

Chicago Blackhawks dodge Sidney Crosby again Pittsburgh Penguin star out with groin injury



Sidney Crosby skates through hats after scoring his third goal of the game against the Rangers. (Justin K. Aller, Getty Images / November 28, 2009)

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PITTSBURGH -- **Sidney Crosby** isn't ducking **the Blackhawks**. It just seems that way.

The Penguins star was sidelined for Saturday night's game at Mellon Arena with a sore groin. It's the second time in as many meetings with the Hawks that Crosby was a scratch with a groin injury. The center also sat out Feb. 27 at the **United Center**.

"People probably think I have the Blackhawk Flu or something," Crosby told the Pittsburgh Tribune-Review. "I don't like missing games at all, but especially (against) this team that has a lot of great players and is a great matchup for us. You kind of have those measuring-stick games, and you want to be in those games; they're big games, fun games."

Crosby has been red hot with seven goals and four assists in his last three games and 10 goals and 10 assists in his last 11.

'Tis the season: Hawks winger **Patrick Kane** will host a toy drive at the next two games at the United Center to support the **U.S. Marine Corps** Toys for Tots Program, Dreams for Kids and the NorthShore University HealthSystem. Fans who bring an unwrapped toy to drop-off locations at Gates 2, 3, 6 and 7 will be entered into a raffle to win Kane-autographed items.

Defenseman **Brent Sopel** and wife **Kelly** are hosting a holiday party at their home Sunday for families with members of the military currently deployed.

The Sopels and six Hawks teammates purchased gifts for 15 families as part of the "Operation Homefront" charity that provides emergency and morale assistance for troops, the families they leave behind and for wounded warriors when they return home.

For more information, go to www.operationhomefront.net and www.homefrontonline.com.

One-timer: **Tomas Kopecky** was a scratch against the Penguins and was replaced by **Jordan Hendry**.

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