Guess who's back? We'll talk some Selanne, and what to do with him in your fantasy league. But first I have to get something off my chest:

The All-Star Shame, er...Game.

This weekend really summed up the NHL. So much potential, but so poorly executed. The league is just a mess and so was the skills competition.

It is bad enough the NHL All-Star weekend and the sport in general is completely non-existent in the minds of so many US citizens. How can it be that the majority of the teams call the United States home, but the majority of citizens, even in Atlanta probably, didn't even realize the sport's biggest spectacle next to the playoffs took place this weekend? There is so much money to be made and growth to be had for the NHL in the US, and they are just missing the boat.

It really all starts with the TV package. Why Versus? I know the station is still in its infancy but common… it needs to be broadcasted on network television at least until Versus gets in better standing. I don't think everyone up north understands how difficult it can be to watch the NHL Draft or NHL All-Star game in the states. Last year, one of my college buddies and I tried to watch the game at a bar or restaurant because we didn't have Versus. We called around and tried to find a place that did. It took six calls… SIX!... before we found a sports bar that had Versus. Most people didn't even know what Versus was or that the game was even on. NO ONE HAS VERSUS!

So anyway, we went to this bar and tried to watch the game. They put the game on for us only because we requested it, and they said we could only watch it for half an hour before the local college basketball came on. There are so many regular season basketball games on each winter and only one NHL All-Star game and the basketball still gets precedence. On top of that, they made us watch it with the sound off because football news coverage was on.

This occurred in Missouri. I can't imagine how obscure the sport is in the deep south. The game is only on NBC once a week and only in the second half of the season. It is ridiculous. Even worse, ESPN, the standard cable heartbeat of sports in America, completely ignores the sport. Whatever deal ESPN is willing to give the NHL, they should take it. The NHL can't truly succeed in the US without ESPN supporting them. It is just insane how little they speak about hockey. It is usually just Barry Melrose letting people know that Crosby is good.

Now back to the All-Star festivities. Not a lot can be said about the game itself. It was pretty typical, with little hitting and high scoring. There's nothing wrong with that for an exhibition. It is the NHL SuperSkills event that was really sad.

Mistakes from the the "Phanuef" error to the fastest skater mix-ups to mispronunciations were just the tip of the iceberg. The relay was boring, the YoungStars game had old veterans tending goal and Chris Pronger showed off his "Skills" by falling down during Perry's interview. How ironic.

I really think the relay could be aided by adding a 2 on 1 or 2 on none element. The passing in that would have been much more exciting than watching guys make passes standing still.

Regardless, the worst by far was the Breakaway Challenge. What kind of competition is it when the winner whiffed on the shot twice? He didn't even get the puck on goal on his highest scoring attempts. What a joke. It is just really sad how these competitions went. Still, this event has so much potential. There are a few key things they could do to make sure this thing gets better instead of worse.

First, Make sure the players know the rules before they compete. It was obvious some players didn't realize what was expected of them in the challenge.

Next, let's make goals matter. A puck going in on a good move is much better than seeing a whiff on a great move. In order for an attempt to count, the shooter has to score.

Also, make the goalies stay in the crease. This is obvious. How can a player razzle dazzle if the tender is coming 10 feet out of the net to stop him. No one wants to see that, and it will be over before it starts. St. Louis chances were just ruined. This particular competition isn't about the goalies. Limit their ability. Take away their sticks if you have to. There is a reason shooters don't use these moves in games. It really isn't because it is showboating. If it worked, players would do it. The real reason is because they are extremely low-percentage moves and we can't have goalies playing it like a real game and expect to see successful attempts.

The players also need more chances. Two chances just make it nearly impossible to see a lot of success against a real goalie. Either make it a time limit like 1 minute or make it a best of 5 shots per player. This way they can have a couple opportunities to try something different and won't be under so much pressure. It will also give a higher likelihood that we actually see goals.

If you are going to keep it at two chances, then take away the live goalie. There is some logic to that idea. It would give all players the same opportunity against a dummy or cutout with the appropriate holes open. It isn't like the Slam Dunk contest has a guy guarding the dunker anyway. Elimination shootout can serve as the real goalie feature instead. The Elimination is more about the goalies than the Breakaway anyway, and this would distinguish the event even more. Right now, they both seem somewhat similar. Either way, make the opportunity to score easier in the Breakaway Challenge. No one wants to see a winning whiff.

