With many teams having their third and even fourth preseason matchup in the books, there's never a better time than now to take stock of the September showings that have been markedly more super than any other series this month. Who would make a good pick up, would you put down, and who should you keep?

Rising:

Casey Borer, D (Carolina)- Seasons of 9, 11, 11 and 11 points in the NCAA don't usually belie offensive success at the next level, but that was the case Friday night in Carolina"s tuneup against Nashville. The 22 year-old defenseman scored a shorthanded goal that proved to be the game-winner in a 3-0 shutout. Borer also set up the marker that made it 2-0, and finished with a +2 rating in the 3-0 victory.

Verdict: Take a chance in your keeper league. While Borer faces a laundry list of competition that includes Mike Commodore, Tim Gleason, Bret Hedican, Frank Kaberle, Dennis Seidenberg, Nic Wallin, Glen Wesley and fellow rooks Noah Babin and Brett Carson, the heady rearguard has made the most of his audition. Add to that a blueline ripe for the IR- Kaberle missed all but 27 games last season, while Wesley (39) and Hedican (37) are no spring chickens- and Borer's chances of playing at least a handful games look good. But just why should you draft a defender who never scored more 42 points at the college level? It's all about Carolina's system. With an offense built on the long pass, and Borer an expert at just such a skill, primary and secondary assists should be plentiful.

Matt D'Agnostni, RW (Montreal)- A major junior scoring star picked late in the Draft by the Habs, only to become a top-line NHLer? No, it's not Michael Ryder. But Matt D'Agnosti got to play a similar role yesterday against the New York Islanders. Winging it on the line with fellow kids Guillaume Latendresse and Tomas Plekanec, the 190th overall pick in 2005 scored both the first and the final goals in a 3-2 OT victory.

Verdict: There could be something here. Third in goals both during the regular season and playoffs for the Hamilton Bulldogs as a rookie pro, the 20 year-old likely won't play a significant role this year in the NHL- but that doesn't mean he's useless. If you need a prospect or two to round out your farm team, D'Agnosti is a good choice. His visible chemistry with Latendresse and Plekanec leapfrogs him ahead of bubble call-ups like Duncan Milroy and Corey Locke, and puts him on an even keel with Mikhail Grabovsky.

Shining:

Jonathan Bernier, G (Los Angeles)- The four-ring goalie circus in LA has added another act. Jason LaBarbera, Erik Ersberg, Dan Cloutier and J.S. Aubin have taken a backseat to Bernier, the 11th overall pick in '06. After making 16 stops on 17 shots on September 16th, the 20 year-old made 18 saves two nights later.

Verdict: Kings GM Dean Lombardi has had nothing but good things to say about Bernier, and despite the four goalies under contract, it appears as though he'll get his chance. Putting Cloutier on waivers is a positive sign for Bernier owners everywhere.

Devin Setoguchi, LW (San Jose)- The frustratingly inconsistent winger came into Sharks camp with one mission: stay with the big boys. He's done a good job of it. While a fairly cushy assignment on Joe Thornton's left side should benefit almost anyone, 'Seto' took full advantage Friday, scoring the go-ahead goal in the second period on the man advantage. For his efforts, the 8th overall pick in 2005 was second star.

Verdict: Despite his success, Joe Pavelski also has had himself a righteous pre-season, netting four points in his last two games. Similarly, Ryan Clowe has had a strong start to the year. With one spot open on Jumbo Joe's side left side, the rate of error is extremely low. If Setoguchi finds himself struggling even an iota, it may be game over. Keep a close eye on him as the pre-season progresses.

Claude Giroux, LW (Philadelphia)- In a star-studded camp that featured the likes of Danny Briere, Simon Gagne, Scott Hartnell, Joff Lupul, Jeff Carter, Scott Upshall, Mike Richards, Kimmo Timonen, etc. etc. etc., it was a 2006 draftee that put on one of the best performances. While it would've been okay for 2006 first round pick Claude Giroux to have been bagged- the 19 year-old just returned from the Super Series, after all- the crafty winger was a consistent two-way threat, killing penalties and scoring goals.

Verdict: Hold your horses. While Giroux fit right in on a checking line, he likely won't get the powerplay time to be a roto fixture this or even next season. However, keeper league owners have no reason to dump him. Just don't expect offensive results right away,

Gilbert Brule, C (Columbus)- A game without an injury? Former WHL star and top-two draft pick Gilbert Brule would have been happy with just that result. Instead, the burgeoning power forward Brule potted two goals- including the GWG- in a 4-1 win over Buffalo (never thought I'd write that). Oh, and he didn't break or sprain anything, either.

Verdict: If it's the 15th round in your roto draft and he's still there, pick him up. The diminutive center had a rough introduction to the NHL, suffering a sprained collarbone in Columbus' home opener and a broken leg in December. However, Brule came into BJs camp looking stronger and smarter- both good traits if you want to play more than Eric Lindros. The off-season work has paid off, as dominance during intercamp scrimmages has translated into pre-season offensive success.

Falling:

Kris Letang, D (Pittsburgh)- An up-and-down pre-season for Kris Letang has hit some more rocks. A powerplay dynamo and team leader in junior, the 20 year-old was expected to make a seamless jump to the NHL. After struggling early in camp, Letang rebounded in scrimmages... only to fall off the map in his two exhibition auditions. It's no coincidence that in those same two games, the Pens dropped both and averaged one goal a game. Letang has zero points, a plus/minus rating of zerio, and only four shots.

Verdict: Okay, so it's been rough. And it may get rougher still if Alex Goligoski blows the lights out in the remainder. If it doesn't happen this year, Letang will be a prime breakout candidate for

next season- and with it being only September, there's still plenty of time left for the former 3rd round pick to establish himself as a PP saviour.

Jakub Kindl, D (Detroit)- Okay, so he's only gotten in one game... but therein lies the problem. Kindl debuted last night against Pittsburgh, and only got in 13 minutes before taking a 4 minute penalty for high-sticking. He, quite predictably, ended the night pointless.

Verdict: Just like Letang, patience is required. He's been handled with kid gloves so far, and hasn't helped his cause by playing poorly. Add in the training camp addition of Brent Sopel and you have a player who may not meet expectations this season.

For more of Matthew Bugg's thoughts, check out his BLOG.