Zbynek Michalek is returning to Phoenix. The Coyotes reacquired the defenseman from Pittsburgh in exchange for prospect Harrison Ruopp, a 2012 3rd round pick, and goaltender Marc Cheverie.

**Pittsburgh gets:**

Most importantly, cap space (they have close to $15 million…. Something is brewing). According to a few in the media world, the Penguins are gearing up to take a run at defenseman Ryan Suter. The essentially traded away one of their best defensemen for nothing… this move is a precursor to something. Penguins fans were hoping that Paul Martin was the guy on the way out, but they moved Michalek instead (some speculate that Martin may be unmovable with his current contract).

Pittsburgh's pairings right now:

Orpik – Letang

Niskanen – Martin

Engelland – Lovejoy

Straight, Morrow, and Despres are in the mix too. They will definitely be adding.

**Phoenix gets:**

A familiar face back. Michalek is a defensive rock who can move the puck and make a great first pass up the ice. He won't light the lamp at the offensive end, but he should be a terrific compliment for the young offensive blueliners on the Coyotes back end. In his final season with the Coyotes, Michalek played mostly with Ed Jovanovski. A bit with Keith Yandle, too.

**Frequency**

**Strength**

**Line Combination**

57.35%

EV

55 JOVANOVSKI,ED - 4 MICHALEK,ZBYNEK

9.24%

EV

4 MICHALEK,ZBYNEK - 3 YANDLE,KEITH

9.12%

SH

55 JOVANOVSKI,ED - 4 MICHALEK,ZBYNEK

Potential pairings:

Yandle – Morris

Ekman-Larsson – Michalek

Schlemko – Klesla

Rundblad/Gormley in the mix

**Fantasy players impacted:**

Michalek is a great example of a player with secondary fantasy value. He helps those around him tremendously – as stated earlier, he is mobile and makes a great first pass. However, his best attribute is his defensive IQ. He blocks shots, plays really well positionally, and can match up against top opposing forwards.

Mike Smith is a happy camper after this trade, as are Yandle, Morris, Schlemko, Ekman-Larsson, and Klesla.

This is a hard trade to evaluate in Pittsburgh, as it is the first part of something bigger. There is no chance the Penguins head in to next season with the blue line listed above. Michalek played 14 seconds on the PP per game last year, and 3:38 on the PK. His role was not to put up points.

In his final season with the Coyotes, Michalek played 1:27 per game on the PP, and 3:16 per game on the PK.

**Players this trade helps:**

1. Smith

2. Ekman-Larsson

3. Yandle

4. Michalek

5. Lovejoy

6. Morrow

**Players this trade hurts:**

1. Gormley (short term)

2. Marc-Andre Fleury

3. Tomas Vokoun