

Patience is a Virtue

Written by Jeff Angus

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When the Anaheim Ducks (at the time more Mighty than now) selected Bobby Ryan second overall in 2005, he was being touted as the next big power forward to dominate the NHL. It has taken three long years for Ryan to finally emerge as that, but he finally looks well on his way to earning the title of NHL star.

Ryan was forced to start the 2008-2009 season with Iowa in the AHL thanks to cap problems that the Ducks were facing. In 14 games for the Chops he showed he was too good for the AHL, potting nine goals and racking up 19 points in total. Since being called up to the NHL he has not looked out of place. First off he was forced to carry any semblance of a second line in Anaheim, which at any time featured the likes of Brendan Morrison, Ryan Carter, Brad May, or if Ryan was lucky the occasional Teemu Selanne appearance. More recently however, he got an opportunity on the top line when Corey Perry received a four game suspension. Even with Perry's return, Ryan has filled a bit of Perry's role as the go-to scorer on the Ducks, potting six goals in his last four games (including a hat trick against Los Angeles on January 8).

So many times high first round draft picks are rushed to the NHL (Gilbert Brule and Jamie Storr, to name a few). The Ducks showed extreme patience with Ryan; so much in fact that many were beginning to question his upside in the NHL. His conditioning and skating were

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scrutinized, as many wondered why such a high pick was taking so long to make the NHL. He finished two more dominant seasons with Owen Sound before joining Portland where he played for parts of two seasons. Ryan really began to show that he was on the right path with 21 regular season goals and another eight in the playoffs in 2007-2008.

Look for Ryan to bounce back and forth between playing with Getzlaf and essentially on his own on the second line, but he will be a mainstay on the Ducks first power play unit. He has shown that he is capable of carrying a line on his own, something the Ducks would love to see out of him as they try and get a secondary attack beyond the usual Getzlaf-Perry combination. Ryan has always been equal parts scorer and playmaker, something that sets him apart from other big wingers. He has the shot and the hands of a goal scorer, but he also possesses deft playmaking skills and great vision; the total offensive package. Look for him to finish this season around 60 points (he missed the first part of the season while playing in the AHL, otherwise he would be closer to 70 or 80). His ultimate upside is probably closer to 90 points, but that is merely a guess at this point. After a long wait for the Ducks and fantasy owners everywhere, Bobby Ryan has emerged as a bona fide young star.