Every couple of weeks during the 2009-10 season I will roll out my High Five/Low Five. The list is open to teams, players, coaches, and fans – basically anything hockey-related qualifies. The High Five are five things that have impressed me (with an emphasis on recent games), while the Low Five are five things that have me shaking my head.

High Five

Ryan Miller – save for his poor start on Saturday (three goals on 16 shots), Miller has been the best player in the Eastern Conference so far this season. He is a lock to start for Team USA if he keeps this level of play up (through Halloween, Miller is 8-1-1 with a 1.86 GAA and a .936 GAA). He has always had the talent to be a top tier goaltender, but often struggled with consistency, something required if one wants to succeed as a workhorse goaltender.

Tomas Kaberle – Kaberle has really taken off over the past week, recording a massive 12 points (including five in one game against the Ducks). His trade value is huge, but the Leafs would just end up needing another defenseman like him. His skating, poise, vision, and instincts are all elite. Look for him to return to his 50-60 point level, even on an offensively starved team. The return of Phil Kessel can only help, as it gives Kaberle a bona fide sniper to pass the puck to. He is on pace for 116 points, so don't expect 12 points every week. However, his proven track record should make you wary of any thoughts of selling high.

Pekka Rinne – Rinne is trying to slow down the goaltending carousel going on in Nashville right now. He has posted three straight wins (including one shutout), along with a miniscule 0.76 GAA. He was fantastic for Nashville down the stretch last season, but had an awful preseason and has struggled to earn back his starting spot. Don't expect things to get any easier in Nashville though – in addition to playing behind a team that has big-time struggles lightning the lamp, their best player (Shea Weber) is now on the shelf for a few weeks. I really like Rinne (the way he uses his size and reflexes reminds me a bit of Luongo), and think he is the long-term guy in Nashville. Even with the early season struggles (as well as some strong play at times by Dan Ellis), he should see the bulk of the starts from here on out.

New York Rangers – this one might be a bit overdue. The praise can be heaped on the game breaking Marian Gaborik, the all-world Henrik Lundqvist, the fiery John Tortorella, or a number

of other players. Tortorella has the Rangers playing a high-octane, aggressive offensive game. Gaborik obviously spearheads it, and he is awfully difficult to rely on every game in terms of health. However, he isn't alone. Bounce back seasons from Vinny Prospal and Ales Kotalik have spearheaded a lethal power play, the same power play being quarterbacked by the sensational Michael Del Zotto. The Rangers have quickly gone from fantasy afterthought (besides Lundqvist) to a team you want to stock up on (aside from the overpaid defensemen and the Chris's).

Tyler Myers – there have been a number of impressive rookies this season (the already mentioned Del Zotto, John Tavares, Jason Demers, Victor Hedman, Ryan O'Reilly, and so on), but perhaps the greatest impact has been delivered by the hulking Myers. He leads all Buffalo defensemen in scoring (in fact he is the only one to light the lamp, a feat he has accomplished twice), is second with a very impressive plus-9, has taken only three penalties, and plays over 20 minutes a night. Buffalo has had a soft defensive group recently, but Myers changes that. His skill level is very high as well – he even scored a highlight reel goal last week in the shootout. It will be interesting to see how he progresses – he has the size and positional play of a defensive stud, but he has the shot and awareness of a power play quarterback.

Low Five

Injuries – Every year injuries rear their ugly head, but it is usually to the obvious candidates (Gaborik, Havlat, DiPietro, Demitra, and so on), However, this season, many of the high profile injuries have hit the most durable players in the game. Ovechkin has only missed four games in his career. Eric Staal had played close to 400 consecutive games before getting hurt. Evgeni Malkin had only missed four games in his NHL career, and aside from last season, Luongo was gravy for 70-76 starts per season. It is risky to draft the band-aid boys (and they often slide because of this), but drafting for durability with your early picks should be rewarded!

Peter Mueller – Mueller's awful start can be summed up by his status as a healthy scratch this past Saturday night. He has only two assists through 12 games (a stat I am sure all of you Mueller owners are painfully aware of), and perhaps even more frightening has only fired 17 shots on goal through 12 games. Mueller is big, fast, and has a ton of talent. Obviously he isn't showing that now, but he is a prime "buy low" candidate.

Jarome Iginla – on paper Iginla's season hasn't been awful (four goals and nine points through 12 games), but his inability to make an impact has raised many an eyebrow in Calgary. The Flames are/were being carried by a mobile defense and fantastic secondary scoring, but Iginla needs to step up and take over. He only has three points with the man advantage, but his shooting percentage (12.5) is right around his career average (13.2). Iginla makes a great buy low candidate if anyone is panicking, but his play has been even worse than his stats indicate. Against Detroit on Saturday, you wouldn't have even been able to spot Iginla if he wasn't on the ice for two goals against.

Carolina Hurricanes – The lowly 'Canes have lost nine in a row, and have an overall goals for/against differential of –22 (even worse than the Toronto Maple Leafs). Word is they are actively involved in the trade market, but they do have largely the same roster that went to the Eastern Conference Finals last season. Cam Ward has struggled, but their team defense has been the real problem. Carolina needs more from basically everyone in the lineup (especially Eric Staal, who has only five points).

Detroit's depth – Although it is much too early to write off the Wings (an idiotic statement on ESPN that labeled Zetterberg and Datsyuk as "over-the-hill" spurned many Detroit fans to take a defensive stance), the lack of secondary scoring may be the undoing of this team. The potent offense from last season still boasts its two best, but gone are Hudler, Hossa, Samuelsson, and most importantly Franzen (different circumstances, but he is not currently in the lineup). Free agent signings have produced decently – Jason Williams has seven points and Todd Bertuzzi has five (and for around $1 million each, I doubt much more should be expected), but other depth forwards like Valtteri Filppula (six points), Ville Leino (three points), and Dan Cleary (five points), have struggled. With some emerging young teams in the Central, Detroit will not only be in tough to repeat their Division crown from last season, they may be fighting for a playoff spot.