



DALLAS STARS COMMUNICATIONS

DAILY NEWS CLIPS

Sunday, December 7, 2025

NHL.com (Dallas Stars)

Heika's Take: Perseverance once again pays off as Stars pull ahead late to beat Sharks

By Mike Heika

Date: 12/06/2025

The Magical Mystery Tour continued for the Stars on Friday with a game that was Here, There and Everywhere.

In the end, the lads in Victory Green took a 4-1 win over the San Jose Sharks at American Airlines Center. It was just one more reminder of how fabulous they have been this year.

"We stuck with it," Stars coach Glen Gulutzan said of Dallas breaking up a 1-1 tie midway through the third period on a Sam Steel goal. "It was hard, they're coming off a loss at home that was a tough loss. I thought we started off good, and then I thought they had a little bit of a push. Our penalty kills, the two kills in the third period were massive. That's a good power play over there. I thought the penalty kill was the difference there. And, obviously, we got some timely scoring."

There were so many things that were true to the identity of the 2025-26 Stars, and so many things that were different. Gulutzan and the coaching staff pushed for a good start against a motivated Sharks team and got just that – holding San Jose to no shots on goal in the first 16 minutes of the game.

Dallas took a 1-0 lead on Jason Robertson's 18th goal of the season in the first period. This one came on a power play rebound. The Sharks tied the game in the second period as they started to find their legs, and then they dominated the early portion of the third frame.

The Stars were whistled for five penalties, putting the Sharks on four power plays, but San Jose wasn't able to get anything going. That was early in the third, and Dallas seized momentum from there.

"I mean we had chances right, two power plays there, but we didn't get anything out of them, momentum or anything, that can't happen in this game," said Sharks coach Ryan Warsofsky.

Dallas then received a good grinding shift from Steel, Mikko Rantanen and Wyatt Johnston and found a way to get a goal.

"I think we were out there a little bit late, we turned over the puck in the offensive zone, when you're late on your shift you can't do that," Warsofsky said. "When we came back

in the D-zone, we were actually in decent spots, but we couldn't get to a net. Story of the season basically."

And the story of the season for the Stars, as well. Rantanen had an uneven game, taking three minor penalties but finishing with a goal and two assists. Rantanen was part of the chaos around the net that allowed Steel to shovel in the go-ahead goal midway through the third, and then Rantanen added the insurance goal six minutes later on a beautiful sweeping shot off a turnaround.

It was the kind of play the Stars have been making at the right time while pushing their record to 19-5-5 this season.

"Our structure was pretty good. So, we don't give up too much, even though they might have some O-zone time and stuff," Steel said. "I think we just stuck with it and came out with it at the end."

It's a trick this group seems to repeat while turning out hit after hit. They can do pop, they can do rock, they can even mix in the sitar when needed. And the harmonies seem perfect almost every night.

The penalty kill has now stopped 25 consecutive opposing power play opportunities. The goaltending continues to be stellar as Jake Oettinger stopped 16 shots and moved his record to 13-4-2.

"It is tough," Gulutzan said of the uneven pace of the game. "Those games are not easy. It's a credit to goalies that can have a performance like he did. He made some key saves."

Mix in that performance with an empty-net goal from Miro Heiskanen (just the third of the year for the Stars) and it was a perfect ending to a bit of an odd game.

It wasn't so much A Hard Day's Night as the team telling everyone to just Let it Be.

"It's not always going to be pretty, but we've played a lot of hockey lately, a lot of games and feel like everyone's contributing," said forward Justin Hryckowian. "I think we've been patient in all of these games and we're finding different ways to win."

NHL.com (Dallas Stars)

Game Day Guide: Stars vs Penguins

By Stars Staff

Date: 12/07/2025

When: Sunday, December 7 at 5:00 p.m.

Where: American Airlines Center

TV: Victory+

Radio: The Ticket 96.7-FM, 1310-AM

Live Stats: NHL Game Center

Tickets: Single-game / Groups / Rentals

Local Parking: AAC Parking Options

Arena Bag Policy: Frequently Asked Questions

20% Off In Arena: Women's Line Change Warm Up Hoody

Food Highlight: Texas-Sized Philly Cheesesteak Sandwich

50/50 Beneficiary: Dallas Stars Foundation

Robo's Toy Drive: PNC Plaza & Fan Center

Five Points

The Dallas Stars face the Pittsburgh Penguins Sunday night for the first of two matchups this season. The two teams will face each other for a final time this season on March 28 in Pittsburgh.

Dallas is 70-72-14 all-time vs. Pittsburgh, including a 46-25-8 mark on home ice.

The Stars have won four of their last five games against Penguins dating back to March 23, 2023. Dallas has also won seven of their last 10 games played vs. Pittsburgh at American Airlines Center (7-3-0).

Forward Jamie Benn enters Sunday's matchup riding a four-game point streak against Pittsburgh, collecting five points (3-2—5) during that span. In all, Benn has registered 17 points (8-9—17) in 25 career games played against the Penguins.

Forward Jason Robertson has nine points (1-8—9) in seven career games against Pittsburgh, carrying a plus-minus rating of +4. He has posted multi-point efforts in four of the seven games he has played against the Penguins. Robertson's 1.29 points per game against the Penguins ranks seventh among active NHL skaters who have played Pittsburgh at least three times in their careers.

Stats Against Opponent

Active Streaks

Jamie Benn (3-2—5, 4 GP)

Miro Heiskanen (2-1—3, 2 GP)

Leading Scorers

Matt Duchene (10-9—19, 27 GP)

Jamie Benn (8-9—17, 25 GP)

Tyler Seguin (10-6—16, 32 GP)

Mikko Rantanen (5-11—16, 15 GP)

Players To Watch

Stars forward Rantanen enters Sunday's game having recorded a point in each of the last five games that he has played in. A goal or an assist on Sunday would extend his point streak to six games for the first time since he had a 14-game point streak from Dec. 7, 2024 to Jan. 6, 2025 (9-14—23). His five-game point streak was tied for the sixth-longest active point streak in the NHL entering play Saturday. He has totaled 10 points (3-7—10) during this current stretch. In all, Rantanen has totaled 38 points (13-25—38) through 28 games this season, leading the team in scoring while ranking fifth in the league entering play Saturday. In his career against Pittsburgh, Rantanen has registered 16 points (5-11—16) in 15 games, including putting up five points (3-2—5) on Dec. 10, 2024 (w/ COL).

Penguins forward Sidney Crosby enters Sunday's contest having six points (5-1—6) in his last five games played. In all, Crosby has totaled 29 points (18-11—29) through 26 games this season, tied for the team lead. He has also registered 10 multi-point outings this season. Among active NHL skaters this season, Crosby ranks tied for third in both goals (18) and power-play goals (7). In his career against Dallas, Crosby has tallied 26 points (13-13—26) in 25 games played, carrying a plus-minus rating of +10 and averaging 1.04 points per game. Crosby put up a hat trick and an assist (3-1—4) in his last outing against the Stars on April 4, 2025.

First Shift

Alexander Petrovic is a great example for a lot of the Stars players.

The 33-year-old defenseman was drafted in the second round and played seven seasons with the Florida Panthers. He then spent most of the next six seasons in the minors, including long stretches with the Texas Stars.

But after coming up two seasons ago to play seven playoff games, and then logging 17 post-season contests last year, the steady blueliner impressed the coaching staff enough to become a regular this year.

With injuries to Thomas Harley, Nils Lundkvist and Lian Bichsel, Petrovic has bumped up the lineup and is playing more than 17 minutes per game in November and December.

“He’s been a beast, really,” Stars coach Glen Gulutzan said. “He’s been really good for us.”

Petrovic has a lot of what the team needs. At 6-5, he is both physical and rangy. As a right-hander, he gives balance to a mostly left-handed group of defensemen. And as a calm veteran, he earns confidence from the coaches and his teammates.

In doing so, he makes it a little easier for players like Kyle Capobianco and Vladislav Kolyachonok to step in and help the Stars.

“He’s worked so hard, and he really deserves this,” said Capobianco, who played last season with Petrovic in Cedar Park. “It’s great to see something like that, because you see what can happen with the hard work.”

The trickle down has been impressive for the Stars. They sit 19-5-5 despite having injuries to several different players. While the big shifts have happened on defense, injuries to Duchene and Seguin have created opening in the forward group.

As a result, players like Sam Steel, Colin Blackwell and Mavrik Bourque are getting additional minutes, while Justin Hryckowian and Nathan Bastian are getting the chance to jump right in.

“That’s the way the league goes,” said Gulutzan. “It rewards players who take advantages of opportunities.”

As the Stars potentially get healthier – Harley, Lundkvist and Duchene each skated on Saturday and are getting close to returning – the challenge will become even greater for the depth players. But just getting the chance to show what you have for a few games can have lasting effects.

