



Columbus Blue Jackets Media Clips
March 10, 2026

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Sports Illustrated / Kings, Blue Jackets' New Acquisitions Make Immediate Impact

By Jayd Serdy – March 10, 2026

The Columbus Blue Jackets and Los Angeles Kings faced off on the afternoon of March 9 in a game that was rescheduled following a winter storm on the East Coast. This game came just three days after the NHL's March 6 trade deadline, which saw a lot of change in the league.

Prior to the Olympic Break, the Kings added forward Artemi Panarin to their roster in a blockbuster trade with the New York Rangers. At the trade deadline, the Kings acquired forward Scott Laughton from the Toronto Maple Leafs. While Panarin is more of the "superstar" type, Laughton adds a level of depth that will benefit the Kings for the remainder of the regular season and into the playoffs, should the team make it.

During the matinee with the Blue Jackets, both Panarin and Laughton scored one goal each to get the Kings started. Laughton's goal came at the 6:46 mark in the first period, followed by Panarin at the 14:48 mark in the period. Laughton also tallied an assist on a goal from Brian Dumoulin at 10:07 in the third period.

In Panarin's seven games as a King, he has scored two goals and assisted on five. Prior to joining the Kings, he had scored 19 goals and 38 assists in 52 games with the Rangers during the 2025-26 season.

While this was only Laughton's second game as a King, he's already scored two goals and assisted on two. Prior to the deadline, Laughton scored eight goals and four assists over 43 games with the Maple Leafs.

Blue Jackets' New Additions Also Make Impact

The Blue Jackets have had similar luck with their trade deadline acquisition from the Vancouver Canucks in forward Conor Garland. Garland had spent the past five seasons with the Canucks prior to getting the call that he would be heading to Columbus. During the 2025-26 season with the Canucks he scored seven goals and 19 assists over 50 games.

In the game, Garland scored two goals against the Kings, which brought his total goals up to three in his new threads. He is known to be a bit of a pest on the ice and has been playing on the second line right-wing position with the Blue Jackets so far.

Earlier in the season, the Blue Jackets acquired forward Mason Marchment from the Seattle Kraken, who has also had a positive impact on the team. With the Blue Jackets so far, he has scored 11 goals and eight assists over 20 games.

The matinee went into overtime after a regulation score of 4-4; the Kings' Adrian Kempe scored the game-winning goal for a final score of 5-4, sending the Kings back home with two more points.

The Athletic / Blue Jackets rally late on Marchenko's goal, but suffer another frustrating OT loss

By Aaron Portzline – March 9, 2026

COLUMBUS, Ohio — For the second straight game, the Columbus Blue Jackets chased the scoreboard for most of three periods before pulling off a late rally to force overtime. Those single points might come in handy next month.

But for the second straight game, the Blue Jackets struggled to defend, barely touched the puck during overtime and suffered a frustrating loss in Nationwide Arena. Those frittered-away second points — along with so many earlier in the season — could lead to tears five weeks from now.

Adrian Kempe's second goal of the game, scored at 2:34 of overtime, sent the Los Angeles Kings to a 5-4 win before a matinee crowd of 14,838, and it sent the Blue Jackets to two straight losses for just the second time since Jan. 10.

"We're scoring four goals, we should be winning games," Blue Jackets coach Rick Bowness said. "We give up five goals (in consecutive games), and that's really disappointing."

Conor Garland, the Blue Jackets' trade deadline acquisition, scored his first two goals with his new club, ending his career-worst 24-game goal-scoring drought in the process.

Denton Mateychuk and Kirill Marchenko added goals for the Blue Jackets, while goaltender Jet Greaves stopped 26 of 31 shots. It was Marchenko's power-play goal with 1:56 remaining that kept the game alive.

Garland found zero satisfaction in ending his personal slump or scoring two goals.

"We're just trying to win hockey games here at this time of year, so that's our main focus," he said. "It's tough to come up short again."

