



DALLAS STARS COMMUNICATIONS

DAILY NEWS CLIPS

Tuesday, January 20, 2026

NHL.com (Dallas Stars)

Game Day Guide: Stars vs Bruins

By Stars Staff

Date: 01/20/26

When: Tuesday, January 20 at 6:30 p.m.

Where: American Airlines Center

TV: TNT, HBO Max

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: Colosseum New Dad Jacket

Food Highlight: All-beef Hot Dog

50/50 Beneficiary: After8toEducate

Promotional Schedule: Texas Rangers Night

Five Points

The Dallas Stars face the Boston Bruins Tuesday night for the first of two matchups this season. The two teams will meet for a final time this season on March 31 in Boston. Dallas won both of their games against Boston during the 2024-25 season on Oct. 24, 2024 (5-2 W) and Nov. 11, 2024 (7-2 W).

Dallas is 38-85-26 all-time vs. Boston, including a 23-38-14 mark on home ice.

The Stars have earned points in five of their last seven games played against the Bruins dating back to Jan. 30, 2022 (3-2-2), outscoring Boston 26-17 during that span. Dallas has also recorded points in four of their last six games played vs. Boston at American Airlines Center (3-2-1).

Forward Roope Hintz enters Tuesday's contest riding a three-game point streak against the Bruins dating back to Feb. 19, 2024, collecting three points (2-1—3) during that

span. In all, Hintz has totaled six points (5-1—6) in 10 career games played vs. Boston, carrying a plus-minus rating of +5.

Forward Matt Duchene enters Tuesday's matchup riding a two-game point streak against the Bruins, earning five points (2-3—5) during that span, both of which were multi-point outings. In 28 career games played vs. Boston, Duchene has totaled 23 points (9-14—23). His 23 career points against them top Stars skaters.

Stats Against Opponent

Active Streaks

Roope Hintz (2-1—3, 3 GP)

Jamie Benn (11-12—23, 31 GP)

Thomas Harley (0-3—3, 3 GP)

Matt Duchene (2-3—5, 2 GP)

Leading Scorers

Matt Duchene (9-14—23, 28 GP)

Jamie Benn (7-14—21, 24 GP)

Tyler Seguin (8-10—18, 22 GP)

Mikko Rantanen (3-8—11, 17 GP)

Players To Watch

Stars forward Rantanen skated in his 700th NHL game in Dallas' last game on Jan. 18 against the Tampa Bay Lightning. He became the 27th Finnish player in NHL history to reach the milestone and the sixth player from the 2015 draft class to reach the 700-game milestone. In all, Rantanen has totaled 63 points (19-44—63) in 48 games played this season and enters Tuesday's game leading the Stars in scoring. He ranked sixth in points and fifth in assists in the NHL this season entering play Monday. Twenty-seven (5-22—27) of Rantanen's 63 points this season have come on the power play, which was tied for the third-most in the NHL this year entering play Monday. In his career against Boston, Rantanen has collected 11 points (3-8—11) in 17 games played, averaging 20:21 of time on ice per game. He also has registered four points (2-2—4) in his last four games played against the Bruins. Tuesday's game will mark Rantanen's first matchup against the Bruins as a Dallas Star.

Bruins forward David Pastrnak has recorded 18 points (5-13—18) in his last nine games played dating back to Dec. 31, 2025 against the Edmonton Oilers. In all, Pastrnak has totaled 59 points (20-39—59) through 44 games played this season, leading the team and ranking seventh in the League in scoring entering play Monday. He also leads Boston skaters in both power-play scoring (9-12—21) and shots taken (153) while ranking second in goals (20). In his career against Dallas, Pastrnak has tallied 18 points (8-10—18) in 19 games played. He enters Tuesday's contest riding a six-game point streak against the Stars, collecting eight points (5-3—8) during that span. According to NHL Stats, his six-game point streak vs. Dallas ranks tied for the sixth-longest among NHL skaters with active point streaks against the Stars.

First Shift

The Stars had a nice long meeting on Monday.

“That’s what happens when you lose a few games, there are a lot of meetings,” Stars coach Glen Gulutzan said. “Too many meetings aren’t a good sign.”

But with the team in a 2-6-4 slump, the Stars coaching staff would like to believe it is doing some good things in these meetings.

“Our meetings are generally positive in nature, and that reflects the individuals,” Gulutzan said. “Sure, we’re going through a tough spot, but the strength of this team is its level-headedness.”

