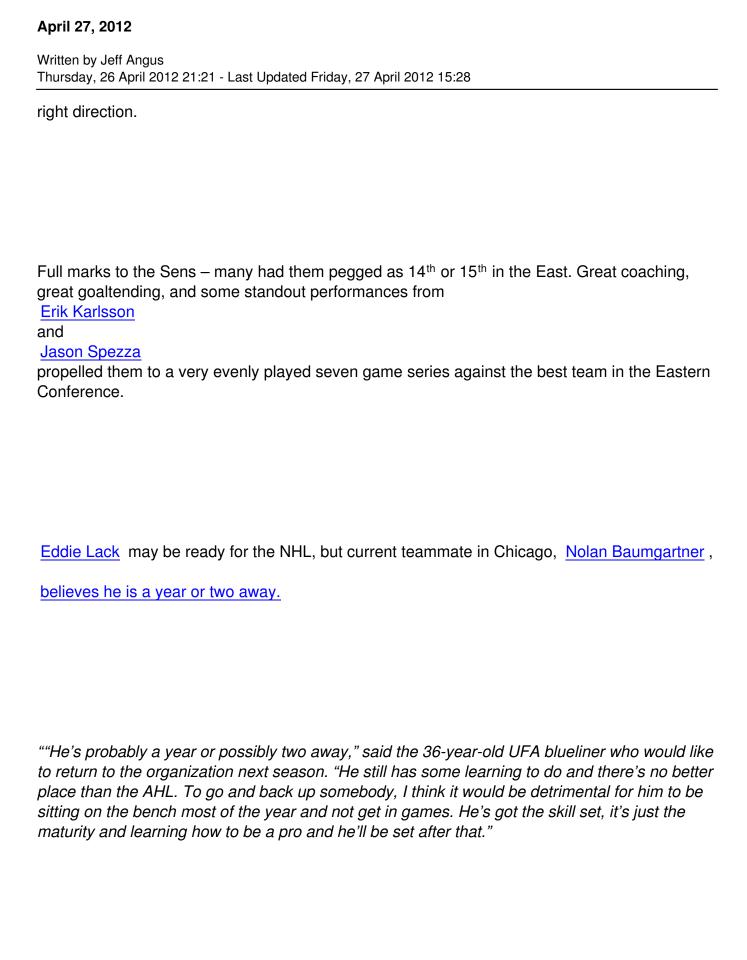


Written by Jeff Angus

Thursday, 26 April 2012 21:21 - Last Updated Friday, 27 April 2012 15:28

Stephen Weiss had a phenomenal game - he scored a goal and played close to 30 minutes. Also fired six shots on goal.
Mike Weaver led the Panthers with 10 hits.
Brian Campbell was one shift shy of hitting the 40-minute mark.
Derek Stepan has been arguably the best Ranger forward over the past few games. Encouraging sign as they now move on to the stingy Capitals squad.
The DobberHockey panel selections for Round 2 will be up at some point early Friday evening
Henrik Lundqvist was a difference-maker for the Rangers last night. For all of his regular season successes, he hasn't done it in the playoffs yet. Last night was a huge step in the



The Roberto Luongo situation is an interesting one, and it definitely deserves its own column. I hope I'll get around to writing one in due time. Until then, I'll ramble on my thoughts regarding

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prospective destinations:

Tampa Bay – the Lightning make the most sense. They need a goalie, Luongo would love to play in Florida, and there is the connection with Yzerman because of the Olympics. Luongo likely wouldn't fetch a huge return (I laughed at <u>Victor Hedman</u>'s name being tossed around on TV). I'd guess either

Malone or

a prospect like

**Brett Connolly** 

would be coming to Vancouver.

Florida – <u>Jacob Markstrom</u> is the goalie of the future, but is he ready now? Even if he isn't, the Panthers are probably better off going with a stop gap like <u>Jose</u>

<u>Theodore</u>

for another season until Markstrom is ready. Luongo will be playing for at least six more seasons.

Toronto – the media pressure in Vancouver isn't why he wants out, it is because he sees that Schneider stole his starting gig. Toronto has Dave Nonis, who originally stole Luongo from Florida back in 2006. The Leafs have a clear need for a goalie, but like Florida, do they want more of a stop gap? Do they still believe <u>James Reimer</u> is the goalie of the future? How about <u>Tim Thomas</u>

to Toronto?

