

Angus Audits Your Team: The Renegades

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 19 May 2010 01:47 - Last Updated Thursday, 20 May 2010 01:37



I have decided to spice things up a bit this week while Dobber is off enjoying a few cervezas in sunny and warm Mexico. Each day this week, I will be auditing a different fantasy hockey team submitted to me by DobberHockey members and readers. Wondering what your plan of attack should be this summer? Preparing for a draft? Wondering about some trades you made in the past? I'll weigh in on the interesting and important issues with my thoughts.

Today I'll be taking a look at the team submitted to me by Ryan (known as Renegade on the DobberHockey message boards).

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The League (The UFHKL)

- 11 team keeper league (full keeper, which means no roster turnover and no dispersal draft)

- 12 forwards, six defensemen, and two goaltenders start each night

- Unlimited adds/drops (three day waiting period to prevent streaming)

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Goals = 1

Assists = 1

PIM = 0.2

Shots = 0.1

+/- = 0.2

Wins = 2

Shutouts = 3

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The Roster (The Renegades)

Forwards:

Marian Hossa

Ilya Kovalchuk

Dany Heatley

Paul Kariya

Henrik Sedin

Claude Giroux

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Peter Mueller

Ryan Kesler

Evander Kane

Milan Hejduk

JP Dumont

Jason Blake

Defensemen:

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Alex Goligoski

Cam Barker

Tom Gilbert

Marc-Edouard Vlasic

John-Michael Liles

Goaltenders:

Jonas Hiller

Ilya Bryzgalov

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Bench:

David Legwand

Teddy Purcell

Justin Williams

Randy Jones

Matt Niskanen

Jack Hillen

Anssi Salmela

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Marc-Andre Bergeron

Denis Grebeshkov

Francois Beauchemin

Vesa Toskala

Prospects:

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Brett MacLean

Vladimir Sobotka

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Benoit Pouliot

Bobby Sanguinetti

Brian Salcido

Michal Neuvirth

The Trades

Ryan mentioned a few of his recent trades to me, and I'll share those with you guys.

Outgoing: Kyle Okposo, Valtteri Filppula, Jamie Benn, 2011 6th round pick

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Incoming: Alex Goligoski, Michael Grabner, 2011 3rd round pick

Ouch. Not much else to say there. You can't win them all... (Actually that isn't true, technically you can win them all if you prepare and negotiate properly!) Goligoski has a lot of upside, especially if Pittsburgh and Sergei Gonchar part ways. However, Okposo and Benn are both fantastic offensive prospects with lots of upside.

Outgoing: 2010 3rd and 4th round draft picks

Incoming: Brett MacLean

I like this deal. MacLean has clicked with Kyle Turris and Mikkel Boedker in the AHL, and all three should crack the big club at the same time (2011) – perhaps a second scoring unit for the Coyotes featuring the three?

Outgoing: Alexander Elder and 2010 5th round draft pick

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Incoming: Marc-Edouard Vlasic, Bobby Sanguinetti, 2010 4th round draft pick, 2011 5th round draft pick

Not a huge fan of this deal – you lose the best asset in the deal. Sanguinetti has some upside, but Vlasic will never be the offensive force that Edler is primed to become.

Outgoing: 2011 1st and 5th round draft picks

Incoming: Peter Mueller, Vladimir Sobotka and Beniot Pouliot

This is a great deal, even with Mueller's injury history. Pouliot has shown during the post-season that his hot streak after the trade was just that – a streak. Sobotka is an intriguing player, as he hasn't really established a role in the NHL yet. He has more skill and offensive ability than many give him credit for.

The Breakdown

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One quick note here – it is tough to evaluate the value of draft picks, as they vary greatly from league to league. However, in general I am a fan of trading picks for proven players. Fantasy hockey isn't like the NHL – it is much easier to build a winner through trading and free agency! Besides, tanking every year is very boring (and expensive, depending on your league's entry fee).

