

**November 27, 2011**

Written by Chris Nichols

Saturday, 26 November 2011 23:24 - Last Updated Sunday, 27 November 2011 13:50

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Brent Sutter is changing up the lines for Calgary's game with Minnesota today, separating what has been the top line of Alex Tanguay - Mikael Backlund - Jarome Iginla and putting them all on different lines: Curtis Glencross - Olli Jokinen - Jarome Iginla/ Alex Tanguay - Roman Horak - Rene Bourque/ Blake Comeau - Mikael Backlund - Lee Stempniak.

Nikita Filatov, who has 7-5-12 in 15 GP in the AHL, is back up with the Sens and Stephane Da Costa was sent down. Maybe Filatov will never figure it out at the NHL level, but I still think it's too early to write him completely off like so many have done.

Kari Lehtonen has officially been placed on the IR after last night's lower-body injury. Richard Bachman has been called up.

Have an open IR slot? It looks like Kristian Huselius will be back pretty soon; perhaps targeting December 6 against the Habs. He'll eventually strengthen the top six in Columbus once he's back up to speed and maybe after Christmas he'll be able to steadily contribute to your roster in a depth wing slot.

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If you're a frustrated Tomas Kaberle owner, you're not alone. Is it time for the Canes to [admit their mistake?](#)

Pacioretty will have a hearing for the Letang hit via phone on Monday.

Make that four straight wins for Cory Schneider, who has looked incredibly impressive on this run. 28/29 in a 2-1 win over the Sens. B2B shutouts, with 24 and 22 saves, against the Avs and Coyotes. Now this against the Sharks with a 3-2 victory and a 43-save performance. Despite the late goal, he was really seeing the puck well again this evening. Nonetheless, if Roberto Luongo's owner in your league is in full panic mode and wants to sell him on the cheap... you'll see the payoff eventually. Schneider is the real deal, to be sure, but don't discount Luongo. It'd be a mistake.

Alexander Edler left this game injured after a Jamie McGinn hit. We'll see if it's serious or not, but that could mean a bump in PP time for Dan Hamhuis. He's already posted some great totals in November (nine points in 12 GP) and if Edler is out, that could mean he'll see more time with Sami Salo, Ryan Kesler and the Sedins on PP1. Sportsnet's Dan Murphy tweeted this after the game: AV - Edler has an upper body injury and will be re-evaluated tomorrow. Not his head, upper body.

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Brett Hull is reportedly interested in [joining the Stillman bid](#) to buy the St. Louis Blues.

Evander Kane already had 73 SOG in 21 GP before throwing another 9 on net tonight, which brings his seasonal average to 3.7 shots per game. In anything more than the shallowest of standard keeper leagues, I'd be thrilled to own him. He's just one of those guys that's going to be able to do it all for poolies and we're really getting a taste of that this season. He's just scratching the surface of some pretty enormous potential. It's one thing to be a high draft pick, but he's just a guy who is going to get it done at the NHL level.

Not only did Zack Kassian get bumped up in the line-up so he could play with Derek Roy (and Nathan Gerbe), but the young power forward potted his first NHL goal. Kassian is the perfect example of how rewarding those really deep keeper leagues with farm systems can be. Drafted back in 2009, he just played his first NHL game the other night and now here several years later he's both physically and mentally more mature and more able to handle the NHL game.

Stefan Elliott made his NHL debut tonight and was also part of the starting lineup for the Avs. Nice touch. Oh... and he just happened to pot his first goal and it was the GWG in a 5-2 win over the Oilers. His marker was actually the go-ahead tally in a 2-2 game at the time when the Avs exploded for a four-goal third period. Elliott had some insane totals in Saskatoon in the WHL and this is the defenceman's first pro season, where he has 2-7-9 in 18 GP with Lake Erie.

Taylor Hall left tonight's game with a left shoulder injury. Ruh-roh. MRI coming and Tom Renney urges us all to "step back from the ledge".

