Mike Smith has consecutive shutouts, and he has allowed only six goals in a personal six-game winning streak. He's been huge for Phoenix all season. Maybe the Flyers would be interested in acquiring him to shore up their goaltending issues?

Ryan Johansen has been a healthy scratch in five of the last seven Columbus games. Such a great way to develop a blue chip prospect...

A few minor trades yesterday – Dallas traded UFA-to-be Nicklas Grossman to the Flyers for a few draft picks. Dallas isn't a seller (yet) – this is just them clearing the depth chart on the back end a bit.

Winnipeg got a huge win last night - Kane had two goals, an assist, and seven shots on goal (he also scored the shootout winner).

Burmistrov had two points for the Jets, as well. Byfuglien had two helpers.

Jared Spurgeon played almost 28 minutes for Wild - far and away the highest total among all skaters. He had an assist and four shots on goal.

Setoguchi had three points for the Wild - he now has six points in his last four games. I traded for him a few weeks ago - a one year league, and figured he couldn't do any worse than he had been doing up to that point.

Friday's Studs & Duds is posted.

San Jose acquired center Dominic Moore from the Lightning for a 2nd round draft pick. Moore will play somewhere in the bottom six – he was very effective for Tampa Bay last season during their surprising playoff run. The Sharks have Michal Handzus on the third line, but you can never have enough good centers during the playoffs.

The Blues embarrassed the Islanders last night. Three points for defenseman Alex Pietrangelo – there aren't many young defensemen who I would take over him.

Andy McDonald scored a goal in just less than 14 minutes of ice time. Great to see him back and producing right away. Alex Steen remains out with a concussion for the Blues.

David Perron scored and now has seven goals in his last six games.

TJ Oshie has six points in his last four games (including three last night). The Blues forwards are really seeing the benefit of having some great puck movers on the back end (hint, hint, Edmonton).

Jamie Benn left the game last night after suffering a nasty cut on his leg. He took a skate to the back of the thigh and was quickly rushed off the ice. It didn’t look good, but apparently it isn't serious. He could play as early as Sunday.

Mark Fistric has to be the most devastating hitter in the league right now. Don’t believe me? Search his highlights on Youtube. He absolutely blew up Mike Cammalleri last night.

Grossman is a free agent this summer, and he has struggled a bit this season. He's big and strong and really good on the PK – likely the role he will fill with the Flyers.

A wild game in Tampa Bay last night – the Lightning and Sharks combined for 11 goals.

Tommy Wingels had two points and almost 18 minutes of ice time for the Sharks.

The Lightning had a few defensemen with strong games – Brendan Mikkelson had two helpers and led the team with five shots on goal. Victor Hedman had three helpers.

Hedman has looked great ever since returning from a concussion a few weeks ago.

Stamkos had two goals and is now only one away from 40. He also added two assists. Stamkos/Giroux/Malkin are going to make this Art Ross race an interesting one to follow for the next few months.

Dwayne Roloson allowed five goals (to be expected), but he did face 50 shots. I guess that counts as coming out ahead…

New York decided to start Martin Biron yesterday against the struggling Hawks. Bad idea. Chicago scored three goals in the first four minutes, and four goals in the first period.

Toews and Hossa both had two point games, as did defenseman Brent Seabrook.

Viktor Stalberg played less than 10 minutes. Rookie Andrew Shaw played barely over five.

Brendan Morrison and Michal Frolik were healthy scratches for Chicago.

James Mirtle wrote a great piece on my second favourite NHLer, Claude Giroux, a few days ago. Good timing, as Giroux ventilated the Sabres to the tune of five points last night.

Giroux's five assists came in only 15 minutes of ice time, too. Hartnell added four points.

Matt Read had a helper and played almost 22 minutes – including almost six on the PK. Crazy stat for a rookie forward. He's been really impressive all season long.

The recently called up Eric Wellwood had an assist in about 13 minutes of ice time. He's got top nine upside, probably not a lot of fantasy relevance, though.

Defenseman Erik Gustafsson scored his first career NHL goal.

Simmonds had two goals and he has done a great job of filling in for Jagr on the top unit with Hartnell and Giroux. He now has 20 goals and could hit 30 with a strong finish to the season. Is he simply on a hot streak or is this a sign of things to come?

Simmonds also received over 20 stitches after taking a puck to the mouth in the pregame warm up. These hockey players truly are a different breed….