The Stars have been a consistent team for years, and that makes the highs and lows of this season a bit more of a challenge. That said, they know there is an answer in there. Dallas went 25-7-3 to start the season, a .746 points percentage. They are 2-6-4 in the past 12, a .333 points percentage.

Gulutzan said he believes the answer is somewhere in the middle, and he’s confident the team can get back to it. The coach said the team’s inner analytics say scoring chances are about what they were during the winning days, but that finishing has dropped. Dallas led the NHL in shooting percentage at 14.0 percent in the first 35 games. It has been 25th at 9.9 percent in the past 12.

In fact, the offense is probably the most significant drop in recent weeks. Goal scoring has gone from second (3.51) to 29th (2.50) and the power play has gone from second (31.3 percent) to 25th (17.2 percent).

So how do you get back to executing plays and scoring goals?

“You make sure the players are prepared, because when they feel like they are prepared, that builds confidence,” Gulutzan said. “Confidence comes from being prepared, and that’s what we’re trying to do.”

That’s a reason for the meetings and practicing at American Airlines Center Monday. The Boston Bruins come to town on a six-game winning streak Tuesday, so the challenges don’t get any easier.

That’s just part of it.

“You try to control what you can control - discipline, not being stupid with the puck, staying structured, that’s all you can do,” forward Robertson said. “If you start doing it, you start feeling better about your game regardless of the results.”

That’s another reason for the meetings, so the group can know it’s on the same page. Defenseman Nils Lundkvist said that the team has been good for years, so it knows it can be good now.

“It’s trusting that we have it in here and not let frustration creep in,” Lundkvist said. “You just have to work hard and I have all the belief in the world that it’s going to turn around.”

That confidence, Gulutzan believes, comes from an honest place.

“It’s a long year so you have to sit back and understand where you are,” Gulutzan said. “There are different ebbs and flows, and what we’re trying to do is have a realistic look at those ebbs and flows and manage them so that we can gain confidence. Confidence isn’t something you can just hand out, you have to develop it.”

Key Numbers

23.6

Boston ranks fourth in the NHL in hits per game at 23.6. Dallas ranks 25th at 18.2.

15.5

Boston ranks fourth in the NHL in blocked shots per game at 15.5. Dallas ranks 10th at 15.0.

66

Dallas leads the NHL in third period scoring with 66 goals. It’s goal differential in third periods is plus-17. The goal differential in the first period is plus-12 and in the second period plus-1.

He Said It

“I’m thinking about that. Ritzy has been one of our steadier guys. I’m not completely sure what my lines are, but just wanted to give him some time there.”

-Stars coach Glen Gulutzan on the fact that Justin Hryckowian was practicing on the left wing of the top line Monday and could play Tuesday with Wyatt Johnston and Rantanen.

Dallas Morning News

Stars defenseman Lian Bichsel skates in practice, nears return from injury

By Lia Assimakopoulos

Date: 01/19/26

Stars defenseman Lian Bichsel is nearing his return from a lengthy lower-body injury.

The 21-year-old defenseman joined the team for practice Monday for the first time since he went down with a lower-body injury on Nov. 30 against the Senators when he awkwardly went feet-first into the boards.

The injury required surgery and the team said he would miss 6-8 weeks, but Stars GM Jim Nill told Sportsradio 96.7 FM/1310 The Ticket Thursday that Bichsel is on pace to return in the coming weeks.

“He’s doing well,” Nill said. “We’re hoping that when we get back, he started skating a little bit on his own, we’re hoping maybe sometime next week depending on how his rehab goes that he just starts skating with the team and be back at it.

Nill and Stars coach Glen Gulutzan both said that Bichsel is on track to return before the Olympic break, which begins Feb. 6, and has skated eight times in recent days. The Stars still have eight games remaining before the break.

Dallas could use the defenseman back in the lineup, as the Stars have lost 10 of their last 12 games.

The 6-foot-7, 237-pound Swiss defenseman is a key for Dallas on the blue line. In 26 games prior to his injury, he averaged 15:49 of ice time and totaled three points and 24 blocks.

He is Dallas’ most physical player by far, as his 85 hits lead the team by a considerable margin despite the fact he hasn’t played since suffering his injury in late November.

Forward Mikko Rantanen was the one player missing from practice Monday, but Gulutzan confirmed to reporters that he took the day off for maintenance.

Dallas Morning News

Stars forward Jason Robertson changes agents amid contract negotiations

By Lia Assimakopoulos

Date: 01/19/26

A new agent is taking over Jason Robertson's contract negotiations with the Dallas Stars.

