

# **Black and blue line calls for aid**

## **Vancouver adds Tanev to shore up team's ailing defence corps**

By Brad Ziemer, Vancouver Sun January 17, 2011

Sami Salo, come on down.

Not ready? Alrighty then, Chris Tanev it is.

The Vancouver Canucks' depth on defence is about to get its first significant test as the team not only lost a game Sunday but another defenceman.

Andrew Alberts suffered a right shoulder injury midway through the first period and did not return. His injury follows the loss of Aaron Rome, who suffered a knee injury on Friday night.

That's two defencemen in two games. The Canucks called up Tanev from Manitoba before Sunday's ugly 4-0 loss to the Minnesota Wild and it appears the rookie 21-year-old pro from Toronto is going to see his first NHL action on Tuesday night when Vancouver completes its five-game road trip in Denver.

Coach Alain Vigneault did not have much information on Alberts's injury, which occurred when he was slammed into the side boards by Wild winger Brad Staubitz.

"I know he hurt his shoulder and he will be re-evaluated [today]," Vigneault said. "That's all I can say now."

If Alberts can't go, and that seems a given, then Tanev will dress against the Colorado Avalanche.

He got the call Saturday night after the Moose lost 3-2 in overtime to the Milwaukee Admirals. He didn't quite know what was happening when he was summoned to the office of Moose coach Claude Noel.

"The coach called me into the office and I thought I was in trouble for something," Tanev said. "He said, 'you're going up' and so I was really excited, a little bit nervous, too. I think that's normal."

Tanev was signed as a free agent last May after just one season of collegiate hockey at the Rochester Institute of Technology. He has one goal and eight assists in 39 games with the Moose this season.

"Season has gone well," he said. "Our team is doing real well and when the team is doing well you are doing well. Everyone is focused on winning down there. That is the right way to do it.

"The coach is teaching me to work hard, use my body and things like that. Just little things that make a big difference in your game."

The Moose have had nine defencemen on their roster the last while, so Tanev has had an assortment of different partners.

"We have been rotating seven D, so I have been playing with Lee Sweatt a little bit, a little bit with Ryan Parent," he said. "But everyone has been in and out and we have been rotating through seven D the last month or so."

The latest injuries mean that Vancouver's healthy five defencemen will have to log extra minutes. On Sunday, Kevin Bieksa had a game-high 28:04 of ice time, while Dan Hamhuis logged 25:05.

Keith Ballard, who had been partnered lately with either Alberts or Rome, said he and others on the back end welcome the extra ice time.

"Everyone gets a few more minutes," Ballard said. "I don't think anybody complains too much about that because everyone wants to play. When you get into a game like that you just have to take short shifts. That's all it is."

It is interesting to note that the combined salaries of Alberts and Rome just about equal the roughly \$1.8 million the Canucks need to free up to get Salo back on the roster.

But general manager Mike Gillis indicated late last week that Salo was not close to being ready. The veteran defenceman is back practising with the team after rupturing his Achilles tendon last July.

**DON'T WATCH, MOM:** Ballard, a Minnesota native who had lots of family and friends in attendance, was involved in one of two fights in Sunday's game. He didn't fare particularly well in his scrap with Wild winger Chuck Kobasew.

"They have seen me get beat up before," Ballard said of his mom and dad. "It's probably good for me every now and then."

The other fight featured Aaron Volpatti and Staubitz, who got the better of the Canuck winger.

**ICE CHIPS:** Staubitz and Volpatti dropped the gloves at 9:51 of the first. The remainder of the period was played without a whistle ... Alex Edler had a rough game, finishing up minus-three ...

Vancouver rallied in the faceoff circle after winning just two of 11 draws in the first period. The Canucks finished the game 25-27, thanks mainly to the fact that Manny Malhotra was 12-4 ... Sunday's game was the first time the Canucks have lost by more than one goal in regulation since Nov. 20, when they were hammered 7-1 by the Chicago Blackhawks.

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## Dead puck ends up killing Canucks

By Jason Botchford, The Province January 17, 2011 6:50 AM

The Canucks appeared more vexed by an officiating call than their own play.

With good reason. In Minnesota, they need all the help they can get. They weren't getting any Sunday from the officials.