After Saturday's 5-4 loss to Utah, Bowness focused a video session and brief practice Sunday toward eliminating the bad reads that led to several odd-man rushes and easy goals.

The two games were frighteningly similar. The Kings weren't off to the races like Utah was, but they had their way with the puck in the Blue Jackets' zone during too many crucial moments in the game.

Never was that more true than in overtime.

The Kings, who dominated in the faceoff circle (they won 44 of 67 draws), won the opening faceoff at three-on-three play and turned Nationwide into their playground.

The only time the Blue Jackets touched the puck, defenseman Ivan Provorov collected it along the wall deep in his own zone and inexplicably chucked it up the middle of the ice ... right back to the Kings.

Seconds later, Kempe beat Greaves from distance to end it.

“Guys, you can’t imagine how frustrating it is when you play a full overtime without the puck,” Marchenko said. “It’s not five-on-five. It’s three-on-three. You’re just chasing it. It’s tough. It sucks for us. It’s about the small details, and we just have to work on this, and I think we will.”

One of the “small details” will be defending three-on-three, although the very point of three-on-three OT is to end the game quickly. It’s not easy to defend NHL players with that much open ice.

Still, the winning goal Saturday against Utah was scored when Garland seemed confused about who to cover, and the winning goal Monday was scored by Kempe just seconds after Marchenko and Zach Werenski were crossed up.

Bad communication? Maybe. Fatigue? Almost certainly.

“We haven’t controlled the puck at all,” Bowness said. “We got killed on faceoffs, so we ended up spending too much energy chasing the puck. When we got control of it in overtime, we kind of gave it to them.”

The game didn’t get off to a great start for the Blue Jackets, either.

Only three seconds into the game, off the opening faceoff, the Kings’ Quinton Byfield was given a double-minor penalty for high-sticking Blue Jackets winger Mason Marchment, putting the Jackets on the power play for four minutes. The Blue Jackets couldn’t complain about their power-play chances. They moved the puck well and created several scoring chances, but all of them fizzled out in the glove of Kings goaltender Anton Forsberg, a long-ago Columbus draft pick.

Kent Johnson twice could be seen stepping back from shots that Forsberg had swallowed and looking into the rafters in disbelief.

The Blue Jackets had an 11-2 advantage in shots on goal when Los Angeles center Scott Laughton scored to give the Kings a 1-0 lead. It was 2-0 before the end of the first, after former Blue Jackets forward Artemi Panarin scored.

The Blue Jackets lost defenseman Erik Gudbranson to an upper-body injury after a late first-period check by Panarin, who was angered by a Gudbranson hit earlier in the period.

Gudbranson did not return for the final two periods, and Bowness said he wouldn’t travel on their upcoming three-game road trip beginning Tuesday in Tampa. That suggests that Gudbranson, the Blue Jackets’ most physical defenseman, will be out for at least a week.

The Blue Jackets, with 19 games remaining, are 2 points behind Boston for the second wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference and 3 points behind the New York Islanders for third place in the Metro.

They’re treading water, and they’ll be lucky to keep that up if they continue to sag defensively. Since they returned from the Olympic break, they’ve allowed 26 goals in seven games. They’re 3-1-3 in those games, and that pace is not going to get them into the playoffs.

Asked if his glass is “half-full” or “half-empty” after these two overtime losses, Bowness didn’t blink.

“Hall-full, man,” he said. “We’re in the hunt. We’re right there. I believe in these guys. We scored that huge power-play goal (by Marchenko) at the end.

“I believe in these guys, and we’re going to stay in that hunt right until the bitter end.”

The Athletic / Blue Jackets Monday gathering: Trade brings a welcome change for Conor Garland

By Aaron Portzline – March 9, 2026

COLUMBUS, Ohio — A collection of notes, insights, ruminations and did-you-knows gathered throughout the week that was for the Columbus Blue Jackets:

Item No. 1: Plans change

Conor Garland signed a six-year, \$36 million contract extension with the Vancouver Canucks on July 1, 2025. He went pen to paper with a long-term commitment on the first day he was eligible to sign an extension.