Robertson and his brother Nick, who plays for Toronto, will now both be represented by Andy Scott of Octagon, Sportsnet's Elliotte Friedman and Stars Thoughts' Robert Tiffin reported Monday.

Robertson was previously represented by Pat Brisson of CAA, who also represents Matt Duchene.

The agent switch doesn't guarantee anything, as the Stars and Robertson look to reach an extension before he becomes a restricted free agent this summer. However, Stars GM Jim Nill has a recent history of reaching long-term deals with Scott, who also represents Wyatt Johnston, Mikko Rantanen and Thomas Harley.

In the last year, Scott has negotiated an eight-year, \$96 million extension for Rantanen, a five-year, \$42 million extension for Johnston and an eight-year, \$84.7 million contract for Harley.

Robertson is likely looking for an AAV in the ballpark of Rantanen's \$12 million, which would be a significant raise from his current four-year deal that pays him \$7.75 million annually.

Ahead of the 2025-26 season, both parties said negotiations had reached a standstill because there was no need to reach a deal immediately.

Robertson doesn't achieve UFA status until the summer of 2027. The Stars can sign Robertson to a one-year deal with a \$9.3 million qualifying offer.

While Robertson has been considered by some national outlets as a potential trade piece for the Stars ahead of this March's deadline, it's unlikely Dallas trades him yet because the Stars still have team control for another year. The Stars could sign and then extend or trade Robertson in the offseason (or ahead of next season's trade deadline) if a deal can't be reached.

Especially since he's averaging over a point per game with 56 (27 goals and 29 assists) in 49 games, Nill and his staff will likely want to keep him on the roster as long as they can — unless another unbelievable offer came their way.

Dallas Morning News

Stars-Bruins preview: A matchup between a pair of teams heading in opposite directions

By SportsDay Staff

Date: 01/19/26

Can the Dallas Stars finally break out of their lengthy slump this week?

Their next attempt to get back on track takes place Tuesday night when the Stars (27-13-9) host the Boston Bruins (28-19-2) at the American Airlines Center.

Dallas is coming off a disheartening loss on Sunday against the Tampa Bay Lightning and has lost 10 of its last 12 games. Boston enters the game on the other end of the spectrum, riding a six-game winning streak.

Here's everything to know about Dallas' next matchup.

Dallas Stars vs. Boston Bruins

When: Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Where: American Airlines Center, Dallas

TV/streaming: TNT/HBO MAX

Radio: Sportsradio 96.7/1310 The Ticket

Bottom line

Dallas has a 27-13-9 record overall and a 12-7-3 record in home games. The Stars rank eighth in NHL play with 160 total goals (averaging 3.3 per game).

Boston has an 11-11-1 record on the road and a 28-19-2 record overall. The Bruins have a +13 scoring differential, with 162 total goals scored and 149 given up.

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

Top performers

Jason Robertson has 27 goals and 29 assists for the Stars. Wyatt Johnston has five goals and three assists over the past 10 games.

Morgan Geekie has 25 goals and 17 assists for the Bruins. Marat Khusnutdinov has six goals and four assists over the last 10 games.

Last 10 games

Stars: 2-6-2, averaging 2.4 goals, 3.8 assists, 3.7 penalties and 7.7 penalty minutes while giving up 3.2 goals per game.

Bruins: 8-1-1, averaging 4.1 goals, 7.6 assists, 4.4 penalties and 13.2 penalty minutes while giving up 1.9 goals per game.

Stars Stack

Tales From the Clipped: How did Dallas' PK go from 6th to 14th in just two weeks?

By David Castillo

Date: 01/20/26

The Dallas Stars under Alain Nasreddine have been elite on the penalty kill. They were a big deal in the Colorado and Winnipeg series this last postseason. Or at least that used to be the case. From 2022 to 2025, Dallas' shot quality allowed was calculated at 7.63 goals against per 60 while shorthanded, which made them a top five team during that span. They also have an .876 save percentage during that three-year stretch, which ranked first.

So there's at least one explanation for why the Stars have suddenly turned into a PK pumpkin: the goalies were simply too hot for an unsustainable amount of time. Do I buy that?

Yes and no. Since December 23, the Stars are 23rd in expected goals against and 30th in save percentage while shorthanded. The PK is allowing too many high danger chances, but goaltending is performing even worse, making it the perfect storm for a bad patch. 12 power play goals in 12 games. It's not good.