“You just live day to day,” Capobianco said. “You show up and do your best and hope that you can help the team.”

If you do, it’s pretty certain management and coaches will take notice.

Key Numbers

Dallas leads the NHL in third-period scoring with 41 goals, and that includes just three empty-netters.

12

Dallas is tied for the NHL lead in goals scored by backhand shot at 12. Robertson is credited with 5.

34.4 percent

Pittsburgh ranks first in the NHL in power play success rate at 34.4 percent. Dallas ranks third at 31.9 percent.

He Said It

"I think we'll get one of our guys back for sure. We'll see how guys are in the morning. I think Duchene is very close to playing, Lundkvist is very close to playing, Harley is still a few days away. We'll see in the morning where everybody is at."

-Stars coach Glen Gulutzan on injured player Duchene, Lundkvist and Harley, who all skated Saturday. Dallas placed Seguin and Bichsel on long-term IR Saturday to make possible room for roster moves.

NHL.com (Dallas Stars)

Dallas Stars statement on the passing of former team owner Thomas O. Hicks

By Dallas Stars Communications

Date: 12/07/2025

FRISCO, Texas – The entire Dallas Stars family mourns the loss of our former owner Thomas O. Hicks, who passed away on Saturday at the age of 79.

During his ownership of the club from 1995 - 2011, the team experienced unprecedented success and captured multiple division titles, two Presidents' Trophies and the 1999 Stanley Cup. He also played an instrumental role in the development and planning of the American Airlines Center, along with the grassroots growth of hockey through the creation of numerous StarCenter facilities. Our franchise would not be in the position we are today without the ownership of Mr. Hicks. His legacy will be honored by our franchise for decades to come.

A widely regarded pioneer in American business, he also made extraordinary contributions to the city of Dallas, helping shape the region's cultural, educational, and civic landscape. His impact will be part of our community forever, but he will ultimately be remembered most for his profound love of family.

We would like to extend our deepest sympathies to his wife, Cinda Cree, six children, many grandchildren and the entire Hicks family.

NHL.com

Rantanen has goal, 2 assists, Stars top Sharks to extend point streak to 9

By Taylor Baird

Date: 12/05/2025

DALLAS -- Mikko Rantanen had a goal and two assists for the Dallas Stars, who extended their point streak to nine games with a 4-1 win against the San Jose Sharks at American Airlines Center on Friday.

"I asked him, I wasn't quite sure if he was chasing the point lead or the penalty minute lead. He had a little laugh there," Dallas coach Glen Gulutzan said of Rantanen, who took three penalties in the game. "He's competitive. He does great things and we don't want him in the box those six minutes a night, but it happens sometimes."

Sam Steel broke a tie midway through the third period, and Jason Robertson and Miro Heiskanen also scored for the Stars (19-5-5), who have gone 7-0-2 in their past nine. Wyatt Johnston had two assists, and Jake Oettinger made 16 saves.

Collin Graf scored for the Sharks (13-13-3), who lost their second in a row after alternating wins and losses in their previous eight games. Yaroslav Askarov made 20 saves.

"I mean we had chances right, two power plays there, but we didn't get anything out of them, momentum or anything, that can't happen in this game," San Jose coach Ryan Warsofsky said.

Jeff Skinner returned for the Sharks after missing the past 10 games with a lower-body injury.

"I feel fine. Obviously, we would like to have a better result, but I feel fine," Skinner said. "It's a good team, there's not a lot of space, couldn't really get to the inside much. They closed the lanes up and were blocking shots. I thought as the game went on, we got better. I thought we had some looks on the power play, we just couldn't find it when we needed it."

Robertson's power-play goal gave Dallas a 1-0 lead at 14:20 of the first period when he backhanded in a rebound from the left side of the net. It was his 15th goal in the past 13 games.

"I think we just kind of played a mature game," Stars forward Justin Hryckowian said. "We didn't want to get into a back-and-forth game, wanted to get some [offensive] zone time and kind of low event a little bit to start. I thought we did that and just kind of built on our game as we went."

Graf tied it 1-1 at 8:23 of the second period, capitalizing on a rebound in a net-front scramble.

"I mean it can't really get worse than the Washington game (a 7-1 loss on Wednesday), so I thought for the most part we battled with [the Stars], just a couple mistakes and didn't get the result. But a loss is a loss, and we got to get back in the win column," Graf said. "Obviously, things weren't going our way the last game, and we weren't generating a whole lot today, so I think it's just trying to get puck to the net and sometimes the bounces are with you."

Steel gave the Stars a 2-1 lead at 10:56 of the third after he poked in his own rebound from the right of the goal.

"I think our structures, our systems, everyone's thinking the same thing, everyone's on the same page," Dallas defenseman Alexander Petrovic said. "That helps. Everyone knows their job. So, it's whether our legs aren't there one night or they are just still doing the same things, maybe at a different pace. But I think guys are good at realizing maybe keep it a little more simple and just stick with it."

Rantanen extended it to 3-1 at 16:39 on a shot from the bottom of the right face-off circle into the far upper corner of the net.

"We've been playing a lot of games. For the most part, our structure was pretty good," Steel said. "We don't give up too much even though they might have some [offensive] zone time. Nothing crazy dangerous. We just stuck with it and came out with [the win] in the end."

Macklin Celebrini appeared to score at 17:20 to bring the Sharks within one, but the play was overturned after the Stars successfully challenged for offside.

"I thought we did some good stuff," Sharks defenseman Timothy Liljegren said. "Obviously it was a close game there until they scored their second, thought we came out a little flat in the first, but came back in the second but obviously lost in the third. I felt like it was a pretty close game up until, obviously, they scored a couple late there in the third. It was for sure better, but I think it's a process and we can still play a lot better."

NOTES: Robertson scored his 186th career goal and passed Bobby Smith for 12th most in Stars/North Stars history. ... Rantanen recorded his 200th career multipoint game and became the fourth Finnish player to reach the milestone. He joined Jari Kurri (385 multipoint games), Teemu Selanne (382) and Aleksander Barkov (209).

Dallas Morning News

Stars use late goals barrage to sink San Jose Sharks, extend point streak to nine games

By Lia Assimakopoulos

Date: 12/05/2025

The Dallas Stars found themselves in a defensive battle with the San Jose Sharks at American Airlines Center Friday night but found a way to grind out a win, padded by a few late goals.

In a game with just 41 total shots on goal, the Stars emerged with a 4-1 victory thanks to a dominant performance by the penalty kill and three goals in the third period to put them over the top.

The Stars extended their points streak to nine games with the win.

"I think we've been patient in all these games and finding different ways to win," Stars forward Justin Hryckowian said. "I thought we kind of just played a mature game. We didn't want to get into a back-and-forth game."

The Stars controlled the first period, outshooting the Sharks 9-3 and not allowing San Jose to take a shot on goal for the first 16 minutes of the game. In that time, Dallas built a 1-0 lead when Jason Robertson finished a shot Wyatt Johnston took on the power play that hit the crossbar.

The Stars kept up with their average of 1.04 power play goals per game this season, an NHL best. Robertson now has 15 goals in his last 13 games.

Midway through the second period, San Jose tied the game when Collin Graf scored from a crowd in front of the net.

The Sharks had numerous chances to take the lead, as Dallas' penalty kill took the ice four times.

Mikko Rantanen committed three penalties in the contest, now bringing his total penalty minutes to 65 in 28 games this season. That's the second-most he's had in a season, trailing only the 82 minutes he had in 82 games in the 2022-23 season. Rantanen, who leads the league in penalty minutes, could break that career-high before the end of the month.

His three-minor game was his first since that 2022-23 season.

"I asked him, I wasn't quite sure if he was chasing the point lead or the penalty-minute lead. He had a little laugh there," Stars coach Glen Gulutzan said. "We don't want him in

the box. I think he was a little frustrated at times. There was maybe a missed call in the first and then it just snowballed on him a little bit. He's competitive, but he does great things, and we don't want him in the box those six minutes a night."

But all the penalties gave the Stars' PK a chance to shine. Dallas killed all four penalties and has now killed 23 consecutive penalties over its last seven games.

"We've got some rhythm now with our killers," Gulutzan said. "We're on a little run."

The Stars took control midway through the third period. Sam Steel snuck the game-winning goal past San Jose goalie Yaroslav Askarov with 9:04 remaining in regulation. Rantanen made it a two-goal game with under four minutes left in the game, finishing with as many points as he had penalties.

San Jose's Macklin Celebrini scored a minute later, but Dallas challenged the goal for being offside and was correct.

Miro Heiskanen added an empty netter from the opposite end of the ice with 2:19 to play.

