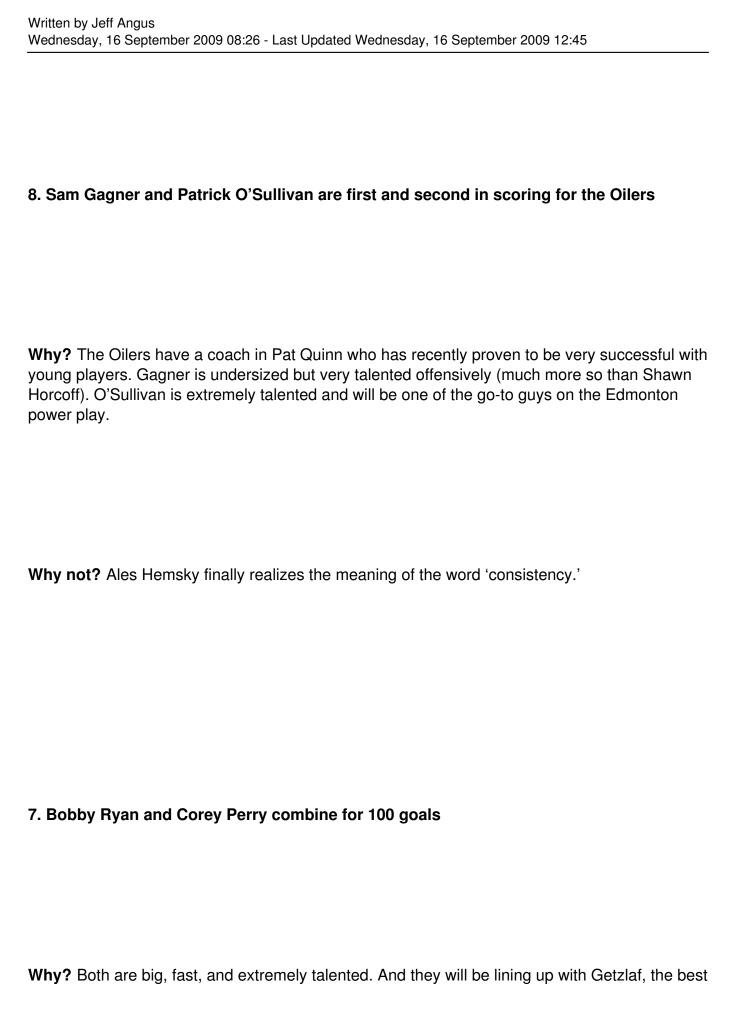


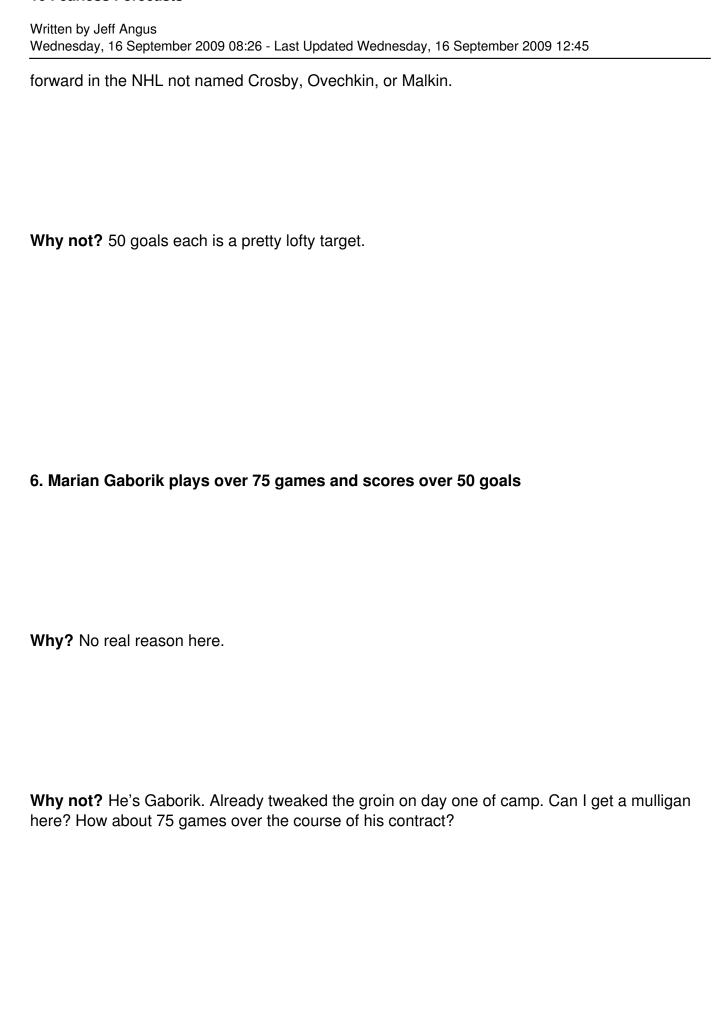
A few weeks ago I posted this topic in the Dobber Hockey forums. I rang off 10 bold predictions (fearless forecasts, if you will) for the upcoming season and asked forum members to do the same. I promised to give a free fantasy team audit to anyone who ended up with more correct predictions than me at the end of the season (provided they were not predicting things like Sidney Crosby breaking 90 points). The predictions ranged from conservative and cautious to extremely unlikely (and in some cases laughable, which was appreciated by all). I have had my list posted for over a week now, but without any justification or reasoning as to why I made those predictions. I'll now dive into further detail.

10. Vesa Toskala is a finalist for the Vezina Trophy

Why? The Leafs have a deep, mobile, and talented defensive group. Toskala is a great goalie. Last season, he played over a month with a nagging hip injury, and the Leafs weren't exactly

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| world-beaters in the defensive zone. He also has a competent backup to spell him off now in Jonas Gustavsson. |
| Why not? The Leafs are going to struggle to score goals in a big way. Gustavsson may steal the starting gig. |
| 9. James Neal outscores Brenden Morrow |
| Why? Neal is bigger than Morrow, faster, and has the upside to be a similar offensive player. |
| Why not? Dallas wants to keep Morrow with Mike Ribeiro. Whoever plays with Ribeiro will score 10-20 more points than if they play with Brad Richards or Mike Modano. Jamie Benn may steal a top-six spot out of camp from Neal. |