Well, I had more ranting to do, but I'm just going to stop there. I tire of trashing this sport I love. Maybe it is a good thing most American's didn't see the SuperSkills after all.

The Status Report:

Sell High:

Teemu Selanne , RW, ANA

Well don't you look smart. You held on to Teemu all this time and now it is time to celebrate. The excitement is at an all time high with Selanne signing Monday. I told you to hold on to him for this moment. Make the move. If you are in a keeper and rebuilding, it is a no brainer. He only signed a one-year deal after all. He won't be around forever and surely won't continue to be the same player as he approaches 40.

J.P. Dumont , RW, NSH

In the midst of a career-high, franchise-record 14 game points streak, J.P. Dumont's value is at an all-time high. He now has 24 points in his last 20 games. That is huge for a guy whose career high is 66 points in a full season. Though he is in the middle of his prime, he is playing way over his head. To put this in perspective, he only had 18 points in his first 30 games. Find an offer for a surefire 70-point player and sell, sell, sell.

Hold:
***Daniel Carcillo* , LW, PHO**
I'm really just writing this because it is excited to have the King back. He still has a shot at 350 penalty minutes which is absolutely amazing after missing so many games. Now the only question is, has the rest energized him enough to get a few points on the board again. If he gets over 300 PIM, I'm not so sure it really matters. The highest total in the new NHL so far was Avery with 257 in 05-06. Carcillo could be there in two weeks. Just so you know, ***Dave Schultz*** holds the record for a single season with 472 and only four players have even put up more than 400. Carcillo might have done it without the injury. Now where will Daniel's value rank when this season ends? Let's just hope he finishes it.

From the Dust: *The player who may have some value after all.*
***Zbynek Michalek* , D, PHO**
After an 11-game drought, the elder Michalek has scored three points in two games. I am still optimistic about the 24-year-old defenseman as he has two more seasons with Phoenix before he becomes unrestricted in 2010. The team will continue to improve, and Michalek should be right in the middle of it. Don't expect anything earth shattering, but he is a solid depth D for the future.

Young Guns: *The future of the West.*
***Fabian Brunnstrom* , LW, UFA**
Fabian is moving west. As mentioned in the forum, the Detroit Free Press reports Brunnstrom is likely to sign with the Swedish…I mean Detroit Red Wings once his SEL season ends. He could be a great snag in many leagues for next season. He is 15th in the SEL in scoring with 32 points in 39 games. This guy has already been snagged in many pools, but there is still a significant gamble here. After all, he is already 23 and is trailing in a league boasting leaders like Pavel Brendl and Jan Hrdina. So that alone shows, you might want to be concerned about how he will translate. Still, even Brendl and his domination of the SEL the last two years raise an eyebrow.

Cactus of the Week: *The player you shouldn't touch right now.*
Manny Legace **, G, STL**
Manny and the Blues are slumping. Legace has allowed 15 goals in his last five games. That is just awful. On top of it, he received no rest having to take on superstars and reporters all weekend at the All-Star festivities.

Last 10 Days: 0-3-1, .845SV%, 3.42GAA, 82SV, 0SO

On top of it, you know after all that work, he is bound to get injured soon to add injury to his insulting last few games.

Fantasy Flashback: *Your weekly reminder that fantasy hockey is a rollercoaster.*
Patrick Marleau **, C, SJ**
In case you didn't notice, Marleau is back in business with seven points in his last seven games. In even better news, Thornton has not been associated with the last three of them… so he isn't just sponging. Despite the resurgence, his numbers are drastically different from this point last year.

2006-07: 49GP, 24G, 32A, 56P, plus-14, 27PIM, 138SOG
2007-08: 49GP, 8G, 17A, 25P, minus-20, 21PIM, 100SOG

Marleau was better in every category last year. It is amazing that he had nearly as many goals as he has points this season. Even more surprising is the 34 point swing in plus/minus. After two point-per-game seasons of 86 and 78 points, who would have predicted this collapse? This coaster has one gnarly drop.

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