Holmgren's 2011 summer was incredibly ballsy, but hard to argue with the success of it so far (on the trade front, at least… as the Bryzgalov signing is a huge question mark)…. Richards/Carter for Simmonds, Schenn, Couturier, and Voracek. Four core forwards to build around for the next 10+ years.

I decided to keep Zdeno Chara (at least for now) in my keeper head-to-head league. He's getting up there in age, and I am looking to retool. However, I didn't love the offers I was getting. One package centered around Ryan Callahan, while another centered around Cody Hodgson and Wayne Simmonds.

I reread my golden rules of fantasy hockey – evaluate trades with a two or three year scope –

Chara has another few years of elite hockey left – especially in a league that counts PIM and hits.

Ryan Miller let in four goals on 17 shots. Rumours from Andy Strickland (a fairly well connected hockey writer) yesterday had Ryan Miller willing to waive his no-trade clause to go to Chicago. Not sure if this is 100% legitimate or not, but Miller has been frustrated all season. He has fallen quite far in the last year.

"Sources close to Miller confirm his frustration with the Sabres organization and tell me he'd waive his modified no-trade clause to go to Chicago. The frustration began early in the season after he was trucked by Boston's Milan Lucic. Miller stayed down on the ice while his teammates stood around and watched. From this point forward it's more than safe to assume Miller began questioning his teammates. Are they willing to bleed for him in the same fashion he does for them?"

If I am Buffalo, and Miller does request a move to Chicago, I don't ask for anything less than Patrick Kane. The Buffalo boy returns home. Do the Sabres have confidence in Enroth to be the starter? Could he be a starting goalie now?

According to Pierre LeBrun, Jack Johnson could be in play. I mentioned him yesterday in a potential Rick Nash swap. Johnson makes about $4 million per, and he is signed for the foreseeable future. I still think LA is the most likely and realistic destination for Nash, as they

have the assets (especially the future starting goalie Columbus so desperately needs) to get a deal done.

Johnson is really good, but the Kings have a few young defensemen who could fill in as replacements – Slava Voynov and Alec Martinez. They'd miss his physical element, though.

According to Darren Dreger, the Leafs have an offer of a prospect and a 2nd round pick for Mikhail Grabovski. If the Leafs want to take a run at the playoffs, they can't make this move. Grabovski is so vital to their success. Worst case is they lose him for nothing in the summer, but that is going to happen from time to time in a capped league (and the salary cap space gained should be considered an asset).

I wrote a piece on Jordan Schroeder yesterday. He has 14 points in his past 15 games, and is trending upward in a big way with his recent play in the AHL. Check it out here.

There is no questioning Mike Green's talent. He'll likely return to Washington's lineup very soon (for how long… who knows).

Olaf Kolzig called out Ovechkin the other day, and Caps GM George McPhee didn't disagree with anything Kolzig said.

"Kolzig stressed that Ovechkin needs to step up his work ethic and "maybe not get wrapped up too much in the rock star status that comes with being Alex Ovechkin."

James Mirtle asks… is Rick Nash really what the Leafs need? No.

"Nash is a very good player. He's scored a ton of goals – more than all but five others in the last five seasons, to be exact – and according to several reports, he's at least somewhat interested in playing for the Leafs.

But he is mostly a one-way player, and Toronto has a few of those already. If he's not scoring a ton of goals, he's simply not worth the contract that Columbus had to overpay on to keep him with the Blue Jackets.

Another key point is that Nash turns 28 years old in June. And while 28 doesn't seem very old, there's agrowing body of evidence that goal scorers begin to decline at or even before that age.

Here's Neil Greenberg from the Washington Post with more on that front:

"History suggests elite goal scorers are often average goal scorers by the time they turn 27 years old. Most goal-scoring wingers peak between ages 23 and 25, and then the decline begins to accelerate after age 26."

Chris Stewart has been demoted to the St. Louis fourth line, and his name is starting to come up in trade rumors. To date, Kevin Shattenkirk has been far and away the most effective player moved in the blockbuster trade last year.

The Canucks called up Chris Tanev from the AHL. After watching Rome and Alberts together for a few games, I don't blame them. Keith Ballard remains out with a mysterious neck/concussion injury.

Fistric:

{youtube}joyi2vrD-jg{/youtube}

More Fistric...

{youtube}QS_j8JKnqWQ{/youtube}

Even more Fistric... (seriously, there are another 15-20 like this)

{youtube}lPl0BHTgUFQ{/youtube}