If that isn't enough proof of where the Canucks and Garland thought this relationship was headed, then consider that the new contract — which takes effect July 1, 2026 — included a full no-move clause for the first three years.

Life comes at you fast, right?

Late last week, barely eight months after signing the extension, Vancouver traded Garland to the Blue Jackets for a pair of draft picks. He never played a game for the Canucks under the new deal.

It's a dramatic change: A new city more than 2,500 miles and three time zones away; a new organization, new teammates, and a new pace of life away from the rink.

It's the type of upheaval pro athletes always know is possible, and Garland has been all smiles since arriving in Columbus before his Blue Jackets debut Saturday in a 5-4 overtime loss to the Utah Mammoth.

"I signed (that contract) with a team that was planning to be good for the next little bit," Garland said. "And then things happened this year, and maybe the year prior, that changed that.

"They're going into a rebuild, and now I'm coming to a team that's a really, really good club, and a big team, and they play hard. So I was excited. I'm very excited."

There's more to it than that. Much more.

Garland is from Scituate, Mass., just south of Boston. His parents still live in the Boston area, so their visits to see their son and grandkids — there's another on the way in April, Garland said — are now far more manageable.

"My mom is very excited that it won't be a full day at the airport," Garland said.

Garland's sister, Kori, is a maternity nurse in Marion, Ind., just a three-hour drive to Columbus. It's a tight-knit family, and the first gathering is planned for next weekend, Garland said, after the Blue Jackets return from their three-game road trip.

And if you think the move was dramatic for Garland geographically, you should check out the NHL standings. Garland moved from 32nd overall — Vancouver's record is by far the worst in the league — to 12th with Columbus.

The Blue Jackets have missed the playoffs in five straight seasons, but they're three points behind the Boston Bruins for the final wild-card spot in the Eastern Conference.

Garland traveled with the Canucks to Chicago last Thursday for the start of a two-game road trip. He and his father, Garry, had plans to meet in Chicago and grab dinner the night before the Canucks played the Blackhawks.

But shortly after he arrived in Chicago, around 5 p.m. CT, he learned that he'd been traded to Columbus. So they watched the Blue Jackets play the Florida Panthers on TV instead.

"I wasn't even thinking (about where I'd fit, who I'd play with)," Garland said. "I was just hoping (the Blue Jackets) would win. Go get the two points. And I was hoping the teams around us lost.

"It's fun being back in a playoff race. There's nothing like it, there really isn't."

Garland brought only two days' worth of clothes with him to Chicago, so he's been scrambling to get situated before the Jackets depart late Monday for their three-game trip.

Young Canucks forward Max Sasson was living with Garland rent-free in Vancouver, Garland said, but his rent is coming due.

"His payment will be to pack up my house for me and send some stuff out," Garland said. "He'll be busy."

It's been a tough season for Garland. He's a consistent 20-goal scorer, but he has slumped to just seven goals in 50 games this season.

Asked if he needed a change of scenery, Garland gave a thoughtful answer.

"*Needed* is a strong word," he said. "But I would say I welcome it.

"One of the things, mentally, I was kind of struggling with was trying to get through those 20 games at the end with no real playoff hopes. I'm a competitive person. You want to win. You want a chance to compete for the Stanley Cup. It's just exciting to be back in the race.

"It's the best time of the year. The guys have played great here. I just want to come in and help."

Item No. 2: Tough calls

On Saturday, the Blue Jackets made a healthy scratch of Dmitri Voronkov, which would have been unthinkable just a few months ago.

Since Voronkov came to the NHL in 2023-24, only Kirill Marchenko (76) and Adam Fantilli (61) have scored more goals for the Blue Jackets than the big Russian (58). He's fourth on the club this season with 17.

