

Gourde lifts Lightning over Hurricanes in OT

Golden Knights top Sharks 3-2 in shootout on historic night

TAMPA, Florida, April 20, (AP): Yannick Gourde scored 2:50 into overtime to give the Tampa Bay Lightning a 3-2 victory over the Carolina Hurricanes in a matchup between Central Division contenders.

Alex Killorn and Brayden Point also scored for the Lightning. Andrei Vasilevskiy finished with 25 saves.

Andrei Svechnikov and Brady Skjei scored for Carolina, which has only one regulation loss in the past eight games. Petr Mrazek stopped 33 shots.

Carolina and Florida are tied for the Central Division lead with 63 points, though the Hurricanes have two games in hand. The defending Stanley Cup champion Lightning are one point behind the co-leaders.

Golden Knights 3, Sharks 2, SO

In Las Vegas, Alex Tuch scored the winner in a shootout and streaking Vegas beat San Jose as Sharks forward Patrick Marleau passed Gordie Howe for the most games played in NHL history.

Robin Lehner stopped 29 shots and the Golden Knights won their seventh in a row, overcoming a two-goal deficit behind a pair of power-play goals from captain Mark Stone.

ICE HOCKEY

The 41-year-old Marleau played in his 1,768th career game to break Howe's record in front of a sold-out crowd of 3,950 that included his wife, Christina, and four sons. That wouldn't have been possible in San Jose, where fans still aren't allowed in the arena during the pandemic.

Martin Jones made 38 saves for the Sharks, including five spectacular game-saving stops in overtime.

Lehner, who denied all three San Jose attempts in the shootout, improved to 8-0-1 since returning from a concussion on March 19.

Predators 5, Blackhawks 2

In Nashville, Tennessee, Luke Kunin and Calle Jarnkrok each scored a goal and added an assist to lead Nashville over Chicago.

Matt Duchene, Mattias Ekholm and Tanner Jeannot also scored and Mikael Granlund had two assists for Nashville, which snapped a two-game skid.

Alex DeBrincat and David Kampf scored for Chicago, which has lost two of three.

Nashville has won all six meetings between the teams so far this season as they battle for fourth place in the Central Division. Dallas, which defeated Detroit in a shootout Monday, also is involved in a tight three-way race for the division's final playoff spot.

Stars 3, Red Wings 2, SO

In Dallas, Denis Gurianov scored in the fifth round of a shootout to give Dallas a win over Detroit, and a vital extra point for the defending Western Conference champions in their push to get back in the playoffs.

Roope Hintz and rookie Jason Robertson both scored in regulation for the Stars, with Miro Heiskanen assisting on both goals. Robertson also converted the first shootout attempt for Dallas.

Anton Khudobin stopped 20 shots before the shootout, including a glove save reaching around a defender with less than three minutes left in regulation.

After Red Wings captain Dylan Larkin got a puck through Khudobin's legs in the first round of the tiebreaker, the Stars goalie stopped the next four attempts, including Filip Hronek's try after Gurianov had beaten Thomas Greiss at the other end.

Greiss finished with 34 saves, and both goalies had three in overtime.

Luke Glendening, with only three goals in his first 44 games and none since March 11, scored two tying goals



San Jose Sharks center Patrick Marleau (12) attempts a shot on Vegas Golden Knights goaltender Robin Lehner (90) during the first period of an NHL hockey game on April 19, in Las Vegas. (AP)

NHL Results/Standings

WASHINGTON, April 20, (AP): Results and standings from the NHL games on Monday.

Florida	4	Columbus	2	Edmonton	4	Montreal	1
Tampa Bay	3	Carolina OT	2	Minnesota	5	Arizona	2
Dallas	3	Detroit SO	2	Ottawa	4	Calgary	2
Nashville	5	Chicago	2	Vegas	3	San Jose SO	2

