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**December 23, 2025**

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## The Athletic / Despite Zach Werenski's absence, Blue Jackets claim improbable 3-1 win over Kings

**By Aaron Portzline – December 23, 2025**

Hockey is a wonderful sport that sometimes makes very little sense.

The Columbus Blue Jackets, playing without defenseman Zach Werenski, headed into a much-needed NHL holiday break with a much-needed victory, beating the Los Angeles Kings 3-1 before 18,145 in Crypto.com Arena.

"It's certainly nice to go into the break with a good feeling," Blue Jackets coach Dean Evason told reporters in Los Angeles. "We haven't felt this (winning) feeling for a bit. So to play the way we did, certainly at the end of the game, the guys should be proud of the way they played."

Especially considering they did it without Werenski, their best player on both ends of the ice and in every situation, not to mention their leader on the bench and in the dressing room.

Make it make sense:

- Werenski is the Blue Jackets' power-play quarterback, but without him Monday they scored three power-play goals for the first time all season and the first time in almost a year (Dec. 27, 2024)
- Mason Marchment had four goals in 29 games with the Seattle Kraken before he was traded to the Blue Jackets on Friday; after scoring two goals Monday, he now has three in two games with the Blue Jackets
- the Blue Jackets had allowed at least one third-period goal in 17 consecutive games, but they slammed the door shut on the Kings in the final 20 minutes Monday
- the last time the Blue Jackets won a game in regulation was Dec. 1 vs. the New Jersey Devils; this was their eighth regulation win of the season

The Blue Jackets did not panic in the third period. They played authoritative hockey, even after captain Boone Jenner took an offensive-zone hooking penalty with five minutes remaining and the Jackets protecting a 3-1 lead.

"We've already started clipping (video)," Evason said, "so that when they come back we can reinforce this and they'll remember, hopefully, how we need to play to win hockey games."

Marchment made it 1-0 only 4:07 into the game when he dangled through traffic high in the zone during the power play to create a clean look from the slot, beating Kings goaltender Anton Forsberg with a wrister.

The lead grew to 2-0 at 19:36 of the first thanks to another Marchment goal, this one a redirection of a Damon Severson shot directly in front of Forsberg.

Marchment is the first player in Blue Jackets history to score three goals in his first two games with the franchise. Oddly enough, Severson has the primary assist on all of Marchment's goals.

Kirill Marchenko, who had gone seven games without a goal, scored off a wrister from the left circle at 14:16 of the third to give the Blue Jackets a 3-1 lead. Goaltender Jet Greaves stopped 23 of 24 shots, earning just his second win since Nov. 20.

The only goal he allowed came at 18:41 of the second period when a shot by Andrei Kuzmenko glanced off Jackets defenseman Dante Fabbro, hit the post to Greaves' right and caromed into the net.

"(Greaves) was real good," Evason said. "They did have some quality opportunities. He did a good job smothering pucks and making things calm, but when there were pucks laying around, we did a good job clearing them and getting them out of the zone.

"We didn't turn the puck over, either. We talked about that the other night. We turned it over way too much. We didn't do that here tonight."

Werenski was struck in the lower right leg during Saturday's game in Anaheim, immediately falling to the ice in agony. He crawled to the bench, limped off to the dressing room with still two minutes left in the game and had Blue Jackets fans fearing the worst.

But the Blue Jackets learned late Saturday that Werenski did not have any broken bones, meaning he wouldn't be out of the lineup long term. Monday's game against the Kings was the first game he's missed this season.

"(Werenski) did everything to try and play in tonight's game," Evason said. "But to give him five (days) off (including the NHL's mandated holiday break), we think, is the intelligent thing to do.

"I don't anticipate (Werenski's absence) being past the (holiday) break. Clearly, he's a huge part of our hockey team in all areas, so the intelligent thing is to let him completely heal up. It's not just the one issue that he's working on right now."

With Werenski out of the lineup, the Blue Jackets had to make some big adjustments on the back end.

Ivan Provorov moved up into Werenski's spot on the top pair, joining Fabbro, who was elevated from the third pair. Denton Mateychuk, who had played with Werenski on the top pair, moved to the second pair, with Severson to his right.

The third pair was Brendan Smith with Jake Christiansen, who had been a healthy scratch in 12 straight games and hadn't dressed for a game since Nov. 24.

It was Mateychuk, though, who took Werenski's spot on the point of the Blue Jackets' top power-play unit. He also took on a heavy load of minutes, too, playing 28:35, a career high.

Perhaps the only drawback for Columbus was that center Sean Monahan didn't play for the final 10 minutes of the third period. He was in pain on the bench before heading down the tunnel.

## **The Columbus Dispatch / Without Zach Werenski, Mason Marchment helps deliver Blue Jackets' win**

**By Lori Schmidt – December 23, 2025**

Forward Mason Marchment is off to a scorching start with the Blue Jackets. In a 3-1 win on the road against the L.A. Kings on Dec. 22, Marchment scored two first-period power-play goals.

