **Tampa Bay Lightning pull off rarity on home ice** **Erik Erlendsson (Lightning Insider)**

TAMPA – Sometimes you just get beat.

When you lose games, defeat is hard to accept. When you lose, you want to pull out the microscope and dissect every aspect of the game to figure out how the game got to the result.

When that happens, sometimes the analysis comes to the conclusion that the other team simply won the game. For the Tampa Bay Lightning, that summed up Saturday's shutout setback to the Carolina Hurricanes.

Coming off Thursday's game against Chicago where the Lightning were their own enemy – that's what the analysis showed – Saturday's result pulled off a rarity for Tampa Bay on home ice. By dropping both games on the homestand in regulation, it marked the first time in more than three years that the Lightning lost consecutive games on home on the same homestand.

The last time Tampa Bay dropped two straight games in regulation at Amalie Arena Feb. 25 and Feb. 27, 2020, when they lost to Toronto and Chicago, respectively.

And maybe that's what is most disappointing coming out of the result on Saturday is there should have been plenty of reasons for Tampa Bay to put forth a more convincing showing against Carolina. Except the Hurricanes were in that same situation as they've been scuffling along the early part of the season, giving up goals at a rate they are not used to allowing and they came off a game on Friday at Florida in which they were subtly called out by their head coach.

"Guys are trying out there," Lightning captain Steven Stamkos said. "It's just maybe they were just a better team to tonight."

The Hurricanes have not shown who they are to this point of the season. Carolina is an aggressive team that plays with a relentless approach to pursuing the puck. When they don't have it, the put pressure on the puck and the puck carrier looking to get it back. They can suffocate you.

That's all but what happened on Saturday. The Hurricanes showed who they are when they are at their best. And Saturday, they were at their best.

"Usually when you play Carolina, the style of play that they play, it's not going to be a high opportunity night," Stamkos said. "We just didn't touch the puck that much tonight. It's tough to create anything offensively when you don't have the puck. They're an aggressive team in terms of the forecheck and hemming teams in their own end, so that was probably the case."

Carolina scored the opening goal 3:10 into the game with a power play goal by Teuvo Teravainen when Luke Glendening was called for the only penalty during a postwhistle scrum in front of the Carolina net. And when you fall behind early to Carolina when the Hurricanes are playing to their expected level, the climb back into the game is like trying to run on a treadmill where the incline is at maximum angle where the harder you try the further you fall behind.

"We give up an early power play goal and they play that style, we know exactly what they're gonna bring," defenseman Victor Hedman said. "But when they're on it, they're tough to play against."

It's even tougher when playing without your top offensive player who has been a dynamo over the past week. Just before the game, the team learned league-leading scorer Nikita Kucherov would be unable to play due to illness.

"He's a really good player in the league and I think if you took the top player off any team in the league, right before the game, pretty sure it'd be somewhat of an issue," Lightning head coach Jon Cooper said.

But his absence isn't the reason the Lightning lost the game. Carolina was just that good that not even Kucherov would have been able to change how the game was played.

"The bigger problem is, there's guys we depend on on this team to deliver and it's a lot of weight on their shoulders," Cooper said. "And when we lose guys to injury or what have you it's that group that we need to pull this team and push this team forward. For a lot of the year that's happened. Tonight it was a little more difficult for us. Give Carolina credit. They came in a pretty determined group tonight, and they took it to us."

To rub a little salt in the wound, Tampa Bay lost the services of defenseman Erik Cernak to what might be a shoulder issue after he was hit into the boards. Cooper did not sound optimistic of a quick recovery.

"He's got to be evaluated," Cooper said. "It's tough of late here to be losing these guys."

## **NOTES**

RW Nikita Kucherov missed the game due to illness. ... Tampa Bay scratched D Phil Myers, D Haydn Fleurn (conditioning assignment) and Kucherov.

## **MY THREE STARS**

1. Hurricanes G Pytor Kochetkov – Stopped all 22 shots he faced
2. Hurricanes C Sebastian Aho – Goal, assist, plus-1, six shot attempts
3. Hurricanes D Jaccob Slavin – Assist, plus-2, four shots, two blocked shots

## **The Backcheck: Bolts drop second-straight contest at home** **Chris Krenn (TampaBayLightning.com)**

Recording a season-low 22 shots on goal, the Tampa Bay Lightning dropped a second-straight contest Saturday night, falling to 4-0 to the Carolina Hurricanes at AMALIE Arena.

Carolina jumped on Tampa Bay early with Teuvo Teravainen opening the scoring 3:10 into the first period on the power play. With Luke Glendening in the penalty box for roughing, Teravainen took a pass from Sebastian Aho and hammered a one-timer past Jonas Johansson for his ninth goal of the season just 19 seconds into the man advantage.

After going to the locker room in a 1-0 hole, the Bolts saw the deficit double 4:32 into the middle frame with Aho jumping on a loose rebound in front of the net and netting his fourth goal of the year to make it a 2-0 game.

Aho's goal was the lone tally of the second period, a frame that saw the Lightning record just three shots on goal, tied for Tampa Bay's lowest total in a single period this season.

Going into the third period down by two against a structured team like the Hurricanes was a tall task for the Bolts, who were outscored 2-0 by Carolina in the final frame with Brent Burns scoring at the 11:20 mark to make it 3-0 before Stefan Noesen sealed the game with a deflection goal with 2:06 remaining.

The Lightning were outshot 32-22 in the loss, a game that Tampa Bay had to play without the services of leading scorer Nikita Kucherov, who missed the game with an illness. Erik Cernak left the game with nine minutes remaining in the second period and did not return. Johansson made 28 saves in the defeat.

### **Bolts by the Numbers**

- The Lightning were shutout for the first time this season.
- Tampa Bay fell to 1-2-0 against Metropolitan Division opponents and 3-4-3 against the Eastern Conference.
- The Bolts recorded just 12 shots through two periods, their lowest amount through 40 minutes of a game this season.

### **Bolts Quotes**

- Jon Cooper: "He's a really good player in the league. I think if you took the top player off any team in the league right before the game, it'd be somewhat of an issue. It's a little tough when you have a power play that's been together so long and you take one piece off. It was very similar when Stammer was out...But the bigger problem is there's guys we depend on on this team to deliver and it's a lot of weight on their shoulders. When we lose guys to injury or what have you, we need that group to pull this team and push this team forward. For a lot of the year, that's happened. Tonight, it was a little more difficult for us. Give Carolina credit. They came in a pretty determined group tonight and they took it to us."

- Jon Cooper on the status of Erik Cernak: "He's gotta be evaluated. It's tough of late here to be losing these guys."

- Steven Stamkos: "It's tough to create anything offensively when you don't have the puck there. They're an aggressive team in terms of the forecheck and hemming teams in their own end, so that was probably the case."

- Jon Cooper: "Last two times we played these guys, we've shut these guys out. There's a little give and take. You're not going to win every one. For us though, to come home for just two home games and then go back on the road and with how much we're on the road, we've got to get these points. That's disappointing to come out of these two games without points. Now we've got to go back on the road. You are going to get beat some nights. Not completely thrilled how we got beat tonight, but it just adds a little more pressure for us to go on the road. We have to come together and not accept what happened these last two games."

### **Lightning Look Ahead**

- Tuesday, November 14 at St. Louis Blues, Enterprise Center, 8 p.m. ET

- Thursday, November 16 at Chicago Blackhawks, United Center, 8 p.m. ET

- Saturday, November 18 vs. Edmonton Oilers, AMALIE Arena, 4 p.m. ET