On the surface, you would think things would be okay. Nasreddine hasn't suddenly forgot how to run a PK. Miro Heiskanen is playing more penalty killing minutes than ever. Radek Faksa, who is averaging more minutes on the PK than any other forward per game, was brought in for precisely this reason. Esa Lindell still brings his cot to the defensive zone.

In the grand scheme of things, I don't believe Dallas' PK explains Dallas' current troubles. The power play has been even worse than the PK during this stretch, scoring 5 goals (ranking 26th). Their 18 even-strength goals is "good" for 30th, above only the Blues and Canucks. Needless to say, focusing only on the PK today says very little about this team as a whole. But one thing at a time. So what exactly is happening? Is it temporary? Or something else?

Goals against since Dec 23

So here are all the goals against during Dallas' horrific stretch.

A few things stand out:

Heiskanen and Lindell are out for all but one goal against. I don't believe this is a big deal.

Oskar Back and Radek Faksa are out for six of the seven goals against as well. I don't believe this is a big deal either, but it's worth nothing.

Four of the seven goals involved rebounds/scrambles in front of the net. This is also something that my instinct says isn't a big deal because this kind of stuff is bound to happen.

The majority of these goals against started out with the power play team extending possession with numbers up high to counter Dallas' point pressure.

It's the last part that I think is significant. Most power plays run a 1-3-1. Dallas' diamond formation is the ideal counter to such a setup, not only because it puts the shorthanded team in a position to defend the cluttered middle, but one man at the point also means any 50/50 puck battle can quickly turn into a shorthanded chance. Indeed, shorthanded teams generate more PK chances against the 1-3-1 setup, and more specifically — they generate more chances when the power play setup is four forwards instead of two defensemen.

So how bad is this stretch? Has Dallas been figured out tactically? First the numbers. It's pretty bad. The main thing is that teams are possessing the puck more than ever during this 12-game stretch, they're also generating higher shot quality than ever, and the goalies not only can't cover for the PK, but are faltering in their own tasks.

The fact that the difference between goals against per 60 is so large tells me that a big part of this patch is simply a stretch of rough goaltending. However, there's no doubt that it's all bad. The amount of unblocked shots getting through (or fenwick against per 60) is also alarming. You may have noticed I left out the San Jose game; a game in which Dallas allowed four power play goals (!). Was it just bad luck?

Not really. It's like all the issues versus every other team condensed into one really bad night. However, I do think DeSmith's rebound control in these clips feel a little like an aberration. But only a little. We'll get to why in a second.

Shorthanded goaltending

They say that your best penalty killer has to be your goaltender. I find this to be an utterly vacuous statement. Yes, I get that there's something innocuous about the implication — your last resort better be your best resort — but it doesn't actually mean anything. It's just another way for broadcasters to do less homework and rely on some trick of language to substitute for real analysis. To demonstrate, here's as clean a picture as you can get with regard to the tension between goalies doing their job (middle bar on the section to the right of the dotted line), and the skaters doing their job (the 'team' section of this graph on the far left).

The skaters are failing Oettinger on the PK. Conversely, the skaters and DeSmith both fail in equal measure.

So the formula for a bounceback is there. Better play from the skaters will probably lead to better results. This is not cheap hope. Dallas' PK has been great for much longer than they've been bad. Oettinger is doing a good job on it, and he's the starter, which means the first chart is the vision of the future more than the second.

What this means for Dallas long term is hard to say. Off the top of my head:

Dallas is probably due for some positive regression on DeSmith's side. Even if it's by accident.

I'd like to see Heiskanen and Lindell split up. The Stars still seem good at their opening shorthanded shifts. Like with the last bad stretch that they rebounded from, goals seemed to come later in the shift. Perhaps do the same with Steel and Blackwell.

More Roope Hintz on the PK. It's not like he doesn't have experience. Hintz with Blackwell or Steel seems like a quality change. Anything to include diversity in Dallas' PK looks instead of 'Gritty Faceoff Guy + Gritty Faceoff Guy.'

One last point that deserves emphasis: I'm not too fond of how Dallas' minutes are divided up, which goes primarily through four players, and not much else.

That's not to say that Nasreddine is wrong. Only that I wonder if PKers are like goaltenders: at some point their minutes need to be managed. Only six teams are on the penalty kill more often. By keeping the list of PKers short, it really puts a tax on the main group. Even Lindell has seen his numbers drop. I don't think the concept of managing minutes is insignificant. This is an Olympic year. I hate cheap excuses like this, but with the condensed schedule, I don't think it's out of line to suggest that Lindell, Heiskanen, Faksa, and Steel might be wearing those minutes.

