

Ready or Not, Jiri Comes

Written by J Status

Tuesday, 04 December 2007 04:38 - Last Updated Thursday, 27 December 2007 14:55

DobberHockey announced changes yesterday ([click here to see them](#)). Among the moves, we welcome J Status into the fold. Status will be taking over the Wild West column from Jeff Angus, who has moved onto a new feature called "Angus Unleashed".



Jiri Hudler has finally arrived as a fantasy viable option for a majority of pools.

In November, Hudler put up 12 points in only 12 games and added another to start December. The most amazing part of this feat is that he's still receiving less than 10 minutes in some

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games. He has only increased his average ice time by 1 minute and 38 seconds over last year. When he finally does earn a consistent 15 to 20 minutes... watch out. His production has gone from 30 minutes per point to just over 18 minutes per point. Thus, with 18 minutes of ice time, he could already be a point-per-game player at the age of 23.

He is on pace for 50 points this year, which would double his previous total. Still, this scoring is really no surprise. Due to his limited ice time causing limited results, many people forgot Jiri put up 96 points two years ago in the AHL. His keeper stock is looking higher than ever with the Red Wings, and the only concern is obtaining minutes with the league's top team. They have 38 points and the Central Division tops the NHL with 156 points.

The Status Report:

Buy Low:

Milan Michalek, LW, SJ

When planning this article last week, I had hoped to encourage a buy low for the then point-per-game Joe Thornton. Unfortunately, Thornton blew up and went for seven points in his last three games; destroying any chance of a discount. Still, one of his main beneficiaries, Milan Michalek, remains hidden under a veil of slumps and injury. Milan is finally healthy, and has quietly put up three points in his last two. Additionally, he is proving to be a great source for shots this year. Michalek has too much skill (and too much Thornton) to not continue his return to prominence.

Jack Johnson, D, LA

Many expected it, but some may be impatient. JJ's production has been limited. If your team is rebuilding, trade an older 40-point defenseman for young JJ and reap the rewards when his time comes. Teams in the playoff hunt will likely not want to weight down their team with an unproductive youngster who is hurting their plus/minus. Personally, I would even trade a Sergei Zubov for Jack Johnson, if I were out of the race. Maybe a little too much, but I prefer taking risks on younger players as opposed to watching my old stars fade. Meanwhile, a playoff team could win their league with the services of Zubov.

Sell High:

Daniel Carcillo, LW, PHO

Carcillo has been one of my favorite players this fantasy season. Still, as much as I hate to say

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it, this looks like a great time to trade the youngster high. He has maintained an astronomical value in leagues with penalty minutes for over a quarter of the season now. His PIM and points combo has been untouchable. He ranks in the top 10 in many fantasy settings. His predecessor and only real competition, Sean Avery, is out again. For now, Carcillo is one of a kind. Some people may really see the value in him. At this pace, he will finish with 36 points and 426 PIM... yes, 426. I think that would make him the best ranked player in fantasy. This is unlikely to continue, so if you can sell his projections at a premium... do it.

Markus Naslund, RW, VAN

Now is the perfect time to move Naslund. He has 12 points in his last nine games and is approaching a point-per-game for the season. Last year, Markus had a similar stretch of 16 points in 12 games. As you know, he ended that year a 60-point player. If you can trade him for a younger, 70-point player, consider that a victory in a keeper league. It is the safer move. So find a Vancouver fan and get the job done. Naslund is one shakeup away from being off the Sedin line and back in your doghouse.

Martin Havlat, RW, CHI

Havlat is healthy. So, trade him while you still can. He has had a solid debut in his return, so someone will be excited about him. Get return for his talents before you have to reserve him for another month.

Cactus of the Week: *The player you shouldn't touch right now.*

Pierre-Marc Bouchard, RW MIN

It was a rough week for Mr. Bouchard. This isn't a guy you count on for SOG or PIM. So, when those are his best stats ... you know you have a problem.

Last 7 Days: 3GP, 0G, 0A, 0P, +1, 2PIM, 2SOG

He actually hasn't scored in his last five games, but the real reason he's this week's Cactus is because of the combination of his poor performance and his history of slowing down at this time in the season. In 06-07 Bouchard had 18 points in his first 26 games and only 39 points in the remaining 56 games. In 05-06 Pierre-Marc contributed 20 points in his first 26 games and only 39 points the rest of the way. Bouchard now has 19pts in 26 games this year. Seems to me you can expect 39 points again. The numbers are almost identical. Plus, his fast start this year was nothing new. He began the last three seasons with 10, 11 and 10 points in the first 10 games.

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Someday, I hope he breaks this cycle, but realistically, you probably should have traded him a week ago.

Fantasy Flashback: *Your weekly reminder that fantasy hockey is a rollercoaster.*

Henrik Zetterberg, LW, DET

So for my first ever flashback profile, let's take a look at the daddy of them all. Zetterberg has gone from a fantasy disaster to a fantasy desire in less than a season. The comparison with last year at this point is amazing.

2006-07: 26GP, 9G, 6A, 15P, +9, 26PIM, 82SOG

2007-08: 26GP, 17G, 18A, 35P, +10, 14PIM, 139SOG

Besides PIM, Henrik has been twice the player he was last year at this time. He was a textbook example of a perfect buy low candidate in 2006, and I hope many of you took advantage (like moi) while you had the chance! He took off in the second half, and now he has started 2007 better than anyone had expected.

Please send your questions to jstatus@dobberhockey.com

Comment on Jiri Hudler, or [welcome J Status here...](#)