But Blue Jackets coach Rick Bowness now faces a tough decision before every game thanks to the team's depth. They added Garland last Friday without any players leaving the organization. They acquired Mason Marchment in mid-December for draft picks.

"We have to look at our lineup every day now," Bowness said. "We have 14 NHL forwards. We have eight NHL defensemen. If somebody's having a real tough time, they'll get one warning, and then they'll be out. We'll put somebody else in.

"We don't have time to fool around and wait for guys to find their games. They've had all year. They've had 62 games to find their game. If they're off for a little bit, they're going to get a warning. And if it doesn't pick up, they're out."

Voronkov hasn't scored since Jan. 24 and has just 0-1-1 in his last 10 games. The other healthy scratches were forward Danton Heinen and defenseman Jake Christiansen. Dante Fabbro (lower-body injury) missed the game with injury.

Bowness agreed that having too many players and not enough lineup spots is a healthy way to motivate the team at the toughest time of the season. But that doesn't mean he enjoys the daily conversations.

"The worst job of a coach is to tell somebody they're not going to play that night," Bowness said. "For me, after all these years, that's still the job I hate the most. But I'd rather it come from me than have them read it on the wall."

The Blue Jackets are mostly healthy right now. But the final 20 games of the season will be played over just 37 days. There will be bumps and bruises. There will be gas tanks running low. The message to the healthy scratches could not be clearer, he said.

"Stay ready," Bowness said. "We're going to need everybody. They're going to have to handle it and be ready. Nobody's pouting when they're not playing. They're getting ready to play the next time their name is called."

Item No. 3: Take 5, Elvis Merzlikins

Take 5 is our regular brief and (mostly) non-hockey conversation with a Blue Jackets player, coach, broadcaster or staffer. This week, goaltender Elvis Merzlikins:

What part of the city is home?

New Albany. When we first came (to the United States), I had a suit guy who lived in New Albany, and when (my wife) and I first visited him and saw so much green and open space ... not the traffic like downtown. It's an amazing place to raise kids. They can ride their bikes on the streets and all over, and there is no danger.

Favorite restaurant?

Lately, it's Butcher & Rose. When we want a steak, we go there. But closer to home, we go to Del Mar at Easton (Town Center), or Bar Italia, which is also very good. Now, if I want a sandwich, I go to Firehouse

Subs. Italian with double cheese. The steak sub is good. Really, I like the steak sub with cheese and jalapeños. That's definitely our sandwich place.

Any hidden talents?

For me, it's working with wood and making things. You would say woodworking here (in the States). I really enjoy it — the studying how things are built, the measuring, fitting them together. I built a playground for my kids. I built a hockey stick rack for my son, Knox. It's work, but it's relaxing, you know? It calms me down. It's time to think, yes. There is music playing. A couple of beers, as well. I enjoy it. I must really have the talent, too, because I still haven't cut off my fingers.

What song do you have to crank?

Anything by AC/DC. I really like AC/DC. The Offspring. Oh, and Limp Bizkit. That song, "Until the End," would be the song. I really love that.

Favorite vacation spot?

I really want to go to Dubai, but maybe now is not the time (with the Iran conflict ongoing). I would say Santorini (Greece) is my favorite spot. It was the most relaxed, but that was a very long time ago. I want to bring my family to Greece now. Spend a whole day out on a boat to see the sunset. That is my perfect moment.

