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Game Night: Toronto Maple Leafs at Calgary Flames

Calgary Flames vs Toronto Maple Leafs 1/24/21 (4/56): Flames Look For Third Straight After A Long Break

LEAFS LOSE IN SHOOTOUT Calgary Flames' Mark Giordano, left, gets a shot away against a checking Auston Matthews of the Toronto Maple Leafs on Thursday at Scotiabank Arena in Toronto. The Flames won 2-1 in a shootout. Claus Andersen/Getty Images TORONTO, ON - JANUARY 16: Mark Giordano #5 of the Calgary Flames gets a shot away against a checking Auston Matthews #34 of the Toronto Maple Leafs during an NHL game at Scotiabank Arena on January 16, 2020 in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. The Flames defeated the Maple Leafs 2-1 in a shoot-out. PHOTO BY CLAU ANDERSEN /Getty Images

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Toronto Maple Leafs (4-2-0) at Calgary Flames (2-0-1)

Today, 2 p.m., TV: Sportsnet West Radio: Sportsnet 960

Tuesday, 7 p.m., TV: Sportsnet One, Radio: Sportsnet 960

Season Series

Calgary 2-0-0 6 GF

Toronto 1-1-0 3 GF

Previous scores

Dec. 12, 2019: Calgary 4, Toronto 2

Jan. 16, 2020: Calgary 2, Toronto 1 (SO)

Team scoring leads vs. Opponent

FLAMES vs. LEAFS

Johnny Gaudreau 2-0-4 +2

Sean Monahan 2-0-2 +3

Derek Ryan 1-0-1 +/- 0

LEAFS vs. FLAMES

John Tavares 1-2-3 -1

Mitch Marner 1-1-2 -2

William Nylander 1-0-1 -1

FIVE KEYS TO THE GAME

BRODIE'S RETURN

After 10 seasons in Calgary, TJ Brodie signed with the Leafs in the off-season. While he's a quieter guy who tends to shy away from the media spotlight a little bit, there's no question that his return to the Scotiabank Saddledome is a big story.

START OF SOMETHING

On paper, you can argue that the Flames and Leafs have the deepest teams in the North Division. There are questions about how each group responds to the pressure of the playoffs, but there is a tonne of talent on both sides. There's no real rivalry, but this could be the start of a fun season-long fight.

Calgary Flames vs Toronto Maple Leafs, 2 PM MT, Scotiabank Saddledome, Calgary AB
TV: NHLN, SNW - Radio: Sportsnet 960

Calgary Flames (2-0-1, 5 pts) - Toronto Maple Leafs (4-2-0, 8 pts)
NHL Standings

If it seems like the Flames haven't played hockey in a while, it's because they haven't. Sunday's game will mark the first time they will have played since January 18th, a 5-2 victory over the Vancouver Canucks. The Flames historically come out of long breaks and fall directly into prolonged losing streaks, especially after playing well going into long breaks. In a short season the Flames can't have this trend continue as any long stretch of futility could sink their season early.

At the other end of the spectrum are the Toronto Maple Leafs. They have already played six games this season, playing every two days without a long rest like the Flames just went through. The Leafs are currently in second place in the all Canadian North Division, only behind Montreal due to games played. But with that amount of ice time, injuries have been piling up for Toronto. They are currently without the services of Joe Thornton, Nicholas Robertson and Auston Matthews is listed as day-to-day with an upper body injury. Despite all of that, Toronto has won three of their last four, including a 4-2 victory over the Edmonton Oilers Friday night.

Calgary will certainly have their hands full with this high flying Maple Leafs team as they have speed and the power to put the puck in the net quickly and often. Toronto is third in the NHL in GF with 19 and their PP is second overall at a ridiculous 44.4%. If that's not enough to make you pause, they also have three players in the Top 10 in scoring as well. Mitch Marner (1), John Tavares (6) and William Nylander (10) have combined for 22 points so far this season with Marner's eight goals being tops in the league. Where you can get to the Leafs and potentially get an upper hand in a game is on the PP. The Toronto PK units haven't been stellar so far this season, giving up eight goals in 22 short handed situations. Their goaltending is also a rough spot now as well. Both Frederik Andersen and Jack Campbell have sub .900 Save% and as a

team the Maple Leafs have given up 17 goals, 6th worst in the NHL and third worst in the North Division.

The last half of that bodes well for a Flames team that has scored 11 times in their first three contests. The Flames also own the league's 5th best PP%, which should be able to find the back of the net against Toronto's middle of the pack penalty kill. This will be the Flames first real test of the season as none of the offences they have matched up with so far have the fire power of the Maple Leafs. Calgary is 65-63-12 against Toronto and have won seven out their last ten contests against the Leafs at the Saddledome.