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WILD

Wild's Defensive Duo – Seeler and Pateryn – Playing Well on Winning Stretch



Mandatory Credit: Isaiah J. Downing-USA TODAY Sports



By [Heather Rule](#) - November 6, 2018

The Minnesota Wild are rolling as the calendar turns to November, having won seven of their last eight games. They sit at 8-3-2 with 18 points and in second place in the Central as of Tuesday morning.

Along with that, one of the more encouraging signs is that they're getting help from all over the lineup. That includes the Wild's third defensive pairing of Nick Seeler and Greg Pateryn.

Seeler and Pateryn had a couple of their best games of the season while the Wild played their most complete game of the season with a 5-1 victory in St. Louis over the weekend. Put an asterisk next to the Blues for struggling as a whole recently – with goaltender Jake Allen leading the way in that department – putting former Wild coach and current Blues head coach Mike Yeo's job security in serious question.

Still, the Wild put together a full 60-minute effort, and that in itself is a feat to be applauded.



Nov 3, 2018; St. Louis, MO, USA; Minnesota Wild center Eric Staal (12) is congratulated by defenseman Nick Seeler (36) and left wing Jordan Greenway (18) after scoring during the first period against the St. Louis Blues at Enterprise Center. Mandatory Credit: Jeff Curry-USA TODAY Sports

The night resulted in three points for Seeler, including his first NHL goal and a pair of assists. Pateryn was a plus-5 in the game against the Blues, a career-best mark while recording two shots on goal and three blocked shots.

It wasn't just the two of them that showed what they can do either.

J.T. Brown scored his first goal with the Wild on a breakaway late in the first period to take a 3-1 lead. Again, the Blues aren't exactly playing stellar hockey right now, but the Wild had to be encouraged with the effort overall and especially with scoring three times in the first period. After all, slow starts have followed the Wild around a lot in the first month of the season.

Any game where they can start with energy, and maintain that throughout the evening, is a big positive.

Matt Dumba scored in the second, and Eric Fehr tallied his second of the season in the third period. Jordan Greenway had a pair of assists as nine Wild players got on the scoresheet. Oh, and Eric Staal got the scoring started with his 400th career NHL goal as he made a wicked deflection of a Seeler shot.



Minnesota Wild

@mnwild

A night of milestones.



Seeler's first, Staal's 400th, Pateryn's +5 night and more:

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These performances are all welcomed, especially during a stretch when Mikko Koivu isn't lighting the lamp regularly, Nino Niederreiter is in an offensive funk and Charlie Coyle hasn't quite found his

scoring game yet.

Defensively, there's no question the Wild relies heavily on the veteran minutes-muncher Ryan Suter, Dumba, Spurgeon and Jonas Brodin as the top two pairings at the blue line.

However, Pateryn and Seeler have provided a stable third combo as well, which is certainly encouraging for a youngster in Seeler (just 22 regular-season NHL games under his belt coming into this season) and a new man to the Wild roster in Pateryn, who came over from Dallas.

Pateryn, 28, is in his sixth season and with his third team in the NHL. He still has yet to register a point this season and is averaging 14:20 on the ice. Seeler clocks in with 13:26 average time on ice so far this season.

Dumba on Wild's Seeler: 'He had quite the game!'



For that Minnesota hockey connection, Seeler is the fourth player born in Minnesota to score his first NHL wearing a Wild sweater, according to *NHL Stats*.

He joins the company of Jarod Palmer (2011), Chad Rau (2012) and current Wild player Nate Prosser (2012) in this category. Seeler is a product of the high school hockey powerhouse, Eden Prairie, winning the Class 2A boys' state hockey tournament in 2009 and 2011 with the Eagles. A fifth-round Wild draft pick in 2011, he spent time with Nebraska-Omaha for two seasons from 2012-14 before 10 assists in 36 games with the Gophers in 2015-16.

Seeler had four assists in 22 games with the Wild last season and added another pair of helpers in five playoff games. He isn't afraid to drop the gloves either as he and Luke Witkowski threw haymakers at each other in a victory against Detroit on March 4 last season.

The 25-year-old Seeler hadn't registered any points in the first 12 games this season until the three-point outburst against the Blues. Still, on the same shift as the Staal goal, a loose puck bounced off the boards and found Seeler's stick near the top of the circles. He fired a slap shot past Allen for a 2-0 Wild lead just 45 seconds after Staal's tally.

Pateryn joins just three other Wild players in team history to record a plus-5 rating in a game (Spurgeon, Clayton Stoner in the March 25, 2013 game and Todd White on Oct. 19, 2005).

Sure, the sample size may still be pretty small just 13 games into the season, but not seeing any glaring plays or repeated errors from the Pateryn-Seeler combo is worth noting, too.

Sometimes it's the plays that don't get noticed that make a player shine.

Boudreau on Seeler's big night, Staal's milestone



TIDBITS

- Mikael Granlund had the first assist on Dumba's goal in St. Louis to extend his point streak to 10 games, two shy of his career/franchise-best 12 games. He also had a goal and an assist in Edmonton earlier in the

week. He's put up six goals and seven assists so far during the current streak. Shooting the puck more agrees with him – he had a game-high six shots on goal against St. Louis.

- The Wild outshot the Blues 13-5 in the first period, 20-4 in the second and 12-7 in the third for a 45-16 advantage in the game. Despite scoring five times, the Wild went 0-for-4 on the power play and their penalty kill gave up a goal to the Blues on their only opportunity.
- Let's not forget how solid Devan Dubnyk continues to be in net. He allowed just one goal against St. Louis on 16 shots, the fewest shots the Wild have given up this season (which might say more about the Blues).
- The Wild finish up the record-setting road trip with the standard three-game California set – San Jose, Los Angeles, Anaheim – before ending with another trip to St. Louis on Sunday.

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