Written by Jeff Angus Monday, 21 June 2010 18:39 - Last Updated Tuesday, 22 June 2010 13:50



After posting my 2010 Mock Offseason for the Vancouver Canucks on the weekend, I received a few emails from readers asking for my take on their favourite club. Naturally, a significant portion of these messages were from Leafs fans. I decided to tackle the Leafs for other reasons besides the numerous requests – the Tomas Kaberle saga, the need for offense, and Dion Phaneuf's swagger all drew me to Toronto's offseason situation.

Right now, the Leafs have a lot of holes up front, a lot of high-paid defensemen, and a stable goaltending situation.

The current roster (as of June 21st):

Viktor Stalberg \$850k Tyler Bozak \$3.7 mill Phil Kessel \$5.4 mil

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Nikolai Kulemin	RFA	Mikhail Grabovski	\$2.9 mill
			V
Luca Caputi	\$833k	John Mitchell	RFA
Fredrik Sjostrom	\$750k	Christian Hanson	RFA
Dion Phaneuf	\$6.5 mill	Mike Komisarek	\$4.5 mill
Tomas Kaberle	\$4.2 mill	Luke Schenn	\$2.9 mill
0.10	****		44 A
Carl Gunnarsson	\$800k	Francois Beauchemin	\$3.8 mill
Jeff Finger	\$3.5 mill		

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JS Giguere	\$6 mill
Jonas Gustavsson	\$1.3 mill

Total \$49.9 mill

As of right now, the second best RW on Toronto's roster is Darcy Tucker's buyout. Lots of work ahead for Burke and Nonis...

Written by Jeff Angus Monday, 21 June 2010 18:39 - Last Updated Tuesday, 22 June 2010 13:50 What I would do: 1) Trade Mikael Grabovski and a draft pick to Dallas for Mike Ribeiro. The Leafs could probably acquire Ribeiro for a relatively low price because of his \$5 million cap hit. Ribeiro has developed into a very solid top line center since being traded away from Montreal a few years ago. He is a great distributor with the puck and would fit in nicely alongside **Phil Kessel** . The Leafs may be better off targeting a free agent center like **Patrick Marleau** , but he is going to cost significantly more than \$5 million per season. Ribeiro is an elite offensive talent and would provide an immediate boost to Toronto's power play. He may not fit the mould of a Brian Burke type of player, and for whatever reason people still underrate him because of some of his childish antics from his Montreal days. Dallas does this deal to save cap space. It also opens up a spot on the second line for Jamie Benn to move. Grabovski is overpaid but he is a versatile forward that can slide around on the top three lines. The real value for Dallas in this trade is the cap space. 2) Trade Tomas Kaberle to Buffalo for Zach Kassian and Drew Stafford. Kassian is a hell of a prospect that projects as a hard-hitting second line scorer. Stafford brings more skill to a lineup that needs it. He regressed to 14 goals in 2009-10 after scoring 20 the season before, and a change of scenery may be just what he needs to get back on track. Kaberle fills a huge need for the Sabres, who would love to add another defenseman who can move the puck.

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3) Trade Luca Caputi and James Reimer to Chicago for Brent Sopel and Andrew Ladd . Ladd is the prize here obviously. The Blackhawks would love to get rid of Sopel's contract, even after his strong playoff run. Caputi is the closest to being NHL ready. Reimer, Toronto's 4 th
round draft pick from 2006, would add depth to Chicago's goalie pipeline. Ladd has some upside too, he just hasn't been given offensive minutes to produce over the past few years in Chicago. Sopel played under both Brian Burke and Dave Nonis in Vancouver.
4) Banish Jeff Finger to Siberia. Waive him, trade him, find a way to get him off the roster. He's a decent defenseman but is overpaid by about \$2 million.
5) Re-sign Nikolai Kulemin . Kulemin is playing hardball right now, but that usually doesn't work well with Brian Burke (see Peter Schaefer). Kulemin will come around and sign a two-year extension for \$5 million.
6) Sign Adam Burish . Grit, energy, intensity, he brings it all.

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7) Give **Carl Gunnarsson a** bigger role. This isn't an acquisition as so much as a tip for Ron Wilson. Gunnarsson was Toronto's best defenseman on many nights last season. He can skate, shoot, and defend. Get him more minutes! Bringing back **Mi ke Van Ryn**

at a very reduced rate would be a great low-risk, high-reward move for the Leafs to make.

The final roster:

	Andrew Ladd	\$2 mill	Mike Ribeir	0	\$5 mill	Phi	l Kessel	\$5.4 m
Nik	olai Kulemin	\$2.5 mill		Tyler Bo	ozak		\$3.7 mill	
Vik	tor Stalberg	\$850k		Nazem	Kadri		\$1.7 mill	
Ero	drik Sjostrom	\$750k		Chietian	n Hanson		\$900k	
rie	arik Sjostrom	\$75UK		Onsuar	THAIISOII		фэоок	
John \$1 m	ı Mitchell nill	\$650k		Darcy Tu	ıcker's buyo	out		

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Dion Phaneuf	\$6.5 mill	Mike Komisarek	\$4.5 mill
Francois Beauchemin	\$3.8 mill	Luke Schenn	\$2.9 mill
Carl Gunnarsson	\$800k	Brent Sopel	\$2.2 mill
Mike Van Ryn	\$750k		
IS Giguere	\$6 mill		
JS Giguere	\$6 mill		
Jonas Gustavsson	\$1.3 mill		

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Total \$57.35 mill

Is this at all unrealistic? Some of the trades may be a bit of a stretch (The Stars may not want Grabovski, and Siberia may feel the same way about Finger). However, it addresses two of Toronto's biggest need – size skill up front. The Leafs have a great defensive group on paper, they just need to play like it on the ice. It would also be contingent on the salary cap rising. A significant portion of Toronto's allocated cap space is tied up in bonus money (Bozak, Schenn, and Kadri). Both Ladd and Stafford have some offensive upside, and the key will be giving them minutes in the right situations (power play, for example) to help with that development.