

## Pack Your Bags, Tomas!

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---



Tomas Kaberle will be traded at some point over the next few months (if I were a betting man, I'd look for a draft day deal). His no trade clause ceases to exist between the date of the Entry Draft (June 25<sup>th</sup>) and August 15<sup>th</sup>, as there is a provision in his current contract that removes the clause if the Leafs missed the playoffs in either 2008-09 or 2009-10.

He and current Maple Leafs head coach Ron Wilson have never been on friendly terms. Wilson likes to use the media to bring attention to poor player performance, and over the course of the past two seasons he has delivered his fair share of biting criticisms aimed at Kaberle. It started in 2008, when Wilson criticised Kaberle for coming into training camp overweight. Near the end of this past season, Wilson again hung Kaberle out to dry in the papers (albeit a bit more subtly this time). After a 3-2 loss to the lowly Atlanta Thrashers, [Wilson said](#), "we talk about how solid our defence is and how well we're playing and we've still got guys who are minus-16 or whatever." Kaberle's plus-minus at the time was... you guessed it, minus-16.

Kaberle won't sign an extension with the Leafs as long as Wilson is around, and Leafs GM Brian Burke knows this. He also knows that Kaberle is far and away his most tradable asset, as there are about a half-dozen teams seriously interested in acquiring him this summer. Which teams are interested in him is not information we are privy to (yet), but looking at the 30 NHL clubs, it isn't too hard to fill in the gaps. There are a few teams out there with cap space, a need

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

for a top-pairing puck mover, and lots of young assets to package up in return.

Kaberle's 2008-09 numbers were down across the board because he missed close to 30 games with hand and concussion issues. His potential numbers in 2010-11 depend a lot on where he ends up. He could remain around the 45-55-point mark, or he could see a jump up to 65-70. His ice time has been cut under Wilson as well, especially on the penalty kill.

The Leafs could potentially view Kaberle as expendable with Dion Phaneuf now around to run the power play. However, puck movers of Kaberle's quality are a rare breed. Unless the Leafs are able to get above-market value for Kaberle (something I don't see happening), they would be better off keeping him and trying to mend the relationship in 2010-11. After Phaneuf, where is the offense on the back end going to come from? Luke Schenn and Mike Komisarek are offensively inept. Carl Gunnarsson has a great shot and skates well, but his offensive instincts are very raw. Francois Beauchemin can shoot the puck as well, but he not a puck mover.

## **Columbus**

### **Why?**

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

The Blue Jackets are a perfect fit for Kaberle. They have ample cap space, a clear need for a power play quarter back (their power play ranking over the past three seasons: 26<sup>th</sup>, 30<sup>th</sup>, and 14<sup>th</sup>, respectively), and young assets to move.

### **Why not?**

GM Scott Howson is not someone you would classify as a risk taker. He held on to coach Ken Hitchcock about five months too long, and has yet to make any real bold moves as the GM in Columbus (overpaying for depth defenseman Mike Commodore doesn't count, unfortunately).

### **The competition:**

Anton Stralman and Fedor Tyutin. Kaberle is miles ahead of both from an offensive standpoint. Tyutin has been a 30+ point defenseman in each of his two seasons in Columbus, but expect a slight dip back to his Ranger numbers (20-25 points per season) if the Jackets land Kaberle.

## Pack Your Bags, Tomas!

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

### Potential trade:

The rumour mill has Toronto targeting the pick owned by Columbus (4<sup>th</sup> overall). I don't see them being able to fetch that sort of return, though.

#### **Matt Calvert, Jared Boll, the 2010 2<sup>nd</sup>**

**nd**

#### **round pick, and a later pick**

– how does that sound? Toronto fans probably won't be happy with the return from Kaberle, especially with the way Burke has spouting off about a 1<sup>st</sup>

**st**

round pick and a proven top-six forward. Unless Kaberle is willing to agree to a long-term extension at similar money to what he is making now (below \$5 million per season), don't get your hopes up, Leaf fans.

## Pittsburgh

### Why?

[It doesn't sound like](#) Sergei Gonchar will be returning to Pittsburgh this summer. The Penguins like Alex Goligoski and Kris Letang, but GM Ray Shero knows he needs to replace Gonchar with another puck mover. It would be a horrible decision to stick with the status quo on defense (sans Gonchar). Having offensive talent like Evgeni Malkin and Sidney Crosby with no elite

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

defenseman? It's bad enough that the Penguins force them to play with journeymen wingers...

### **Why not?**

Goligoski. If the Penguins feel he has the ability and upside to run the power play, they can better spend Gonchar's cap money on a winger or two (or three). Goligoski plays a similar style to Kaberle – good skater, crafty, moves the puck well, loves to pinch in on the power play.

### **The competition:**

Goligoski and Letang. If the Penguins make a trade for Kaberle, I'd expect Goligoski's numbers to suffer the most. Letang would probably play on the point opposite to Kaberle, as he is a right shot and has a very good one-timer. I don't see Toronto having interest in Goligoski as they have depth on defense already, but he would immediately become trade bait if the Penguins acquired Kaberle.