In a scoreless tie, the Wild scored on a second period power play even though the puck disappeared several times, including once directly under Cory Schneider's glove. But the play was never blown dead, allowing Andrew Brunette to score on a mad scramble by diving and poking at the puck under Schneider like he had a pool stick.

"I thought I did," Schneider said when asked if he gloved it. "He came in pretty aggressive with his stick and kind of pitchforked me into the net. Again, they are the ones making the call, not me."

Referee Dean Morton never reached for his whistle. He was on the far side from where the play was developing behind the goal line. Brunette started the play by cycling the puck out of the corner opposite to Morton's. He rolled in on Schneider, who got a pad on his shot. He also got his glove on top of the rebound, smothering the puck for a second. But Pierre-Marc Bouchard, barrelling into the crease, dug his stick under it, pried the puck loose. Brunette then speared it into the net, under Schneider.

Canucks head coach Alain Vigneault was blunt with his dissatisfaction.

"The referee said that the puck was loose," he said. "I do agree with him that the puck was loose. But Bouchard pitchforked our goalie and swatted it out of his hand. (Morton) was on the wrong side of the play.

"He didn't see it right and, obviously, I don't agree with the call."

How is that for straight and to the point?

Sure, the Canucks lost by four. But the first goal was pivotal, several of the players pointed out.

"It was at a big point, giving them the first goal of the game and some momentum," Schneider said. "I was pretty certain I was on top of it and covered it. I don't know how he still saw the puck and didn't blow the whistle.

"It was a critical part of the game. The crowd got into it. They turned it up a bit after that."

Vigneault did acknowledge the goal was hardly the reason the Canucks lost.

"I don't think it's a goal," he said. "It gave them that little bit more momentum. But at the end of the day we haven't scored any goals for Cory in two games. You're not going to win a lot of hockey games when you don't score goals."

Schneider, who was getting all kinds of goal support earlier in the season, knew things were going to start to turn the other way.

"It goes both ways," he said. "Maybe not back to back, but I knew at some point this year it was going to happen where we didn't get any goals. But as long as I'm giving up goals, I can still be better and keep us in the game."

There was also some displeasure among the Canucks about the way Brad Staubitz hit Andrew Alberts behind the play. It seemed late on first look but the replay was not shown in the Xcel Energy Center.

Alberts didn't return to the game. It's believed Chris Tanev, who was recalled Sunday, will get his first NHL start in his place in Denver on Tuesday. Tanev got the call over more experienced defencemen in Manitoba like Nolan Baumgartner, Ryan Parent and Lee Sweatt.

"When the coach called me into the office, I thought I was in trouble for something," Tanev said. "He said 'You're going up.'"

"I was really excited ... but I'm not too crazy emotionally."

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## **With Bolduc out again with separated shoulder, Canucks are in need of another centre**

The Province January 17, 2011

The Canucks are in the market for a fourth-line centre.

That is in no way meant to be disrespectful to Alex Bolduc. He's a terrific guy. The kind who the more you know, the more you cheer for. But with three shoulder separations in two seasons, it will be difficult for the Canucks to depend on him into the playoffs. Bolduc is expected to miss a month. He won't know definitively until an MRI in Vancouver this week. His shoulder popped out taking a faceoff Friday. It's the second time that's happened to him. When he comes back, the question will be when is it going to happen again?

The Canucks will temporarily fill his spot and are expected to recall a forward from Manitoba this week. Maybe it will be Sergei Shirokov or Viktor Oreskovich. But Vancouver will look for ways to do better. A name getting some traction locally is Islanders centre Zenon Konopka.

When pressed on it, GM Mike Gillis dropped this:

"Well, Cody [Hodgson] is supposed to play this week, we'll see how he does."

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## **Day off for NHL's lacklustre leader**

### **'Now we have to win in Denver to make this a decent road trip'**

By Jason Botchford, The Province January 17, 2011

The good times weren't going to last forever. At some point, the Canucks effortless wins were going to quietly devolve into some effortless losses.

When they did, some of the Canucks' imperfections were going to seep to the surface. It's happened on this road trip where the Canucks now head into their fifth game not looking quite as complete or as dangerous as they did heading into their first.