Stars goalie Jake Oettinger made 16 saves in the low-event win.

The Stars were still without Matt Duchene, Thomas Harley and Nils Lunkdvist, who are all day to day with injuries. They were also without Adam Erne, Lian Bichsel and Tyler Seguin, who are out long term.

The Stars will remain home and face the Pittsburgh Penguins Sunday evening.

Dallas Morning News

How the Dallas Stars have overcome injuries and found unexpected defensive success

By Lia Assimakopoulos

Date: 12/06/2025

Losing four of their top six defensemen and a handful of forwards in their first 29 games may not have been the way the Stars thought they'd improve their defensive game.

But Stars coach Glen Gulutzan said it gave his team no choice.

"We had to get in the lifeboats a little bit and play D and preserve," Gulutzan said ahead of Friday's 4-1 win over the San Jose Sharks. "That stuff helps you moving forward. We've had to really nail down some of our defensive play. As you're adding pieces back into the mix and your forwards kind of get a little healthier, you're seeing a good balance."

The Stars learned this week they'd be without Lian Bichsel for the next 6-8 weeks, as the young defenseman would need surgery for a lower-body injury. They're also still without Thomas Harley and Nils Lundkvist, who haven't played in three and seven weeks, respectively, due to injuries.

However, Dallas has still shined defensively, ranking third in the league in goals allowed per game (2.57). Between reliable depth and solid penalty killing, the Stars have managed to overcome significant adversity on the blue line.

"Our structure, our systems, everyone's thinking the same thing," defenseman Alexander Petrovic said. "Everyone's on the same page. Whether our legs aren't there one night or they are, we're still doing the same things."

Friday's game was the latest display. The Stars held the Sharks to just three shots on goal in the first period despite San Jose ranking second in the league in first-period goals with 31 in 29 games. Through two periods, the Stars had allowed just nine shots on goal.

Their showing Friday followed a shutout in New Jersey just two nights prior. Dallas hasn't allowed more than three goals in any of its last 14 games.

Defensive depth has been among the Stars' fatal flaws in past years. When Dallas had to turn to depth defensemen like Matt Dumba and Brendan Smith last year, their play suffered. Currently, the Stars have three defensemen in the lineup that spent almost all of last season in the AHL — Alexander Petrovic, Kyle Capobianco and Vladislav Kolyachonok. Capobianco and Kolyachonok started this season in the AHL as well.

But they've filled in for veteran NHL blue liners seamlessly. Kolyachonok, the youngest of the group, even made a key poke check on a Will Smith breakaway to save a goal Friday.

"They've just done a great job of playing the way we want to play and fitting in," Gulutzan said. "And I don't even think they've just held water. I thought they've been good, and they're making names for themselves."

It's also helped that the Stars' penalty kill is on a hot streak. The group has killed 23 consecutive penalties over its last seven games. In Friday's win, Esa Lindell had nearly seven minutes of shorthanded ice time. Oskar Bäck, Colin Blackwell, Sam Steel and Miro Heiskanen all had over 3:30, as the Stars killed all four San Jose power plays.

"We take a lot of pride in it," Steel said. "When we get given that opportunity to go out there and kill a penalty and we come up with it, it's a good feeling for sure."

Both penalty kill and 5-on-5 defensive success doesn't just boil down to the work of the defensemen. The Stars' forwards have contributed just as much. With a strong group of defensive-minded forwards like Steel, Blackwell, Bäck and Radek Faksa, the Stars have been able to play a more sound defensive game. Their goaltenders have also stacked solid performances in net to clean up anything that gets through.

Some extra support should be coming soon, as both Harley and Lundkvist skated with the team during morning skate Friday. Gulutzan labeled both as day-to-day and said he expects them to return next week.

But the Stars aren't as desperate as they maybe thought they would be for those players to return. The healthy ones have been filling in just fine.

"Guys in and out, injuries, guys jumping into different roles, it's always a bit of a challenge, but we have a great group here, great culture that's been built for a long time," Steel said. "There's confidence in everybody in this room to step into whatever role it may be."

Dallas Morning News

Stars place Tyler Seguin, Lian Bichsel on LTIR with lower body injuries

By Lia Assimakopoulos

Date: 12/06/2025

The Dallas Stars made two roster moves Saturday morning, indicating more moves could be coming.

The team announced it has placed Tyler Seguin and Lian Bichsel on long-term injured reserve (LTIR) as each deal with lower body injuries. Bichsel will miss 6-8 weeks after undergoing surgery for an injury to his left leg, while Seguin will likely miss the rest of the season with an ACL injury. Bichsel is on LTIR retroactive to Nov. 30, while the Seguin move was retroactive to Dec. 2.

The moves relieve \$4.74 million in cap space, which will allow the Stars to either activate other players that are close to returning from injured reserve or call up additional support from the Texas Stars.

Beginning in the 2025-26 season, the NHL introduced a new designation for long-term injured reserve (LTIR).

In past years, a player could be placed on LTIR if he would miss at least 10 NHL games and 24 days of the regular season. Putting a player on LTIR allowed a team to exceed the salary cap ceiling by the player's cap hit minus its available cap space. It offered more relief than regular injured reserve, which only freed up the roster spot.

An injury to a player like Seguin, who has a cap hit of \$9.85 million, typically would have opened up a massive amount of cap space for the Stars to work with. However, it's not necessarily as significant this year.

This season, the league introduced a new designation called season-ending long-term injured reserve. If a player is placed on SELTIR, meaning he will miss the rest of the regular season and the playoffs, the team can receive LTIR relief up to the player's full cap hit, as they've been able to do in the past.

However, if the player may return later in the regular season or the playoffs, the LTIR benefit is limited to the previous season's average league salary, which was \$3,817,293.

With Seguin placed on regular LTIR, the Stars receive approximately \$3.82 in immediate salary cap relief. Placing Bichsel on LTIR gives Dallas an additional \$918,000 of salary cap relief for the injured defenseman.

Seguin is not yet on SELTIR, but the Stars have the option to move Seguin to that designation later this season and receive his full \$9.85 million.

However, Seguin is still receiving more guidance from doctors on whether he would be available to return in the playoffs or whether his injury is year-ending. He can only be placed on SELTIR if he misses the regular season and playoffs.

If that's the case, the Stars will likely want to trade for a top-six forward and use some of Seguin's significant cap space. But given the condensed schedule and all the injuries they've already had, it's risky for Dallas to make any move this early. Expect a trade won't come until much closer to the March deadline.

Last year, for example, the Stars were able to use Seguin's cap hit starting in early December but didn't make their first trade until February when Miro Heiskanen and Nils Lundkvist both went down with injuries in the same week.

As the Stars continue to win, there is less of an immediate need to make a move. Plus, the Stars don't have all too many assets to give up, other teams aren't desperate to trade this early in the year.

While the moves likely don't indicate a trade in the near future, they do signal that the Stars could make some further roster moves before Sunday's home game against the Pittsburgh Penguins.

Defenseman Ilya Lyubushkin didn't skate at practice Saturday due to injury. Stars coach Glen Gulutzan said he believes either Nils Lundkvist or Matt Duchene may be available to play for the first time in months Sunday. Both have been out since mid-October with injuries.

If Lundkvist and Lyubushkin aren't available, the Stars would only have five healthy defensemen and need to call up a defenseman from the Texas Stars Sunday morning.

"We just have to see where our health is tomorrow morning," Gulutzan said. "We may have to call somebody up if we can't get healthy today, if we're not there yet, so I think that's the reason for the moves.

"I think Dutchy's very close to playing. Nils is very close to playing. [Thomas Harley] is still a few days away. We'll have to see in the morning where everybody's at."

Dallas Morning News

How to watch Stars-Penguins: Dallas looks to make it three wins in a row

By SportsDay Staff

Date: 12/07/2025

With two wins in a row after their defeat in New York, the Dallas Stars have continued good early season form.

The Stars will look to keep their momentum when they will host the Pittsburgh Penguins at home on Sunday afternoon.

Here's what to know for Stars-Penguins:

Dallas Stars vs. Pittsburgh Penguins

When: Sunday, 5 p.m.

Where: American Airlines Center, Dallas

TV/Streaming: Victory+

Radio: Sportsradio 96.7/1310 The Ticket

Bottom Line

The Pittsburgh Penguins visit the Dallas Stars after Evgeni Malkin's two-goal game against the Tampa Bay Lightning in the Penguins' 4-3 win.

Dallas has a 19-5-5 record overall and a 9-4-1 record on its home ice. The Stars have a +27 scoring differential, with 100 total goals scored and 73 allowed.

Pittsburgh has gone 8-3-3 on the road and 14-7-5 overall. The Penguins have a 3-3-2 record in one-goal games.