Marchment, whom the Blue Jackets recently acquired by sending second-round (2027) and fourth-round (2026) draft picks to the Seattle Kraken, also scored a goal in his Columbus debut, a 4-3 loss to the Anaheim Ducks on Dec. 20.

Defenseman Damon Severson has recorded assists on all three of Marchment's Columbus goals. Marchment has scored seven times this season.

With Kirill Marchenko adding a power-play goal in the third period, the win against the Kings marked the first time this season the Jackets had tallied three times on the man advantage.

Goaltender Jet Greaves had 23 saves.

### **Injury update on Blue Jackets defenseman Zach Werenski**

Columbus' Zach Werenski sat out vs. the Kings with a lower-body injury, although coach Dean Evason said the defenseman was dealing with more than "just one issue."

Werenski was struck in the ankle by a Troy Terry shot in the Blue Jackets' loss two nights earlier.

Evason said Werenski made an effort to be available against the Kings, but the Blue Jackets decided to give Werenski the night off. With the NHL's holiday break coming up, Werenski would have over a week to recover from his various bumps and bruises.

"We think it's the intelligent thing to do," Evason said.

Evason expects Werenski to be ready when the Blue Jackets face the New York Islanders on Dec. 28.

"I don't anticipate it being past the break," Evason said.

Werenski had five goals in his previous three games and was riding a five-game point streak before he got hurt.

## **BlueJackets.com / Winning Thoughts: Blue Jackets deliver a present with win over Kings**

**By Jeff Svoboda – December 23, 2025**

### **1. Even without Zach Werenski, the Blue Jackets turned in a strong defensive effort to down the Kings.**

The good news is that the Norris Trophy-level defenseman is expected to be back after the Christmas break after taking a shot off his lower leg Saturday vs. Anaheim. The bad news on Monday night, though, was that Werenski wasn't able to suit up against the Kings as those bumps and bruises healed.

With their standout blueliner out of the lineup, the Blue Jackets still got the job done, limiting Los Angeles' offensive chances throughout the night. Despite giving the Kings five power-play chances, Columbus kept LA to just 24 shots on goal as well as the single tally.

"We did a lot of good things defensively as far as reloading and not allowing, you know, the odd-man rushes were down because we were doing the right things coming back to defend," head coach Dean Evason said. "We need to do that each and every night."

With Werenski a spectator, it took a team effort to turn in that type of performance. Denton Mateychuk stepped up to play a career-high 28:35 – including 5:39 on the power play and 6:02 on the penalty kill – while Ivan Provorov skated 27:12 and Damon Severson notched two assists. In net, goaltender Jet Greaves stopped 23 shots.

From his perspective, Greaves saw a team in front of him that turned in a dedicated defensive effort, and it marked just the fourth time all season the Blue Jackets allowed just one goal.

"I thought it was great," Greaves said. "That's something we've been speaking about a lot lately is just making sure the compete level and those little details are there because that's what wins hockey games. I think it was a really good job of that tonight from the first period, second period all the way through the third. I think it was consistent the whole night, and that was positive as well."

### **2. Mason Marchment's two-goal performance was another example of the jolt he's given the Blue Jackets.**

Acquired late Friday night before the NHL roster freeze from Seattle, Marchment couldn't have made a better first – and second – impression with the Jackets.

After scoring in his CBJ debut Saturday night in Anaheim, Marchment did even better on Monday night, posting a pair of power-play goals in the first period. The first came when he deked around Joel Armia and surprised Anton Forsberg with a shot that the goalie got a piece of but couldn't keep out, and the second was a shot from the blue line from Severson that went off Marchment's chest and in the net.

It was 10th multigoal performance of Marchment's career, but the big winger has his sights set on even more.

“Two is nice, three is better,” Marchment said. “Just trying to get some shots on net, and happy that one went in. Then the other one was a great shot from the point and it just went off my chest and in, so we’ll take it.”

Marchment made a bit of CBJ history, as well, becoming the first player with three goals in his first two games with the franchise. He has a fan in new linemate Kirill Marchenko, who could only smile when Marchment’s name was brought up.

“Whewwww,” Marchenko said, “He’s an unbelievable player. He can score goals, he can make passes, he can do everything on the ice. I can just chill a little bit. I’m happy to play with this guy, and he can do everything on the ice. He scored two different goals today, one from shot and second one from tip, and it’s awesome.”

### **3. The Blue Jackets’ special teams stepped up in the victory.**

Apparently, the Blue Jackets have a go-to present for CBJ fans around the holiday season – power-play goals.

Columbus notched three power-play goals in the win against Los Angeles, getting a trio of man-advantage tallies for the first time since Dec. 27 of last year.

‘Tis the season, it appears, as Marchment’s two tallies were supplemented by Kirill Marchenko’s five-hole snipe that served as an insurance maker with 5:44 to play.

“The power play was good,” Marchment said. “That’s a huge goal by Marchy to get up by two, and I thought all night we had a couple good chances and it’s fun to see.”

Don’t look now, but the CBJ power play could be described as dangerous. Columbus moved up to a tie for 12th in the NHL this season at 20.7 percent, and the Blue Jackets have 10 power-play tallies in the last 11 games while clicking at a 29.4 percent rate.

