



AMALIE Arena Media Clips
Friday, October 20, 2023

1. Lightning's Steven Stamkos returns for game against Vancouver Canucks – Eduardo Encina (Tampa Bay Times)
2. Nikita Kucherov scores twice as Lightning end 3-game winless streak – Associated Press
3. The Backcheck: Bolts defeat Vancouver to open homestand – Chris Krenn (TampaBayLightning.com)

Lightning's Steven Stamkos returns for game against Vancouver Canucks **Eduardo Encina (Tampa Bay Times)**

TAMPA — Steven Stamkos returned to the Lightning lineup for Thursday's 4-3 win over Vancouver at Amalie Arena after missing the previous two games with a lower-body injury.

The Tampa Bay captain assisted on Nick Paul's first-period power-play goal. Stamkos had seven shots and one hit while playing 18:55. He was minus-2.

Stamkos, who was scratched for road losses in Ottawa and Buffalo, was a full participant at Thursday morning's skate. He skated on the first-team power-play unit and on the second line, alongside Anthony Cirelli and Brandon Hagel.

"I felt good the last couple of days and I felt good (Thursday) on the ice, so that's the expectation," Stamkos said after morning skate when asked about playing against the Canucks.

The Lightning were 0-for-6 on the power play in the two games without Stamkos, including an 0-for-4 showing in Tuesday's 3-2 overtime loss to Buffalo. Tampa Bay used two defensemen — Victor Hedman and Mikhail Sergachev — on the top unit to try to compensate for Stamkos' absence.

"Especially on the power play, he's a threat," head coach Jon Cooper said. "It's another thing a defense has to worry about when he's out there. And so the other night, it was just different without him out there, and we didn't really have practice time because it was unforeseen he wasn't going to play. When you have that kind of triple threat we have across the line on the power play, it makes a big difference when he's in there."

After opening the season with three of their first four games on the road, the Lightning (1-2-1, 3 points) play their next five at Amalie Arena, through the end of October. They owned one of the best home records in the league last season.

"It's imperative that we start getting some points here," Cooper said. "I'm disappointed we only came away with one on that trip, and we've been pretty good at home in the past. We just can't say, 'Oh, just because we're at home that we're going to get points.' We've got some good teams coming in here, but it'll be good to not bounce around different cities."

Nikita Kucherov scores twice as Lightning end 3-game winless streak

Associated Press

TAMPA — Nikita Kucherov scored twice to break open a close game and the Lightning beat the Canucks 4-3 on Thursday night to end a three-game winless streak.

With the score tied at 2 with a little over three minutes left in the second period, Kucherov scored his first goal of the game, and he gave the Lightning a 4-2 lead on a power play 4:42 into the third.

‘Kuch’ took over,” Lightning coach Jon Cooper said.

Nick Paul and Mikey Eyssimont also scored, and Jonas Johansson made 26 saves for the Lightning (2-2-1) at Amalie Arena.

Steven Stamkos had an assist and tied Kucherov with a team-high seven shots in 18:55 of ice time after missing the previous two games because of a lower-body injury.

“I felt good the last couple of days, and I felt good (Thursday) on the ice,” Stamkos said after the morning skate.

Thatcher Demko stopped 31 shots for Vancouver, and Brock Boeser, Tyler Myers and former Lightning forward J.T. Miller scored.

The Lightning tied the score at 2 on Eyssimont’s goal with 4:17 left in the second period.

“Big goal for us,” Cooper said. “After that tough shift we had to open the period and gave up two (goals), we just felt stale, and I thought his goal kind of gave us that life we needed.”

Kucherov scored from the top of the right circle 1:09 later.

“I feel like it was like the last six, seven minutes (of the second) their big guys started wheeling around,” Miller said. “Once they get going, they’re hard to stop.”

Lightning left wing Tanner Jeannot (84) fights Vancouver Canucks defenseman Mark Friedman during the second period.

Kucherov also hit the post early in the third.

“Work ethic,” Paul said. “When we start taking the game over, what was going well? We’re moving pucks. We’re hustling. We were first on the forecheck. Winning our battles in front. That’s the kind of hockey we want to play.”

Boeser scored 14 seconds into the second period before Myers made it 2-1 48 seconds later. Myers had his first goal of the season to match his total from both 2021-22 (82 games) and 2022-23 (78 games). The defenseman has 89 goals in 922 career games.

Miller cut the Canucks’ deficit to 4-3 with 1:49 remaining in the game.

Boeser — who had four goals in a season-opening win over Edmonton — is the first Vancouver player with five goals in his first four games of a season since Alexander Mogilny in 1995-96.

Paul scored his third power-play goal of the season at 11:10 of the first after a turnover by Myers. Demko made a pair of strong saves on Stamkos before Paul put home a loose puck.

“I was trying to clear it,” Myers said. “I think I had more time than I thought. I couldn’t get it in the air, under it. Looking back, I wish I would have held on to it for a second.”

