

What's going on in Russia?

Written by Alessandro Seren Rosso

Wednesday, 05 May 2010 06:18 - Last Updated Thursday, 06 May 2010 11:52



Hello Fantasy GMs. Missed me? I missed this, actually - I've been eager to get to it because there so much going on in Russia right now.

First of all I had the pleasure of watching Nikita Filatov and Vladimir Tarasenko with the national team, and although neither will play in the upcoming WC, they did look good. And I'm rather upset that coach Bykov didn't want to give many chances to younger players, in the same fashion Canada and USA are doing, with great results. It might sound a blasphemy, but players like Alex Ovechkin and Alex Semin might as well sit in the stands and watch other players take their place, at least in this year's world championship. They could use the rest. But it won't happen, and as a result we will have Ovechkin, Semin, Viktor Kozlov and other players playing while Tarasenko, Filatov and other young guys watch on tv.

By now everyone has heard the latest news. Maxim Goncharov signed with the Phoenix

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Coyotes. That is great for all the desert dog fans. And also for all you fantasy GMs who picked him cheap as he was "only" a fifth rounder. Maxim Goncharov is an offensive defenseman with a great shot from the point, very good finishing abilities (as he showed in the great goal he scored in the famous 2009 WJC semis against Canada. Yes, I know the final score of that game...) and solid defensive play. He has three full KHL seasons under his belt as well as some games with the Russian national team. I know that many would say the three magic letters, "AHL", but – three full KHL seasons aren't enough experience? He's still quite young though, but he has a sky-high ceiling and can develop into a very valuable player both for his NHL team (Phoenix for now) and for the Russian national team. So, if any Fantasy GM managed to get him cheap, congrats and keep him in your squad even if he starts in the A. I rarely give fantasy advice, but if I can give it now I will repeat: keep Maxim Goncharov in your roster.

Another piece of news. As you might know, for many months the famous Dynamo Moscow were dangerously close to having to cease operations. In the end they managed not to fold, but they had to merge with the KHL runners up, HC MVD, the ministry team, as they call it (MVD is Russian Ministry of Internal Affairs). So they founded a sort of "Dynamo United", to make it a bit British and it's right now unknown how everything will be sorted out. Officially only one player has a valid contract with the team: young center Anton Krysanov (who was originally drafted by the Phoenix Coyotes). That means that many players are now free. Slick forward Igor Makarov included. Do you remember that I wrote about him in my very [first column](#) ? Does that mean that the Hawks will give him a go? Who knows, but if I were Stan Bowman I would, even if Makarov showed to be a bit capricious when he had his first shot at the Hawks' roster. He might need a change of scenery. He had a rocky season and the trade to Dynamo didn't help, but the whole team struggled (especially Tampa's Johan Harju). Regarding Alex Avtsyn, well, he's a junior players and junior contracts are different to deal with. But many times he said that he'd cross the pond in the 2010 summer. Well, here we go...

Miscellaneous News

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SKA St. Petersburg are in contact with Vyacheslav Voinov of the Los Angeles Kings. The young defenseman isn't happy about his AHL player status and thus he'd be willing to get back to Mother Russia if the Kings won't give him a true chance...

The famous Red Army club, CSKA Moscow, signed from the Rangers Steve Valiquette and they are reported to be close to signing Evgeny Artyukhin. The large-sized Russian announced he will be hearing offers from both NHL and KHL.