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## Matthews, Leafs fall to Canadiens in OT

Auston Matthews scores twice, but Andrew Shaw's overtime goal stretches Montreal's streak to 14 straight wins over Toronto.



Canadiens captain Max Pacioretty almost slips the puck past Leafs goalie Frederik Andersen in the first period of Saturday night's game. (FRANK GUNN / THE CANADIAN PRESS)

By **KEVIN MCGRAN** Sports Reporter  
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The Maple Leafs have made a number of huge strides forward this season.

But one hurdle they can't seem to make it over is the Montreal Canadiens. It might be hockey's oldest rivalry, but lately it's also been the most one-sided.

The Canadiens rode the goaltending of Carey Price and Andrew Shaw's overtime winner to take a 3-2 decision Saturday night, beating the Toronto Maple Leafs for the 14th straight time.

"For us, and the fans, it's a team we want to beat pretty badly," said defenceman Jake Gardiner, who's been around for all of this 0-10-4 run vs. Montreal. "It's not something to be proud of, that's for sure."

Auston Matthews scored both Toronto goals — the only goals of the first and third periods. The rookie now has 30, with Wendel Clark's team rookie record of 34 in his sights. He also had an overtime breakaway, but the shot hit the shaft of Price's stick.

"I saw the open corner and he got a stick on it," said Matthews. "Tough bounce. He got a knob on it, but we move forward."

On the ensuing faceoff, Montreal's Tomas Plekanec set up Shaw for the winner on an odd-man rush.

As far as the standings go, was a worst-case scenario result for the Ottawa Senators in the Atlantic Division. The Sens (70 points) were sandwiched between both teams, but saw first-place Montreal pull further away with 74 points, while third-place Toronto got closer with 69 — after 61 games, matching their output for all of last season.

“It wasn’t a very high number to hit,” said Gardiner. “That being said, it’s good to pass it and put it behind us and make the push towards the playoffs now.”

Leafs coach Mike Babcock said equalling last season’s point total this early is an important marker.

“I wouldn’t say it’s a small step,” said Babcock. “I’d say it’s a huge step. The biggest step is we’re getting to play in real hockey games that matter. Our crowd is excited. It’s good hockey, at a level we couldn’t play last year.

“We just have to keep getting better. If we keep getting better, we have a chance to get in. We just want to get in the playoffs. We just want to scratch and crawl and earn our way in.”

If there was a goat, it was Zach Hyman. Shaw was Hyman’s man in overtime, and the Canadien simply outskated the Leaf. But after the game, Hyman was more upset about a second-period play. He was stripped of the puck in the neutral zone while killing a penalty and that turned into a goal by Max Pacioretty.

“I’ve got to get the puck down (into the Montreal end),” said Hyman. “There’s no excuse. That’s my job. I kill penalties all the time. It’s the main reason I’m here. I didn’t see him come from behind. I just tried to buy a extra few seconds. Against good players, they’ll catch you.”

The Maple Leafs were without three key players at the same time for the first time this season. Tyler Bozak missed the game with a cut finger, joining winger Mitch Marner and defenceman Connor Carrick on the sidelines. Babcock said he expected both Bozak and Marner to return quickly, possibly Tuesday when the team kicks off a three-game road trip in San Jose.

“We should have Bozak back. He just got a cut in his hand and got an infection,” said Babcock. “It should be cleaned up. It shouldn’t be an issue. And you have to give our trainers credit. Both Mitch and I were bribing them today (so Marner could play), but they held strong. I think they’ll let him out of jail pretty soon. That will be good for us.”

Ben Smith took Bozak’s spot on a line with James van Riemsdyk and Connor Brown.

The Leafs have scored just three goals over their last two games — overtime and shootout losses.

“We have good depth in lots of spots, but not as much at centre ice as we’d like to have,” Babcock said.

The last time the Maple Leafs beat Montreal was Jan. 18, 2014 — powered by goals from the likes of Joffrey Lupul and Mason Raymond. Babcock said it’s only a matter of time before the drought ends: “Did I want to win? Yes. Are we going to beat Montreal? Yes.”

**Read more about:** [Tyler Bozak](#)