

SPORTS NHL

Prosser welcomes return to Wild, home

The defenseman rejoined the team for a third time. BY SCOTT SIMON



Blues defenseman Ryan Murphy (left) and Mike Kelly (right) with the Blues.

Tension mounted inside the two-bedroom apartment. Erik Rouseau, the St. Louis Blues defenseman, was sitting on the couch, his wife, Britanni, and their three kids were crammed together like hockey players fighting for space along the boards.

Meanwhile, the St. Louis Blues kept scratching the defenseman, game after game after game. Prosser knew he was a strong candidate for the waiver wire.

On Monday, the Blues finally moved. The Prossers into a three-bedroom place, only to realize that two days later, Prosser got the 8-by-12 U-Haul trailer ready, not knowing which way to haul it.

Thursday, the Wild brought him home. "I went and picked up the kids from school," Prosser said, "and they were like, 'Oh, we're going back to (Wild coach) Norby's house!'"

Prosser was going back to stay with Grandma and Grandpa but seeing their smiles was priceless.

Rouseau was still beaming Friday, when Prosser

returned to practice with the Wild, in preparation for Saturday's game against the familiar Blues. "It's a relief," Prosser said. "I'm excited to be back with the Wild. I'm excited to be back with the Wild. I'm excited to be back with the Wild."

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Prosser, 31, is no superstar. In a sport packed with elite talents, he's an extra defenseman, and is returning for his first stint with the team after twice signing with the Blues.

He might get scratched

WILD GAMEDAY 5 p.m. vs. St. Louis · Xcel Energy Center · PSN 100.3 FM

Preview: The Western Conference-leading Blues beat the Wild 6-3 in St. Louis last Saturday after jumping a 2-0 first-period lead. The Wild extended P-2 at Wednesday night's 4-2 victory over upstart Vegas.

Plays to watch: Interim Blues coach Mike Yeo wants to start Wild killer Jake Allen on consecutive nights for the first time this season. He'll turn to backup goalie Carter Hutton, who has a 1.59 goals-against average in six games this season. Former Wild F Kyle Brodsky entered Friday's game with three goals in the past two games for St. Louis.

Numbers: The Wild is 6-0-1 in its past five home games. The Blues are 9-1 on the road.

Injuries: Wild F Zach Patric (back surgery) and D Jared Spangaro (groin) are out. Blues F Robby Fabbri (knee) and Zachary Stubbins (shoulder) are out.

BY JOE CHRISTENSEN

and missing about. That's what Prosser is with this group. "The Wild always loved Prosser's attitude. He was the 5-2 runt growing up on Elk Street in a high school. He went undrafted but signed with the Wild out of Colorado College in 2002 and developed a reputation for blocking shots and taking the puck for 18 years and getting right back in and

dim with Ryan Murphy and Mike Kelly with fellow greenhorn Gustav Olofinna. Boudreau kept those three pairs together at Friday's practice, using Prosser as a sub, and the coach was vague about who would play Saturday.

Prosser is changing at the bit after playing in just one of 24 games for the Blues this season — the Oct. 25 win over Calgary. The Blues, led by former Wild coach Mike Yeo, are loaded with defensive depth and lead the Western Conference with 35 points as of 12:01 going into Friday's game.

"It's a little frustrating (not playing), and a little stressful at times," Prosser said. "I've always done. I just wanted to stay positive through it all. That's kind of been my calling card."

The Prossers have kept a Twin Cities home, and amid the recent chaos, they sold it, purchasing another one in a neighboring suburb.

"So on top of all this, we're looking through MLS for a house," Prosser said. "It was crazy last few days... We are so happy for this opportunity to come back home."

COLLEGE HOCKEY

GOPHERS MEN 5, WISCONSIN 4 Saturday, 7 p.m. vs. Wisconsin (PSN Plus)

Second-period surge saves Gophers

A burst of four goals provides a lead that holds up against Wisconsin.

BY HEATHER HULL Special to the Star Tribune

The goal-scoring floodgates opened in the second period Friday. The Gophers men's hockey team scored four times, turning a 2-1 deficit into a 5-4 victory in the Badger Battle against Wisconsin.

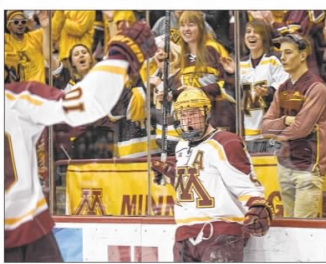
The No. 7 Gophers (10-6-1, 4-4-3) showed their depth with goals from five players and points from 10 in the victory over No. 14 Wisconsin (9-2-1, 3-5-1) Friday night at JM Arena at Marquette.

The Gophers extended their home winning streak to eight games. "It was nice to have the five different scorers, but they get rewarded because they went to the net," coach Don Lucia said. "Because that's where goals are scored."

Lucia called it a hard-fought game, not the prettiest at times but still a good bounce-back game after a pair of losses at Notre Dame last weekend.

Their approach was different against Wisconsin. The Gophers went hungry for blue paint. "I think we just played in the dirty areas," said senior forward Mike Sematula, who scored the first goal for the Gophers and his fifth of the season to give him 30 career points.