Even more impressive, though, might have been the CBJ penalty kill, which denied all five chances for the Los Angeles power play. The Blue Jackets finished the two-game swing through California perfect on all eight penalty kill chances. In that 7:46 of power-play time, the Kings had just three shots on goal.

## The Hockey Writers / Blue Jackets Prospect Sergei Ivanov Discusses Contract, KHL Breakout, and North American Ambitions

**By Alessandro Seren Rosso – December 22, 2025**

There's a quiet intensity in Sergei Ivanov's game. At 21 years old, the young netminder for SKA, who was drafted 138th overall in 2022 by the Columbus Blue Jackets, has already played in the Kontinental Hockey League (KHL) for several seasons, including a loan spell to Admiral Vladivostok and a second loan to HC Sochi, feeling the weight of responsibility that comes with guarding the crease against quality shooters. Yet beyond the routine of practices and games, there's a broader horizon that occupies his thoughts — the possibility of one day playing in the NHL.

In this translated interview, originally appearing on the Russian website sovsport.ru, Ivanov talks about his ongoing contact with Columbus, his future after SKA, preparing for a possible move to North America, and the progress he's made during his breakout KHL season.

### **Ivanov in Contact with Columbus**

"I talk with the Columbus goalie coach," Ivanov says. His contract in the KHL runs out in May 2026. "He sometimes writes, congratulates, or just asks how things are going. He watches my games. We're in contact roughly once a month, or around some notable events." Of course, the team is interested in what he has planned. "Representatives from Columbus haven't asked yet what I've decided," he admits. "But I think they will. For now, nothing like that yet."

As his contract with SKA approaches its natural conclusion, the question of what comes next looms large. "I understand that if I come to America now, I'll have to go through the AHL to make it to the NHL," he says frankly. "(Igor) Shesterkin came ready, but even he still worked his way through the farm club. I'm not afraid of that. If it happens that way, so be it. If it's different — that's good too. But I don't know what will happen next year. This year, I need to figure things out."

Still, there's a thoughtful reticence about rushing things. "I don't know if I want to decide earlier," he says of making a choice about his future. "The season is ongoing. In this situation, you can't relax at all." Ivanov has a .927 save percentage so far and one shutout across 13 games. Very good numbers.

### **Taking It to the Next Level**

But he knows that to make it to the next level, it's not enough. "Even if I'm a backup, I still have to be ready to go at any moment. There's always going to be competition," he says. "Even if you're a starter or second goalie, your job is simple — play hockey."

Each athlete has their own style, and Ivanov is no exception. "I like Shesterkin, (Sergei) Bobrovsky — they're different. In general, it's interesting to take something from everyone. In one situation, you play it one way, in another a bit more aggressively, and in a third more calmly." He doesn't seem to have just one style. "It depends on the situation," Ivanov explains. "If you've missed the moment, you'll throw yourself into it just to do something. If everything is under control, you play calmly, cleanly, get into position."

Recently, Ivanov was included in the KHL All-Star Game rosters, where he will play for the Russia U23 team alongside New York Islanders draftee Dmitry Gamzin. That's another recognition of his strong play, with his game improving as he gets older.

"There's some experience now, of course. It's my third season — even my fourth. You already understand the players who have been in the league for a long time, the ones I started out with. You know how they play. But this is just the beginning; everything is still ahead. New players keep coming in, and the league keeps getting more interesting." And with Ivanov's experience and strong play, conquering a new league seems like an achievable task for the young goalie.



## The Athletic / U.S. men's hockey roster: What we're hearing as management prepares to make final decisions

**By Michael Russo – December 23, 2025**

About the only bad part for Minnesota Wild president of hockey operations and general manager Bill Guerin also holding the GM role for the United States men's hockey team is watching every NHLer who dreams of representing the red, white and blue in Milan put on a show against the Wild.

We've seen everybody from Tage Thompson to Clayton Keller to Zach Werenski to, most recently, Brock Nelson use their games against Minnesota as an audition.

Nelson scored a goal and two assists and did all those little things that Guerin and the coaching staff, led by Mike Sullivan, value during Sunday night's 5-1 Colorado Avalanche win over the Wild.

After the game, Nelson even admitted that Guerin being in the building did cross his mind.

"Maybe a little bit," Nelson, with a wink and a grin, told *The Athletic*. "I mean, Billy's a great guy and he's got a big job ahead of him, a tough one. I want to be there, but whoever ends up going over there, the Americans, I feel like we have a deep squad and can win gold."

Nelson's big game came with his uncle Dave Christian, who won gold the last time the United States won it all, in 1980 in Lake Placid, in the arena with his son. Nelson's grandfather Bill Christian was also part of the 1960 gold-medal-winning United States team, as was his great uncle Roger Christian. Nelson's great uncle Gordon Christian won a silver medal at the 1956 Olympics.

"It'd be incredible," Nelson said. "Every time I let my mind slip to that, I get a little emotional just thinking about my family history. My grandfather, I mean, he's been one of my biggest fans. And my uncle's here today. To have those guys be not just role models but family members that are big fans, it would mean a lot to have another generation of our family be an Olympian."