After opening the season with three of their first four games on the road (1-2-1), the Lightning opened a five-game homestand Thursday.

“It’s imperative that we start getting some points here,” Cooper said before the game. “I’m disappointed we only came away with one on that trip, and we’ve been pretty good at home in the past. We just can’t say, ‘Oh, just because we’re at home that we’re going to get points.’ We’ve got some good teams coming in here.”

The Backcheck: Bolts defeat Vancouver to open homestand **Chris Krenn (TampaBayLightning.com)**

The Tampa Bay Lightning got back in the win column Thursday night with a 4-3 win over the Vancouver Canucks at AMALIE Arena.

The Bolts opened the scoring 11:10 into the first period with a power-play goal after Nick Paul intercepted a clearing attempt from Tyler Myers and found a wide-open Steven Stamkos on the back door. With a good look at the net, Stamkos hammered a one-timer on goal, but was denied by an incredible save from Thatcher Demko, who also managed to stop an attempt from Stamkos on the rebound. But Demko was unable to turn away three in a row, as Paul jumped on the loose puck and shoveled it into the back of the net for his third goal of the season, all scored on the power play.

Tampa Bay surrendered the lead and quickly found themselves trailing after Brock Boeser scored 14 seconds into the second period, followed by a slap shot goal from Myers just 48 seconds later that put Vancouver up 2-1.

With the Lightning's struggles in the second period to start the year starting to creep back up, Tanner Jeannot gave his team the spark they needed when he dropped the gloves with Mark Friedman at the 6:50 mark of the period.

Given a boost from Jeannot's fight, the Bolts got back to their game and evened the score at the 15:53 mark with a dart from Mikey Eyssimont. Taking a pass across the neutral zone from Connor Sheary, Eyssimont skated into the Vancouver zone, got to the left circle and leaned into a shot that was wired right over the glove of Demko for his first goal of the season.

Similarly to how Vancouver got back-to-back goals to start the period, Tampa Bay scored just 1:09 later to go back up by one. After Nikita Kucherov calmly handled a pass along the boards from Brandon Hagel, he turned towards the top of the right circle and ripped a quick wrist shot through traffic that went top shelf and made it a 3-2 game with 3:08 remaining in the middle frame.

But Kucherov wasn't done there and added a second tally with the Lightning on the power play early in the third period. After Paul was denied on a power move to the net, he won a puck battle along the wall with the help of Brayden Point and went back towards the net before putting the puck on a platter for Kucherov, who quickly fired a one-timer past Demko to make it 4-2 with 15:18 remaining.

Vancouver crawled back within one on a late goal from J.T. Miller with Demko on the bench for an extra attacker, but Jonas Johansson shut the door for the remainder of the contest and helped the Bolts move to 2-0-0 on home ice this season. Johansson finished the night with 26 saves on 29 shots against.

Bolts Quotes

Jon Cooper: "Jeannot is one of those guys that can turn a game like that. There's not a lot of guys that will look that guy in the eye. When you see those things happen, physical presence, it makes guys a little bit taller on the bench. But there's been a lot more to Jeanno's game. He's been big, physical. He's on the forechecks. He's around the net. I'm just really, really happy with his game."

Mikey Eyssimont: "I changed something up this year. I went with Point's curve, but on a lefty. Pointer told me nice shot after the game. I said, 'Nice curve.'"

Nick Paul: “We don’t want to be a losing team. What winning teams do is they answer and we knew we’d answer. Jeannot stepped up big and got the energy going and then from there we just kind of built off it and took it over.”

Jon Cooper on Eyssimont’s goal: “Big goal for us. After that tough shift we had to open the period and gave up two, we just felt stale and I thought his goal kind of gave us that life we needed. Then, I think Kuch took over after that.”

Bolts by the Numbers

- Tanner Jeannot recorded another four hits and leads the Bolts with 16 on the season. He is tied for the fourth-most hits among NHL skaters.
- With one assist, Steven Stamkos has now picked up points in 15 of his 19 career games vs. Vancouver (16-12—28).
- Nikita Kucherov has posted a multi-point effort in nine of his last 12 games vs. Vancouver (8-10—18).
- Anthony Cirelli won eight of 11 faceoffs (73%) and currently ranks third among all NHL skaters with a 63.8% faceoff win percentage (minimum 30 faceoffs).
- With one assist, Brandon Hagel has found the scoresheet in four of five games this season and is tied with Nikita Kucherov for the team lead in points (both: 4-2—6).

Krenner’s Three Stars

1. Nikita Kucherov
2. Nick Paul
3. Tanner Jeannot

Lightning Look Ahead

- Saturday, October 21 vs. Toronto Maple Leafs, 7 p.m. ET, AMALIE Arena
- Tuesday, October 24 vs. Carolina Hurricanes, 7 p.m. ET, AMALIE Arena
- Thursday, October 26 vs. Seattle Kraken, 7 p.m. ET, AMALIE Arena