Item No. 4: Snacks

- After missing the last two games with a lower-body injury, Fabbro skated Sunday and is expected to return to the lineup Monday against the Los Angeles Kings.
- Yes, Monday's game starts at 4 p.m. Both teams agreed to the odd start time for a non-holiday weekday game because they play again Tuesday: the Blue Jackets at Tampa Bay and the Kings at Boston. This game was squeezed into each team's calendars after their scheduled Jan. 26 meeting was postponed due to heavy snowfall and subzero temperatures in central Ohio.
- Saturday's overtime loss to Utah was a raucous affair before a standing-room-only crowd (18,668) in Nationwide Arena. It was a statistically peculiar game, too. Blue Jackets Mathieu Olivier and Damon Severson each had their first Gordie Howe hat tricks (a goal, an assist, and a fight) and became the first Blue Jackets teammates to pull off the feat in the same game.

According to the NHL, the last time two or more teammates had Gordie Howes in the same game was Oct. 30, 2023, when Jack McBain and Liam O'Brien did it while playing for the now-defunct Arizona Coyotes. But Saturday's game actually had *three* Gordie Howes, including Utah's Alex Kerfoot. Per the league, the last time three players in the same game did that was Nov. 14, 1992, thanks to the Buffalo Sabres' Wayne Presley and the New York Islanders' Tom Fitzgerald and Benoit Hogue. No NHL game has ever included four.

- Hockey is the smallest world, example 13,109: In 1988-89, the general manager of the International Hockey League's Flint Spirits needed some midseason energy, so he turned to the ECHL's Carolina

Thunderbirds and recalled an undersized but combative winger in his first and only pro season. The GM? Don Waddell, who today holds the same position with the Blue Jackets. The player? Garry Garland, father of Conor Garland, who, 38 years later, was Waddell's big addition at the trade deadline.

Waddell said the two had a good chat about it Sunday morning at the rink. Garry Garland sure got his money's worth in his lone pro season. He had 30 penalty minutes in four games with Flint. He spent most of the season in the ECHL, where he totaled 151 PIMs in only 23 games.

- It was only fair to wonder if Olivier's 18-goal outburst last season was an outlier. But the right winger has backed up last season's production with 12 goals so far in 2025-26, despite missing 13 games earlier this season with an abdominal injury. Since the start of last season, Olivier has 30 goals and a league-leading 228 penalty minutes. As predicted in this space, he hasn't found as many fights this season, given his standing as the NHL's toughest customer. He's tied for fourth in the league with fighting majors, one behind Vancouver's Curtis Douglas, the Montreal Canadiens' Arber Xhekaj, and the Anaheim Ducks' Ross Johnston.
- Olivier's 27 penalty minutes Saturday marked a career high and moved him past Jason Chimera (372 penalty minutes) for 10th on the franchise's all-time list with 379.
- Speaking of franchise lists — with his next assist, Boone Jenner will match David Vyborny for third on the all-time list with 204. Only Zach Werenski (316) and Rick Nash (258) have more.
- More than a few fans groused during Saturday's game when Utah seemed to be getting additional time on the bench to determine if they wanted to challenge goals scored by the Blue Jackets. The issue? The monitor on the bench, which the coaches and players use to watch instant replays, wasn't working properly, Bowness said.
- Charlie Coyle is from Weymouth, Mass., south of Boston. Garland is from Scituate, just a bit farther south. Coyle is four years older, and Garland grew up admiring and trying to emulate him as they followed similar paths to the NHL. "I loved watching him when I was younger," Garland said of his new teammate. "I remember playing in a charity game with him — he was playing for the (Boston) Bruins at the time. Just the way he handled all the kids ... there were about 300 there waiting for him, and he gave every one of them his time. You learn a lot from him. Great person. There were guys in that area — Keith Yandle, Kevin Hayes, Brian Boyle, Charlie Coyle — guys who were older that played, and we always looked up to them as younger guys. It's really cool now to play with him."
- One more Garland tidbit: He hasn't scored a goal in 24 games, the longest stretch in his 536-game NHL career. His last goal was Dec. 16, when Vancouver played the New York Rangers in Madison Square Garden. How much is that eating at him? "Not at all," Garland said after Sunday's brief practice. "I've had a few called back (after review). I've missed five or six breakaways. If I was going out there and not getting chances, I'd be concerned. But ... I'm going out there trying to make plays, and I'm not concerned about it. I had some chances (on Saturday). It is what it is. It's all about winning now."
- With 20 games left in the season, Coyle is approaching new career highs in assists and points. He's at 16-33-49 after a two-assist performance on Saturday. His career mark in assists is 38, set during the

2016-17 season with the Minnesota Wild. His career mark in points is 60, set in 2023-24 with Boston. Contract talks are tabled until the end of the season, Waddell has said, but Coyle's timing could not be better. He will be an unrestricted free agent this summer.