On Sunday, during the World Juniors in the Twin Cities, Guerin's staff — which includes NHL GMs Stan Bowman, Chris Drury, Tom Fitzgerald and Bill Zito, as well as Wild assistant GM Chris Kelleher and USA Hockey execs Pat Kelleher and John Vanbiesbrouck — will arrive in Minnesota to meet for the final time in selecting the U.S. roster of 14 forwards, eight defensemen and three goalies.

The U.S. came up one goal short against Canada in this year's 4 Nations Face-Off. The coaches and brass loved the style of hockey the team played and the camaraderie within the group. So there are not expected to be massive changes. Maybe only a handful, in fact.

The biggest thing Guerin and his staff will have to monitor is injuries.

Werenski, the New York Rangers' J.T. Miller, the Carolina Hurricanes' Jacob Slavin and the Vegas Golden Knights' Jack Eichel are the latest Americans to be sidelined by injuries. The Rangers' Adam Fox has been sidelined since Nov. 29, and the Florida Panthers' Matthew Tkachuk has yet to play this season, though his return sounds close as he's been skating since Nov. 21. And Jack Hughes just returned to the New Jersey Devils' lineup Sunday.

As of now, the reports that USA Hockey has received indicate that none of the injured players will have their Olympics impacted should they be named to the roster Dec. 31. The roster is scheduled to be announced Jan. 2 on NBC's "Today" show.

If a player named to the team is unable to play, the United States can adjust its roster until Feb. 10, the day before the Feb. 11-22 tournament starts. The Americans will have backup plans.

What will the roster look like? Based on conversations with league sources, here's *The Athletic's* projection of who's in, who's out and what decisions remain heading into Sunday's meetings.

### **Forwards**

**Already named to the roster (4):** Anticipated captain Auston Matthews, Matthew Tkachuk, Brady Tkachuk and Jack Eichel

**Other shoo-ins (7):** Matt Boldy, Kyle Connor, Jake Guentzel, Jack Hughes, Dylan Larkin, J.T. Miller and Tage Thompson

Of the 11 players above, Thompson is the only one who was not part of the 4 Nations roster, although he was nice enough to come to Boston late in the tournament in case there was an emergency — despite being stung that he was snubbed. Thompson went to the World Championship and scored in overtime to deliver the United States its first gold since 1933 in the event.

Connor was scratched in the 4 Nations championship game, but it's hard to imagine them leaving the goal scorer off the roster. And while Miller hasn't had a great season with the Rangers, it's likely the Americans will look at his body of work as a reason for him to make the team.

**Likely (1):** Brock Nelson

Guerin has insisted that you have to be able to check and be trusted in defensive situations if you're going to make this team. It's not an All-Star team. The coaches may riot if Nelson's not a part of it. That's how much he's respected by the staff of Sullivan, John Hynes, John Tortorella and David Quinn.

"They have tough decisions," Avalanche coach Jared Bednar said Sunday night. "Brock is a guy that does a little bit of everything, and he does it all well, too. I think he's definitely going to be in the conversation. I really hope he gets the opportunity."

**What that leaves:** Two spots for players such as Clayton Keller, Jason Robertson, Cole Caufield, Alex DeBrincat, Patrick Kane, Matthew Knies, Vincent Trocheck and Alex Tuch.

If the first 12 above are correct, it will be a difficult choice for the final two.

Best guess is that Keller, who wasn't on the 4 Nations team, gets one of the nods. He impressed during the spring's World Championship, and those were tight-checking games. He's also excellent on the power play from the right circle. If the Americans suffer an injury or need an infusion of speed, Keller can fit many roles.

"I understand every country will have tough decisions to make, and it's easy to debate," Utah coach André Tourigny told us in October. "But no doubt he should be on the radar."

And the last spot?

Robertson has 20 goals in 21 games since Nov. 11 — tops in the NHL. He's also 10 for 15 the past three years in the shootout.

For a team that was a goal short, how do you leave him home?

Caufield is one of the most electrifying goal scorers in the NHL and is lights out in overtime (11 OT goals since 2020-21) and the shootout (11-for-23 the past three years).

For a team that was a goal short, how do you leave *him* home?

But hard as it is, the projection here is that the brass will leave both home, picking Trocheck over Robertson, Caufield and others.

The Americans really wanted Knies to play himself onto the roster, but he hasn't. And when it comes to Trocheck, the coaches love his ability to check, take and win key faceoffs and play the penalty kill. So the bet is he'll be the last forward.

If indeed that's the case, the only 4 Nations forward not to make the Olympic roster will be Chris Kreider.

## **Defensemen**

**Already named to the roster (2):** Quinn Hughes, Charlie McAvoy

**Other shoo-ins (4):** Brock Faber, Jake Sanderson, Jaccob Slavin, Zach Werenski

These six are likely already written in pen, with Hughes and Werenski quarterbacking the two power-play units and Slavin and Faber being a shutdown line — unless Hughes and Faber's chemistry with the Minnesota Wild makes coaches want them together.