## Pack Your Bags, Tomas!

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

### Potential trade:

**2010 1<sup>st</sup> round pick and Chris Kunitz.** The Penguins have traded most of their young assets away in trade deadline deals over the past few seasons. Kunitz is a solid top-six complementary winger, but he hasn't clicked with Crosby or Malkin at all. He brings some grit and tenacity too, and would be great opposite Phil Kessel and Tyler Bozak on the Leafs top unit. Pittsburgh would again be without a 1<sup>st</sup> round pick, but they may feel it is a necessary move if they can't find a way to keep Gonchar around.

### Los Angeles

#### Why?

Cap space, a clear need for a top-four defenseman, and lots of young assets. The Kings need a mobile defenseman to pair with Drew Doughty. Rob Scuderi is not a 22-25 minute-a-night defenseman, and Jack Johnson is too rough around the edges at this stage of his career. Kaberle would complement Doughty wonderfully, both at even strength and on the power play.

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

### **Why not?**

The Kings may want to use their cap space up front. I hear they are interested in a certain Russian left winger?

### **The competition:**

Doughty and Johnson are the offensive defensemen for the Kings. I don't see either being affected negatively. The Kings have enough talent (especially young talent) to form two very dangerous power play units.

### **Potential trade:**

**Brayden Schenn.** There, I said it! Realistically, I don't see the Kings trading away their future

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

second line center. However, they may decide to sign a veteran instead (Patrick Marleau, perhaps), thus making Schenn *a bit* more expendable. More likely is a package including the likes of Oscar Moller, Colton Teubert, Thomas Hickey, and Andrei Loktionov.

## **New Jersey**

### **Why?**

All signs point to Paul Martin leaving New Jersey for greener pastures this summer. The Devils best offensive defenseman at the moment is Andy Greene. No offense to Andy, but he simply can't be the go-to guy on the back end for a contending team.

### **Why not?**

I couldn't come up with a reason. Does that make New Jersey the most suitable destination? I'd

## Pack Your Bags, Tomas!

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

say so.

### The competition:

Andy Greene and Anssi Salmela. Even if the Devils didn't trade for Kaberle, they'd still add an offensive defenseman this summer. Greene is a capable offensive defenseman who can run a power play unit, but he isn't going to be much more than a 35-40 point scorer.

### Potential trade:

**Adam Henrique, Matt Corrente, and a draft pick.** The Devils don't have a ton in the way of young assets, and I don't see either of Jacob Josefson or Mattias Tedenby being made available. Henrique has had a fantastic junior career with the Windsor Spitfires, and Corrente brings the truculence, testosterone, and pugnacity that Brian Burke craves so much.

### Boston

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

### **Why?**

Boston was rumoured to be after Tomas Kaberle very hard at the trade deadline. They have great prospects (especially up front, where the Leafs are the weakest).

### **Why not?**

Not a ton of cap space, and they made decide to re-sign Dennis Seidenberg and/or Johnny Boychuk instead. Buying out Michael Ryder is an option, as is dumping Dennis Wideman for a draft pick.

### **The competition:**

## Pack Your Bags, Tomas!

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

Wideman, Zdeno Chara, Matt Hunwick, and Johnny Boychuk. I think Kaberle would impact Chara the most (in a negative way). Wideman shoots right and is very mobile; I think he and Kaberle would be a great pairing on the first unit. Chara would then slide down to the second unit with Matt Hunwick. One of Wideman or Hunwick would probably be dealt if Boston made a move for Kaberle, so the point(s) above may be moot.

### Potential trade:

**David Krejci.** The Bruins have Marc Savard and Patrice Bergeron at center. Vladimir Sobotka is also ready for top nine duties. They also have Joe Colborne, and potentially Tyler Seguin as well. Krejci is a phenomenal playmaker who would immediately become the Leafs best forward.

There are a bunch of other teams that could have interest in Kaberle. Vancouver, Anaheim, Phoenix, St. Louis, Florida, and Long Island all make sense. I just focused on the teams I feel have the biggest need for a defenseman like Kaberle.

### Dallas

## **Pack Your Bags, Tomas!**

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

### **Why?**

Dallas lost Sergei Zubov last summer, and they didn't replace him. They were gambling on Matt Niskanen quickly developing into their power play quarter back, and the gamble did not pay off. Niskanen had a very rocky 2009-10, scoring only three goals and adding 12 assists in 74 games. Stephane Robidas is a tough-as-nails defenseman, but he is not a viable power play solution.

### **Why not?**

Again, like New Jersey, Dallas has no reason not to aggressively pursue Kaberle.

### **Competition:**

## Pack Your Bags, Tomas!

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 02 June 2010 16:08 - Last Updated Friday, 04 June 2010 01:26

---

Robidas, Niskanen, and Trevor Daley. Robidas is more suited to a two-way role, so expect his production to diminish if a defenseman like Kaberle is brought in. Niskanen has nowhere to go but up. Kaberle would be a great defenseman for him to learn from, as they play similar games.

### Potential trade:

Toronto fans, don't expect James Neal or Jamie Benn in return. However, 2009 1st round pick Scott Glennie could be in play. The Stars want to rid themselves of Mike Ribeiro's contract this summer, and he would bring a lot of offense to a Leafs team that desperately needs it. **Glennie and Ribeiro for Kaberle, John Mitchell, and Mikael Grabovski?**

Grabovski isn't a fit in Toronto, but he could slide in nicely on the second or third offensive unit in Dallas.

*Where do you see Kaberle going?*