The matchup Sunday is the first meeting this season between the two clubs.

Top performers

Wyatt Johnston has 16 goals and 17 assists for the Stars. Jason Robertson has nine goals and five assists over the last 10 games.

Malkin has nine goals and 20 assists for the Penguins. Sidney Crosby has scored seven goals and added two assists over the past 10 games.

Last 10 games

Stars: 7-1-2, averaging 3.8 goals, 6.5 assists, 4.2 penalties and 11.3 penalty minutes while giving up two goals per game.

Penguins: 5-3-2, averaging 2.8 goals, four assists, 3.5 penalties and 7.5 penalty minutes while giving up 2.9 goals per game.

DLLS

3 Stars: Cancer sucks, Mikko is Hulk, & Steel's curse broken (maybe) in win vs Sharks

By Sam Nestler

Date: 12/07/2025

The Dallas Stars scored three third-period goals in a 4-1 win against the San Jose Sharks at American Airlines Center on Friday.

Cancer sucks... Hockey Fights Cancer does not

Hockey Fights Cancer night has to be the best theme night, promotion, recognition, or whatever you call it, of the year.

All 32 teams have their own HFC night, and the NHL does a great job pushing it, including families, video tributes, and plenty of special moments. Plus, the players really buy in and do their part as well.

It's great to see.

Unfortunately, the cause of all of it really, really sucks.

The more I cover the NHL and am around these types of nights, the more I see just how many people are affected by this awful disease. I don't know if there is anybody in the world who isn't in some way. Whether it's themselves, a direct family member, or a distant cousin/ old friend, it rears its head in our lives.

And it sucks every single time.

In fact, the reason I am not at the game in Dallas tonight is that I am out in California with my mom, who is going through her own fight.

Our family has had a really tough go of it, health-wise, this year. And as much as I would give anything to change those test results for the better so that the people I love most could be fully healthy and out in the world enjoying their days, I am also grateful for the closeness these struggles have brought us.

I am truly lucky to have an amazing and supportive family. I am grateful for that every single day. And any challenges that come our way only bring us closer together. So if I need to be out here for my Mom or sister in law or vice versa, I know that not one person in my family will think twice about it. And that is truly special.

To all of those going through the fight, we are all in your corner. I hope you can lean on your support system like my family has been able to lean on theirs. And of course, I hope you come out the other side happy and healthy, ready to take on the world.

I FIGHT FOR MY MOM.

Who do you fight for?

Mikko Rantanen has turned (Victory) Green

“Don’t make me angry. You wouldn’t like me when I’m angry.” – A big green guy that was good but also bad sometimes, and also fought evil.

Well, you wouldn’t like Mikko Rantanen when he is angry and turns Victory Green. Trust me.

Rantanen has been front and center of the hockey world since his double trade from Colorado to Carolina to Dallas last season. Then he was the star of the first round of the playoffs against his old team. Now he is lighting up the scoresheet on a nightly basis and leading Dallas to an excellent record, despite some tough circumstances.

But that’s not what I want to talk about right now. No. I want to talk about his surge of penalties and angry play.

Rantanen is known as a player who will drag his teammates into the fight. This year, he has done that with his offense and his physical, animated play on the ice. Has he gone too far at times? Sure. It cost him a game when he was suspended during the Western road trip. But has his attitude and colorful antics also helped drag Dallas into the fight, especially when they are injured, tired, and not playing well?

Absolutely.

Tonight, he already has three minor penalties, as the trend continues.

Those three minors moved Rantanen back into the NHL lead for penalty minutes, jumping Nikita Zadorov.

But unlike most of his company on this list, he is still racking up the points all at the same time. That’s quite impressive, especially considering he has been on the ice a heck of a lot more than normal with all of the penalties and game misconducts.

To be honest, I don’t think this is by accident.

One critique Dallas often took under Pete DeBoer was that they lacked a killer instinct. They were great at remaining calm and level, and that often helped them overcome deficits and win a lot of hockey games. But, at times, it felt like they waded their way into

games and lacked the blood in the water mentality to either jump on lesser opponents or separate themselves when they had the chance.

Maybe Rantanen is taking that on his own shoulders. What does that look like?

It looks like some big hits, screaming at officials, taking penalties (often from trying too hard), and always, always, always, playing every shift with 100 percent effort. That effort and attitude are contagious, and I have little doubt they have helped Dallas overcome their injuries and win a lot of games during a tough stretch of schedule.

Rantanen is closing in on a career high in penalty minutes. Maybe he could take fewer minors?

But also, maybe not?

Sam Steel is maybe cursed? But Steel, a missed opportunity

Get it? Instead of “still,” I said “Steel.”

Clever, right?

Sam Steel has struggled to find the net this season despite getting an incredible opportunity on the top line with some combination of Rantanen, Roope Hintz, and Wyatt Johnston. The missed shots and bobbled pucks on the tail end of great creative set-ups from Johnston and Rantanen have led to a clear lack of trust.

And it has cost the Stars some really good scoring chances.

If you doubt it, check out how Rantanen and Johnston didn't even look in Steel's direction, and instead settled for a low-angle shot on a 3-on-1 against the Rangers.

Steel is a bottom-six forward with underrated skill and speed.

The Stars wondered whether that could translate into making him one of those guys (like Kiefer Sherwood) who could pot 15-25 goals when playing with top players. So far, it has not. Steel has just three goals and nine points in 28 games. Meanwhile, his linemates (Johnston, Hintz, and Rantanen) have combined for 37 goals.

I think Steel is the perfect bottom-six player who can bring a bit more offense than your usual fourth-liner. But I also think it may be time to experiment with other options at the top of the lineup. Unless the Stars believe he has helped bring out the offense in his linemates and don't care about the other stuff?

Amazing how hockey works sometimes... No more than two minutes after I finished writing this section and tweeted about it (lol), Sam Steel scored and gave Dallas the 2-1 lead. It truly doesn't change my opinion or all of the above, but I do give Steel a ton of

credit for sticking with it and basically pitchforking a puck over the line after two more chances.

Huge goal for Steel and Dallas. And Rantanen added another to seal the victory. Again.

Their 19 wins are tied with Colorado for the most in the NHL.

Stars Thoughts

Friday Dallas Stars Roundup: More Tough Health Updates, Nils Lundkvist and Thomas Harley's Progress, and John Klingberg's Evolution

By Robert Tiffin
Date: 12/05/2025

The Dallas Stars got some much-needed good news this morning on the injury front. Because during morning skate before tonight's game against San Jose, both Nils Lundkvist and Thomas Harley joined the team for the length of the practice.

You can watch Gulutzan's presser [here](#), but the most salient quote on Harley and Lundkvist's health came right off the bat, when Gulutzan talked about Lundkvist and Harley's recent skates with skills coach Stan Tugolukov up in Frisco.

"I was up in Frisco yesterday, a couple good skates for Nils," Gulutzan said. "Stan skated Nils and Harls and Dutchy yesterday. They [Harley and Lundkvist] were obviously out there this morning, so they're getting close. I would say, almost, those guys are truly day-to-day. I think maybe sometime next week you'll see some of those guys get back in."

Harley and Lundkvist skated on a fourth defense pairing in line rushes, and both of them looked very glad to be back on the ice. Lundkvist got a lot of hootin' and hollerin' when he first stepped onto the ice, while Harley arrived in the midst of a bigger crowd later on, with far less fanfare accompanying his return to the group—which I'm sure was his preference.

Here were the lines as we saw them this morning:

Steel-Johnston-Rantanen
Robertson-Hintz-Benn
Bäck-Hryckowian-Bourque
Blackwell-Faksa-Bastian

Lindell-Heiskanen
Kolyachonok-Lyubushkin
Capobianco-Petrovic
Harley-Lundkvist

(And yes, of course: Jake Oettinger will start in goal tonight for Dallas, fresh off his shutout in New Jersey.)

The Stars always seemed likely to need at least one extra body before traveling to Winnipeg on Monday afternoon, so given Gulletzan's words, one or both of their planned second-pair defensemen could be ready to reinforce the group by then.

Matt Duchene was also mentioned in the group of players who skated yesterday in Frisco, but Duchene did not participate in morning skate today. He remains day-to-day, and it sounds like the Stars are going to be very careful to ensure he has a good run of full health before putting him back into a game.

On the less positive side of things, Gulletzan said he doesn't believe Tyler Seguin has had his surgery yet.

"I think they're still deciding what course of action is gonna be the best," Gulletzan said. "Big blow for us."

Until Seguin actually has a procedure done for his ACL, the Stars aren't likely to have a firm timeline for his recovery, so we'll continue to wait for news on that front.