**Likely (1):** Seth Jones

Jones wasn't part of the 4 Nations roster, but after winning the Stanley Cup and logging huge minutes in all situations for the Panthers, the big right-shot defenseman has done enough to impress the U.S. staff and earn a spot.

**What that leaves:** One spot for Adam Fox, Noah Hanifin, Lane Hutson, Jackson LaCombe and others.

Again, *if* this projection is right, this will be a tough choice.

Fox and Hanifin both made the 4 Nations, so one could be out barring injury. Fox is hurt right now and seemed to be affected by the pace of the 4 Nations, but he's had a much-improved season for the Rangers and is now coached there by Sullivan. Could that push him over the top?

Hanifin is steady and can play big minutes, and Hutson is an offensive dynamo who could fill in if the team loses a power-play defenseman. And the American brass really respects the up-and-coming LaCombe.

But where it seemed before the season as if Fox was in trouble, the best guess now is that he's grabbing that eighth D spot.

## **Goaltenders**

**Shoo-ins (2):** Connor Hellebuyck and Jake Oettinger

Hellebuyck was great at the 4 Nations and has won three Vezinas and a Hart. And Oettinger, who was also on the 4 Nations, has been one of the NHL's best goalies this season. Both money goaltenders will be in Milan.

**Likely (1):** Jeremy Swayman

Swayman, who was also on the 4 Nations roster, might have seemed in danger of falling off after a tough 2024-25 season. But he has bounced back this season and proven he belongs on the team.

**What that leaves:** Spencer Knight has had a great season and Thatcher Demko has had healthy stretches, but Hellebuyck, Oettinger and Swayman are incumbents on the roster and are all deserving Olympians, so there's just no room left.

## [The Athletic / Rating every NHL team's goal song, from Eminem to AC/DC to Sabrina Carpenter](#)

**By The Athletic NHL Staff – December 20, 2025**

Every NHL fan wants to hear it played over and over: their favorite team's goal song.

For years, goal songs have signaled joy in NHL arenas. Whether they're played after a game-opening goal or to mark the ending of an overtime thriller, these tunes can carry the weight of nostalgia and team history. Or they might be more of the moment as teams try to modernize the fan experience.

This week, *The Athletic* asked its NHL staff to rate every goal song on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the best), based on personal opinions and how the tune fits the team.

For teams with multiple songs, ratings were combined. In the case of teams using different songs for individual players, we rated the captain's song.

What do you think of your favorite team's goal song? Which one do you like the most league-wide? Let us know in the comments.

### **Anaheim Ducks**

#### **"Coming For You" by The Offspring**

**Rating:** 5/10

It's nowhere near my favorite track from The Offspring and I'm still not sure how I feel about the words "sold out, blow out, Donkey Kong" as part of a song's chorus but I'll give points for venturing away from the longtime usage of Pennywise's "Bro Hymn (Tribute)" while sticking with another SoCal band that is even from Orange County, where the Ducks are based. From a promotion angle, the Ducks and The Offspring have collaborated a lot in recent years, so maybe it's part of the deal? — *Eric Stephens*

### **Boston Bruins**

#### **"Kernkraft 400" by Zombie Nation**

**Rating:** 5/10

It's OK. Nothing great. Nothing awful. How about some freshness in the future? — *Fluto Shinzawa*

### **Buffalo Sabres**

#### **"Kickstart My Heart" by Mötley Crüe (blue jerseys) and "Song 2" by Blur (black and red jerseys)**

**Rating:** 7/10

"Kickstart My Heart" is a relatively new goal song in only its second season. It gets the job done, but it hasn't had a chance to really take hold with the fan base. The Sabres get a boost in this rating for "Song 2" being the goal song when they use the throwback black and red jerseys. That brings people back to better days. — *Matthew Fairburn*

## **Calgary Flames**

### **“T.N.T” by AC/DC**

**Rating:** 7/10

Some Flames players have had individual goal songs in the past (Blake Coleman’s “Roar” by Katy Perry comes to mind). But typically, the Flames will play “T.N.T” by AC/DC. Solid song that can get the crowd into it, which matters. — *Julian McKenzie*

## **Carolina Hurricanes**

### **“Raise Up” by Petey Pablo**

**Rating:** 7/10

There aren’t a whole lot of songs that both mention North Carolina and have the potential to hype up a crowd, but Petey Pablo’s “Raise Up” checks both boxes. It’s been in place since 2018, and the fans seem adequately satisfied with it. If the team wants to move on, they could dip into the Triangle’s vibrant indie scene — maybe “Raleigh Days” by Archers of Loaf or something from Hurricanes fan Mac McCaughan’s band Superchunk, such as “Hyper Enough” or “What a Time to Be Alive.” — *Cory Lavalette*

## **Chicago Blackhawks**

### **“Chelsea Dagger” by The Fratellis**

**Rating:** 9/10

There are probably many people in Chicago and beyond who think of the Blackhawks when they hear “Chelsea Dagger.” The song is as associated with the Blackhawks’ most recent three Stanley Cup titles as anything. It was the party theme for many. From inside the stadium to packed bars to homes, people celebrated as that song played. Regardless, the chorus is catchy and fun, and it’s easy to understand why it caught on. Fans don’t seem to get sick of it, but you do wonder if it might be worth considering a new song for this new generation of Blackhawks. — *Scott Powers*