[The Columbus Dispatch / Columbus Blue Jackets lose to LA. Kings in overtime: 5 takeaways](#)

By Brian Hedger – March 9, 2026

At the end of another eventful game March 9 at Nationwide Arena, the Blue Jackets tacked another point onto their season total in a 5-4 overtime loss to the Los Angeles Kings.

Despite feeling the sting of letting an extra point slip in 3-on-3 OT for a second straight game on home ice, the points they added in each loss still matter. The Blue Jackets are still in the thick of things for a playoff spot in the Eastern Conference with 19 games remaining, and there's no time to sulk with the second half of a back-to-back to play March 10 at the Tampa Bay Lightning.

The Boston Bruins are two points ahead for the second of two wild-card spots and the New York Islanders are three points up for third in the Metropolitan Division. Asked whether the Blue Jackets' situation is a glass half-full or half-empty, coach Rick Bowness didn't hesitate to answer.

"Half-full, man, we're in the hunt," he said. "We're right there. ... I believe in these guys and we're going to stay in that hunt right to the bitter end."

Here are five takeaways from another win that got away:

Columbus Blue Jackets struggling in 3-on-3 overtime

Prior to Bowness taking over as the Blue Jackets' head coach Jan. 12, former coach Dean Evason seemed to make some peculiar decisions regarding 3-on-3 overtime periods.

Rather than sending his top offensive weapons into the game at the same time, Evason leaned on defensive-minded players to help push games to shootouts. The Jackets' loss to the Kings shows why Evason employed that strategy.

In short, Columbus has struggled to gain and keep possession during 3-on-3 play.

After finally gaining possession against the Kings, defenseman Ivan Provorov gave it right back by chipping the puck into the neutral zone. Adrian Kempe scored seconds later, dropping the Blue Jackets to 5-9 in games decided in OT.

They're 5-1 in shootouts.

"We had control of the puck [before giving it back]," Bowness said. "That's the biggest thing in the last two overtimes. We haven't controlled the puck ... at all."

Columbus Blue Jackets allowing too many goals

One of Bowness' priorities after taking over as coach was to reduce the number of goals the Blue Jackets give up. He emphasized better defensive play in front of the net and in surrounding areas where most

goals are generated. It worked during his first 11 games going into the NHL's Olympic break. Since then, they have allowed four or more goals in five of seven games.

"If we're scoring four goals, we should be winning games," Bowness said. "Now we give up five in back-to-back (games), that's disappointing. That's not who we are."

The Jackets are also playing a tough slate of opponents while facing what Money Puck assesses to be the NHL's second-toughest remaining schedule.

Conor Garland sizzling to start Columbus Blue Jackets career

It didn't take Conor Garland long to show the Blue Jackets what he can provide to the lineup.

In two games since a March 6 trade brought him to Columbus, he has shown nimble skating, powerful bursts of speed and impressive hand-eye coordination. Garland scored twice against the Kings.

"That's how he plays," Bowness said. "He's a good fit for us. He's on the puck. He stops. He starts. He doesn't go for big loops. He's not afraid of the battles. He's going to win his share. [He's] not the biggest, but he's got enough power in his legs. It's his tenacity that I really like. He's a good fit."

Columbus Blue Jackets pay for not scoring on extended power play

Right off the opening draw, the Blue Jackets got a four-minute power play when Kings forward Quinton Byfield drew blood from Mason Marchment's face with a high stick.