Overall, I'm a little like last time, where the numbers were bad, but the alarms didn't need to be sounded. I feel broadly the same. They're in a bad stretch, but the foundation doesn't feel like it's threatening to fall out from under them. I know that's probably not the kind of analysis you pay for, but I still don't feel like I'm seeing genuine red flags. At least not yet. That this is happening in a condensed year makes me think (just a gut feeling) that they'll be rejuvenated after the break and into the postseason.

If I'm wrong, you'll hear it here first.

Shap Shots

Jason Robertson changed agents, does it matter? And how do these relationships work?

By Sean Shapiro

Date: 01/20/26

Back in September, before the NHL season started, I put together my second annual Dallas Stars organization power rankings for D Magazine.

This week two of the top-five on that list combined forces when Stars forward Jason Robertson (No. 3 on the list) switched agents to Octagon's Andy Scott (No. 4 on the list), who also happens to be the agent for Mikko Rantanen, Wyatt Johnston, and Thomas Harley.

Robertson's brother, Nick, also switched from CAA to Octagon, so it should be noted this wasn't just a single move.

Right now we don't know the full impetus or reasoning for the move, and I don't think it's really fair to dig deeper any of that speculation of why or why not Robertson actually changed agents. I know he changed, he's deferred any comment to his new agent, and his new representative isn't the best source to ask about what went wrong with the old one.

That being said, it is fascinating timing for the move.

Robertson, as it's well-known, has been in the headlines for various reasons in the past couple months. He's a pending restricted free agent, was subject to over-zealous trade rumors before that, and despite leading all American's in goal scoring in the 2025 calendar year, was left off Team USA for the upcoming Olympic Games.

Stars GM Jim Nill has also told me, directly, that he's working on getting Robertson signed, that he hopes this season Robertson pushes his value and that he wasn't in to much of a rush before the season started.

Now, with a new representation, that negotiation doesn't completely start over, but it does go back to Level 1.

And the interesting thing for Scott and the Stars pertaining to Robertson, is that Level 1, is probably a bit more advance than most Level 1 conversations.

Scott and Nill have hammered out deals in the past 18 months for extensions with Johnston, Rantanen, and Harley. The Johnston and Rantanen deals, for example, actually were negotiated on some of the same phone calls around the time the Stars

were given permission to talk extension from the Carolina Hurricanes before the trade was finalized to Dallas.

Those deals turned out pretty favorably for both sides, even if it feels like the Stars “won” the Rantanen deal a bit while the agency side “won” a bit more on the Johnston deal. The Harley deal, a bridge pact, will still be judged over time here.

It’s also not the first time the Stars have had this type of thing happened. Ian Pulver, from the Will Sports group, is the agent that worked out the deal for Tyler Seguin’s extension in 2019. Pulver also happens to represent Miro Heiskanen, and some of that good will didn’t hurt in 2021 when the Stars signed their franchise defenseman slightly below his market rate.

It’s a give-and-take business with agents and general managers, it might get contentious at times, but anyone who tries to “win” a deal to one-sided, often doesn’t last very long.

Nils Lundkvist’s agent is Claude Lemieux, in 2023 the Stars did Lemieux a favor by trading Fredrik Olofsson to the Colorado Avalanche for future considerations to help the player avoid a European contract he had signed. It was a deal the Stars didn’t have to do, but it helped the player out, and as Lundkvist went through some of his trials and tribulations in Dallas under Pete DeBoer, Nill’s past treatment of his agent didn’t hurt smoothing all of that over with the Lundkvist camp.

None of this is to say the Stars had a negative relationship in the past with CAA or Pat Brisson, Robertson’s former agent. Matt Duchene and Nathan Bastian are Brisson clients, for example, but it is important to note that in the current string of events, the Stars and Octagon have been heavily tied together on deals.

For Robertson, whether it’s the reason he changed agents or not, it’s probably a positive sign in the discussion, and based off the Stars recent struggles he might even have more leverage in this moment because of his importance to the team.

Relationships matter in this business, just like any other transactional-based one, one deal might not always positively impact another, but a negative can certainly leave a sour taste.

Stars Thoughts

Monday Rundown: Lian Bichsel's Return, Jason Robertson's Agent, and a Trade Dallas Might Need to Make Again

By Robert Tiffin

Date: 01/19/26

After a week's hiatus during some travel, welcome back to the Monday Rundown.