It's what happens when a team is shut out twice in three games, even if it continues to squat atop the NHL standings with some glossy statistics. It may be easier to brush aside Sunday's 4-0 loss to the Wild as something all too familiar, as though Vancouver falling in Minny is just one of those inexplicable things -- like birds falling in Arkansas.

Even if the Minnesota Wild are the Canucks' opposite currently, buried deep in the Western Conference standings, crippled by injuries, relying on a rookie goalie and plagued by hands of concrete, it didn't matter. It never does in the Xcel Energy Center. Here, the Canucks' knees invariably buckle, their breath consistently gasps as they apparently get spooked -- or put to sleep -- at the mere sight of the 30-foot X which marks the middle of the Wild's arena like a Vancouver tombstone.

But it's not just the X, the air in Minny, or the water or the snow. The Canucks are a little distressed right now, and a tad frayed. In their past seven games, only three Canuck forwards

have goals. That means nine have none. On Sunday, it was all 12. They've been outplayed for long stretches during three of the four games on this trip. Their depth on defence is gone. Aaron Rome sprained his MCL Friday, and Andrew Alberts hurt his shoulder Sunday. It means fresh-faced rookie Chris Tanev is expected to get his first NHL start Tuesday in Denver.

Dare we say the Canucks have something to overcome for the first time in two months?

"In a normal season, this wouldn't be adversity," Henrik Sedin said. "But with the way we've played in the past month-and-a-half, this is adversity.

"If you look at the games, on the Island, we didn't play particularly well. In Washington, we played a great game. (Sunday), we weren't that far off, we just couldn't score on our chances. We lost two on this road trip, now we have to win in Denver to make this a decent road trip."

Any chinks in the Canucks' armour were on display to start Sunday's game. Vancouver lumbered on to the ice, got called for a penalty, and then took cover.

Starting in Roberto Luongo's place, Cory Schneider kept them in it, most notably after Andrew Alberts was nailed for a high-sticking call 5:21 into the game. In a blink, Minnesota had eight shots on net. Schneider had several money stops, including one on Antti Miettinen from point-blank range. He then thwarted power play tip-in attempts from Martin Havlat and Kyle Brodziak.

Asked about the start, head coach Alain Vigneault gave a "are you kidding me" look before saying:

"The only reason we were in it after 10 (minutes) was the way Cory played. He played outstanding. I thought we would get a little better in the second half of the first. I thought that would give us an opportunity to find our legs and find our brains to sort of get going but, for whatever reason, both weren't there."

Vancouver did escape the first in a scoreless tie. But, before they could generate real momentum, Dan Hamhuis took a tripping penalty and the Wild scored on the power play. Every time you watch the replay of that first goal, you will expect the ref to blow it dead. The whistle, however, never came.

Vigneault and his players were incensed with the call.

Less than eight minutes later, Alex Edler was nonchalant with a puck near the red line. Martin Havlat picked his pocket and then beat Schneider five-hole on his breakaway. From there, the Canucks didn't have much in the way of push back.

"Things shouldn't be too easy," said Mikael Samuelsson, who has two goals in two months. "There will be bumps in the road. You are going to learn from it. Don't take anything for granted."

Vancouver blew the few good opportunities it had. The most egregious was a glorious Jannik Hansen scoring chance. Skating with the Sedins for a few second-period shifts, Henrik and Daniel set Hansen up beautifully in the slot just as a Minnesota player took out goalie Anton Khudobin. Hansen didn't appear to see Khudobin spill, rushing his shot right into the pile up in the crease instead of taking his time and dunking it into the net.

It only underlined the problems the Canucks forwards, who are not named Ryan Kesler and Daniel Sedin, have had scoring goals.

"We do have a couple guys right now that, offensively, we all feel and they feel, can contribute and play better," Vigneault said. "I think that's a good sign. We've been winning hockey games and we still have room for improvement."

Lots of room.

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Next Up

AT COLORADO AVALANCHE

Tues., 6 p.m., Pepsi Center TV: SNP Radio: TEAM 1040

If Minnesota can be used as the measure here, Colorado whupped the Wild 4-1 on Friday night while Minny turned around and beat the Canucks 4-2 on Sunday. The Avs, 4-4-2 in their last 10, will be well rested by game time.

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## **Canucks use up their get out jail free card**

### **Higher education, unlikely winners and questionable entertainment all capture columnist's mind**

By Ed Willes, The Province January 17, 2011

The Seattle Seahawks' impossible dream might have died but the Monday morning musings and meditations on the world of sports will live on.