Freshman forward Scott Reedy, who had his first career multi-point night with a goal and two assists, agreed that the midweek changed in practice this week. The team worked on drills that stopped in front of the net.



Gophers forward Mike Sematula celebrates a first period goal Friday against Wisconsin. Sematula reached 100 points in his career and has scored five goals this season.

"That's what we came out and did tonight," Reedy said. "The only Gophers goal that wasn't scored from just in front of the goal crease was an absolute blast of a point shot from defenseman Tyler Nantze on the power play for a 4-3 lead. Reedy added what turned out to be the game-winner just 20 seconds later.

Reedy recalled this week's practice as the best he's ever had. "I have to play my game," Reedy said. "As long as I'm

getting my chances, I know the points will come. His goal was the fourth in a fiery activity of the second

period, which started with junior captain Tyler Sheehy tying the score 2-2 at the 11:17 mark. Then sophomore forward Ryan Plick's team-high eighth goal of the season put the Gophers in front for good a few minutes later.

The Gophers held off the Badgers when Derek Baker scored late in the second to make it 5-3 through two periods. Then Trent Frederic scored the second power play goal of the game for the Badgers with 7:44 left in regulation to get within one.

Novak had a three-assist night to extend his team lead to 15. Sophomore forward Joey Mansoury assisted on Sheehy's goal for his first point with the Gophers.

ROUNDUP

Notre Dame outshot but tops Michigan St.

Jake Evans and Cal Burke scored goals 62 seconds apart in the middle of the second period to lead No. 4 Notre Dame over host Michigan State 3-1 on Friday night in Big Ten hockey.

Colin Deisten had the other goal for the Irish, with 2:38 left in the third. Theo Hesse gave the Spartans a 1-0 lead with 35 seconds left in the first period.

Colin Morris had 20 saves for Notre Dame. John Lehmann 15 for Michigan State.

Ohio State 5, Penn State 4 (OT): Freddy Grant's goal with 4:25 to play gave the No. 11 Buckeyes a 5-4 lead, but the visiting Nittany Lions tied on Andrew Searcy's goal with one second left. Penn State led 2-1 into the third period.

NCHC 12, Cleveland State 6: Omaha 6-Mickey Eysenhardt and Jake Wolfin each had two goals and assists. No. 7 Bulldogs routed the No. 20 Mavericks on the road. Omaha cut CSU's lead to 5-4 on Zach Jenkins's goal at 4:20 of the third period. But Wolfin and Eysenhardt each scored their second goal of the game in the final four minutes. Jeff Smith had 40 saves for the Huskies; two Mavericks goalies combined for 23 saves.

Dawson 1, Minnesota Duluth 0: The No. 1 Pioneers beat No. 20 UMD on Logan O'Connor's second goal of the season at 2:51 of the second period. Tanner Jallut made 28 saves for the Minnetonka. Bulldogs goalie Hunter Shepard stopped 22 shots.

North Dakota 4, Western Michigan 3: Austin Pysanek scored two power play goals to lead the No. 6 Fighting Hawks over the No. 30 Broncos in Grand Forks, N.D. Collin Adams' unassisted goal at 10:24 of the third period put UND ahead 4-2. Wade Allison scored on a power play for Western Michigan at 6:28. Cam Johnson had 18 saves for North Dakota, Ben Baker 25 for the Broncos.

WCHA Bowling Green 3, Bemidji 1: The Falcons scored twice in the last 1:12 of the game to break a 1-1 tie with the visiting Braves. Nolan Coffman's goal won the game without and then Michael McLean added an empty-netter. Mike Soucier scored for Bemidji State at 6:27 of the third. Both goals — Michael Reiter of the Braves and Eric Dog of the Falcons — had 24 saves.

STANDINGS

Table with columns for conference, team, W, L, T, Pts, GF, GA, and a list of top scorers.

GOPHERS WOMEN 3, BEMIDJI STATE 1 (OT) Saturday, 6:07 p.m. vs. Bemidji State

Zumwinkle's OT goal extends U win streak to 9

The freshman forward scored with 26 seconds left in the extra period.

NEWS SERVICES

Freshman forward Grace Zumwinkle scored with just 26 seconds left in the five-minute overtime to give the No. 6 Gophers women's hockey team a 2-1 victory over Bemidji State on Friday night at Redler Arena before an announced crowd of 7,723.

"The goal was Zumwinkle's eighth of the season and extended the Gophers' winning streak to nine games."

"There were moments where we had them hemmed in and their goalie made some saves," Gophers coach Brad Frost said. "But finding a way to pull it out there in overtime again is a pretty special feeling for our team, and we appreciate it."

This was Minnesota's fourth overtime win this season, the first was Oct. 16 at Bemidji State.

The Braves took a 1-0 lead in the opening period, but the Gophers (14-4-3-24 WCHA) went ahead 2-1 in the middle of the second period on goals by Caitlin Hall on a power play, and Emily Brownless on two minutes apart.

Palg Boef of Bemidji State (5-0-2, 7-1-1) tied the score at 2:05 on an unassisted goal with 52 seconds left in the second. Sidney Peters had 34 saves for Minnesota, Lauren Bench 34 for Bemidji State.

Table with columns for conference, team, W, L, T, Pts, GF, GA, and a list of top scorers.