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3/16 PREGAME: Minnesota Wild vs. Vegas Golden Knights



By [Heather Rule](#) - March 16, 2018

March madness indeed. The Minnesota Wild finally get their chance to play the Vegas Golden Knights at T-Mobile Arena.

The Golden Knights (45-20-5) have put on a show as the new kid on the block this season. They lead the Pacific Division in the West with 95 points. They'll be out for a win after getting pounded 8-3 by

New Jersey the last time out. Plus, the Wild have won the first two meetings between the clubs, both at Xcel Energy Center (4-2 and 5-2 victories in November and February).

The Wild (39-24-7) and the New York Islanders are the only two teams Vegas hasn't beaten yet. The Wild and Vegas are both 3-2-0 in their past five games overall. It's a two-game losing streak the Wild hope to end with a sweep of the Golden Knights. The Wild have been outscored 9-2 in their two recent losses. They haven't lost three straight games in regulation since Nov. 4-8 against Chicago, Boston and Toronto.

[Eric Staal](#) leads all NHL players with four goals against the Golden Knights. He's scored goals against all 31 NHL teams in his career. He's tied for fourth in the league with 37 goals and with 68 points is on pace for his most points since he tallied 82 in 2007-08.

[Alex Stalock](#) gets the nod in net for his first-ever start against the Golden Knights. He's 9-10-2 this season.

Vegas is led by center Jonathan Marchessault and his 65 points (22-43-65), followed by winger [David Perron](#) with 16 goals and a team-high 47 assists. [William Karlsson](#) leads the team with 36 goals. Former Wild player [Erik Haula](#) is second on the team with 27 goals and has 22 assists as well.

Another former Wild player for a cup of coffee, [Alex Tuch](#), has 13 goals and 17 assists on the year.

Focus also shifts to Wild forward [Jason Zucker](#), since he's notably the only Vegas native playing in the NHL. Many thought he'd be headed for the Golden Knights in the expansion draft, actually. Zucker has 28 goals and 26 assists this season in a career year. He has 14 points in his past 13 games.

[Charlie Coyle](#) is riding a four-game point streak with two goals and three assists in that span. He has 10 goals and 22 assists this season. [Mikko Koivu](#) has eight points in his past eight games and scored the lone goal in the Wild's home loss to Colorado on Tuesday.

With the hamstring injury to [Jared Spurgeon](#), the Wild called up [Ryan Murphy](#) (1-1-2 in nine games) and [Zack Mitchell](#) (3-2-5 in 21 games). The loss of Spurgeon leaves a void, especially with a defensive core that's scored 171 points this season, good enough for second in the NHL.

The Wild still hold the third-place slot in the Central Division, keeping them in the postseason picture just above Dallas and Colorado. With another March weekend, it's another set of back-to-back road games for the Wild. They're 6-5-1 on the first night.

Injury list:

[Luke Kunin](#) (ACL tear in left knee), out for the season, 4 games

Jared Spurgeon (right hamstring tear), out a minimum of four weeks

Total man games lost: 118

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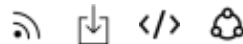


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