While we talked at length about the loss of Seguin and everything that means for the team and Dallas as a whole, Gulletzan also confirmed one immediate issue that arises for Dallas on the ice without Seguin: a lack of right-handed faceoff guys.

Gulletzan said the lack of having a righty and a lefty on every line to take faceoffs was something that they had been able to take for granted, but that immediately impacts a team's faceoff ability when you don't have it anymore.

"It did create a little bit of an issue for us," Gulletzan acknowledged. "We're gonna have to address it with some of our lefties taking more draws on their off-side."

The Stars went just 38% on faceoffs against New Jersey, so that's something they'll be looking to improve tonight. But without the consistent ability to have a player take a face-off on their strong side of the ice, it's something that could be a real challenge for the stars, especially in crucial moments.

I talked to Colin Blackwell (a righty) about taking faceoffs this morning as well, and he acknowledged that it's something he's working to improve, as he's begun the year at just 39% on the dot—a long way below his 49% success rate last year.

A lot of those faceoffs take place on the penalty kill as well, making them that much more crucial (and difficult). But Blackwell said that he's hopeful his faceoff numbers will continue to improve as the year goes on, especially given how the Stars will need more help from their right-handed forwards in the absence of Seguin. Blackwell did say that the more faceoffs you take in a game, the more comfortable you tend to feel, so we'll see if greater opportunity leads to greater success for him.

Blackwell added something else about the penalty kill I thought was interesting. We were talking about how dominant he and Sam Steel have been lately (as you loyal readers know), and he said that he thinks they're getting more confident and aggressive shorthanded than they were earlier in the year, when the penalty kill was giving up a few more goals, and the tendency was to be a tad more careful.

Whether that confidence will lead to shorthanded scoring remains to be seen, as the Stars are one of just five teams in the NHL still without a 4-on-5 goal this year. But given how much confidence and synergy there is between their two top PK forwards, it's probably a good bet that some shorthanded goals are not too far off.

And by the way, San Jose is one of three teams (along with Dallas and Boston) leading the NHL in 5-on-4 shorthanded goals given up. So, I'm not calling my shot or anything for tonight, but I'm not not doing that, either.

One other note on the unfortunate health issues around this team: Dallas Stars Goaltending Coach Jeff Reese wasn't at practice today, with Texas Stars Goaltender Development Coach Ryan Daniels on the ice instead.

Daniels was also in Dallas with the NHL group last weekend for their home games, which seemed a bit unusual considering the extended road trip the Texas Stars are currently on in California. But unfortunately, there is a necessary reason for it, which Gulutzan confirmed today.

"Reese's dealing with some personal stuff on the medical side," Gulutzan said. "He should be back hopefully in a couple weeks. I'll leave the rest of that to Reese and Jim [Nill]."

Gulutzan confirmed that Daniels would continue to be with the Dallas group in Reese's stead for the next couple of weeks until the Stars' regular goaltending coach's expected return.

I'm a big fan of Jeff Reese the person as well as the coach, and he has always been gracious with his time and kind with his words, even tacitly confirming stories about him discovering ways to exploit opposing goaltenders' tendencies in the playoffs.

Here's hoping Reese is back and fully healthy as soon as possible.

Finally, I wanted to share a couple of notes from a conversation I had with John Klingberg this morning.

Klingberg has had a fascinating journey in the NHL. He was the number one defenseman in Dallas practically from his debut in 2014 until Miro Heiskanen's ascension began in earnest in the latter's sophomore season in 2019.

In fact, I might go so far as to say that Klingberg's window as a Norris Trophy defenseman closed for good late in 2018, when he blocked a shot against—you guessed it—the Sharks, and broken his arm.

That was the same season that forced the Stars to delve into their defensive depth in the organization, with players like Julius Honka, Taylor Fedun, Gavin Bayreuther, Joel Hanley, Dillon Heatherington, and even Ben Gleason getting NHL time that year.

Klingberg returned from that injury to be a top-pairing blueliner for the Stars later in that 2018-19 season and the playoffs—including his overtime series winner against Nashville in the first round—but he never really found that elite tier of defensive form again, while Heiskanen quickly turned into the team's go-to defenseman at even-strength the following year.

In chatting with Klingberg today, he was really candid about where he is now: a defenseman who has had three "lower-body" surgeries and also has a metal plate in his body. Klingberg said he has had to reconcile himself to the fact that he simply can't skate the same way now at 33 years old than he did when he was 26, and he needs to adapt his game accordingly.

With that said, Klingberg finally rounded into form late last year for Edmonton after signing with the Oilers mid-season, becoming a go-to option in the Oilers' run to the Stanley Cup Final on a pairing with Jake Walman, playing 19 minutes a night.

But after the Oilers went a different direction this summer, Klingberg signed a one-year deal in San Jose, and it's been another adjustment for him, as he began the season in a rotation of up to nine defensemen at times, which meant some healthy scratches. He also had to deal with an upper-body injury early on, too.

Klingberg has been blunt about how his 5-on-5 game still isn't quite up to his standards this year, though he has said it's getting better.

https://youtu.be/g-MG_xOCTLg

Klingberg knows full-well that he's in a different stage of his career, where it's less about leading a group of defensemen that about fitting into a new locker room—this is his fifth different team since leaving Dallas in 2022.

That's when a funny moment happened, as Klingberg began to name a few of the great teammates in San Jose he's been playing with. After he finished, the player in the neighboring dressing-room stall interrupted him to add: "and Liljegren."

That player was, of course, defenseman Timothy Liljegren, and the two shared a laugh afterward.

Klingberg is still the same person in a lot of ways that he's always been: Someone who enjoys being on the ice, loves to goof around, and wants to make special things happen for his team when he's on the ice.

As for whatever will happen when he's not playing anymore? Well, for my part, I could see Klingberg following the Jussi Jokinen path someday and getting into broadcasting—something Klingberg said he's thought a bit about himself, though it's still (hopefully) a long ways away.

Klingberg also said he could see himself being a coach, so long as it's not a head coach (he was quick to stipulate that). But he could see himself coaching a group of defensemen someday, for example. Again, way down the road.

Wherever Klingberg ends up, I'm grateful that we still get to watch him play right now. Because for a player who burst onto the scene right as the Stars became one of the most exciting teams in hockey, it only seems fitting that he's there once again, on yet another young, exciting team.

Oh, and as for the headliner of that group, Macklin Celebrini? Well, Klingberg is as big a fan as anyone. And he's convinced that anyone who watches Celebrini will quickly become one, too.

"He's nasty. You'll see tonight," Klingberg said.

Stars Thoughts

Game 29 AfterThoughts: Sink, then Swim

By Robert Tiffin

Date: 12/05/2025

The Stars keep doing this.

Against New Jersey, the Stars didn't really start looking comfortable until midway through the game, and that would up being a shutout against the 5th-place team in the league (at the time).

Against the Rangers, Dallas was fortunate not to lose both points altogether, given how deflated they looked in the third period. But they got a point in an overtime loss.

Cut to tonight, against a scrappy Sharks team, and the Stars looked like they were just waiting for disaster to strike as the contest went on, giving up a breakaway during a 1-1 tie and taking back-to-back penalties right off the bat in the third period.

Somehow, that all translated into a 4-1 victory when the final buzzer sounded.

"We stuck with it. It was hard," Gulutzan said. "I thought we started off good, then I thought they had a little bit of a push. Our penalty kill, the two kills in the third period, was massive [...] I thought the penalty kill was the difference there."

Indeed, special teams jump out when you look at a game where the Stars' PK continued to roll with 23 straight successful kills, on top of a power play that went 1-for-2.

But this game was also about how the Stars have found ways to weather the inevitable pushes that teams will mount, relying on their underlying defensive structure along with the overriding skill of their top offensive players to win the day.

And win they have, to the tune of a .741 points percentage that would have easily bested that of the Presidents' Trophy-winning Winnipeg Jets of last year. The Stars have simply piled up victories, nipping at Colorado's heels in a manner itself unthinkable, given how otherworldly the Avalanche have been.

"We just stick with it," Sam Steel said afterward. "Guys can step up in big moments, obviously Mikko, and we got a lot of guys who can do that. Robo scores huge goals, all those guys. So we know if we stay in games...we'll have a chance."

I can't help but think back to last year, when a Stars team that was likewise accumulating a good number of wins also mixed in a few stinkers, like a pair of losses before Thanksgiving where they gave up six goals to Chicago and Carolina, or a real clunker of a 4-1 defeat in early December to Nashville.

This year, at least so far, the Stars simply aren't letting even their bad games get out of hand. And when you let this team stay in the fight, they usually end up finding the knockout punch.

It's appropriate that Mikko Rantanen ended up delivering one of said punches, since he also took three minor penalties during the game to go along with his three-point night. Cleaning up after yourself is a virtue.