Admittedly, the Canucks' game in St. Paul was uglier than Joan Rivers after a tequila binge but a little perspective please.

The random laws of arithmetic chance dictated they were due for an outing where nothing went their way and that was pretty much the case on Sunday.

The Wild's first goal shouldn't have counted. Minnesota goalie Anton Khudobin, in his second-ever start, recorded the most awkward shutout in NHL history. And the Xcel Energy Centre is to the Canucks what the Bates Motel is to Janet Leigh anyway.

True, you would have liked to see a stronger response when they got down 2-0, or any response for that matter. But the Canucks have earned a get-out-of-jail-free card.

Consider it used.

- Cory Schneider's greatest failing seems to be his inability to score goals for himself.

The game was terrible but you had to appreciate the drama behind the Jets' win over the Patriots.

You just hope it doesn't give Jets head coach Rex Ryan a swelled head.

What's that? All right, never mind.

How about this then. You just hope it doesn't make Bill Belichick bitter and distant.

Sorry?

OK. forget that, too.

It's actually too bad that most of the storylines from that game will concern the head coaches because that was one of the great performances by a secondary; probably the best since the salad days of Lester Hayes and Mike Haynes with the Raiders.

Jets' corners Darrelle Revis and Antonio Cromartie basically turned Tom Brady into Trent Dilfer and if you think that's easy, look at Brady's numbers this season.

Brady usually reads defences like Olivier reads Shakespeare but the lasting image from that game will be the Patriots' QB standing in the pocket like he's done a hundred times, going through his progressions like he's done a hundred times and starting to panic because he couldn't find anyone open, like he never does.

That leaves two great matchups in the Conference finals next weekend. We'd also like to point out we picked the Packers to win it all at the start of the season -- over the Titans!!!! -- but we won't because that would be unprofessional.

Go Pack.

- Didn't have the space to fit this into last week's piece on Tanner Glass but it's too good to pass up.

Glass, of course, attended Dartmouth where he earned a degree in history, specifically the history of imperialism. He was asked if he ever uses his Ivy League-education during chirping sessions with the opposition.

"No," he said. "I dumb it down."

During his college career, Glass also battled Canucks teammate Aaron Volpatti, who attended Ivy League-rival Brown. He was asked about the intensity of the Dartmouth-Brown hockey rivalry.

"It's bigger in fencing," he said.

- The Washington Capitals are considered enigmatic under-achievers but, after watching them on Friday, their disappointing showing this season is easier to understand.

It appears they suck.

Yes, upon further review, that's the case.

- Watched Saturday Night Live and they announced the special guests on the next show will be Jesse Eisenberg and Nicki Minaj. The problem is I have no idea which one's the guest host and which one's the musical guest; nor do I have a clue about their gender.

Cripes that bugs me.

- Finally, there are currently buzzards circling the heads of three or four NHL coaches but, really, is there a more tiring story in hockey.

In Ottawa, for example: Cory Clouston got ripped for winning a game with 19-year-old goalie Robin Lehner, then coming back with Brian Elliot the next night.

Who cares. The Senators are awful with Clouston as their coach. They will still be awful when Clouston isn't their coach. Nothing will change.

Their problem isn't Clouston. Their problem is they've drafted like dogs, they got nothing for Dany Heatley and they're paying Alex Kovalev \$5 million this season for his tortured artist act.

There is one team in the NHL who can legitimately point to their position in the standings and say, we are better than this.

That's the L.A. Kings and they'll still get it right before the season is out.

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Province Sports contests are just the ticket

Here at The Province, we enjoy giving things away.

We have two contests rolling in Province Sports. The first: 10 Toronto Blue Jays prize packages. New manager John Farrell and a bunch of players, including starting pitcher Ricky Romero, will be in Vancouver next week and you can win a package that includes autographed team merchandise and the opportunity to meet the players next Saturday at Oakridge Centre. For more information, visit our Go Big blog at [theprovince.com/gobig](http://theprovince.com/gobig). Or you can simply enter by emailing [jmcdonald@theprovince.com](mailto:jmcdonald@theprovince.com) and answering the question, "How do you feel about the new on field association between the Blue Jays and Vancouver Canadians?"

