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On Sunday, St. Louis Blues General Manager Doug Armstrong announced that the club placed goaltender Jaroslav Halak on injury reserve. In turn, the club has called up 22-year old Jake Allen from the Blues' AHL affiliate, the Peoria Rivermen.

Halak suffered a cut on his lip after being struck in the mask with a shot Friday night in Detroit, but was not taken out of the game until minutes later at the 16:23 mark of the second period. The cut does not seem to be the reason for the injury, as the team is calling this a "lower-body injury."

The Bratislava, Slovakia native has posted a 3-0-0 record this season, recording a .910 save percentage and a .889 GAA while amassing two shutouts. Halak has appeared in five games this season, as he has twice been relieved in net by the other half of his goalie tandem, Brian Elliott. The other change in net occurred in the second game of the season in Nashville, after Halak was beaten on a seemingly stoppable Patric Hornqvist power-play goal in the second period.

Allen started this season in a rocky way for the Rivermen, posting a 5-8-4 record in his first 17 games. But since December 11, Allen has posted a 7-5-1 record with a 2.40 GAA and a .916 save percentage.

The Blues' 2008 second round draft selection (34th overall) has not officially played in an NHL regular season game, but did see a few seconds of action during last year's playoff. He did not face a shot.

Elliott is expected to get the nod for the next two home games, which will be Tuesday against the Predators and Thursday against the Red Wings. Halak is expected to be practicing again on Friday but that does not necessarily mean that he will be ready for in-game action.

To round out the four-game home-stand, the Blues will face-off with the Anaheim Ducks on Saturday and the Los Angeles Kings on Monday; if Halak is still not ready to return, Allen may have a chance to shine at the highest level. This may be an even better possibility if the defense can hold strong throughout the next few games. Halak's two shutouts this season have come when facing under 15 shots (14 SA against the Red Wings on opening night; 13 SA on January 24 against the Predators). A low amount of shots would make for an easier transition from the AHL to the NHL.

Brian Elliott is expected to start every game until Halak's return, but if there are any signs of fatigue from the shortened season, Head Coach Ken Hitchcock may just be willing to give Allen a chance in goal. After all, he has been heralded as a top prospect within the organization for quite some time.

If given the chance, Jake Allen could prove that he is ready for the next leap forward in his young career.