Alex Goligoski received a four-year extension for big bucks, re-affirming our belief that he is a Top 3 key to the success of the Dallas franchise. He'll get $4.6 million per.

Mike Ribeiro is probably going to return to the lineup tonight. The losing streak factored into this, because he's been champing at the bit for a week now, trying to get back in even with his injury.

Alex Ovechkin was suspended for three games for his hit on Michalek. That opens up a lot of ice time for other wingers, such as Troy Brouwer and forwards in general, such as Perreault, Johansson and Eakin. I don't think this helps Perreault though, despite the added ice time, because he was on Ovechkin's line when this happened. But the added ice time should soften the blow.

Matt Lombardi now has four goals in his last four games. His ice time is still hovering around 13/14 minutes, so I don't expect a sudden resurgence to what we were seeing when he was in Phoenix. But it's a positive sign and worth a short-term look for sure.

It was the third shutout in eight games for Jonas Gustavsson, but he's lost three of his last four. The Leafs are limited the shots against, which sets up average goaltending for wins.

Eric Staal was shutout for the fourth time in five games last night. We're hoping that the little resurgence he had isn't over, but…

Jeff Skinner has scored in back-to-back games now. This guy had a concussion – a second one – last week. I don't care what the team says or what the doctors say. He got knocked into next week, got up and stumbled. But to me it's an example of a player playing down the symptoms…and the team not arguing. So he plays his way through the symptoms, takes a risk… but after a few weeks if he hasn't taken a bump on the noggin then the gamble pays off. My opinion only, and I'm just weighing in because I saw the hit a dozen times and can't believe he's playing – and productively – today.

Johan Franzen's goal last night was his league-leading ninth game winner of the season. His career high is eight.

I wish I had an answer for you about Patrik Berglund. I'm stumped.

Chris Stewart, Alex Pietrangelo and David Backes combined for 43 PIM Monday.

Mike Fisher has 11 points in his last nine games. At this point in his career, we know we've seen this before and we know it will end. But he's on fire right now so giddy up.

Some promising signs of life for Craig Smith, whom I had given up on for the second half. A point in each of his last two games. Not much, but something. I would be nice to see him get 45. I've not given up on his future upside, but any stretch, I just opined that he is tiring out from the longer schedule.

RJ Umberger (concussion) was back in the lineup for Columbus and played nearly 15 minutes.

My Puck Daddy column from yesterday is here . My THN column from yesterday is here . I enjoyed writing these, as usual. The THN one is on Peter Mueller, and examines the risks of owning him.

Nicklas Backstrom finally skated briefly for the first time in 17 days yesterday. To me, best case is February 10th or so. Dr. Dobber, that's me.

Carolina prospect rearguard Ryan Murphy was the OHL player of the week for last week. He nearly made the team this year, but frankly I think they'll hold him back until 2013.

Chicago is being mysterious about Jonathan Toews' arm injury, but he is out for All-Star Weekend so that's at least a week right there. They say it's " not serious ".

Jamie Benn is expected to play in the All-Star Game, so his recovery is coming along nicely. I benched him this week in the one league I own him in, so from a selfish standpoint I hope he doesn't return until next week!

Devan Dubnyk may have earned himself another outing. Edmonton was outshot 45 to 18, and DD allowed just one by. STOLE the game!

And that's three games in a row that Thomas Greiss has allowed just one goal.

Ryan Suter picked up two assists in his return to action. Yeah, he's fine. But great news for Ryan Ellis owners - he still played and he picked up an assist in 17:27 of ice.

The word on Nathan Horton – a " mild concussion ".

Christian Ehrhoff will make his return to the lineup tonight for the Sabres. Is that good news or bad news?

Tomorrow's Dobber Nation includes a discussion between Angus and myself about some Midseason Fantasy Awards. It was a great dialogue, I'm sure you'll enjoy.

I liked Jimmy Howard before, but I really like him now. I love passion like this…

{youtube}dLrxd5qzcUo{/youtube}

Stewart vs. Stuart:

{youtube}NyZ4B7ZVs20{/youtube}