“We have a trade to announce...” are the only words any hockey fan ever wishes to hear out of Gary Bettman’s mouth. There may be no more exciting off-ice situation in the NHL than the draft day trade announcement. There is no shortage of star players available at the draft this year – Mike Ribeiro, Tomas Kaberle, and Sheldon Souray to name a few. There are several premier soon-to-be-free agents whose rights may be up for grabs as well – Ilya Kovalchuk, Anton Volchenkov, Dan Hamhuis, Patrick Marleau, Paul Martin... the list goes on.

I asked the DobberHockey community to share their trade ideas a few days ago (check the topic out here). I borrowed a few of the ideas shared there and added them to some of my own.

To Pittsburgh: The rights to Ray Whitney

To Carolina: 2010 4th round draft pick

Why?

It is obvious that Whitney won't be returning to Carolina, where a significant youth movement is underway. Pittsburgh is extremely desperate for skilled wingers, and 'The Wizard' fits perfectly (on paper, of course) with Sidney Crosby on Pittsburgh's top line. Crosby has never had a winger able to keep up with his skill level. Whitney has lost a step or two in terms of skating, but he is extremely crafty, slick, and offensively-aware.

Fantasy impact:

Whitney is 38, so expecting him to best his previous career high in points (83 in 2006-07) would be extremely optimistic. He had 58 points last season, after posting 77 in 2008-09. Pittsburgh's highest scoring winger in 2009-10 was Bill Guerin, who had 45 points. A return to 70 points could be in the cards for Whitney if he finds himself a Penguin in 2010-11.

To Edmonton: 2010 1st round draft pick (TOR), 2010 1st round draft pick (BOS), Matt Hunwick

To Boston: 2010 1st round draft pick, Ethan Moreau

Why?

Boston desperately wants Taylor Hall. Edmonton is indifferent between Hall and Tyler Seguin. Boston trades a very valuable asset to move up, and they also take on one of Edmonton's bad contracts. The Oilers add a versatile depth defenseman who has the potential to chip in with 30-35 points.

Fantasy impact:

Seguin's short term upside is much higher if he is drafted by Edmonton as opposed to the Bruins. Instead of competing for a spot with the likes of Marc Savard, Patrice Bergeron, and David Krejci, he only has to contend with Shawn Horcoff and Sam Gagner. I personally don't see the Oilers trading the pick unless Boston knocks their socks off, and this deal would do just that.

To Tampa Bay: Kris Versteeg

To Chicago: 2011 2nd round draft pick, 2010 draft pick

Why?

Chicago needs to shed a lot of cap space. Versteeg is a very solid second line winger, but he is expendable. Tampa Bay needs to add talent at all positions. Versteeg is a very smart player who would fit in well with either Vincent Lecavalier or Steven Stamkos.

Tampa Bay does not have their own 2010 2nd round pick.

Fantasy impact:

Versteeg had 44 points for the Blackhawks in 2009-10. He averaged just over 15 minutes per game. If he were to be traded to the Lightning, a bump up to 16 or 17 minutes per game would be in order. I could see him hitting 65+ points in the right situation. The key with players like him (offensively talented players who love to make plays) is confidence, which directly correlates to ice time.

To Philadelphia: Tomas Vokoun, Shawn Matthias, 2010 2nd round draft pick

To Florida: Jeff Carter, Ryan Parent

Why?

Philadelphia needs a goalie, and with the emergence of Claude Giroux at center (as well as the re-emergence of Danny Briere), they now have the luxury of being able to offer a stud forward like Carter. The Panthers could ice a tandem of Jacob Markstrom and Scott Clemmensen next year.

Fantasy impact:

Carter's value would probably remain the same. In Florida, he would immediately become the go-to guy from an offensive standpoint, but the quality of his linemates would decrease. Vokoun would go from an offensively inept team to one capable of scoring at will. Matthias is a better prospect than given credit for, and he would find a spot somewhere in Philadelphia's forward group for 2010-11. Flyer fans would probably rather keep Carter and sign a veteran like Nabokov or Turco for a reduced rate, but Vokoun is an elite goalie who has never really received the credit or attention he has deserved (playing in Nashville and Florida probably has a lot to do with that).

To Tampa Bay: John-Michael Liles

To Colorado: Ryan Malone

Why?

Liles has never seen eye-to-eye with Colorado head coach Joe Sacco, and the Lightning would love to dump Ryan Malone's contract from their books ($4.5 million cap hit per season for five more years, although because the deal was frontloaded he is only making $3.9 million per season on average). Malone would add size and a legitimate net presence to Colorado's offensive attack.

Fantasy impact:

This trade would benefit all parties. The Lightning would add a viable power play quarter back. They had Kurtis Foster last year, but he is a free agent and may seek more money elsewhere. Even if they do bring him back, he is more of a shooter, as opposed to Liles who loves to rush the puck up the ice and make plays. Malone can play anywhere up front, and would look great opposite Chris Stewart on a line centered by Paul Stastny.

To Vancouver: Barret Jackman, Jay McClement

To St. Louis: Kevin Bieksa, Steve Bernier

Why?

Steve Bernier has regressed offensively since being acquired by the Canucks in the summer of 2008. Kevin Bieksa has been plagued by injuries and inconsistent play. Perhaps there is no better example than his series against Chicago. Largely invisible through the first four games, he had an all-world game five, scoring twice and making lots of great reads defensively. However, he was a disaster only two nights later, directly responsible for two goals as the Canucks got eliminated by the Blackhawks for the second consecutive season. Jackman brings toughness and is a BC boy, while McClement is one of the best defensive centers in the game. He was the key cog on the league's best penalty kill in 2009-10.

Fantasy impact:

When he is on, Bieksa is a solid power play defenseman. Like Erik Johnson, he shoots right, so they probably wouldn't be paired together on the top unit. Bernier could see more ice time than he currently does in Vancouver, as the Blues have a wealth of young talent at center but aren't as deep on the right side.

Do you have an idea/rumour/proposal to contribute? Post it here or on the message board, as I'll be running a few more draft day trade articles over the next 10 days or so.