

Trade Deadline 2008: A Preview

Written by Jeff Angus

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Even though the deadline is still more than two weeks away, many experts around the league are predicting some big deals to go down before February 26th. There are big names that are constantly in rumors to a variety of teams. Below is a comprehensive breakdown – and prediction – as to what happens to these stars on the move.

Mats Sundin

Sundin has a ton of teams after him, but with the NTC he can dictate where he wants to go. The Leafs are obviously going to be sellers, and word around the league is that Sundin wants to stay in Canada, which would make both Vancouver and Calgary attractive trading options for Toronto. Toronto will obviously push hard for Alex Edler, but he is a non-starter from the Canucks' perspective.

The Angus Prediction: Sundin is dealt to Vancouver, for prospects Luc Bourdon, Michael Grabner, a first-round draft pick, and forward Matt Cooke.

Olli Jokinen

Jokinen may be the most attractive piece available at the deadline this year, because he is

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young and still signed past this season. Rumors out of Florida are that Jokinen and Jacques Martin do not see eye to eye, and Florida may accommodate a move to a contender for Jokinen. Calgary keeps getting mentioned with Alex Tanguay going the other way, but Florida could do better.

The Angus Prediction: Jokinen (reluctantly) remains a Panther.

Peter Forsberg

Forsberg has dwindled down his prospective teams to include the likes of Colorado, Ottawa, Vancouver, and Philadelphia. The word is that his health is good, and he would obviously provide a huge boost. Some interesting tidbits with Forsberg though: he wants a two-three year deal, which would make it awfully tough for either Ottawa or Philadelphia to fit him in long-term. Vancouver makes the most sense because of their cap space (as well as a glaring hole at center), but Forsberg may be reluctant to sign with a rival of the Avalanche.

The Angus Prediction: He may have already signed with Philadelphia by the time you are reading this article.

Adam Foote

Foote is the type of player that every single playoff team would love to add to their roster. The Jackets would love to add some futures close to the NHL for Foote, who is a free agent after this season. His veteran presence and defensive play would be a huge, huge boost to any and all contending teams. Expect the demand for Foote to be very high.

The Angus Prediction: Foote is dealt to the East, as Columbus still wants to hold on to some playoff hopes. He ends up going to Ottawa for Patrick Eaves.

Alex Tanguay

With the signing of Phaneuf, the Flames are going to be in tough to re-sign both Huselius and Langkow. They have been trying to move Tanguay and his \$5 million to open up some cap space for next season. Tanguay has been coveted by Montreal, but it would make more sense for the Habs to go after a scorer rather than a playmaker at wing.

The Angus Prediction: Tanguay is traded to Montreal for Michael Ryder, Kyle Chipchura, and a first-round draft choice. If the Habs are able to obtain Marian Hossa, Calgary will try to move Tanguay to another Eastern Conference club. There is no way they want to help out a Western rival with a trade.

Brian Campbell

The Sabres would love to re-sign the flashy rearguard, but Campbell wants a lot of money and seems intent on testing the market. His offensive and puck-moving ability would be a huge bonus to a number of teams, especially out West. He has a game breaking quality that is rare among defensemen, and while he is not an excellent defender, if paired with a shutdown guy he can play an effective game.

The Angus Prediction: Campbell is dealt to San Jose for Matt Carle and a mid-round pick.

Marian Hossa

Hossa is as good as gone at the deadline, as he has informed the Atlanta management that he wants to test the market. He is arguably the best player available, but with free agency looming his value will not be as high as players signed through next season. Hossa can carry a line by

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himself and will have teams lining up to acquire his services at the deadline. Montreal is really pushing hard for him, and he seems like an obvious fit with the lackluster play of Michael Ryder on the right side.

The Angus Prediction: Hossa is dealt to Montreal for a package containing Chris Higgins, Kyle Chipchura, prospect Alexei Emelin, and a first-round draft pick. Detroit also makes a play for Hossa, dangling Jiri Hudler and prospect Jakub Kindl.

Patrick Marleau

Marleau has been an enigma this season for the Sharks. He is making star money and is the team captain, but for whatever reason has not been able to get in any sort of groove. Fellow struggling teammate Jonathan Cheechoo has been battling a nasty hernia, but Marleau's struggles appear largely mental. The Sharks may try and flip him for a defenseman at the deadline, or even for another center. Jokinen from Florida would be of interest, but he is a much better player than Marleau so the Sharks would have to add to interest Florida.

The Angus Prediction: San Jose tries to flip Marleau for a young star defenseman, but to no avail. They reluctantly hope he can turn it around in the post-season.

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