

Martin Fehervary Stepping Up

By [Matthew Shea](#)



(Caps Outsider)

With just about fourteen minutes left of third period in Buffalo, the Capitals found themselves in a 2-1 hole. It was then that **Alex Ovechkin** dished the puck to **Martin Fehervary** who took a slapshot, beating Sabres' netminder Ukko-Pekka Luukkonen and tying the game.

Washington went on to beat the lowly Sabres 3-2 in a shootout, but the story of the night was Fehervary.

“We had a lot of opportunities in the offensive zone,” said Fehervary following the victory.

“[Ovechkin] feed me really nice, so I just shoot it.”

Prior to the game in Buffalo, it was unclear if Fehervary would even get to play. The young defenseman exited Friday night's home loss to Pittsburgh after [suffering a hit to the head](#) from Penguins' forward Brock McGinn.

“It was bad hit,” said Fehervary after Saturday night’s game. “But I felt way better today, so I’m happy for it.”

The apparent injury had left Caps fans concerned as the team is already playing shorthanded, with notable players like **Anthony Mantha** and **Nicklas Backstrom** out, as well as a handful of players on the covid list.

“Well he’s been excellent all year,” said coach **Peter Laviolette** of Fehervary following the Caps’ shootout win. “It’s nice to see him get rewarded with a big goal like that because he plays so hard every night.”

Fehervary’s goal tied him for second place among rookie defenseman, only trailing **Bowen Byram** of the Colorado Avalanche.

His performance against Buffalo has been a recurring theme for some time now. This season Fehervary has shown poise, skill and resiliency. His presence on the defensive end has provided an energy and physicality that has complemented veteran **John Carlson** well, proving that Fehervary not only belongs on the top defensive pairing, but that he will be a key component of the Caps’ defense for years to come.

For the Caps, a team that will need to get younger in the coming years, this is exactly what you want to see in a young defenseman.

Prior to Saturday’s game tying tally against the Sabres, Fehervary’s two previous goals included a strike in late October to cut the Caps’ deficit against the Calgary Flames, along with a short-handed goal in mid-November in which he scored on a breakaway against the Penguins.

Additionally, Fehervary’s [**6pts**](#) this season (3g, 3a) is comparable to linemate Carlson during his first season with the Caps in 2009-2010 in which he recorded [**6pts**](#) (1g, 5a). While Carlson only played 22 games (Fehervary has played in 28 so far this season and six games during the 2019-2020 season), their numbers are relatively similar, something that is somewhat noticeable and yet another possible indicator that Fehervary may follow a similar trend.

In his following season, Carlson exploded for 37pts (7g, 30a). With the way Fehervary has been playing this season, and the fact that he will gain more experience at a young age, along with guidance from Carlson, it would not be surprising to see a similar breakout upcoming.

But rather than look too far ahead, the Caps can enjoy the current play of Fehervary and the value that he brings to the team. There is no doubt that the Caps' have a bright future with Fehervary, and fortunately it seems that he is just getting started.