

Rolston's Devils Rolling

Written by Russ Miller

Thursday, 27 January 2011 17:52 - Last Updated Friday, 28 January 2011 13:02



Heading into last night's match (which of course they lost), the New Jersey Devils were 6-0-1. They look like they have turned it around, but considering how poorly they performed over the first 40 games, the playoffs are only theoretically possible. The Devils obviously had some issues (a mild understatement!) adjusting to a new coach and system. Now that Lemaire is back, the turnaround shouldn't have come as a complete surprise.

For a guy who was placed on waivers at the end of December, Brian Rolston has seemingly turned his year around. Overall on the season he has averaged 17:00 minutes of ice time per game. Over his last seven contests, he received over 19 minutes per game and recorded 10 points during that stretch. Can the 37-year-old maintain this pace you ask? It was a long three years ago that he recorded a third consecutive 30 goal season. No he won't continue at his current pace, but he won't be as bad as he was earlier in the year either.

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Other Devils excelling at the moment include Patrik Elias, who has nine points in seven games and Andy Greene with seven points in his last nine games. Greene had 11 points in his first 39 games, so put him back on your radar.

The numbers listed below are based on the calendar month prior to last night's games:

PLAYER

TEAM

POINTS

Tuomo Ruutu

CAR

20

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Danny Briere

PHI

20

Daniel Sedin

VAN

20

Keith Yandle

PHX

20

Steven Stamkos

TB

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19

Henrik Sedin

VAN

18

Patrice Bergeron

BOS

18

Rick Nash

CBJ

17

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Ryan Kesler

VAN

17

John Tavares

NYI

17

Brad Richards

DAL

17

Shane Doan

PHX

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17

Jeff Skinner

CAR

16

Jeff Carter

PHI

16

Thomas Vanek

BUF

16

Claude Giroux

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PHI

16

Lubomir Visnovsky

ANA

15

Seven Forwards

With

15 Points

The fact that Keith Yandle outscored the league's leading point-getter, Steve Stamkos speaks

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volumes about Yandle's offensive ability. Seeing Ruutu's name at the top of the list was a surprise as well.

PLAYER

TEAM

GOALS

Steven Stamkos

TB

11

Jeff Skinner

CAR

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10

Ryan Kesler

VAN

10

Jeff Carter

PHI

10

Danny Briere

PHI

10

Scott Hartnell

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PHI

9

David Backes

STL

9

Patrice Bergeron

BOS

9

Daniel Sedin

VAN

9

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Bobby Ryan

ANA

8

Patrick Sharp

CHI

8

John Tavares

NYI

8

Brad Marchand

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BOS

8

Mikhail Grabovski

TOR

8

Mild surprise with rookie Jeff Skinner recording one less goal than Stamkos. Multi-cat studs Hartnell and Backes are a welcome sight in this category. Patrice Bergeron is also a surprise here. Brad Marchand is now playing over 85 per cent of his even strength shifts with Bergeron and Mark Recchi. I didn't see Marchand as a scorer at the NHL level, but he did have 153 points in 116 games over his last two major junior seasons, a 108 point pace.

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PLAYER

TEAM

ASSISTS

Keith Yandle

PHX

18

Tuomo Ruutu

CAR

15

Henrik Sedin

VAN

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15

Anze Kopitar

LA

13

Brad Richards

DAL

13

Claude Giroux

PHI

13

Lubomir Visnovsky

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ANA

12

Joe Corvo

CAR

12

Nicklas Lidstrom

DET

12

Rick Nash

CBJ

11

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Mike Ribeiro

DAL

11

Daniel Sedin

VAN

11

Thomas Vanek

BUF

11

James Wisniewski

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MTL

11

Shea Weber

NSH

11

Loui Eriksson

DAL

10

Nicklas Backstrom

WSH

10

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Danny Briere

PHI

10

Brad Boyes

STL

10

Shane Doan

PHX

10

Henrik Zetterberg

DET

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10

Jason Pominville

BUF

10

Tomas Kaberle

TOR

10

Andrew MacDonald

NYI

10

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Tobias Enstrom

ATL

10

Jack Johnson

LA

10

Yandle blew away the competition over the last month. Anytime Tuomo Ruutu can record as many assists in a month as Henrik Sedin, you know he's overachieving. Joe Corvo with 12 assists will qualify as a mild surprise for many fantasy owners. I'm not sure why though, as his coach has always given him prime power play opportunities and plenty of ice time. Seeing Brad Boyes in this category is definitely surprising.