East Division							West Division								
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
Washington	46	29	13	4	62	163	141	Vegas	45	32	11	2	66	150	100
NY Islanders	45	28	13	4	60	127	105	Colorado	43	30	9	4	64	154	101
Pittsburgh	45	28	14	3	59	152	126	Minnesota	44	28	13	3	59	137	117
Boston	43	25	12	6	56	125	110	Arizona	46	20	21	5	45	123	146
NY Rangers	45	20	18	7	47	128	162	St. Louis	43	19	18	6	44	124	135
Philadelphia	44	14	24	6	34	109	150	San Jose	45	18	22	5	41	120	152
New Jersey	45	12	26	7	31	111	154	Los Angeles	42	16	20	6	38	114	127
Buffalo	45	12	26	7	31	111	154	Anaheim	46	14	25	7	35	103	147

Central Division							North Division								
GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA	GP	W	L	OT	Pts	GF	GA		
Carolina	44	29	10	5	63	142	107	Toronto	45	28	12	5	61	147	120
Florida	46	29	12	5	63	147	125	Winnipeg	45	27	15	3	57	144	120
Tampa Bay	45	30	13	2	62	152	117	Edmonton	44	27	15	2	56	141	121
Nashville	47	25	21	1	51	126	132	Montreal	43	19	15	9	47	126	123
Dallas	44	18	14	12	48	125	111	Calgary	45	19	23	3	41	118	133
Chicago	46	21	20	5	47	129	144	Vancouver	38	17	18	3	37	103	122
Detroit	47	16	24	7	39	105	148	Ottawa	46	16	26	4	36	126	166
Columbus	47	15	23	9	39	116	158								

Note: Two points for a win one point for overtime loss. The top four teams in each division will qualify for playoffs under this season's temporary realignment.

for Detroit in the second period.

The Stars have earned points in a season-best seven games in a row (5-0-2). They moved into fifth place in the Central Division with 48 points, one ahead of Chicago, with 12 regular-season games left. Nashville is fourth with 51 points, but only nine games remaining.

Oilers 4, Canadiens 1

In Edmonton, Alberta, Connor McDavid scored the winner late in the third period and Edmonton defeated Montreal.

Jesse Puljujarvi, with a goal and an assist, Ethan Bear and Devin Shore also scored for Edmonton, while Mike Smith made 22 saves. McDavid also had two assists for a three-point game for the Oilers, who trailed 1-0 with less than 10 minutes to play in regulation.

Eric Staal scored for Montreal, which got 25 saves from Jake Allen after he replaced Carey Price to start the second period. Price, who stopped seven shots in the opening 20 minutes, didn't come out after the intermission.

The Oilers stretched their home winning streak to eight games, and improved to 2-3-1 against Montreal in 2021.

The Canadiens, meanwhile, fell to 2-6-0 over their past eight games without injured winger Brendan Gallagher (broken thumb).

Senators 4, Flames 2

In Calgary, Alberta, Connor Brown scored a short-handed goal and added an empty-netter for Ottawa in a win over Calgary.

Josh Norris had a goal and an assist and Brady Tkachuk also scored for Ottawa. Senators goaltender Matt Murray made 26 saves for the win. Elias Lindholm and Michael Stone scored for the Flames. Jacob Markstrom stopped 16 of 19 shots in the loss.

The Montreal Canadiens hold down the fourth and final playoff berth in the North Division. Montreal lost 4-1 to the Edmonton Oilers on Monday, but remained six points ahead of Calgary.

The Flames have 11 games remaining in the regular season, but

three games in four days against the visiting Habs starting Friday will likely determine if Calgary sees the postseason.

Wild 5, Coyotes 2

In Glendale, Arizona, Kevin Fiala had a goal and an assist, Cam Talbot stopped 22 shots and Minnesota stretched its winning streak to four games.

Kirill Kaprizov, Jordan Greenway and Marcus Johansson also scored to help the Wild strengthen their playoff position. Minnesota has 59 points, 14 ahead of fourth-place Arizona in the West Division.

Jonas Brodin added an empty-net goal for Minnesota.

Christian Fischer scored his first goal in 48 regular-season games and Alex Goligoski also scored for the Coyotes, who had numerous defensive breakdowns in losing for the sixth time in seven games. Darcy Kuemper stopped 19 shots.

Panthers 4, Blue Jackets 2

In Sunrise, Florida, Frank Vatrano scored two goals, Anthony Duclair had a pair of assists and Florida defeated Columbus.