**Rating:** 10/10

It’s a perfect goal song, there’s no denying it. It’s buoyant, has a sing-along element and is just a flat-out good rock song. I remember liking it when it came out on alt-rock radio long before the Blackhawks adopted it. After hearing it 14,000 times, it’s just white noise at this point, but it’s never a chore to listen to. Other non-NHL teams have used it over the years, but it’s universally associated with the Blackhawks. I do feel the team missed a chance to start a new anthem for the new era back in Connor Bedard’s rookie season, but the fans love it, so I understand the reluctance to change. — *Mark Lazerus*

## **Colorado Avalanche**

### **“Chase the Sun” by Planet Funk**

**Rating:** 5/10

The best part about this goal song is the fan participation element, when the crowd chants “Hey! Hey! Hey!” Even still, it’s not as good as the old Avalanche goal song. “Chase the Sun” isn’t a great song on its

own, and it sounds generic as a goal song. I appreciate the sing-along portion, but I can't give it a grade higher than five. — *Jesse Granger*

### **Columbus Blue Jackets**

#### **"For Those About to Rock (We Salute You)" by AC/DC and "The Whip" by Locksley**

**Rating:** 8/10

"For Those About to Rock (We Salute You)" works very well with the Blue Jackets' universally loved cannon, which they blast after every goal. Hard to beat that. As for "The Whip," it's been played at so many sporting events that it almost seems ubiquitous. But it's the type of catchy, mindless chorus that allows fans to be delirious and excited without having to think about anything but what they just witnessed on the ice. Rock on, Locksley. — *Aaron Portzline*

### **Dallas Stars**

#### **"Puck Off" by Pantera**

**Rating:** 9/10

This one's always been a little divisive among hockey fans, but I love it. A bespoke goal song by rock royalty is a hell of a lot cooler than a 30-year-old jock jam like half the league seems to use. It's loud, it's distinct, and it gives fans the opportunity to chant. If you don't like 18,000 people screaming DALLAS! STARS! in unison, you don't like fun. Or you're an Avalanche fan, I suppose. — *Mark Lazerus*

### **Detroit Red Wings**

#### **"Without Me" by Eminem**

**Rating:** 8/10

Local legend Eminem will always be a hit in Detroit, but there's a taunting element to the "na-na-na-na-na" of the chorus that takes this one up a notch — as does the fact that the Red Wings brought the song in at the same time as (finally) getting a goal horn two seasons ago. It's been well received — though I'm sure the fans wouldn't mind hearing it just a bit more often. — *Max Bultman*

### **Edmonton Oilers**

#### **"Fluxland" by XL**

**Rating:** 7/10

It's a great song for a celebration and house music is fun! This is a famous song and everyone (all ages) can join the party. It isn't a brilliant song (such as "Blue Monday" by New Order), but it hits hard from the first beat and it's fast. Probably need to replace it if the Oilers lose in the Stanley Cup Final again, though. — *Allan Mitchell*

### **Florida Panthers**

#### **"Panthers Pulse" by Öwnboss and Selva**

**Rating:** 6/10

The stripped-down EDM track gets points for being unique, bespoke and bringing the fan base into it with the “woah-oh-oh-ohs.” Since they’ve adopted it, Panthers Pulse has become an anthem that strikes fear into playoff opponents, given how frequently they’ve had to hear it in their worst on-ice moments. I know many Florida fans miss the days of Jimmy Eat World’s “Sweetness” to the point that there are videos on YouTube retrofitting the tune into their biggest recent goals. Personally, I say give the fans what they want. “Are you listening?” — *James Mirtle*

### **Los Angeles Kings**

#### **“POWER RIDE 22 (LA Kings Goal Song)” by Fred Coury**

**Rating:** 6/10

For one, it’s not a “song,” and probably the best thing about it is the local tie. L.A.-based Fred Coury was the drummer for glam metal band Cinderella and is a fervent hockey fan who composed the guitars-and-drum-driven sound for the Kings. I wouldn’t call it particularly memorable, but it’s got a straightforward beat fans can chant “Hey! Hey! ... Hey, hey, hey!” and pump their fists to in time. Given how the Kings scuffle offensively at times, they won’t be worn out by game’s end. — *Eric Stephens*

### **Minnesota Wild**

#### **“Shout” by The Isley Brothers**

**Rating:** 8/10

I really like “Shout” as a goal song. It brings a lot of energy to the building. It’s a little old-school, which I enjoy. My guess is that most players don’t know the Isley Brothers, but they probably like the sound. — *Joe Smith*

**Rating:** 1/10

I hate it. — *Michael Russo*

### **Montreal Canadiens**

#### **“Canadiens Goal Song” by Antoine Becks**

**Rating:** 6/10

The Canadiens’ goal song is fine. It encourages crowd participation, which is important, and it’s been around long enough to make it distinct and recognizable. Being an original song is a bonus to me. But for such an iconic franchise, it would be hard to say this goal song fits that same bill. It’s fine; nothing more, nothing less. — *Arpon Basu*