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Kris Letang. Max Pacioretty. Thoughts? In case you missed it, Pacioretty caught Letang with a pretty stiff hit to the head fairly late in this match. Lots of blood from Letang's nose. No penalty on the play and Letang did stay in the game, where he proceeded to notch the OT GWG on a play Carey Price was pretty irate over. For good reason too. He did have the puck covered with his glove. Anyway, Pacioretty personally apologized to Letang right after the game and Letang said it was a "great gesture by him". Where do you think the hit falls on the spectrum of Shanny's era of discipline?

Again, keep in mind Rule 48 for illegal checks to the head: "A hit resulting in contact with an opponent's head where the head is targeted and the principal point of contact is not permitted. However, in determining whether such a hit should have been permitted, the circumstances of the hit, including whether the opponent put himself in a vulnerable position immediately prior to or simultaneously with the hit or the head contact on an otherwise legal body check was avoidable, can be considered."

There's been more than enough written on Sidney Crosby since his return (and how freaking good has he looked??), but I really like Evgeni Malkin's game since #87 came back into the lineup. It seems like Malkin has taken that needed next step in his '11-12 performance, which bodes extremely well for poolies in the coming months.

The Caps were smacked by Winnipeg 5-1. Bruce Boudreau offered this thought on mental toughness afterward: "It's got to come from within I've got to believe. I'm hoping that's got to

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come from within because if I've got to teach it them how to be tough, then I don't know quite how to do that."

Paul Szczechura is back in the NHL. Good for him, bad for me. I have a mental block about spelling the guy's name. Of all of the names over the years, he's one I generally have to check three times after I type it out... I almost ALWAYS miss the e.

Kari Lehtonen left his tilt with a lower-body injury. Could mean we see Andrew Raycroft, who has pretty horrible stats in his only four starts (not easy starts, to be sure), for the foreseeable future.

Daymond Langkow was back in the line-up, which pushed Boyd Gordon back out of the top six. Langkow skated with Mikkel Boedker and Shane Doan. Ray Whitney, Martin Hanzal and Radim Vrbata on L2.

Two strong starts from Al Montoya in the home-and-home with the Devils. 22/23 in Friday's 1-0 loss and 24/26 in a 3-2 win today.

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Throw another two points on Adam Henrique's totals from today's slate too, which brings his November stats up to 5-8-13 in 13 GP. Linemate Ilya Kovalchuk has seven points in his eight games, while Zach Parise only has seven in his 13 this month. Depending on the price, Parise should still be considered a worthwhile acquisition for a stronger second half push. For H2H owners in particular, that may be of interest. If your team is sailing along in H2H, it's a good idea to try to find a deal on a few of those sorts of stars who are struggling now... knowing you can likely afford the short term hit with the long-term plan in mind of winning those playoff rounds at the end of the year.

Henrik Lundqvist secured his second shutout of the season today in a 2-0 win over the Flyers at MSG. He had 11 goose eggs last season and only three of them had come by this date last year. He had one in October, two in November, two in each of December and January, one in February and three in March... including two in the final five starts. There are truly few fantasy goalies upon which you can rely as steadily as Lundqvist year in and year out.

Incidentally, in Sergei Bobrovsky's 43 minutes of relief work against the Isles and his subsequent starts against the Habs and Rangers, he has stopped 23/23, 23/24 and 30/32 today. That's 76/79 over 163 minutes. I have full faith in Ilya Bryzgalov as the No. 1 guy over the course of the season, but it's great to see Bobrovsky seize upon his chance to run with the ball. Errr... skate with the puck.

John Tortorella on Brandon Prust after today's game, where he had two fights in the first period: "He has balls as big as this building, doesn't he?"

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Mike Babcock offered this of Valtteri Filppula after tonight's impressive three-point performance: "We think Fil can score and we think Fil can be a dominant player. It was great to see him step up." It really is pretty nice to see him have this looooooonnnnnngggg-awaited breakout campaign. I mean seriously... long-awaited.

Should you be so inclined, you can [follow me on Twitter](#) .