Rookie Tournament results - best fantasy value - Galchenyuk vs. Yakupov, Huberdeau vs. Tarasenko

So it's here. The final matchup of the Cage Match Rookie Tournament is finally upon us. Only two remain. Are they the best rookies? That's debatable but according to you as of right now they are. Only time will tell the rest as we push forward there is still another half of a half-season (which is normally a quarter but not this year) to be played so there is still time for these rookies to make an early impact and to change their narrative. Of course, for the purposes of this tournament time has run out for 14 competitors. Let's see who remains:

#3 Alex Galchenyuk over #1 Nail Yakupov – 64 votes to 49 votes

So this is kind of an upset isn't it? Well not really, Galchenyuk is a huge third seed and this poll was pretty damned close. I don't know that the right guy won here but I also don't know that the wrong guy lost. The comforting thing is that my own indecision here is reflected by the tightness of this poll. It could've gone either way and still could but right now the perception is slightly in favour of Galchenyuk. My only concern is that this may be something of a false result based on the backlash to some unfulfilled hype, the sort of thing that happens when expectations are unfulfilled.

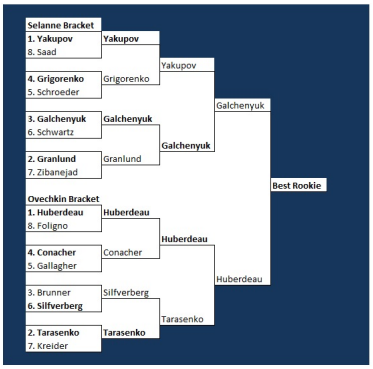
Yakupov's rookie season could easily be deemed a failure. He's skating for the forever dwindling Oilers and doing so at a not ground-breaking scoring pace. Contrast that with Galchenyuk, who is skating for the upstart Canadiens and surpassed the expectations of many simply by making the NHL roster. The reality is that these were the best two forwards in their draft class and had Galchenyuk not been injured last season he could have swung the hype machine in his favour by earning the top draft spot in 2012 and proving that he was every bit as ready for NHL action as he so clearly is now. There is also the fact that at the time of writing this both Yakupov and Galchenyuk have scored exactly 13 points in exactly 13 games. They are in essence tied. Has one really been more impressive than the other? By my count Galchenyuk has only been more impressive relative to his expectations coming in.

I do think there is merit in voting for the guy who exceeds your expectations rather than the one who disappoints you but remember that it is WAY early. Simply put, expect your perceptions on this one to change many times before all is said and done. These two will be compared to one another for a long time.

#1 Jonathan Huberdeau over #2 Vladimir Tarasenko – 81 votes to 26 votes

Huberdeau hasn't even had to sweat so far and it's not fair. In my mind Tarasenko puts up a huge fight against Huberdeau if he wasn't currently concussed. Maybe he even wins. Actually, I

voted for Tarasenko so in my mind he definitely wins. I don't care that he's concussed and I know about the caveat about winning now. I freaking declared that caveat about winning now. I don't care. Tarasenko is the bee's knees. But that's just my opinion and there's not really much I can do to back it up. More importantly, I can't hardly take anything away from all of you who voted for Huberdeau under the premise that you want to win now, never mind the fact that you may also prefer Huberdeau long term. And you may not be wrong. All I know is I want to see Huberdeau sweat. There's just one matchup left, please make him sweat!



#1 Jonathan Huberdeau vs. #3 Alex Galchenyuk – VOTE HERE!

I know I said that I want you guys to make Huberdeau sweat here but if he's the best rookie then that's all there is to it. That being said I think this is a half-way decent finale. I hope you've enjoyed the ride.

Please remember to vote based on a points-only keeper league with no positions and the caveat that you want to win now. Follow the link provided to cast your vote and make your voice heard!