Sam Bennett and Radko Gudas also scored for the Panthers, who have won five straight games against the Blue Jackets and gone 6-0-1 in their past seven meetings.

Vatrano's second goal was an empty-netter at 18:38 of the third after he was stopped on a penalty shot earlier in the period.

Florida netminder Sergei Bobrovsky made 34 saves. Elvis Merzlikins turned back 35 shots for the Blue Jackets.

Oliver Bjorkstrand got his team-leading 15th goal and Zac Dalpe also scored for Columbus, which has lost three straight.

Belgian Olympians get priority vaccines

IOC reluctantly accepts plan for '26 Cortina bobsled track

MILAN, April 20, (AP): The International Olympic Committee reluctantly accepted plans to spend 50 million euros (\$60 million) to rebuild an abandoned bobsled track in Cortina d'Ampezzo for the 2026 Winter Games — as long as the funds stay out of the official games' budget.

After the IOC periodic coordination commission's visit on Monday, which was held virtually, the Olympic body said it "again expressed its concerns with regard to the legacy of the track."

The century-old venue in Cortina was closed 13 years ago for financial reasons but is still a source of pride in the Dolomites resort.

The IOC had suggested that instead of spending heavily to rebuild the Cortina track, that sliding events for the Milan-Cortina Games could instead be contested at a venue in neighboring Switzerland (St Moritz) or Austria (Igls).

Ever since Russia's overall spending linked to the 2014 Sochi Olympics topped \$50 billion, the IOC has been anxious to curb all infrastructure spending by local organizers. That policy allows for taking events to another country to cut costs.

"It was pointed out that the IOC

had made a number of proposals for alternative tracks, none of which were accepted," the IOC said in a statement.

"On the other hand, the commission took note that the final plans for the venue are not an investment in a sliding track for the Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games but are part of a wider entertainment park project that is completely unrelated to the games. The IOC is therefore not in a position to go any further in this discussion, as this is a sovereign decision of the Veneto region."

The IOC added the hefty expense "will not form part of the investment budget for the Olympic and Paralympic Games" and "the track will therefore only be (lent) out to the organizing committee for the duration of the games."

As for the organizing committee's risky proposition of holding speed skating at an outdoor oval in Basella di Pinè, no decisions were made.

There were recent tests to stage speed skating at Milan's outdoor Arena Civica, as well as calls to use the indoor oval in Turin that was built for the 2006 Games.

OLYMPICS

"Discussions are continuing on the speed skating oval," the IOC said.

The last time speed skating was held outdoors at the Olympics was for the 1992 Albertville Games, with the IOC having since preferred the controlled environment of indoor venues.

High temperatures in Albertville made the track slushy.

Also:

BRUSSELS: Belgian Olympians traveling to Japan for the Tokyo Games were promised priority treatment for COVID-19 vaccines on Monday.

The Belgian Olympic Committee said its 177 Olympic and 55 Paralympic athletes will get vaccine shots while most of the adult population of their age must still wait.

The Olympics are set to open on July 23.

"Because of the small group of athletes, the decision will have as good as no impact on the overall vaccination campaign," the committee said in a statement.



Tampa Bay Lightning's Brayden Point (21) avoids the check from Carolina Hurricanes' Brady Skjei during the first period of an NHL hockey game on April 19, in Tampa, Florida. (AP)

Bencic, Sakkari win opening matches in Stuttgart

STUTTGART, Germany, April 20, (AP): Eighth-seeded Belinda Bencic had to face down a stubborn performance by a 17 year old on tour debut to reach the second round of the Porsche Grand Prix.

Bencic was broken once in the first set and needed six match points against Nastasja Schunk to finish a 6-4, 6-2 win.

With a ranking of 928, the young German is more used to playing junior events and came through qualifying in Stuttgart for her first WTA main draw.

TENNIS

Bencic will play Ekaterina Alexandrova or Karolina Muchova in

the second round. It was the Swiss player's first win on clay since the 2019 French Open.

Maria Sakkari beat German wild card Andrea Petkovic 6-2, 6-2. Sakkari broke Petkovic four times in a chaotic opening set. Sakkari next plays seventh-seeded Petra Kvitova or Australian Open finalist Jennifer Brady.