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TEAM

POWER PLAY POINTS

Joe Corvo

CAR

10

James Wisniewski

MTL

9

Nicklas Lidstrom

DET

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9

Lubomir Visnovsky

ANA

9

Daniel Sedin

VAN

8

Henrik Sedin

VAN

8

John Tavares

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NYI

8

Kris Letang

PIT

8

Tobias Enstrom

ATL

8

Andrew MacDonald

NYI

8

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Patrick Sharp

CHI

7

Thomas Vanek

BUF

7

Mike Ribeiro

DAL

7

Tuomo Ruutu

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CAR

7

Dany Heatley

SJ

7

Teemu Selanne

ANA

7

Eric Staal

CAR

7

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Christian Ehrhoff

VAN

7

Tomas Kaberle

TOR

7

Keith Yandle

PHX

7

This is where the defensemen shine. Ten power play points for Joe Corvo is nice for his

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owners.

PLAYER

TEAM

SHOTS ON GOAL

Phil Kessel

TOR

78

Dustin Byfuglien

ATL

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68

Daniel Sedin

VAN

67

Alexander Ovechkin

WSH

65

Jeff Carter

PHI

65

Shane Doan

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PHX

63

Rick Nash

CBJ

61

Henrik Zetterberg

DET

59

Eric Staal

CAR

59

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John Tavares

NYI

58

Zdeno Chara

BOS

57

Ryan Kesler

VAN

56

Jarret Stoll

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LA

55

Patric Hornqvist

NSH

55

Marian Gaborik

NYR

54

Brad Richards

DAL

54

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Brian Boyle

NYR

54

Kessel leading the pack by 10 shots is a small surprise to me, but Big Buff being second is even bigger. Seeing big Zdeno Chara get more shots on goal has to be encouraging for his owners. Brian Boyle has five points in his last seven games and should continue to put up points if he keeps putting the puck on net.

PLAYER

TEAM

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PENALTY MINUTES

Chris Neil

OTT

58

Colton Orr

TOR

55

Matt Carkner

OTT

52

Steve Ott

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DAL

43

Steve Downie

TB

43

George Parros

ANA

42

Brad Staubitz

MIN

42

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Tim Gleason

CAR

40

Derek Dorsett

CBJ

39

Kyle Clifford

LA

38

Jared Boll

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CBJ

38

Dion Phaneuf

TOR

36

Jody Shelley

PHI

35

Zenon Konopka

NYI

34

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Kris Newbury

NYR

33

Adam McQuaid

BOS

33

The usual suspects litter the penalty minutes category. Guys like Steve Ott and Steve Downie are money in leagues that count penalty minutes. Unless you are in a deep league, no one owns Brad Staubitz or Tim Gleason. Who the heck are Kyle Clifford and Adam McQuaid? Don't rush out to pick up these one category wonders. Good to see Mister Personality (Dion Phaneuf) help out his owners with some penalty minutes.

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PLAYER

TEAM

PLUS/MINUS

Brad Marchand

BOS

16

Kevin Bieksa

VAN

15

Patrice Bergeron

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BOS

14

Dan Hamhuis

VAN

13

Brian Campbell

CHI

12

Keith Yandle

PHX

11

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Matt Carle

PHI

11

David Legwand

NSH

10

Mark Recchi

BOS

10

Ryan Suter

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NSH

10

Shea Weber

NSH

10

Jeff Skinner

CAR

9

Ryan Kesler

VAN

9

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Cal Clutterbuck

MIN

9

Jeff Carter

PHI

9

Daniel Sedin

VAN

9

Adam McQuaid

BOS

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9

There's that Marchand name again. Kevin Bieksa was a plus-15 over the last month? What the...apparently I traded him a month too soon.

Thursday Trivia

In honour of Wayne Great Gretzky's birthday yesterday, name the Great One's wingers in his first NHL season.

Again, those simply googling the answer please refrain from replying right away. Give those who think they can answer without looking it up a chance to get it right.