I'll start today by hitting my Texas friends with a bit of a truth bomb: Tri-tip might be my favorite barbecued meat.

Yes, smoked brisket is incredible when done well. And sure, great ribs are fantastic, always. But having spent most of my childhood on the Central Coast of California, I continue to believe that barbecued Tip-Tip is among the best ways to consume beef on this earth.

If you are ever in the area, hit up Firestone Grill and get one. You don't need cheese or peppers or other fixins—just incredible sliced tri-tip, some barbecue sauce, and a toasted French roll. You can debate whether it's actually sirloin if you want, but there's no debating the taste. It's as good as it gets.

On the Stars front, one of the biggest pieces of news today was that, as Elliotte Friedman initially reported on 32 Thoughts this morning, Jason Robertson confirmed today that he and his brother Nick have indeed changed agents. Both are now represented by Andy Scott of Octagon.

Robertson was previously represented by Pat Brisson of CAA. And as recently as last week, Jim Nill told Eric Stephens of the *The Athletic* that he was still in communication with Brisson about the Robertson negotiations, though the two sides hadn't yet bridged the gap in their respective views about the value of such an extension.

Andy Scott is a familiar name to Stars fans, as he represents players like Mikko Rantanen, Thomas Harley, and Wyatt Johnston—all three of whom received high-dollar, long-term extensions from Dallas over the last year.

While any speculation about why both Jason and Nick chose to change agents remains just that—speculation—it is certainly true that Scott has a clear track record of getting big contract extensions over the finish line with star players in Dallas. One view of the situation might be that this is a move by Robertson to facilitate just such a deal.

On the other hand, it's also true that players sometimes switch agents ahead of unrestricted free agency because they believe a new agent will help them to maximize their value on the open market.

It's unclear right now which direction Robertson and his camp are leaning. I keep seeing the number \$12 million thrown around out there, and it would seem logical to me that the Stars would prefer to keep Robertson at or below Rantanen's average annual value of that same \$12 million.

If you're Robertson, however, I can see looking over at Kirill Kaprizov's \$17 million he got in Minnesota and thinking that you could get at least closer to \$13 million on the open market.

Again, all speculation. But it wouldn't surprise me to hear some update on the negotiation process one way or the other before too long.

Another bit of news today was which players were and weren't there.

Mikko Rantanen took a maintenance day, but Gulutzan said afterward that we will still see Rantanen play tomorrow, so it doesn't appear to be anything to be concerned about.

More interesting was the fact that Lian Bichsel skated before practice today. Sam Nestler took some video of Bichsel working out if you're curious, and I also saw Bichsel skating, cutting, and looking pretty comfortable ahead of practice today. He had a pretty noticeable smile, too.

Bichsel joined an early drill after practice started, but he left the ice before long. Gulutzan said afterward that this was actually the eighth skate Bichsel had completed—he apparently had been working out on the ice at home during most of the team's road trip.

Gulutzan also said Bichsel had been "pretty pain-free" in his previous seven skates, though there is still "some" pain off the ice. Gulutzan reiterated that it's a very similar injury to the broken foot that Nils Lundkvist suffered, which means that once the bone is healed, the player should be good to go, presuming conditioning is all there.

As of now, Gulutzan says that Bichsel is still on track to play before the Olympic break in February. Certainly, the Stars could use him.

I think I've said this in comments or on social media, but I should put it here, too: I think the Stars need to make another Evgenii Dadonov trade.

Now, I don't think they should trade for Dadonov himself—he's battled injuries in New Jersey and has yet to look like the player Dallas saw score some big goals. But given how tough the market is right now (and with Kiefer Sherwood also coming off the board in today's trade to San Jose), I think the Stars could really benefit from that same type of trade: Acquiring a complementary player who can improve any line he plays on, and without breaking the bank to do so.

Think back to 2023, when Dallas acquired Dadonov. During Wyatt Johnston's rookie year, he played with Jamie Benn on his left, but the right wing was a rotation of Denis Gurianov to start the year, followed by Ty Dellandrea and Mason Marchment.

But when Jim Nill traded Gurianov to Montreal for Dadonov in late February, suddenly the Stars had a really well-balanced third line. Dadonov scored 10 points in 16 playoff games that spring, and he went on to be a very reliable winger for the next two seasons, including scoring 20 goals last year.