Provide your name, hometown and daytime phone number. We'll pick 10 names randomly. Contest deadline: Tuesday at 11:59 p.m.

We also have hockey tickets! Just head to [facebook.com/theprovince](http://facebook.com/theprovince) to enter our Starting Lineup contest, featuring a half-dozen Province Sports ads starring every-one's favourite Orca, Fin. Vote once or vote multiple times; every vote counts as an entry in the contest, where you can win tickets to see the Canucks.

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## Blanks for the memories

### **Wild rookie earns first shutout as Canucks fail to score for second time in three games**

By Brad Ziemer, Vancouver Sun January 17, 2011

For the first time in what seems like forever, the Vancouver Canucks are having to deal with some adversity.

The Canucks were shut out for the second time in three games Sunday and lost their second defenceman in as many nights when Andrew Alberts went down with a shoulder injury.

Vancouver lost 4-0 to the Minnesota Wild at the Xcel Energy Center, which is fast becoming the team's house of horrors, and didn't look good doing it.

The Canucks couldn't put the puck past a rookie goalie from Kazakhstan who was playing just his fifth NHL game, their suddenly stretched defence made some crucial errors and as a team they blocked just four shots.

In short, they couldn't have made it any easier for the Wild, who have outscored the Canucks 21-6 in their last four visits to St. Paul.

Backup goalie Cory Schneider must feel a little like a starting pitcher who doesn't get any run support. The Canucks have not scored a goal in his last two starts.

It seemed like Schneider was the only Vancouver Canuck who bothered to show up to play the first 10 minutes of Sunday's game.

He was magnificent in the early minutes of a scoreless first period, when the Minnesota Wild swarmed the Canucks.

Schneider was forced to make several tough saves, including a couple on tips. His best came just two minutes into the game, when he made an acrobatic glove save on a Martin Havlat redirect of a Brent Burns point shot.

"They came out real strong and the only reason we were in it after 10 minutes was the way Cory played," said Vancouver coach Alain Vigneault. "He played outstanding. I thought we got a little bit better in the second half of that first, but I thought that would give us opportunity to find our legs, find our brains to sort of get going, but for whatever reason both weren't there and Cory tried his best to keep us in the game. But obviously that just wasn't enough."

At the other end of the ice, Anton Khudobin didn't have much to do.

The Wild goalie could have had his compatriot Borat in goal for the first few minutes, as the Canucks didn't register their first shot until the 8:20 mark of the first.

Vigneault and general manager Mike Gillis were livid about the Wild's first goal at 3:31 of the second period and they had a right to be upset.

Schneider appeared to have the puck covered with his glove hand during a goalmouth scramble.

But Pierre-Marc Bouchard poked the puck loose and Andrew Brunette dove to the ice to finally knock it into the net.

"The referee [Dean Morton] said that the puck was loose and I do agree with him, the puck was loose," Vigneault said. "Bouchard pitchforked our goalie and swatted it out of his hand. He was on the wrong side of the play, he didn't see it right and obviously I don't agree with the call."

"It gave them a little bit more momentum, but at the end of the day we haven't scored any goals for Cory in two games. You don't win a lot of hockey games when you don't score goals."

Schneider was convinced he had the puck covered.

"It was a big point of the game, getting that first goal and momentum," he said. "I was pretty certain I was on top of it and covered it. I don't know how he still saw the puck and didn't blow the whistle. It is what it is, sometimes they go your way and sometimes they don't ... They turned it up a little bit after that and we couldn't quite get it going ourselves."

Schneider continued to try to hold his team in the game. He made a big save on Wild captain Mikko Koivu at the 9:30 mark of the second after a Daniel Sedin giveaway in his own end. But

the Canucks couldn't respond to Schneider's strong play and the Wild cashed in on a turnover by defenceman Alex Edler.

Havlat stripped Edler of the puck at the centre-line, raced down the right wing on a breakaway and put a shot between Schneider's legs at the 11:09 mark.

The game was pretty much over when defenceman Christian Ehrhoff got caught flatfooted at the blue-line, allowing Matt Cullen to score on a shorthanded breakaway at 3:37 of the third.

