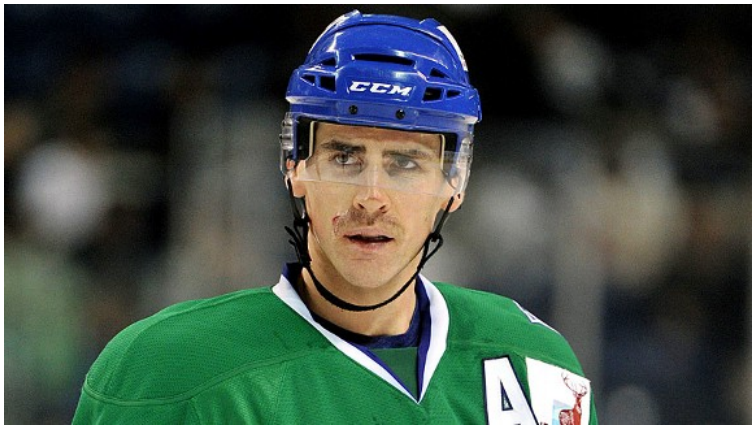

Fantasy Impact: The St. Louis Blues have signed free agent defenseman Wade Redden to a one-year deal worth $800,000. Redden was bought out of his contract with the Rangers yesterday.

The Blues get: A former top defenseman who has been buried in the minors due to the fact that his play was nowhere near where it needed to be to justify the salary he was making. Now that salaries can't be buried in the minors under the new CBA, the Rangers were able to implement an early buyout, so Redden became a free agent. Redden had 62 points in 119 games in the AHL with the Rangers farm club.

It's fairly safe to say that the point every two games that he posted in the AHL is his upside. He's 35 now, so he's not getting any better. It's also safe to say that in a full 82-game schedule, he can't stay healthy for more than 70 games. He played 49 last year and 70 the year prior (75 before that). His body is breaking down. So now, at the top end, you're looking at 70 games and 35 points. That's **upside**. Now let's be realistic. He tallied 40 points in his last 156 NHL games, or about one in every four. Perhaps the coach and the system are partially to blame for that, giving Redden the benefit of the doubt. It's still probably your best bet to take a production range that's between his recent AHL and his recent NHL performance. So a point every three games, which is 23 points in 70 games. Pro-rate that over a 48-game season and you have:

13 points in 41 games, plus-8

Because this is St. Louis, home of strong goaltending and a Ken Hitchcock system, let's project a strong plus/minus, such as the plus-8 above.

Fantasy Players Impacted: The bigger impact of this signing is on the other players. I think initially Redden will see a bit of time on the power play. Not much, but just enough for Hitchcock to get a handle on what he has here. So in the first few games, players such as Kris Russell and Alex Steen will miss out on a bit of PP time. But the impact will be minimal.

Fantasy Players this helps, in order:

none

Fantasy Players this hurts, in order:

1. Russell

2. Steen