This season, the Stars don't have that player, and it's been noticeable. They've had to elevate players like Adam Erne, Colin Blackwell, and even Jamie Benn (who is better used on the fourth line at this stage in his career) to third-line roles, and that's hurt their secondary scoring something fierce. It's also, I think, been one of the reasons they've had to move Matt Duchene up to different wing positions, rather than keep him planted at center to create scoring against the other team's lower-lineup defenders.

We'll talk more about what such a piece might look like in the coming days, but with the biggest names drawing most of the attention right now, don't overlook the importance of finding that player to elevate a line—even if it's not the most impressive name on the list.

Monday Rundown Miscellany

Lastly, here are a few quick hits from different conversations over the past two weeks:

Jamie Benn says that when he travels, he brings a track suit, and a regular suit. Wait, I clarify: He still brings a suit, even with the new dress code that doesn't require them? Yes, the Stars captain says. He's worn one since he was 15 in juniors, so I guess some habits are hard to break. Nothing wrong with a little class, I say.

In talking with a few players lately, the sense right now is that the frustration around the team is with their lack of ability to play a full 60 minutes, not with any specific tactics or changed.

It's a long NHL season, but this recent stretch is really beginning to bring frustration to the surface in a way I haven't seen in quite a while with this team. If they can channel that frustration into the type of effort we saw against Washington, then great. But recent evidence suggests they're still searching for that collective rhythm, and it's resulting in a few too many individual attempts to press, resulting in plays like Wyatt Johnston's turnover on the third goal last night.

One thing I didn't realize: The new CBA prevents teams from using sleep tracking technology anymore. The Stars were utilizing this technology as recently as last season, to minimize jetlag effects during the Finland trip, but teams aren't allowed to do so any longer. Check out the piece if you missed it, too:

<https://www.starsthoughts.com/p/inside-the-dallas-stars-comprehensive-plan-to-fight-jetlag-to-and-from-finland>

Mavrik Bourque continues to strike me as a player who needs to be scoring to feel like his game is at its best. When talking about his success with both the QueBäck line and the Robertson/Hintz line, he very much doesn't want to rest on any laurels, bringing the conversation back to how he's working to contribute more offensively, and he believes he can do it. Some players just have that drive.

Another player like that is Matt Duchene, I think. Even experienced veterans want to feel like they're helping the team, and being moved around the lineup in search of more offense cannot be an easy experience for someone who had such a clear role and position for the previous two years.

Of course, if Duchene can weather all this and find that spot, everything will be fine. But the Stars need to figure out how to do that sooner rather than later.

I do wonder if Misha Donskov's absence is particularly noticeable during the Stars' current stretch. Having such an elite (and trusted) eye-in-the-sky doing video and working with players was a luxury for years, and with Donskov's being poached by Team Canada, I wonder if there are some growing pains happening behind the scenes right now. Donskov was frequently praised for being able to point out little things that got out of whack, and I believe he was great at communicating with players, too. Any change of personnel always requires building new rapport, and that could be an underrated element of the current hiccups right now. One suspects time will see it sort itself out, though.

Radek Faksa's son, Elliot chose the team's Twitter song of the game for Kids Day on Sunday. He chose the Paw Patrol theme song, though Faksa says his son is also pretty big on Lightning McQueen of the Cars movie/franchise right now.

Another player overhearing our conversation heartily endorsed the Cars movie, then recommended the Shrek franchise, though I feel pretty strongly that Bluey is a far superior investment of time (and one much less grating for adults to hear repeatedly that any movie with the soundtrack sung by Smashmouth).

Sadly, my parenting advice is rarely taken on account of my not actually being a parent. Discrimination, I say!

(But for real, the Bluey episodes "Bike" and "Baby Race" are worth every second of your time. Go watch them right now.)

The Hockey News

NHL Insider: Stars Turn Attention To Flames' Nazem Kadri

By Jake Tye

Date: 01/19/26

The Dallas Stars fell short of landing a marquee defenseman in Rasmus Andersson, but their search for a major addition may not be over. Interestingly, the latest name connected to Dallas is also from Calgary.

And no, this time it is not Blake Coleman.

According to recent reports, the Flames are fielding calls on several veteran players who still have term remaining on their contracts, including former Stanley Cup champion Nazem Kadri.

TSN insider Darren Dreger reported that Kadri would be open to joining an established contender, specifically naming the Colorado Avalanche and the Stars. Colorado, of course, is where Kadri won his Stanley Cup in 2022.