Gulutzan joked after the game that he asked Rantanen if he was chasing the penalty-minute lead or the points lead in the NHL, and both of them laughed about it. Yes, Gulutzan also said that they don't want Rantanen in the box as much as he's been, obviously. But I also think it's worth contemplating how Rantanen's more ferocious countenance has led this team to a new identity altogether.

They're dangerous. Not always in the right ways, but very, very often in the effective ones. And hey, you don't have to be safe, so long as you're good.

A pretty sleepy start to the game was livened up when Rantanen was able to take a puck off Dmitry Orlov and head in on a breakaway—one of a couple Dallas got in this game but couldn't score on—drawing a delayed penalty in the process. However, Askarov made a blocker stop, and the Stars had to settle for a power play. And by "settle for," I mean "they did not generate any shots on goal during the next two minutes despite a good amount of possession in the offensive zone."

The Stars' next power play came after Robertson fought through a Macklin Celebrini hook along the wall, but the Sharks' penalty kill once again dared Dallas to do something, and this time they would Do Something Indeed:

[VIDEO]

That made it 1-0, and I tell you what, the Stars just continue to insist upon setting up Wyatt Johnston in that spot, and even when it doesn't work, it works. This power play is something else, managing to defy even the most well-scouted countermoves in order to find the best looks and finish.

Mikko Rantanen would take a slashing penalty (he does that) with two minutes to go, but the Sharks wouldn't muster much on it, and the Stars went to the intermission with a 1-0 lead that was entirely deserved.

The second period saw similar control from Dallas to start, with the San Jose third defense pairing getting hemmed in for nearly three minutes early on. But Rantanen would take his second penalty of the game with a trip that wasn't terribly preventative, and the Sharks had a chance to equalize what had thus far been a pretty unequal game.

But the Stars' penalty kill did what it has been doing, and the Sharks wouldn't get a single puck on net. Their luck wouldn't extend into 5-on-5 time, however, as Colin Graf made the most out of a point shot with traffic in front, sweeping home the loose puck before anyone else could find it to tie the game up.

Bourque is fronting the shot here, but perhaps he needs to be tying up his man's stick as well. Alas, he wasn't able to prevent the chance, but I'm not inclined to be overly harsh about this play.

Speaking of prevention, Vladislav Kolyachonok did marvelously to track down Will Smith on a breakaway that looked destined to make it 2-1 for the Sharks (clip down below), as the Belarusian's skating and stickwork negated any shot at the last minute, and the Stars survived. Again, the work of these depth defensemen for Dallas is just unreal, and Gulutzan praised them accordingly after the game, saying that they haven't just been net-neutrals, but that they've actually been positively contributing to winning games outright—not something you often expect of your 8th or 9th defenders on the depth chart.

But yes, surviving is what Dallas looked like they were doing for far too much of the second period (and early in the third). Outside of a 4-on-4 set, Dallas had trouble stringing good shifts together, and they were probably fortunate not to take on more water than they did in the middle frame, even if most of San Jose's chances didn't turn into shots on goal.

The second was the sort of period where you felt Dallas had been lulled into a false sense of security a bit, with occasional players trying to drive energy into the game, like Robertson did with a big solo rush and a shot through a defender's leg, or Hryckowian did with a big hit at center ice. But overall, the Stars just looked like they were waiting for a reason to start putting the pedal down, and that didn't really happen before the second intermission arrived.

The third period began ignominiously, as the Stars immediately took a penalty on a high-sticking call that was initially made on Kolyachonok, only for the call to be re-assessed to Lyubushkin, for reasons I couldn't really understand in real time.

However, the Stars made it through that kill (which marked their 22nd straight successful one), only to take yet another one shortly afterward, when Wyatt Johnston got tagged with a hooking minor in the offensive zone.

But the Stars Penalty Kill happened again, so make it 23.

As the third period ticked down, Dallas continued to tempt fate. Alex Wennberg looked like he had an empty net begging for a rebound off the end boards, but his one-handed swipe didn't quite work out, as you can see, and the tie game continued into the final 10 minutes of regulation, with shots on goal sitting at a less-than-raucous 16-15 in San Jose's favor.

But games like these are where role players shine. And after creating some chaos in the Sharks' zone for the first time in a little while, Sam Steel would follow up his own rebound, poking a puck through Askarov that doinked (technical term) off the inside of the post and in to make it 2-1.

It's fitting that Steel ended up with the goal, given his work on the forecheck to turn the puck over initially behind the net. Also, every Sam Steel goal is a Thoroughly Fitting Goal.

An even more fitting goal was the next one, which Mikko Rantanen scored to make it 3-1 after Steel didn't quite see a passing lane to find him. But Rantanen eventually got the puck anyway, and he quickly discarded Dellandrea and put a puck far side before Mario Ferraro could close him down.

The Sharks didn't quit after that, however. Shortly after pulling Askarov with around three minutes remaining, Macklin Celebrini thundered in a cross-ice pass with a vicious one-timer.

Except, it turned out that Philipp Kurashev had jumped the gun on the dump-in, putting San Jose offside to begin the sequence. Dallas challenged the play accordingly, and after review, the tally was chalked off. Score one for Patrick Dolan and Chris Demczuk, I suppose. (Or rather, don't score one. You know what we mean.)

"I'd like to say that I got a keen eye for these things, but I couldn't tell you." Gulutzan said. "Patrick and Chris, our video coaches, they had it right below our feet before the play even ended, that this play's offside. So we knew right away. Give them a lot of credit, it was close. It was a skate in the air, and they picked it out, puck's in the air. Good quick decision by them."

That set up perhaps the most interesting statistical goal of the night in my book: the Stars first empty-netter since October 14, back when Hintz and Faksa both scored ENG's against Minnesota. Because tonight, Miro Heiskanen fired a puck from below his goal line in a great impersonation of Esa Lindell, finally putting the game to bed at 4-1.

ESotG

<https://youtu.be/CTAud5O7Qqk>

Lineups

Dallas rolled with this group:

Steel-Johnston-Rantanen
Robertson-Hintz-Benn
Bäck-Hryckowian-Bourque
Blackwell-Faksa-Bastian

Lindell-Heiskanen
Kolyachonok-Lyubushkin
Capobianco-Petrovic

Oettinger in goal

San Jose did with these lines:

Toffoli-Celebrini-Smith
Kurashev-Wennberg-Eklund
Skinner-Dellandrea-Graf
Goodrow-Ostapchuk-Gaudette

Orlov-Liljegren
Ferraro-Klingberg
Dickinson-Leddy

Askarov

AfterThoughts

I didn't have a chance to mention it in today's Roundup, but I also had a moment to chat with Kyle Capobianco today, and he set me straight on a couple of things.

He and Alex Petrovic didn't really play much together in Texas, contrary to a phantom memory I had of them doing so at times last year. But he was very complimentary of Petrovic's calm presence on a pair, and how it makes it really easy to play with such a partner.

Capobianco played primarily on a pairing with Luke Krys last year, the reliable right-shot Texas defensemen who is still recovering from an Achilles injury. Side note: how good will Texas's blue line potentially look in January, when they could theoretically have all of Kolyachonok, Capobianco, and Krys back? Very good, is the answer.

Capobianco also said that playing second-unit power play minutes has been helpful for his game, as it's given him more touches of the puck than he might otherwise have at just 5-on-5.

Lastly, Capobianco said he has recently begun to enjoy coffee in the last year or so, and he's really developed a love for the Aeropress. (Which is an extremely good and affordable way to enjoy high-quality coffee, by the way. If you know, you know.)

Kyle Dubas and Jason Spezza attended Friday night's game, which makes sense, with Pittsburgh in town early ahead of their matchup against Dallas on Sunday. But with Julien Brisebois also on hand for Sunday's game, you might also presume that those

two members of Doug Armstrong's Team Canada management group were doing a bit of first-person scouting ahead of the group's three-day Olympic roster meetings that kick off on Sunday. We'll see if Wyatt Johnston (or Celebrini) made a meaningful impression before the month is out, one suspects.

Rantanen's backhand is such a weapon most times, but I fear he telegraphed this early chance a bit too much:

[VIDEO]

Jason Robertson has scored a whole bunch since January 1st. Specifically, this much: 4th-most in the entire league in the 2025 calendar year.

San Jose didn't get their first shot on goal until over 14 minutes into the first period, and it was a Ty Dellandrea dump-in from center ice. That's not quite ideal, if you're San Jose.

