It's barely a week into the season, but some interesting names have shot to the top of their respective leagues. From the Dub to the O to the Q and beyond, here are the prospects enjoying a strong start to the 2007-2008 season, and what you can expect from them when the spotlight inevitably falls off.

WHL

Kruise Reddick- Just this morning, I made a forum post about how there's no such thing as an

obscure prospect to myself. Now please join me in saying WHO THE ****?! With just 18 points in Midget, and a 22-point scorer last year as a 16 year-old Dub rookie, the Manor, Saskatchewan native has been a revelation of incredible proportions. The Frankie Muniz look-alike and Tri-City Americans center had a bust-out Game 2, grabbing four assists and five points. Add in a three-pointer on October 2, a couple two-point nights, and zero shutouts, and ladies and gentlemen, you have the WHL's leading scorer. Just six games in, the 5'9, 165 lbs forward has 15 points. A late-born 1990, Reddick is eligible for the 2008 Draft and could very easily have the type of year Sam Gagner did to earn a 6th overall draft spot this past June.

Projection: Reddick got into the WHL due to his tenacity, character, work ethic and defensive prowess. He's going to stay- and excel- because of his tremendous hockey IQ and willingness to just drive the net. Think Theo Fleury and potential NHL stardom.

Riku Helenius- Just imagine if Devan Dubnyk had been on a good WHL team. You'd probably get a player with a statline similar to Tampa Bay goalie prospect Riku Helenius. A rookie on North American ice, the 6'3 keeper hasn't looked like it for the Seattle Thunderbirds, registering two wins and an OT loss in three games. Sporting a sparkling 1.62 GAA and 0.922 Sv%, Helenius is likely long gone in most keeper leagues. However, it's great news for those who own the 15th overall pick from 2006.

OHL

Shawn Matthias- The big story to start the Ontario Hockey League season, power forward prospect Shawn Matthias drew little attention last season for someone who stands 6'4 and weighs 213 pounds. There wasn't much reason for it- considered a late-bloomer, the '06 second rounder had a great 2006-07 season in every respect, notching 38 goals and 73 points in 64 games. Matthias was so far under the radar that the Wings showed little consternation in trading him for current NHL big man Todd Bertuzzi- a decision that may come back to haunt them. In his first game of the season, the monster center collected five points, and grabbed seven more in his next two games. No longer the OHL's leading scorer- some kid named John Tavares has that honor- Matthias nevertheless has been outstanding, both creating and utilizing space with his frame.

Projection: In the Prospects Report , I called him a lesser Bertuzzi. Not anymore. His ceiling has jumped in my books from 65 points to 75+. Unbelievably, I managed to scoop him up this week in my keeper league as an FA.

Stefan Legein- Now for a player who I was right about. In the Report, under-heralded Niagra IceDogs winger Stefan Legein earned high marks from yours truly for his pro-ready game. And it just so happens that he's looked like a man among boys early in the major junior season. Overshadowed by the aforementioned Matthias' 4 PPG average, Columbus' second round draft choice in 2007 has amassed 3-5-8 in his last two games to jump ahead in the scoring race.

Projection: Legein is on track. A gifted shooter and handful down both ends, he's only a year or two from NHL service, and will be a 30-goal scorer there eventually.

Alex Pietrangelo- I've talked very little about the 2008 NHL Entry Draft so far, but that's going to change right now. You'd think Matthias would be a shoe-in for OHL POTW honors, no? How about Legein? Nada. It wasn't even the league's current leader, Mr. Tavares. No. The honor instead went to '08-eligible defender Alex Pietrangelo. After notching a measly 52 points in 59 games as an OHL rookie last season, the 6'4, 210 lbs stud has gotten the 2007-08 year off to an even better start. After picking up three assists in the first two games of the year, Pietrangelo collected as many on September 28th in a 5-4 Niagra win over the Ottawa 67s. He then scored a hat trick in his very next outing. With a point in every one of his first five games, with 11 points on the year, the Lidstrominian rearguard has begun to stake out his claim for 1st overall in the 2008 Draft.

Projection: No scout could screw this up, not even one who lives in Mexico- Pietrangelo is, as a certain bald-headed man loves to intone, a monster. His upside is franchise, #1, All-Star, etc. defender who can get 60 points.

QMJHL

Mathieu Perreault- Occasionally I surprise even myself. The QMJHL's Most Outstanding Player in 2006-07, Mathieu Perreault has been a gamble that's most certainly paid off for the Washington Capitals. The 6th round selection in '06 immediately broke through druing the 2006-07 season, netting 119 points in just 67 games. When I discovered him ripe for the picking in my keeper last week, I thought I'd get on board. And although I expected and still expect great things from the dazzling forward, a six-point game the night after I signed him as an FA was definitely a pleasant surprise. Fourth in the Q with 13 points in six games, Perreault was an early cut from Caps camp despite tremendous chemistry with the team's main offensive weapons. He'll be back sooner rather than later, especially with an injury to Alexander Semin.

Projection: Top-line centre, 80+ points. This is a significant bump from my prior projection, as he adapted to the NHL (camp) quicker than expected.

Olivier Bellavance-Roy- More a pickup for those in keeper leagues who allow the drafting of players of any age, 16 year-old Cape Breton goaltender Olivier Bellavance-Roy isn't eligible until 2009, but he's making a strong push for top Q goaltender already. In just his fifth CHL game, the 5'11, 163 lbs keeper picked up first shutout, a 1-0 blanking of the Moncton Wildcats. The hot hand earned the next start, and stayed hot, shutting out Acadie-Bathurst 7-0. How now has the longest active shutout streak in the QMJHL.

Projection: Keep an eye on this one. The comparisons to MA Fleury will come on strong due some dominant play for the NHL starter's former Q team.

RSL

Alexei Mikhnov- Maybe Oilers Assistant GM Kevin Prendergast was right about the much-maligned monster forward Alexei Mikhnov being a top-nine NHL player... he might have just been a year off. A write-off in his debut on North American ice in 2006-07, the 17th overall pick in 2000 took his ball and went home after just 29 games split between the NHL and AHL. Mildly impressive in his return to the RSL to finish the year, Mikhnov was labelled a bust and career Euroleaguer. But maybe that's changed. The RSL's leading scorer at the age of 25 with an outstanding 14 points in 12 games, the 6'5 winger may have finally turned the corner. Maybe. Mikhnov will back in Oilers camp next fall, and there may be one more chance left at an NHL career.

Matt Bugg also has a blog which he updates frequently. Comments or questions? Ask him in his Blog !