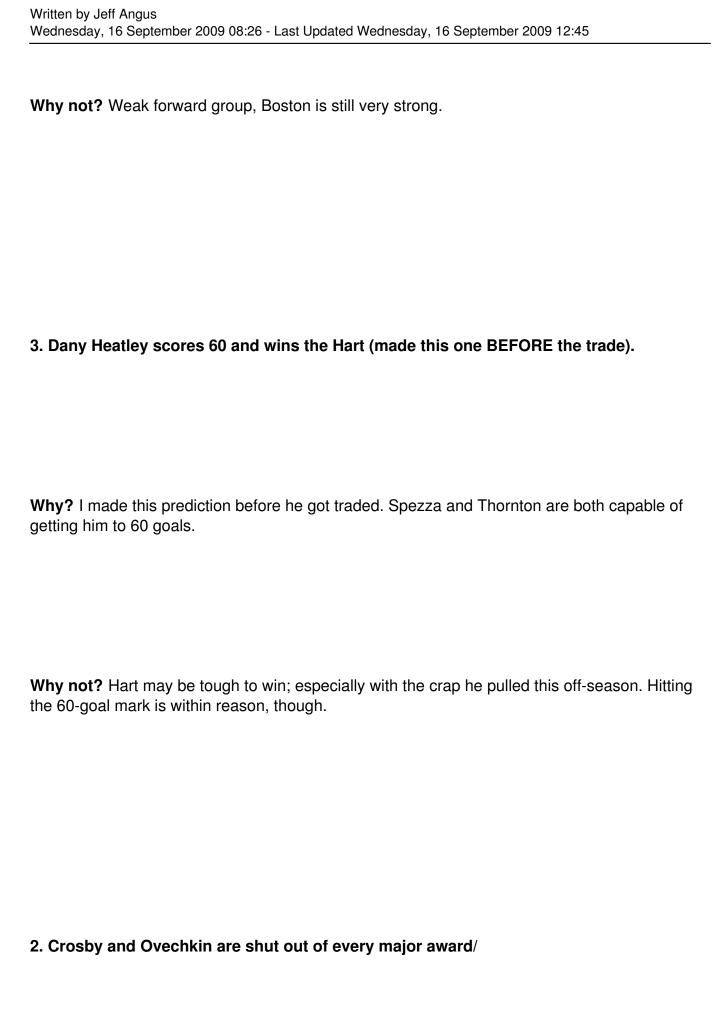


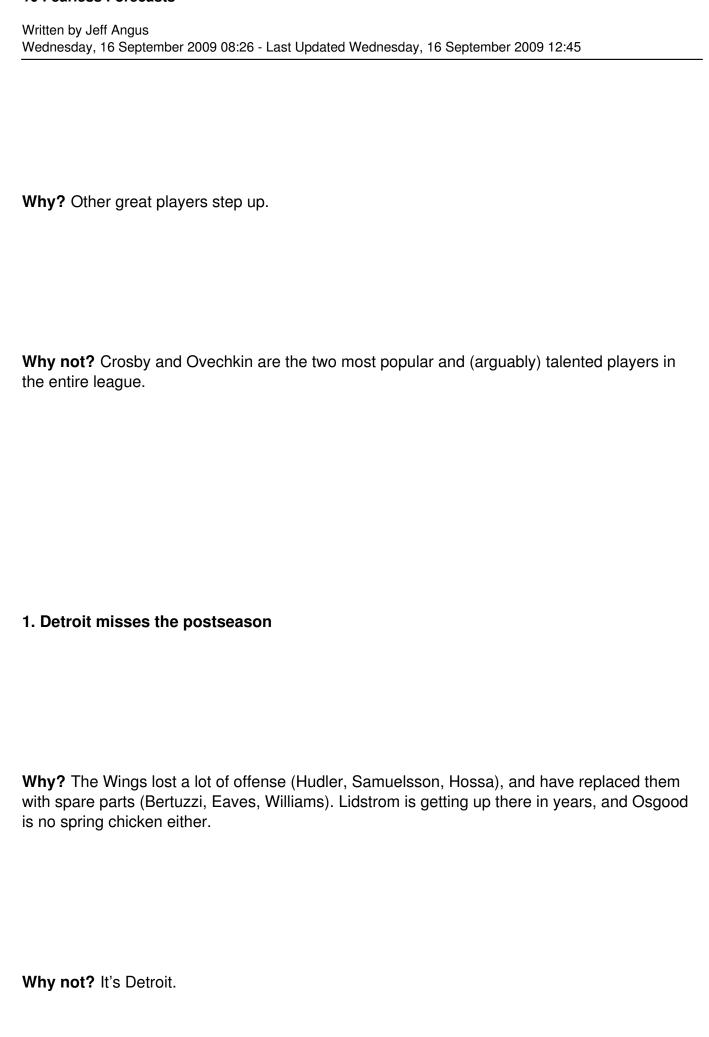


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| 5. Atlanta has the best powerplay in the league but fails to make the playoffs because Kari Lehtonen gets hurt |
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| Why? A solid power play unit adds an immovable force down low (Antropov), as well as a bomb from the point (Kubina). Also, you may have heard of this Kovalchuk guy, he sounds pretty good. |
| Why not? Just depends on how other teams do on the power play. Thrashers have a solid team but consistent goaltending is needed to go anywhere (unless you are Detroit). |
| 4. Toronto wins the Northeast Division |
| Why? The Leafs are an improved group on defense, lots of question marks with other teams in the division. |

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