In Part II, let's discuss some players who have not produced at the level that we expect them to. These guys have frustrated their owners to no end with their lack of fantasy production thus far this season and (in many cases) killed fantasy teams in the standings.

Prepare for some unexpected (and some expected) names below:

*****The following statistics are accurate as of Wednesday morning, December 19, 2007*****

Jaromir Jagr – 23 Points in 33 games. He's on pace for a 57-point season. The last time he scored fewer than 60 points in a season was his rookie year in 1990-91.

While some analysts say that Jagr's recent "back troubles" are the cause of his low production this season, I have a slightly different, more superstitious analysis.

In the preseason pool guide I wrote the following in my article:
"Jaromir Jagr and Michael Nylander have played on the same team for all but 77 games over the past five years. They were both on the Capitals from 2002-03, and joined up again on the Rangers in 2005-06. During the time they were on the same team, Jagr had 296 points in 239 games (averaging 1.24 points a game). In the 77 games without Nylander on his team in 2003-04, Jagr only totaled 74 points in 77 games (an average of 0.96 points a game). Jagr's production was approximately 23 percent worse without Nylander on his team..."

I'll let you formulate your own opinion concerning this superstitious reason for Jagr's huge dip in production this season, but one thing is certain: Jagr is one of the most fickle players in the league. Normally, I wouldn't dream of suggesting that a difference of linemates could affect any superstar's game this drastically, but when Jagr's involved it's a definite possibility.

Tomas Vanek – 21 Points in 31 games. He's on pace for 26 goals and 56 points this season.

After finishing third among left wings (behind Dany Heatley and Alex Ovechkin) in goals (with 43) and points (with 84), everyone expected Vanek to match or come close to matching his sophomore season production despite the departure of Daniel Briere and Chris Drury from Buffalo. Obviously this is not the case so far this season.

After receiving a whopping seven-year $50 million contract last summer, you'd expect that the Sabres organization would give this kid every opportunity he needs to produce for the team. It's surprising then to see that his ice time has actually dipped from just 16:47 minutes a game in 2006-07 to just 16:30 minutes a game this season. It's one thing for a scorer to struggle with new line mates, but to not play a player with one of the highest salary cap hits in the league at least 17 minutes a game is just silly. Since Vanek is making $10 million this year, he makes $7390.98 every minute he is on the ice (if he plays a full 82 games). If this is how they are going to utilize him, they should have let him go to Edmonton, taken the compensatory draft picks, and re-signed Daniel Briere. What is Buffalo thinking?

Bryan McCabe – 12 Points in 27 games. He's been a monster in leagues that count penalty minutes, points, and/or powerplay points the last few seasons, but this season he was on pace for just 36 points (in 82 games) before his injury.

He was getting similar ice time to what he was getting in 2005-06 and 2006-07, but has not been as integral to the offense as he has in the past.

With his recent injury (broken hand) putting him on the shelf likely through February, it is doubtful that McCabe will accumulate more than 30-35 total points this season, making him a huge disappointment to some fantasy owners who expected much more from him.

Chris Mason – 8-12-2 record, 3.04 GAA, and 89.3 save percentage. Mason's (and Nashville's) poor production have been the blight of many a fantasy manager this season (including Dobber himself).

From the 2003-04 to 2006-07 seasons, Mason had a 50-20-5 record for Nashville, with an average 2.36 GAA and 92.2 save percent. While Nashville lost some key players during the offseason, there's no reason or explanation for Mason's terrible numbers so far this season.

This is an inexplicable situation that (like Dobber has mentioned in his ramblings), could lead to a coaching change sooner rather than later. Maybe (as we've seen with players on other teams) a coaching change will give Mason's numbers (and production) a boost.

Regardless of what decision is made regarding staffing, it's probably best to just reserve Mason for the time being in seasonal and keeper leagues and wait this slump out (hopefully it doesn't continue all season long). Mason is a better goalie than his numbers currently show.

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