

They had a slow start to the season, but the LA Kings are still the class of the league. No club in the NHL sports [better possession metrics](#) than LA and Jonathan Quick is slowly beginning to round back into form. Two guys who have begun to find the net more often for Los Angeles are Dustin Brown and Justin Williams, both of whom managed points in the win over Edmonton on Saturday afternoon. Brown in particular was snake-bitten to start the year, which he put down to playing in Europe during the lock-out to some degree, but with six points in his last seven games (and now 24 points in 38 games), Brown is again a decent fantasy option.

\*

Another King to keep an eye on is young defender Slava Voynov. The 23-year old sophomore scored his fifth of the season against the Oilers and now leads the Los Angeles blueline in scoring with 23 points. Voynov was a big scorer in the AHL, managing 15 goals and 51 points in 76 games for the Manchester Monarchs back in 2010-11, so this is hardly out of character for the former second rounder. Since then, Voynov has grown into a capable all around defender for LA and only trails Drew Doughty in terms of average ice time per game (22:32). Look for his role and responsibility to grow in LA as he develops, which means his fantasy value will only grow.

\*

**April 07, 2013**

Written by Kent Wilson

Saturday, 06 April 2013 19:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 April 2013 11:38

---

Speaking of growing fantasy value, PK Subban with another two points at the time of writing and the game against the Bruins isn't even over yet. He's been fantasy gold this year.

\*

The Carolina Hurricanes are being sunk by their goaltending. Cam Ward wasn't having a great season before being felled by injury, but his replacements have struggled even more. Veteran back-up Dan Ellis has been the de facto started since Ward went down (aside from a brief stint on IR himself) and he has lost five straight games, including a three goal on seven shot performance versus the Capitals on April fourth. The Canes are down by three to the Rangers at the end of the second period as I type this (three goals on 30 shots for NYR) and are watching their playoff aspirations evaporate right before their eyes.

\*

Sticking with the Canes, it's still hard to believe how eager they were to get rid of the highly useful Jussi Jokinen. Carolina moved him for next to nothing to the Penguins at the deadline and even agreed to pick up part of his salary in the deal. Jokinen debuted for Pittsburgh on Friday night and displayed his utility by scoring their lone goal in regulation and winning 87% of his face-offs. On top of all that, he scored the game winning goal in the shoot-out to boot. He was named the game's second star

I have no idea why Jokinen was ignored by the other GM's when he was available for free via waivers, nor why the Pens were able to acquire him for a song (when objectively worse players like Jarred Smithson at least garnered a mid-round pick) but the move was a savvy one by Ray Shero. My guess is Jokinen sticks with the Penguins, at least through next year which is the last one on his current contract. If that happens, and especially if his shooting percentage rebounds, he will be a worthwhile mid-round pick in next year's drafts.

\*

How about Alex Ovechkin? the much maligned Capitals captain scored three goals and one assist in Washington's win over the Panthers yesterday. He now has 23 goals and 41 points on the year, good for second and seventh overall in the league, respectively. There's no question Ovechkin isn't as dominant as he once was - the debates about who is better between Alex and Sidney Crosby are all but over. His shot volume has fallen from a peak of 6.68 per game back in 2008-09 to about 4.42 this year. His possession stats have also cratered as Ovechkin has entered his late-20's. At one point, Alex was one of the best players in the league at keeping the puck in the offensive zone, but now he is entirely middling. This year, for example, he is actually marginally underwater in terms of corsi (-1.61/60), meaning the Capitals give up almost two shots at the net more per hour of his ice than they generate.

All that said, Ovechkin is still a very good fantasy option. He gets tons of ice time, typically plays with quality linemates (like Nicklas Backstrom) and can still put the puck in the net. He's not the

**April 07, 2013**

Written by Kent Wilson

Saturday, 06 April 2013 19:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 April 2013 11:38

---

60-goal, 100+ point phemonon he once was, but that doesn't make him worthless.

\*

I'm not sure anyone has noticed, but the Panthers Tomas Kopecky already has 15 goals after scoring against the Capitals last night. That matches his career high, which he garnered back in 2010-11 with the Blackhawks. It took him a full 81 games that season, though, rather than the mere 38 he did it in this year. Does that mean Kopecky has suddenly developed in a 30+ goal scorer in Florida?

Well, no. While Kopecky is is getting a lot of minutes on a young Florida squad, the real reason he's piling up the goals is an uncharacteristic shooting percentage of 18.1%. The only other time Kopecky has had a double digit SH% was 2009-10 when he scored 10 goals on 95 shots (10.5%). His career average is just 8.6%, less than half his current hot streak.

In short, don't bet on Tomas to sustain this long term.

**April 07, 2013**

Written by Kent Wilson

Saturday, 06 April 2013 19:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 April 2013 11:38

---

\*

The Flames lost 5-2 to the Canucks in the final game of the night yesterday, stretching their road losing streak to a franchise high 13 games. Ironically, Calgary actually outplayed Vancouver in aggregate, outshooting them 38-21 and grossly outchancing the Canucuks as well. The difference was Cory Schenider, who was brilliant, versus Miikka Kiprusoff, who was not. The Flames also hit three goal posts over the course of the evening.

In any other circumstances last night would have been a frustrating defeat for Calgary, but the truth is it the club needs losses more than wins for the rest of the year. To date, the Flames have never picked higher than sixth overall in the draft, but they are poised to pick third or fourth at the latest this upcoming June thanks to their on-going struggles. Good news for a team in such desperate need of young, elite talent.

\*

Finally, it seems all the Rangers needed to start scoring was an aging power forward with zero goals. Since Ryane Clowe joined New York at the deadline, the team has scored 11 goals in three games, including last night's 4-1 victory over Carolina. Clowe has a goal and a three assists as a Ranger (and one fight to boot). This must mean Glen Sather is a genius, right?

**April 07, 2013**

Written by Kent Wilson

Saturday, 06 April 2013 19:25 - Last Updated Sunday, 07 April 2013 11:38

---

Well, not really. The blueshirts were never as hapless offensively as they seemed - at the start of the week, they had a [team-wide even strength shooting percentage](#) of just 6.6%, the second lowest in the league (ahead of only San Jose by the way, which kills any speculation that Clowe is the reason the SH% turned around). There's almost no way that percentage was truly representative of the Rangers shooting talent, so pucks were bound to start going in a bit more frequently as a matter of chance.