Edler then fell in the corner, allowing Chuck Kobasew to find John Madden alone in front of Schneider at 9:17 of the third for Minnesota's fourth goal.

"It goes both ways," Schneider said of the lack of offensive support he has received in his last two starts. "Maybe not back to back, but at some point it was going to happen where we didn't get any goals. As long as I'm giving up goals I can still be better and keep us in the game."

Vigneault shuffled his lines for much of the game.

There were some new combinations, like Ryan Kesler between Tanner Glass and Jannik Hansen, while Mason Raymond skated with Aaron Volpatti and Jeff Tambellini. Alex Burrows and Mikael Samuelsson swapped places on the first and third lines.

Nothing seemed to work.

"Yes, we do have a couple of guys right now offensively that we all feel and they feel that they can contribute and play better and I think that's a good sign," Vigneault said. "We have been winning hockey games and we still have got room for improvement. That is what we have been talking about since the beginning of the year."

The Canucks, who became the final NHL team to lose their 10th game in regulation, can still salvage a respectable road trip with a win Tuesday night in Denver. They have split the first four games of the trip.

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## **Wild baffle Canucks again**

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

ST. PAUL, Minn. -- The Minnesota Wild are the only blemish on the Vancouver Canucks' division record.

Anton Khudobin stopped 32 shots for his first career shutout and Minnesota beat Vancouver again, 4-0 Sunday night.

Andrew Brunette, Martin Havlat, Matt Cullen and John Madden scored for the Wild, who had been outscored 13-2 in three straight losses, but managed to get the better of the Northwest Division leaders for the second time in three meetings this season.

"We're a strange team, there's no doubt about it, Brunette said. "You never know what's going to show up."

Vancouver has been shut out in two of its last three after a 17-game unbeaten streak. The Canucks are 10-0-0 against the rest of the division.

It's not just this season, either.

Vancouver has lost its last four in Minnesota by a combined 21-6. The Wild are the first team to beat Vancouver twice in regulation this season.

"This is a great place to play, so it's tough to put a finger on it," Canucks captain Henrik Sedin said. "We have the same problem in Vancouver. It's one of those things."

Mikael Samuelsson didn't have a good explanation either.

"There's a lot of good teams out there, and this is one of them," he said.

Vancouver played much of the game with just five defencemen after Andrew Alberts left midway through the first period because of a right shoulder injury. He will be re-evaluated Monday. The Canucks lost defenceman Aaron Rome for two to three weeks Friday with a knee injury.

"They did the best they could, but it's a tough job for them," goaltender Cory Schneider said. "We've been fortunate during this stretch not to lose too many guys, now we're starting to and we'll have to deal with it."

Khudobin was recalled from Houston of the American Hockey League Jan. 8 after it was determined top goaltender Niklas Backstrom would be out for about another week with an injured hip. Jose Theodore, who took over the top goaltender duties, then sustained a similar injury and Khudobin has started two straight.

Backstrom was in uniform for the first time since Dec. 31, serving as the backup.

In his fifth career game, Khudobin was aided by a Wild defence that did a nice job of collapsing around their goaltender to prevent quality rebound opportunities. Two of his better stops came in the third period. He lunged back across the crease to stop Sedin on a power play and stopped Keith Ballard with a right pad save.

"Good teams like that don't play 40 minutes, they play 60 full minutes and it doesn't matter what the score is. They just play as hard as they can, so I was ready for that," Khudobin said.

Vancouver's best scoring chance was late in the first period, but Minnesota defenceman Brent Burns swatted a puck out of the crease as it was about to trickle over the goal-line.

Brunette gave the Wild a 1-0 lead early in the second period. He was stopped coming in from the right side, but Schneider couldn't cover the puck, and after a scramble, Brunette dove back to poke it in.

Havlat benefited from Alex Edler's turnover midway through the period, picking up a loose puck in the neutral zone, going in alone and beating Schneider through the pads.

Cullen made it 3-0 on a short-handed breakaway early in the third after Christian Ehrhoff failed to hold the puck in at the left point. It was Cullen's third short-handed goal of the season, tying him with four other players for the league lead.

"That Cullen goal was a huge goal," Wild coach Todd Richards said. "It's 2-0 and they were pushing and they're a talented team. They can score quick and can score often, so when the puck went in, I sensed that was enough.

Madden scored on a tip midway through the period.