The Jackets were awarded four minutes of power-play time but couldn't get the puck past Anton Forsberg, despite getting off seven shots. Not taking an early lead allowed the Kings to gain momentum that paid off when they scored the game's first two goals later in the first period.

"[Forsberg] was outstanding," Bowness said. "That's the best [our] power play has looked, in terms of creating quality [scoring] chances, not just shots on net but quality chances, and he was ready for that challenge. That kept them in the game."

Columbus Blue Jackets defenseman Erik Gudbranson injured

The Blue Jackets played the final two periods by mixing and matching five defensemen following an upper-body injury that knocked Erik Gudbranson out of the game late in the first period.

Gudbranson sustained the injury on a hit by former Blue Jackets star Artemi Panarin. Bowness said he won't make the upcoming three-game road trip to Tampa Bay, South Florida and Philadelphia. Look for either Egor Zamula or Jake Christiansen to skate in Gudbranson's spot on the third defensive pairing.

The Hockey Writers / Blue Jackets News & Rumors: Severson, Future Lineup Decisions & More

By Mark Scheig -March 9, 2026

Saturday night at Nationwide Arena was one of the loudest nights in recent memory. The Utah Mammoth and Columbus Blue Jackets put on a show filled with goals, big moments and a huge scuffle in the third period.

With the score 4-4 with just over five minutes left in regulation, all heck broke loose. A pair of fights broke out in the corner near goaltender Karel Vejmelka. Mathieu Olivier fought Ian Cole twice in the same sequence which resulted in a game misconduct for Olivier. But also, Damon Severson fought Alex Kerfoot.

Fighting is something you generally wouldn't see from Severson. But in the moment seeing his team seemingly outnumbered, he answered the bell.

When Severson came out of the scrum, he skated across the ice pumping the crowd up. The crowd responded like it was a playoff game. The players felt that momentum would be enough to eventually get the win.

While Logan Cooley was able to score in overtime to give the Mammoth the win, it was still an unforgettable night thanks to the fans. In Severson's three years with the team, he admitted it was the loudest he's heard Nationwide Arena.

"Probably in my three years, that's the loudest I've heard it and that's the best atmosphere was last night," Severson said of the Blue Jackets' fans.

Severson said he watched back the replay of him pumping up the crowd. What was going through his head in that moment? And what prompted him to fight Kerfoot knowing he's not out looking to fight?

"I don't want to fight. I don't look to go fight," Severson said. "I was just always told to protect myself and my teammates. It's like the old saying, but luckily enough, we got some bigger guys who can handle themselves really well on the team. And last night was just one of those situations. I'm not going looking for it at all."

"I saw we were outnumbered five-on-three in the corner and I knew we were getting called for a penalty," Severson continued. "(Werenski) and I just jumped in to try to protect and it just ended up working out that way where we're both all in there going to fight. It's just protecting myself and my teammates and I don't back down from anyone."

The adrenaline was flowing as Severson left the ice after his fight. In his words, there's not much thought going on in the moment especially when the moment calls for it.

“You don’t really think much, honestly,” Severson said. “Your adrenaline’s going so much. I’m not a fighter by any means. It’s a part that you have to do it. I’m more than willing to step up. Your adrenaline’s so excited. You’re at home. You don’t do that on the road obviously because you’re playing into (their) crowd at that point. You’re at home. You’re in a big game. It’s 4-4 late in the game like that and we’re not looking to do that. But we were in a huge moment in the game and just the adrenaline was going.”

“I was excited. We were trying to come back. I don’t want to put my team down. I don’t want to sit in the box. I want to be out there and be able to help the team in those five minutes of key moments. But it’s a spur of the moment thing. But when I’m pumping up the crowd like that, I’m trying to think of what I’m thinking in that moment. You don’t really think much other than you’re just excited. It’s just one of those key moments that you’re trying to play into the crowd and keep them involved in the game heavily.”

