The Leafs get: Cody Franson and Matthew Lombardi. Franson is a young and skilled puck moving defenseman who scored eight goals last season with the Predators. Lombardi is currently injured, and has been since October of 2010 (concussion-related issues). It is unclear whether he will ever return to the NHL - as for now he sits on the LTIR (long-term injured reserve).

Toronto shipped Brett Lebda and prospect Robert Slaney the other way.

Fantasy Players Impacted:

Franson was a player I got to see a lot of during his career in the WHL with Vancouver. He is big and possesses an elite outlet pass. He also has a hard, accurate point shot. His weaknesses are related to mobility and defensive positioning, but he is improving in both regards.

Nashville essentially makes this trade to save $5.5 million (the remainder of Lombardi's deal). A player on the LTIR doesn't count against the cap, but he still needs to be paid. Toronto obviously has no issues paying that kind of money to acquire a defenseman like Franson. Lebda was awful last year in Toronto and will be in tough to crack Nashville's roster. Nashville didn't have to make this deal to pay Shea Weber - they already had enough room. Perhaps this is a precursor to something else?

Franson plays on the right side, and he gives the Leafs another offensive weapon on the back end aside from Phaneuf and John-Michael Liles. The Leafs don't have a terribly fast defensive group, but they should get significantly more offense from their back end than they did in 2010-11. Franson will probably start on the second power play unit, but I could see him eventually working his way up to the top unit with either Phaneuf or Liles. Tim Connolly will probably see some time on the top unit as the PP QB, but the Leafs may move him around to try and maximize his abilities as a playmaker.

Don't forget the fact that Franson is a right-handed shot, while the other offensive defensemen shoot left.

Potential Toronto Defense:

Aulie-Phaneuf

Liles-Schenn

Gunnarsson-Franson

Komisarek

Potential Nashville Defense:

Suter-Weber

Blum-Klein

Josi/Ekhom/Ellis-Boulion

In Nashville, the defensive group now features Weber (RFA), Suter, Klein, Blum, Boulion, and Lebda. Unless another veteran is brought in (likely), this may open up a roster spot for either Ryan Ellis or Roman Josi (a favorite of mine).

Fantasy Players this helps, in order:

1. Cody Franson

2. Jonathan Blum

3. Ryan Ellis/Roman Josi

Fantasy Players this hurts, in order:

1. Luke Schenn (takes away offensive minutes)

2. Jake Gardiner

3. Carl Gunnarsson