The defence has some great young talent, especially Erik Karlsson. After Mike Green, he is the best young defenseman to own, period. Ryan had a big trade fall through, in which he was going to trade Dany Heatley and Valtteri Filppula for Paul Stastny and Michal Frolik. Looks pretty even to me, and when deals look even I tend to favour the side getting the best player. In this case, that is Heatley. Don't sell low on Dany – he has hit the 100-point mark before, and is in a great situation long-term in San Jose. If you don't get what you are looking for, take a pass. Often times poolies get so locked in to dealing a certain player that they are more disappointed holding on to him compared to trading him for an inadequate return.

The bench looks weak for an 11-team league. No reason to hold on to Hillen, Jones, or Williams. Legwand too... expect Colin Wilson to steal most of his offensive minutes next season. Your roster looks great, the bench not so much. That is a very minor issue, but I'd work at trying to improve your depth by making a 1-for-2 type of trade. Brian Salcido isn't worth holding on to either.

Kariya may be due for a bounce back offensively. I could see him signing with a contender this summer. He apparently was healthy last season for the first time since before the lockout, but St. Louis laid such a big egg in the offensive zone all season long - it was tough to see any positives there. Your core four up front (Sedin, Hossa, Heatley, and Kovalchuk) are fantastic.

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You also have some great secondary talent with Kesler and Giroux. Not a ton after that, though.

Your team is a 'tweener' – lots of young talent, some solid veterans. It makes it hard to decide on a clear-cut plan of attack (rebuild or go big for the win this season). I'd try and improve your depth, especially up front. I like your defense – Gilbert will bounce back. Never been a fan of Cam Barker, but his value is very low right now so moving him wouldn't be prudent. He is behind Marek Zidlicky and Brent Burns in Minnesota (although they are both righties so he may slide in on the top unit). I have never been a fan of his – his stats in 2008-09 were grossly inflated because of PP time with fantastic teammates.

Recommendations

1) Get a third goalie if you can. Neuvirth will see starts next season, but how many? Toskala will see starts, but he won't stop many pucks.

2) Improve your depth at forward. Try and make a 1-for-2 or 2-for-3 type of trade. I usually advise poolies to do the opposite, but you have a huge gap between your top players and your

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bottom players. Ryan has informed me he can get Mikael Samuelsson for Benoit Pouliot. That deal, my friend, is an easy one to accept! You have mentioned that you may be open to moving your top guys for some younger depth – that wouldn't be a bad idea. Sedin could be viewed as a sell high candidate, but again, make sure you are actually selling high!

3) Cut bait on Hillen, Williams, Jones, Legwand, and Salcido. Purcell is probably worth holding on to for a little while. I'd think about moving Hejduk and Blake as well. If no one is interested, a trade to the waiver wire may be in order. Spice things up! Your team isn't a contender, so why not take a few chances on some riskier/young players? Ryan has informed me that there isn't anything on the waiver wire (and he means anything), so I guess you are stuck with these guys, unless you can drug a poolie or two in your league...

4) Make smart trades. That sounds very simple and basic, but with a team like yours (very balanced between old and young), there isn't really anything drastic you can do. You don't have the skill right now to make a push to guarantee a win in 2010-11, and you don't have the young talent to endure a rebuild for a few years. You told me that there are two new guys in your league – I hate to sound like a bad person, but we all do it. Low-ball them (not to the extreme where they will resent you) to gauge how they value some of the players you may be looking to move.

I touched on this yesterday – one effective trade tactic is to send your trading partner a list of players off of your team. The list strategy works for a few reasons:

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- It speeds up the process. There are few things in fantasy hockey as frustrating as working on a deal for weeks only to see it fall through.

- It reveals his cards. He does you a favour directly by allowing you to propose what he wants, but it also does you a favour indirectly by getting him to reveal how he values certain players. Say you like Player X more than Player Y. Imagine how happy you will be to see him have Player Y ranked ahead of Player X on his list?