### **Nashville Predators**

#### **“I Like It, I Love It” by Tim McGraw and “Gold on the Ceiling” by The Black Keys**

**Rating:** 5/10

It’s a pretty bad song. But it’s also a pretty annoying song. And isn’t that the idea, to add to your opponent’s misery by blaring something grating into their ears right after they have to pick the puck out



of their own net? If we are going just on song quality, it's a 2/10. If we are going just on the annoyance factor, it's a 9/10. — *Joe Rexrode*

### **New Jersey Devils**

#### **“Howl” by The Gaslight Anthem**

**Rating:** 9/10

The Devils have one of the best goal songs in the league. The energy is right, and the crowd gets into it with the “you suck!” chants. The point of the goal song should be to get fans pumped up, and New Jersey found a way to do that well. — *Peter Baugh*

### **New York Islanders**

#### **“Crowd Chant” by Joe Satriani**

**Rating:** 3/10

The horn itself and “yes, yes, yes” chants are all a vibe, but the actual goal song is honestly underwhelming. There is definitely a better option out there, whether it's just something with a little more tempo or something that represents the most magical place in the world, Long Island. Something Billy Joel would probably be cheesy, but there are a lot of other artists/songs to choose from to amp things up. — *Shayna Goldman*

### **New York Rangers**

#### **“Slapshot” by Ray Castoldi**

**Rating:** 7/10

I still think half the fans aren't sure whether to sing “Goal!” or “Whoa!” but they come together and have fun with it nonetheless. I've got far less of a problem with that than I do with the general music choices at Madison Square Garden, which fail to properly honor a city with a rich history of diverse artists. Can we get an old-school rap playlist for warmups that starts with Nas' classic “N.Y. State of Mind,” which I'll maintain should be the Rangers' standard entrance song, then hits from Biggie, A Tribe Called Quest, Rakim and other NYC legends? — *Vincent Z. Mercogliano*

**Rating:** 7/10

I don't care too much for the song itself, but any time you can get a crowd singing is a win. This does that, and it even is the source of some debate: are the lyrics “wooaahh” or “gooaal?” I say the former, but when fans sing it, it seems to be the latter, which works for me, too. — *Peter Baugh*

### **Ottawa Senators**

#### **“Song 2” by Blur**

**Rating:** 7/10

I personally love this song. It's short, punchy, yet iconic. It honestly makes me think of the “FIFA 98” Soundtrack, because it was the intro. Anything that takes me back to a sports video game is a winner. I

also associate this song with the Senators because it's been used for so long. One of my favorites in the league. — *Julian McKenzie*

### **Philadelphia Flyers**

#### **"Ain't Talkin' 'Bout Love" by Van Halen**

**Rating:** 7/10

As someone who chooses only to recognize the David Lee Roth years of Van Halen, I'm good with this goal song. It's notable, too, that it was originally used in the early/mid 2000s, and was brought back at the start of the 2023-24 season when the new leadership regime took over. — *Kevin Kurz*

### **Pittsburgh Penguins**

#### **"Party Hard" by Andrew W.K.**

**Rating:** 5/10

It's fine. Not objectionable. Personally, I think it's the most average goal song in the league. Fans like it well enough and it brings back memories of the 2016 and 2017 Stanley Cup championship runs. I have long maintained that because the Penguins wear black at home and because it's a better song, The Rolling Stones' "Paint It, Black" would be a perfect goal song for the Penguins. But this probably makes me old. — *Josh Yohe*

### **San Jose Sharks**

#### **"Power Bite" by BVRNOUT**

**Rating:** 4/10

This one is new as it replaces 2 Unlimited's "Get Ready for This" and the change is part of the Sharks shifting into a new era where Macklin Celebrini, Will Smith and William Eklund are filling the net for years to come. Moving away from the techno dance anthem is fine, but this one that's in a similar electronic realm just doesn't stand out in any particular way. It's got the requisite energy, I guess, but I say bring back Green Day's "Holiday" and honor the East Bay heroes. Or take it in an old-school R&B party turn with Parliament's "Give Up The Funk (Tear The Roof Off The Sucker)." — *Eric Stephens*

The Kraken celebrate after a goal scored by Ryan Winterton. Steven Bisig / Imagin Images

### **Seattle Kraken**

#### **"Lithium" by Nirvana**

**Rating:** 10/10

Absolutely no notes. Nirvana's "Lithium" is one of the single best goal songs in the NHL, up there with the Blackhawks' "Chelsea Dagger" by The Fratellis and the Golden Knights' "Vegas Lights" by Panic! At The Disco. I especially like the in-arena edit of the song, so that the "Yeah!" chorus blares out, turning a melancholy track into a proper arena anthem. That it pays tribute to the rock history of Seattle and is fun to sing along to after a pint or two only adds to the perfection of this goal song. — *Thomas Drance*

## **St. Louis Blues**

### **“The Blues Have the Urge Goal Song (Let’s Go Blues)” by The Urge**

**Rating:** 9/10

I like it for several reasons. First, it’s simple. It has a good beat, and fans react to it right away and sing along. Second, it was recorded by a local band. It’s an original with the lyrics “Let’s Go Blues!” It’s St. Louis’ own. And third, it’s not some Top 40 pop song that can be played in other arenas and be outdated in six months. It may not be for everyone, but it hits everything the Blues need in their goal song.