Here is a shot chart from the first period, in which San Jose had a full two-minute power play:

[https://substackcdn.com/image/fetch/\\$s !2ZO!,w 1456,c limit,f webp,q auto:good,fl_p rogressive:steep/https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2F47d2a518-d29d-4f29-9e54-e795ff5f61a7 2032x1258.png](https://substackcdn.com/image/fetch/$s !2ZO!,w 1456,c limit,f webp,q auto:good,fl_p rogressive:steep/https%3A%2F%2Fsubstack-post-media.s3.amazonaws.com%2Fpublic%2Fimages%2F47d2a518-d29d-4f29-9e54-e795ff5f61a7 2032x1258.png)

Macklin Celebrini is an entertaining player, even when things don't work out for him. If you can't put the puck in the net, may as well get in there yourself, right?

Mikko Rantanen took three minor penalties in the first 35 minutes of this game. The third was a matching slashing minor with Jeff Skinner, and neither player was particularly happy with the call. Players often aren't, though.

Vladislav Kolyachonok somehow got back to track down Will Smith on a breakaway, finishing the defensive work with a brilliant poke check:

[VIDEO]

Take another look at the play from the other zone, and you can see how well Kolyachonok skates to stay in the play:

[VIDEO]

In today's Roundup, I mentioned that the Stars were one of only a few remaining teams without a 4-on-5 shorthanded goal yet this year, and that San Jose is one of the teams that has surrendered the most such goals. But Sam Steel's opportunity to prove me a prophet came close, but without a cigar at the end of the rainbow or whatever.

(I appreciated the effort, at least.)

A bit of levity arrived when a puck got wedged in Alex Wennberg's skate with five minutes left in the game, and play had to be stopped as a result. Despite a few whacks, the puck remained stuck in Wennberg's skate, until the person you call to solve problems finally managed to knock it loose: Esa Lindell.

Tim Liljegren was pretty hard on himself for the goal Sam Steel scored. No word on whether Ty Dellandrea was equally self-deprecating after the Rantanen tally, but if you haven't read Sheng Peng's excellent piece on Dellandrea, however, you really ought to do so.

The Hockey News

Line Combinations: Stars vs. Sharks

By Jake Tye

Date: 12/05/2025

The Dallas Stars return home on Friday for a key Western Conference showdown against a resurgent San Jose Sharks. The Stars have started the season strong at 18-5-5, second only to the Colorado Avalanche in the President's Trophy race, while San Jose has rebounded from a six-game losing streak to post a 13-12-3 record. Dallas will look to showcase breakout star Macklin Celebrini, the 2024 first overall pick, who has already racked up 40 points in 28 games.

This matchup marks the Stars' first look at the revitalized Sharks, promising an exciting end-of-week contest. Despite missing Tyler Seguin due to an ACL injury, Dallas' restructured lines performed well in a recent 3-0 win over New Jersey, and the team's balanced attack, combining strong defense with a high-scoring offense, has made coach Glen Gulutzan's job straightforward. Jake Oettinger is likely to start in goal, bringing a solid track record against San Jose, though his career goals against average versus the Sharks is 2.97 in eight games.

San Jose will rely on their young offensive duo, Celebrini and 2023 fourth overall pick Will Smith, who together have accounted for nearly a third of the Sharks' goals this season. The team may also look to veteran winger Tyler Toffoli to provide secondary scoring, given his strong history against Dallas. Historically, the Stars have dominated this matchup, with San Jose losing six straight games and Celebrini yet to beat Dallas.

High-scoring action is likely, as recent matchups have frequently produced six or more goals. Key players like Jason Robertson have thrived against the Sharks, contributing consistently, and Dallas' combination of strong defensive play and potent offense makes them heavy favorites. In goal, Oettinger faces off against Alex Nedeljkovic, with both netminders carrying solid but contrasting records against their opponent.

Dallas Stars' Expected Line Combinations vs. San Jose (Friday):

Robertson - Hintz - Benn
Steel - Johnston - Rantanen
Back - Hryckowian - Bourque
Blackwell - Faksa - Bastian

Lindell - Heiskanen
Kolyachonok - Lyubushkin
Capobianco - Petrovic

Oettinger

The Hockey News

Stars Goalie Prospect Makes Sweden's World Junior Roster

By Jake Tye

Date: 12/05/2025

The Dallas Stars have reason to keep a close eye on the 2025 fifth-round draft pick Måns Goos, as the young goaltender has earned a spot on Sweden's roster for the upcoming World Junior Championship.

Goos, 18, has steadily made a name for himself as one of Sweden's top goalie prospects, particularly known for his elite ability to handle rush chances. Scouts have praised his size and composure in breakaway situations, often smothering shooters with poise beyond his years. However, in-zone play and rebound control remain areas where he continues to develop.

Last season, Goos showcased his potential at the international level, going 8-2-0 with Sweden's U18 team. He posted a 2.39 goals against average and a .912 save percentage, helping the squad capture a silver medal at the U18 World Junior Championships. His strong performances caught the attention of Dallas, who selected him in the fifth round of the 2025 NHL Draft.

This season, Goos has been splitting time in Sweden's domestic leagues. With Färjestad BK's U20 team, he has a 6-5-0 record, a 3.12 goals against average, and a .905 save percentage. He even made a brief appearance with the senior SHL roster, but it was a rough outing, allowing 12 goals in a single game and stopping just half of the shots faced. In junior international play this season, he has started two games for Sweden's U20 team, posting a 1-1-0 record, a 4.51 goals against average, and a .845 save percentage.

Despite the ups and downs this season, Goos' selection to the World Junior roster is a vote of confidence from the Swedish coaching staff. While there is no guarantee he will see ice time during the tournament, being part of the squad offers invaluable experience against top international competition.

For the Stars, the tournament represents a key developmental checkpoint. Goos has the raw talent and size to become a formidable netminder, but consistency will be crucial if he hopes to make the leap from promising prospect to a contributor at the pro level.

The Hockey News

Stars Place Tyler Seguin, Lian Bichsel On LTIR With Long-Term Injuries

By Jake Tye

Date: 12/06/2025

The Dallas Stars announced Saturday that star forward Tyler Seguin (lower body) has been placed on long-term injury reserve (LTIR) retroactive to Dec. 2. Shortly after, the team also placed blue-chip defense prospect Lian Bichsel (lower body) on LTIR retroactive to Nov. 30.

Seguin suffered a significant ACL injury during Tuesday's game, when he became slightly tangled with another player, fell awkwardly backward, and injured his leg. He required assistance from teammates to leave the ice and was unable to put weight on it. Head coach Glen Gulutzan told reporters Wednesday that Seguin "is going to be out a significant amount of time, probably the rest of the season."

The move to LTIR frees up \$3.82 million in cap space for the Stars, and if it is officially confirmed that Seguin's season is over, his full \$9.85 million salary could be applied toward cap relief. Prior to the injury, Seguin was showing signs of returning to form, recording seven goals and ten assists for 17 points in 27 games this season. However, injuries have plagued him over the years, causing him to miss 230 games since the start of the 2019-20 campaign.

Bichsel, a 21-year-old Swiss defenseman and 18th overall pick in the 2022 NHL Draft, is also expected to miss significant time. He suffered a lower-body injury Sunday after being hit by Ottawa's Fabian Zetterlund, crashing legs-first into the bench. Bichsel remained on the ice for several moments and required assistance to leave, unable to bear weight on his left leg.

<https://youtu.be/V46VSmu3v0w>

Despite his youth, Bichsel has quickly emerged as one of Dallas' top defensive prospects. After brief stints in the AHL with the Texas Stars, he earned a roster spot last season, appearing in 38 NHL games with four goals and five assists. He also played in all 18 of Dallas' playoff games, recording one assist in his Stanley Cup Playoffs debut. This season, he has one goal and two assists in 26 games, along with a plus-six rating, continuing to show steady improvement.

Bichsel has also represented Switzerland internationally, including at the 2023 World Juniors, where he posted two assists in five games. He was considered a strong candidate for Switzerland's roster for the upcoming Winter Olympics, though his injury now casts doubt on his participation.

The Stars now face the challenge of navigating the season without two key contributors, as they have been mentioned to be already active in the trade market as they attempt to stay competitive in a tightly contested playoff race.

The Hockey News

Top Power Plays Clash as Penguins Visit Stars

By Taylor Newby

Date: 12/07/2025

Not many teams can claim better success on the power play this year than the Dallas Stars, who have used it as fuel to their blistering pace this season, but the Stars will face one Sunday as the Pittsburgh Penguins come to town.

The Penguins are converting over 34 percent of their opportunities, more than Dallas at 31 percent. Both teams are using that to bank wins and put themselves squarely in the hunt for a Stanley Cup this season.

Penguins captain Sidney Crosby has been nothing short of outstanding even at 38 years old, tallying 18 goals this season to put his team on pace to make the playoffs after two disappointing seasons in a row. He and Evgeni Malkin, who scored two goals in their last game to beat Tampa 4-3, are having a resurgence that makes it feel like 2016 all over again.

