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Here are five more players to keep an eye on for next season...

Andrej Sekera – Buffalo. Sekera has quietly emerged as the Sabres best defenseman this season (although if you watch Buffalo play at times that is not saying much). He is a fantastic skater, a capable puck-mover, and a smart, positional defenseman. He plays a similar game to Kimmo Timonen (less polished and less physical, though). Sekera is on pace for over 20 points, a respectable total for a defenseman that does not see a lot of power play time (only 1:45 a game, good for fourth among Buffalo defensemen). Look for a 30-40 point breakout season for Sekera, as he is given more responsibility (and in turn power play time) next season for the Sabres. Buffalo's defense has been suspect all season, so expect some changes in the off-season. The only two defensemen safe of any movement are Sekera and captain Craig Rivet.

Max Pacioretty – Montreal. It is no secret in the hockey world that the Habs have a slew if important free agents this off-season. Assuming they bring back captain Koivu and Mike Komisarek, it is very possible that both Alex Tanguay, Alex Kovalev, and Robert Lang all move on from Montreal. Pacioretty is going to get a huge opportunity at camp to earn a full time top-six role, something he is probably ready for right now. He only played one year at the University of Michigan before turning pro, where he did not even complete a full season for Hamilton before getting the call to Montreal. For a big player, he has incredibly soft hands and good offensive instincts. Look for Pacioretty to be a 45-50 point player next year for Montreal. I would have him higher in other situations, but it seems Montreal consistently fails to have any high scoring stars (Kovalev's exploits of 2007-2008 notwithstanding).

Justin Williams – Los Angeles. Many wondered why the Kings gave up prized youngster Patrick O'Sullivan (and a draft pick) for the oft-injured Williams. Once Williams gets healthy, those people will see why GM Dean Lombardi made the move. O'Sullivan has tremendous talent but struggled to find consistency and an identifiable role within the Kings lineup. Williams brings experience, a very reasonable contract ($3.5 per season through 2010-2011), and blazing speed to the wing in Los Angeles. Before the recent injury struggles he posted back-to-back 30+ goal seasons as a Hurricane, and will do the same with Los Angeles next season. Look for him to earn a spot with Anze Kopitar on the top unit. Williams is also an accomplished penalty killer, so keep him in mind when drafting for that category.

Erik Johnson – St. Louis. Johnson is an obvious candidate to have a huge breakout season in 2009-2010. His knee injury derailed any chances of building off of an impressive rookie campaign which saw him net 33 points in 69 games. Johnson also saw nearly a minute more of power play time than any defenseman in St. Louis during 2007-2008. Carlo Colaiaicovo has stepped in as the power play leader for the Blues, but he is a huge injury risk and will probably never play close to 82 games. Another thing to keep in mind is how much the Blues power play has improved from last season. Thanks to an infusion of young talent, the power play has jumped from dead last in the NHL (14.1%) in 2007-2008, to a very respectable ninth (21.1%) this season. Assuming Johnson sees the same power play time he saw in his rookie season (and assuming he is able to recover from the knee injury), look for him to put up 50 or more points.

Lee Stempniak – Toronto. Stempniak has long been a favorite of mine. I optimistically predicted 40 goals two seasons ago (he came reasonably close with 27), but since then he has struggled to light the lamp. The Blues moved him in an effort to acquire some depth, and Toronto wanted to get some goalscoring wings. Stempniak, being young and on a reasonable contract, fit the rebuilding strategy of Brian Burke. Stempniak is not the type of player to carry a line or produce offense on his own, which partly explains his struggles this season as he has bounced around a very mediocre lineup. The Leafs have lots of cap space for next season and Burke will undoubtedly be adding a forward or two. As Stempniak's line mates improve in quality, expect his numbers to reflect that. He could see a return to 25+ goals next season if Toronto is able to find the right complement. (John Mitchell, perhaps?)