— *Jeremy Rutherford*

## **Tampa Bay Lightning**

### **“Burn It to the Ground” by Nickelback**

**Rating:** 6/10

I mean, this is pretty hockey-coded. Nickelback is a Canadian band, and this song was literally featured in the “NHL 10” video game. The Lightning aren’t reinventing the wheel with this one — there are definitely ways to show more personality with more creative songs — but it works for now. And the big picture is that Tampa Bay rotates goal songs every few seasons anyway, so it’s not something the team is going to be locked into forever. — *Shayna Goldman*

## **Toronto Maple Leafs**

### **“Düp Düp” by Mickie Krause and “Panama” by Van Halen (Original Six games)**

**Rating:** 2/10

Like almost everyone, hearing “You Make My Dreams (Come True)” by Hall and Oates dozens of times a season, for many, many seasons, eventually grated on me. But at least it was a choice. This is the opposite of that. This is bland nothingness designed to avoid a stir following all the pleas for change from Hall and Oates. Nobody’s getting excited for tunes like this. — *Jonas Siegel*

**Rating:** 6/10

They’re ... fine. “Düp Düp” ticks some boxes as a goal song: there is an opportunity for crowd engagement (“Hey hey hey!” is easy enough to chant along to), should the Leafs stick with this song. And “Panama” pops in its simplicity. What’s missing is any sort of local or franchise connection: Toronto is one of the world’s great music cities. Is there nothing the organization could have done to honor the city or the team? With the Leafs, we’re always just looking to feel something. With these songs, it certainly feels like crowds don’t feel enough of the kind of energy they want to. — *Joshua Kloke*

## **Utah Mammoth**

### **“Pretty Handsome Awkward” by The Used**

**Rating:** 8/10

I love this goal song. There’s a local connection with The Used being from Utah, and the song itself is very high-energy, which resonates with the hype and emotion that fans want to feel after a goal. The

song is catchy and something you can energetically bob your head along to. The transition to a chant after the song, before the puck drops at center ice, is a nice touch as well. — *Harman Dayal*

### **Vancouver Canucks**

#### **“Don’t You (Forget About Me)” by Simple Minds**

**Rating:** 8/10

The Canucks goal song rocks. It’s instantly recognizable, it’s nostalgic, it’s fun and it’s fitting for celebratory moments. My only very minor quibble with it is that it isn’t local, it’s not something fans can sing along to easily and it’s lyrically complicated. The idea of “Don’t You (Forget About Me)” implies that the club is positioning itself as an underdog, and is likely to be forgotten. In a perfect world, I’d prefer a goal song that was slightly more lyrically self-assured. — *Thomas Drance*

### **Vegas Golden Knights**

#### **“Vegas Lights” by Panic! At The Disco**

**Rating:** 9/10

This goal song checks a lot of the boxes. It has “Vegas” in both its title and the chorus that plays as soon as the goal horn at T-Mobile Arena ends. It’s performed by Las Vegas natives Panic! At The Disco, and the lyrics are all about getting caught up in the energy and lights of fabulous Las Vegas. The song itself has great energy and is well-suited for celebration. The only thing keeping this from being a perfect 10 is the lack of a sing-along (or chant-along) aspect for the crowd, which is what separates the truly elite goal songs from the rest, in my opinion. — *Jesse Granger*

### **Washington Capitals**

#### **Individual goal songs — Captain Alex Ovechkin: “Shake, Rattle and Roll” by Big Joe Turner**

**Rating:** 10/10

Why more teams don’t go this route is still unclear to me. Example A: Ryan Leonard picked “Free Bird” — it was the goal song for Team USA at the 2025 World Junior Championship — and it pretty quickly became a thing among the fan base. I find myself rooting for Matt Roy to score every time he touches the puck just because Metallica’s “Seek and Destroy” still rules extremely hard. So, yeah, other game ops departments should steal this gimmick, wholesale. — *Sean Gentile*

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### **Winnipeg Jets**

#### **“Gonna Celebrate” by The Phantoms, followed by individual goal songs — Captain Adam Lowry: “Espresso” by Sabrina Carpenter**

**Rating:** 9/10

The best thing Winnipeg does with its goal songs is encouraging its players to pick their own, with Adam Lowry leading a group of players whose personalities shine through when they score. Lowry says his choice — “Espresso” by Sabrina Carpenter — is a nod to his fiancée, Laura Quinton, but he’s grown to

become a fan of Carpenter's through Laura's deep dive into her discography together. Other fan favorites include "Macarena" by Los Del Rio for Gabriel Vilardi and "Money for Nothing" by Dire Straits for Jonathan Toews. As for the team song, it's upbeat and festive enough, but I'd like to see the Jets pick a homegrown artist. What about the "one of a million" hook in "Stereo" by The Watchmen? — *Murat Ates*