The Penguins announced that star center Evgeni Malkin is going to miss the remainder of the 2010-11 season with a torn ACL (and a torn MCL as well) in his knee. His recovery time is anywhere from four to eight months. What does this mean? A significant injury always leads to a significant opportunity. Even if Sidney Crosby does return in the near future from his concussion, the Penguins have a tremendous hole to fill (as do many poolies who own Malkin).

Assuming Crosby does return soon (a pretty big assumption at this point), the Penguins will probably stick with the Chris Kunitz-Sidney Crosby-Pascal Dupuis line.

The second line will feature Jordan Staal for sure. Matt Cooke and Tyler Kennedy are also contenders, but both players are more suited to a checking/energy role. The contenders for that vacant top six spot include Mark Letestu, Dustin Jeffrey, and Eric Tangradi. The Penguins also now have ample cap space to make a move. Stephen Weiss and Mike Fisher would be

attractive options if both players didn't have multiple years left on their contracts.

Judging from GM Ray Shero's comments, the Penguins will be active. "The positive is that this happened today and not March 1," Shero said."From that standpoint, we have time to react between now and Feb. 28 if we need to do something."

Dustin Jeffrey – Jeffrey is the most ready of the young Penguin forwards for a top six spot. He's a smart player who can play both wing and center. While Crosby remains out, he will center the second line behind Jordan Staal. His short-term upside is very, very high. He saw a ton of power play time last night, and that will continue for the next little while. Get him while you can.

Eric Tangradi – the most upside of all the young Penguin forwards (save for Beau Bennett, but he is a few years away at least). Tangradi is big and skilled. He is still a bit raw, and the Penguins aren't in a position to let him grow in a top six spot right now.

Mark Letestu – Letestu is currently out for six weeks with a knee injury. Like Jeffrey, he is a smart and versatile player who will shift around the top nine once he returns to the lineup. Sticking with the Jeffrey comparisons, he is a fantastic short-term option in almost all league formats (once healthy, of course).

On the trade market, a few names pop to mind. Alex Kovalev (who could be had for a bag of pucks), Kristian Huselius (who would be absolutely filthy alongside Crosby), Brad Richards (Dallas will have to slip far down the standings to entertain ideas of moving him, though), and a pair of Edmonton veterans – Ales Hemsky and Dustin Penner. If you own any of these players (especially Kovalev, Huselius, and Penner), get excited. All three are available and all three would fit nicely into Pittsburgh's top six.