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Chicago – hilarity aside, this actually makes some sense (provided Chicago moves salary out). The Hawks need stability in goal, and they won't get that from a <u>Corey Crawford</u> and <u>Ray</u> <u>Emery</u>

duo. I can't imagine Luongo wanting to listen to Chelsea Dagger 100+ times, though....

Any other teams that could be interested in him? I didn't bother mentioning Columbus – don't see Luongo wanting any part of that mess.

I'm taking Nashville over Phoenix for one major reason – Alex Radulov. Both clubs have elite goalies, solid defensive groups (not counting <a href="Derek Morris">Derek Morris</a>), and a slew of two-way forwards. Radulov is the only elite forward in the series (apologies to Radim Vrbata

). I think he swings this one in Nashville's favor.

LA/St. Louis may not be the most offensive series, but it will be an interesting one. The two teams are very similar – big forwards who aggressively forecheck – mobile defensemen combined with defensive bruisers, and athletic and elite goaltenders in <a href="Brian Elliott">Brian Elliott</a> and <a href="Jonat Louis">Jonat Louis</a> han Quick

. If

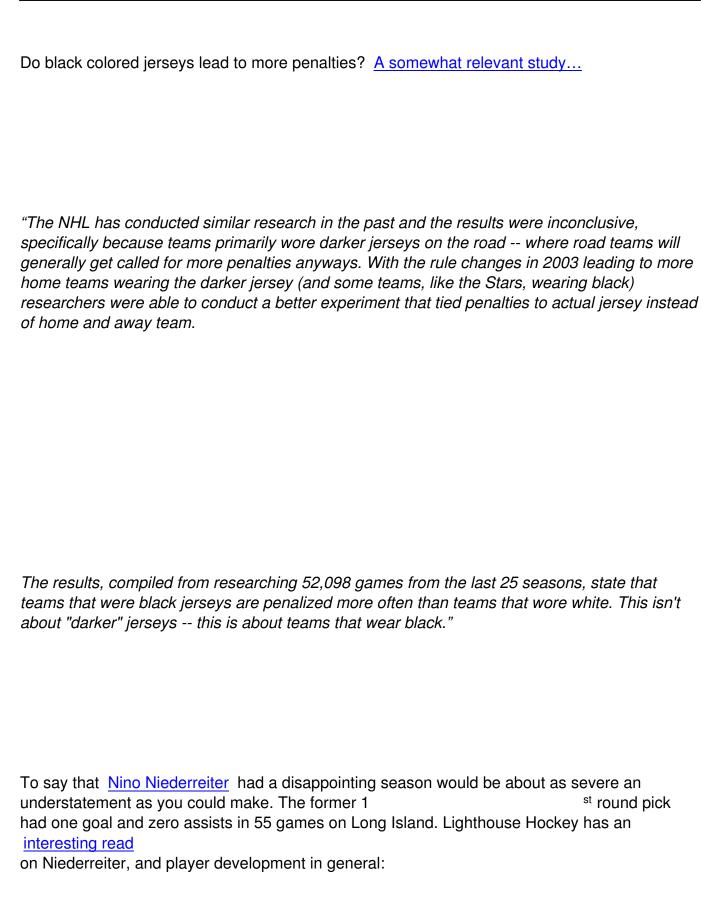
## Jeff Carter

gets over the injury that made him invisible against the Canucks, the Kings could make a series out of this. The Blues have more depth, but

## Jonathan Quick

is capable of stealing a few games. Haven't decided on this one just yet.





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"What happens next year with Nino? He could head to Bridgeport of the AHL, which he was ineligible to do this season, and get some seasoning there. He could stay on Long Island, play like a bull in a china shop and lead the Islanders to the playoffs with a mix of brute force and dazzling stick skills.
Or he could average another eight minutes a game and score two goals, doubling his career totals. And the Islanders, through a mountain of incompetence, neglect and instability, could pulverize Niederreiter's will to play hockey and send him crying back to Lucerne to become a watchmaker or one of Lindt's <b>master chocolatiers</b> .
Whatever happens will be just the next episode in the story of Nino Niederreiter's career. I guess the good news is that It can't possibly be
worse than the premiere. I hope."

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Not exactly the most glowing praise.... but as a value investor in hockey pools, your "buy low" lights should be blinking out of control right now. Niederreiter had everything go wrong this past year. His value won't ever be lower. He may end up busting, or he may end up being a star in a European league. But only one year ago many were projecting him to score 20-25 goals as an NHL rookie. One bad season should help you form an opinion on a player, but it shouldn't be the "be all, end all" of evaluation.