Dreger also noted that there's a strong chance a deal would get home and Dallas could have some financial flexibility, likely referencing the potential cap relief if Tyler Seguin is placed on season-ending injured reserve.

Both the Stars and Avalanche project to have similar cap space, but fitting in Kadri's \$7 million dollar cap hit would likely require moving money out or involving additional assets.

Kadri, 35, has three seasons remaining on his contract after this year. With the Flames already using their second salary retention slot on the Andersson trade at 50 per cent for the remainder of the season, Calgary would have just one spot left and have many other deals they'd like to get done.

Any deal would be complex, but Dallas has reached the point where simply coming close is no longer enough. The Stars have been knocking on the door and could decide that a significant move down the middle is worth the cost.

Kadri has established himself as a reliable 60 to 75 point center, and his career year came in the right situation with Colorado during the 2021-22 season, when he posted a career-high 87 points.

While Kadri is on the older side, the league has seen elite players remain productive well into their mid to late 30s. Players like Sidney Crosby and Brad Marchand continue to perform at a high level, and there is reason to believe Kadri still has plenty left to give.

Slotting him into a lineup that could feature him alongside players such as Matt Duchene and Sam Steel has the potential to deliver significant offensive results.

The biggest obstacles remain the acquisition cost and the salary cap gymnastics required to make it work. Still, if the Stars are serious about getting over the hump, Nazem Kadri represents the kind of bold move that could change their postseason outlook.

Breakaway on Sports Illustrated

Stars Searching for Answers Amid Brutal Skid

By Seth Dowdle

Date: 01/19/26

If the Dallas Stars' New Year's resolution was to continue winning hockey games at a torrid clip, then they've failed, just like the millions of people who said they were going to start going to the gym.

Over the past several weeks, the Stars — who entered late December as one of the best teams in the NHL — have been reeling. All told, this recent skid has seen Dallas lose 10 of its last 12. Yikes. It's a slide that's frankly shocking. The depth and talent on the roster that Stars general manager Jim Nill has assembled is otherworldly. Still, for some reason, this squad just can't figure it out right now.

After a recent 4-1 defeat to the Tampa Bay Lightning, Stars forward Justin Hryckowian expressed what has to be a similar sentiment to the rest of his teammates.

"We aren't happy with the results," Hryckowian said.

Perhaps even more telling was what his head coach, Glen Gulutzan, said back on Jan. 15 in the immediate aftermath of a loss against the then-reeling Anaheim Ducks.

"We're not happy with our play as of late and the results of late," Gulutzan said. "We've got to get back to a little bit of a resetting and get into some rhythm here."

While that's all well and good, the Stars have lost two more games since that quote from Gulutzan, with the end of the skid having no end in sight.

So how in the world did this all happen? How did a team that's equipped with players like Mikko Rantanen, Miro Heiskanen, Jason Robertson and a myriad of other potent talents fall into such depths of despair? What is going on in Dallas?

Lackluster Offensive and Defensive Production is Plaguing the Stars

For the first three months of the season, Dallas relied on a quality-over-quantity approach when it came to getting shots on goal. To its credit, it worked. The Stars roared near the top of the NHL standings — if it wasn't for those pesky Avalanche, they would've been in first place — and all was well in the world.

But then the bubble burst.

It turns out that averaging a measly 25.2 shots on net per game, which is second-to-last in the entire league — with only the St. Louis Blues being worse — isn't a recipe for

success, even with some of the best scorers on the planet. The Stars simply have to pepper the goalie more than they have. Simple as that.

Even with the lackluster shot totals, the Stars still could've won more games over the past several weeks if their goaltending had been a bit better. Team USA netminder Jake Oettinger has valiantly led the charge for the Stars in the crease, but he and his partner, Casey DeSmith, have struggled as of late. All told, the duo has posted a 3.5 goals-against average over the past 12 games, which, while not terrible, isn't good enough — especially when the offense isn't producing at the high level it was earlier in the season.

All is Not Lost

Even with the recent struggles, the Stars are still extremely well-positioned to make the Stanley Cup playoffs. All they need to do is get back to their winning ways, which is easier said than done, and all will be right in the Lone Star State. After all, this is the same organization that lost its final seven games heading into the postseason a year ago and still made a run to the Western Conference final.

This skid is not impossible to break. Take Hryckowian's word for it. He believes, and sometimes belief is all one needs.

"We have such a tight-knit group, and we are going to get out of this," Hryckowian said. "We just have to start stacking plays, stacking games, stacking practices, and it will start going our way soon."