The Blue Jackets had multiple chances to take the lead including one from Adam Fantilli on a late power play. They had the momentum and thought it would be enough to get the win. While it wasn’t enough on Saturday, it showed two important things.

First, the Blue Jackets if necessary will answer the call especially if they see their teammates outnumbered. Then second, the crowd made it an amazing atmosphere. It made it feel like a playoff atmosphere. Down the stretch of the season, it’s those kind of moments and help from the home crowd that could prove to be a difference maker in big games.

Severson answering the bell shows that just about anyone on the Blue Jackets is capable of the same if the situation warrants it. It made for great theatre on Saturday night.

No Time to Mess Around With the Lineup

Now that it is after the NHL Trade Deadline, rosters can be over 23 players assuming it is cap compliant. Thanks to the Blue Jackets bringing in Conor Garland, they sit with a roster of 24.

Head coach Rick Bowness has to make lineup decisions knowing there are 14 forward and 8 defensemen who can play. Barring injuries, that’s two forwards and two defensemen that will sit every game.

On Sunday after practice, Bowness spoke about his mindset on some of those decisions. He also spoke a little bit on Dmitri Voronkov, who was a healthy scratch on Saturday. In the head coach’s mind, there is no time for messing around. They remain outside the playoffs starting this week.

“We have to look at our lineup everyday now,” Bowness said. “We got 14 NHL forwards. We got eight NHL defense. If somebody’s having a real tough time, they’ll get one warning and then they’ll be out. We’ll put somebody else in. We don’t have time to fool around, wait for guys to find their game. They’ve had all year. So they’ve had 62 games to find their game. And if they’re off for a little bit, they’re going to get a warning. If it doesn’t pick up, then they’re out.”

Barring an unexpected injury or illness, Voronkov is set to miss a second-straight game Monday when the Blue Jackets host the Los Angeles Kings in a make up from the previous postponement due to severe winter weather. Bowness said Voronkov will get another chance upcoming.

“He’s a big man that works,” Bowness said. He hasn’t created a lot of offense and so I think that’s kind of hurt him a little bit. But I give him credit. He works incredibly hard. He’s a big, heavy man in there. He’s going to go back in. Everyone’s going to play. With the schedule we have coming up, everyone’s going to play. When he gets back in there, we hope he can bang in a goal around the net like he normally does and see if that gives him a chance to stay in the lineup.”

The Blue Jackets have 20 games left starting with Monday’s game against the Kings. To get to 100 points, they would need to finish those games 12-5-3 or equivalent to get to 100 points. The current pace to make the Eastern Conference Playoffs is about 99 points.

There is simply no time for the Blue Jackets to wait for struggling players to find their game. Knowing that four players are out each game should give the ones playing the motivation to play their best. One or two bad games could lead to a date in the press box.

Side Dishes

We’ll find out for sure Monday pregame, but the expectation is that Fabbro will be able to play. He skated with Erik Gudbranson at Sunday’s practice. He missed Saturday’s game due to a lower-body injury.

Sean Monahan and Charlie Coyle didn’t practice on Sunday. Bowness confirmed those were maintenance days for both players.

The Kings and Blue Jackets will play at 4pm eastern on Monday. How different is that routine with a puck drop three hours earlier than normal? Severson addressed that.

Severson: “It’s a bit of an awkward time. I really like the 1:00 or 3:00 games. Just wake up in the morning, have a little bit of food, come to the arena, come to the rink, have your meetings and play. Whereas the seven’s are always our normal time. 4:00’s are just a weird one obviously with it being a make up game and we’re travelling on top of back-to-back. You adjust your routine a little bit, trying to find the right time, amount of sleep and get ready in the morning. It will be awkward timing-wise but both teams have to do it. We’re excited to finish the homestand with it.”