Crosby had a hat trick the last time the two teams met in April, which was part of a long skid of losses for Dallas to end the last regular season. Now, the Team Canada Olympic captain will go up against an equally red hot Team USA hopeful in Jason Robertson.

Robertson added another goal Friday against the San Jose Sharks, keeping his stellar performance going from November in which he earned the second star of the month for the NHL. Mikko Rantanen is also on a point streak coming into Sunday's game, which is all the more necessary now that the Stars are down a top-6 forward in Tyler Seguin.

Friday's win over the Sharks was a bit of a slog fest over the first two periods, with both teams looking a little tired and sloppy. The Stars have played a significant amount of games with almost no rest more than one day at a time. It was a credit to their determination to pull ahead with three third period goals to beat San Jose 4-1.

Dallas has to go back on the road for two difficult Central Division games after Sunday's game, so keeping their points streak alive would be a welcome relief. Even though the Stars are banking points far more often than not, the Colorado Avalanche have set a difficult pace to follow at the top of the division.

Puck drop is at 5 p.m. at the American Airlines Center and can be seen locally on Victory+ and out of market on ESPN+.4

The Athletic

Tom Hicks, former Liverpool, Dallas Stars and Texas Rangers owner, dies at 79

By Colin Millar

Date: 12/07/2025

Tom Hicks, the former owner of Liverpool and two Dallas-area professional sports franchises, has died aged 79.

In 2007, the Texas businessman acquired a 50 per cent stake in Liverpool, whom he co-owned alongside George Gillett.

The club was sold to New England Sports Ventures (NESV, who later became Fenway Sports Group) in October 2010, after encountering financial difficulties. The pair did not oversee any trophy victories for Liverpool during their three-and-a-half years at the club.

Hicks told Sky Sports after the club was sold that he was devastated after claiming the club was wrestled from him in an “epic swindle”.

Hicks, who failed to become a popular figure among the Liverpool fanbase, also accepted that “something went wrong with my ability to communicate with the fans. I am saddened by it.”

Alongside Liverpool, Hicks owned the NHL’s Dallas Stars from 1995 to 2011, winning the Stanley Cup in 1999.

He also owned baseball’s Texas Rangers from 1998 to 2010, leading them to three American West Division titles and a World Series appearance.

“Being shoulder to shoulder with him was always about more than ballparks and stadiums, though,” Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said in a statement, as per Reuters.

“It was about personal respect, trust and friendship. We shared a lot of miles together, and I’ll miss him greatly. My heart goes out to his family.”

Hicks is survived by his wife Cinda Cree Hicks, to whom he was married for 35 years, and his six children — Thomas Ollis Hicks Jr., Mack Hardin Hicks, John Alexander Hicks, Robert Bradley Hicks, William Cree Hicks and Catherine Forgrave Hicks.

A statement from the family read: “Of everything he accomplished in his remarkable life, Tom Hicks’s most cherished title was, ‘Dad.’

“No matter the trials and tribulations he faced in life, he was constant in his generosity and love for his family. He remains a guiding force for our family, and we are deeply honored to continue expanding his legacy.

“Although we are devastated by this loss, we are profoundly grateful to have been his children.”

The Associated Press

Tom Hicks, the Texas businessman who owned Stars, Rangers and Liverpool teams, dies at 79

By The Associated Press

Date: 12/07/2025

DALLAS (AP) — Tom Hicks, the Texas businessman and philanthropist who owned two Dallas-area professional sports franchises and an English Premier League soccer team, died Saturday. He was 79.

Spokesperson Lisa LeMaster said in statement that Hicks died peacefully in Dallas surrounded by family.

Hicks owned the NHL's Dallas Stars from 1995–2011, winning the Stanley Cup in 1999. He also owned baseball's Texas Rangers from 1998–2010, leading them to three American West Division titles and a World Series appearance. In 2007, he acquired a 50% stake in Liverpool.

"Being shoulder to shoulder with him was always about more than ballparks and stadiums, though," Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said in a statement. "It was about personal respect, trust and friendship. We shared a lot of miles together, and I'll miss him greatly. My heart goes out to his family."

Hicks co-founded Hicks & Haas in 1984 and Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst in 1989, helping reshape private equity and investing strategy.

"Tom Hicks was an innovative businessman and a pioneer in private equity," fellow Texas businessman Ross Perot Jr. said in a statement. "He combined his commitment to business and sports through his ownership of the Stars and the Rangers."

Hicks served as paratrooper in the Army Reserves and was Commissioner of the American Battle Monuments Commission. He served on the University of Texas's Board of Regents from 1994 to 1999.

Hicks is survived by his wife of 35 years, Cinda Cree Hicks, and his six children — Thomas Ollis Hicks Jr., Mack Hardin Hicks, John Alexander Hicks, Robert Bradley Hicks, William Cree Hicks and Catherine Forgrave Hicks.

His children released a joint statement, saying:

"Of everything he accomplished in his remarkable life, Tom Hicks's most cherished title was, 'Dad.' No matter the trials and tribulations he faced in life, he was constant in his generosity and love for his family. He remains a guiding force for our family, and we are

deeply honored to continue expanding his legacy. Although we are devastated by this loss, we are profoundly grateful to have been his children.”

WFAA

Tom Hicks, who once owned both Texas Rangers and Dallas Stars, dies at 79

By Rachel Behrndt

Date: 12/07/2025

Tom Hicks, a Dallas businessman who owned the Texas Rangers, Dallas Stars and an English Premier League soccer team, died Saturday, Dec. 6, at age 79.

Hicks died peacefully in Dallas, surrounded by family, a spokesperson said in a press release Sunday.

Hicks owned the Dallas Stars from 1995–2011. Under his ownership, the team won multiple division titles, two Presidents' Trophies and the Stanley Cup in 1999. He also owned the Texas Rangers from 1998–2010, leading them to three American League West Division titles and a World Series appearance.

In 2007, he acquired a 50% stake in the Premier League's Liverpool.

"Tom was a close friend and a great partner. He dreamed big and watching him bring the Stanley Cup here to Dallas was something that I will always cherish," Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones said in a statement. "Being shoulder to shoulder with him was always about more than ballparks and stadiums, though. It was about personal respect, trust and friendship. We shared a lot of miles together, and I'll miss him greatly. My heart goes out to his family."

Hicks reshaped the private equity and investing industry, the release states.

Hicks co-founded Hicks & Haas in 1984, where he executed several landmark deals, including the Dr Pepper/7UP merger, the release states. He also founded Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst in 1989. His later venture, Hicks, Muse, Tate & Furst became one of the largest private equity platforms in its era, according to the press release.

"Tom Hicks was a legend in finance who perfected the leveraged buyout and pioneered the 'buy and build' strategy by creating one of the world's largest beverage companies," Richard Fisher, a longtime friend and peer in Dallas' business community, said. "Best of all, he was a devoted, constant friend who supported me with gusto when I ran for the U.S. Senate, even though we were from different parties. A man is measured by his affection for and unflinching support of family and friends. At this, Tom was a true champion."

He also served on the University of Texas's board of regents from 1994 to 1999. There, he helped establish UTIMCO, the largest public university endowment in the country,

which he regarded as "one of the most meaningful contributions in his professional life," the release states.

"Tom Hicks was an innovative businessman and a pioneer in private equity," fellow Texas businessman Ross Perot Jr. said in a statement. "He combined his commitment to business and sports through his ownership of the Stars and the Rangers.

Beyond his ownership of two Dallas sports franchises, Hicks made several cultural and philanthropic contributions to the city of Dallas, the release states. He helped in the development and planning of the American Airlines Center, contributed significantly to the Margaret Hunt Hill Bridge, and supported education initiatives across North Texas, according to the release.

He donated land for what would later become Tom Hicks Elementary in Lewisville ISD.

Hicks served as a paratrooper in the Army Reserves and was Commissioner of the American Battle Monuments Commission, the Associated Press reported.

He is survived by his wife of 35 years, Cinda Cree Hicks, and his six children — Thomas Ollis Hicks Jr., Mack Hardin Hicks, John Alexander Hicks, Robert Bradley Hicks, William Cree Hicks and Catherine Forgrave Hicks. His "greatest joy" was his fourteen grandchildren, the release states.

"Of everything he accomplished in his remarkable life, Tom Hicks's most cherished title was, 'Dad,' his children said in a joint statement. "No matter the trials and tribulations he faced in life, he was constant in his generosity and love for his family. He remains a guiding force for our family, and we are deeply honored to continue expanding his legacy. Although we are devastated by this loss, we are profoundly grateful to have been his children."

Services are pending and additional information will be released when arrangements are finalized.

