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Caledon?s Andrew Mangiapane enjoying breakout year in National Hockey League

Written By ROBERT BELARDI

Bolton-Caledon native Andrew Mangiapane was having his best season as a pro until the National Hockey League suspended the year due to the COVID-19 virus on March 12th.

The 23-year-old winger has recorded 17 goals and 15 assists in 68 games, in his first full season as a Flame. Last year, Mangiapane was on the ice for only 44 contests.

In the first two months under Bill Peters' tutelage, Mangiapane only recorded nine points.

When reports emerged, Peters had sent in his letter of resignation on November 29th and the Calgary Flames named Associate Coach, Geoff Ward as the interim coach, the young winger has flourished.

Mangiapane has amassed 23 points, including a 12-point month in January since Ward has been in charge.

He has been on a line with centre Mikael Backlund and tenacious-winger, Matthew Tkachuk.

In February, Mangiapane terrorized the Anaheim Ducks, earning his first career hattrick as a professional and adding one assist.

In the last three games prior to the suspension of the regular season, Mangiapane has been riding a three-game point-streak.

As for his team, the Flames saw their three-game winning streak come to an end on March 8th at home against the Las Vegas Golden Knights.

After falling 3-0 down early in the second period, the Flames cancelled out the advantage with three goals of their own by the beginning of the third period.

Mangiapane assisted Tkachuk's finish and the momentum seemingly shifted in the Flames' favour.

However, two costly goals late in the period from Shea Theodore and Jonathan Marchessault led to a 5-3 loss.

After the game, Mangiapane said to reporters, ?we're good when we forecheck right and that starts off with the first guy getting in on the body. Hitting him, making him make a play that he's uncomfortable with.?

He went on to add, the one positive about the last game of the season was the resilience from the group battling back. Once the boys got into the dirty areas and battling for every puck the odds were in their favour.

In 70 games played thus far, the Flames sit in third in the Western Conference Pacific Division with 79 points, one ahead of the trailing Vancouver Canucks.

The Flames face a tough battle for a ticket to the postseason. Should the team fall into a wildcard spot, the Winnipeg Jets sit at 80 points and the Nashville Predators at 78.

As hockey fans anxiously wait for the season to resume, there is no telling what is in store for the Calgary Flames and Mangiapane.

For now, it is hoped the season returns sooner rather than later; for every sports fan's sake.