**Notes:** It was Vancouver's worst shutout loss since a 5-0 defeat at San Jose on Dec. 23, 2008. ... The teams played the final 10 minutes of the first period without a whistle. ... Earlier in the day, the Canucks recalled D Chris Tanev from AHL Manitoba. ... Wild D Marco Scandella, who required 25 stitches after getting hit in the ear with a puck Friday, did not play. ... Ballard and Minnesota's Chuck Kobasew fought in the second period. It was Kobasew's first fight since Feb. 24, 2009, when he fought Ballard.

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## Wild shut out Canucks

St. Paul, Minn.— The Canadian Press

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“That Cullen goal was a huge goal,” Wild coach Todd Richards said. “It's 2-0 and they were pushing and they're a talented team. They can score quick and can score often, so when the puck went in, I sensed that was enough.

Madden scored on a tip midway through the period.

Notes: It was Vancouver's worst shutout loss since a 5-0 defeat at San Jose on Dec. 23, 2008. ... The teams played the final 10 minutes of the first period without a whistle. ... Earlier in the day, the Canucks recalled D Chris Tanev from AHL Manitoba. ... Wild D Marco Scandella, who required 25 stitches after getting hit in the ear with a puck Friday, did not play. ... Ballard and Minnesota's Chuck Kobasew fought in the second period. It was Kobasew's first fight since Feb. 24, 2009, when he fought Ballard.

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## **Khudobin Earns First Career Shutout as Wild Blank Canucks**

Associated Press

ST. PAUL, Minn. - The Minnesota Wild are the only blemish on the Vancouver Canucks' division record.

Anton Khudobin stopped 32 shots for his first career shutout and Minnesota beat Vancouver again, 4-0 Sunday night.

Andrew Brunette, Martin Havlat, Matt Cullen and John Madden scored for the Wild, who had been outscored 13-2 in three straight losses, but managed to get the better of the Northwest Division leaders for the second time in three meetings this season.

"We're a strange team, there's no doubt about it, Brunette said. "You never know what's going to show up."

Vancouver has been shut out in two of its last three after a 17-game unbeaten streak. The Canucks are 10-0-0 against the rest of the division.

It's not just this season, either.

Vancouver has lost its last four in Minnesota by a combined 21-6. The Wild are the first team to beat Vancouver twice in regulation this season.

"This is a great place to play, so it's tough to put a finger on it," Canucks captain Henrik Sedin said. "We have the same problem in Vancouver. It's one of those things."

Mikael Samuelsson didn't have a good explanation either.

"There's a lot of good teams out there, and this is one of them," he said.

Vancouver played much of the game with just five defencemen after Andrew Alberts left midway through the first period because of a right shoulder injury. He will be re-evaluated Monday. The Canucks lost defenceman Aaron Rome for two to three weeks Friday with a knee injury.

"They did the best they could, but it's a tough job for them," goaltender Cory Schneider said. "We've been fortunate during this stretch not to lose too many guys, now we're starting to and we'll have to deal with it."

Khudobin was recalled from Houston of the American Hockey League Jan. 8 after it was determined top goaltender Niklas Backstrom would be out for about another week with an injured hip. Jose Theodore, who took over the top goaltender duties, then sustained a similar injury and Khudobin has started two straight.

Backstrom was in uniform for the first time since Dec. 31, serving as the backup.

In his fifth career game, Khudobin was aided by a Wild defence that did a nice job of collapsing around their goaltender to prevent quality rebound opportunities. Two of his better stops came in the third period. He lunged back across the crease to stop Sedin on a power play and stopped Keith Ballard with a right pad save.

"Good teams like that don't play 40 minutes, they play 60 full minutes and it doesn't matter what the score is. They just play as hard as they can, so I was ready for that," Khudobin said.

Vancouver's best scoring chance was late in the first period, but Minnesota defenceman Brent Burns swatted a puck out of the crease as it was about to trickle over the goal-line.

Brunette gave the Wild a 1-0 lead early in the second period. He was stopped coming in from the right side, but Schneider couldn't cover the puck, and after a scramble, Brunette dove back to poke it in.

Havlat benefited from Alex Edler's turnover midway through the period, picking up a loose puck in the neutral zone, going in alone and beating Schneider through the pads.

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