Evgeni Kuznetsov has told KHL TV that he will be staying in the KHL next year. Probably saw the playing style that the Caps have been implementing these last two years...

Nicklas Lidstrom has suffered a setback with his ankle. It sounds like he will shut it down for a week. If I were to guess, I would count on two more weeks of him being sidelined.

I'm late with this (rough day - believe it or not, still the fallout from the sick kids of 10 days ago), but I'm sure the fantasy enthusiasts are already on it like Brian Burke on an American college star: Matt Duchene will not play for the Avs tonight, but he will return for the game tomorrow against the Devils, which is well ahead of schedule for him.

Here is a great breakdown of the problems that Anaheim is having with signing Justin Schultz, and the likelihood that he will Blake Wheeler his way into unrestricted free agency in the summer. Wheeler was a great prospect - a Top 20 forward prospect, back when he decided to test the waters. Schultz is better than that - he's Top 10 among defensemen (I have him 11th in the rankings, but plus/minus 5 rating points when you analyze that chart). Teams will be lining up to sign him, and since his salary will be maxed - he'll sign wherever the hell he wants. He's from BC, so Canucks fans are salivating over him. Frankly, while that's certainly an influence, I would guess that he will do what Wheeler did - play where he is guaranteed Top 4 minutes right off the bat. He went to school in Wisconsin, which places him just a few hours from Chicago, St. Louis, Minnesota and even Detroit to an extent. So perhaps one of those teams hold some sway as well - I think you can rule out the depth in the position for St. Louis, Detroit and

Chicago. So how much pull will Minnesota have?

Also look at former teammates/friends - Stepan, Geoffrion, C. Smith, B. Smith, Gardiner, McDonagh are all former teammates. Anyway, I'm rambling - and I'm probably missing something as I stare at this map. The point is - Anaheim is probably going to be a 'no', and Vancouver is the early favorite. Don't discount the Wild (proximity, ideal depth chart) and the Rangers (two former teammates).

Ottawa prospect Jakub Silfverberg was named the MVP of the SEL , as voted by the players. Silfverberg ranks 61 on my Fantasy Prospects List and he has been steadily rising on that list every month since the summer. He will compete for a spot in the fall and could surprise. But he'll compete with Stephane Da Costa, Nikita Filatov and Mika Zibanajed for what will probably be two spots. My money would be on, at this point, Silfverberg and Zibanajed.

The Sens have signed undrafted college star Cole Schneider to a contract. He led the U. of Connecticutt in scoring with 45 points in 38 games. Of the three big college names to sign so far, I'm disappointed that I only caught one of them in my Midseason Guide. Oh well, 12 to go - they're signing them quickly now!

The San Jose Sharks have signed Sebastian Stalberg (Viktor's brother), an undrafted player at the University of Vermont. He led them in scoring this past season, and his points have improved in each of his three seasons there.

With PA Parenteau out, Kyle Okposo saw over 20 minutes of ice time for the first time in a month. He responded with a couple of points, lining up with Tavares and Moulson.

In the last two games, Travis Hamonic – who was supposed to be a great pickup this year – has five points and 12 PIM. The first time this year that he's had back to back multi-point games.

In the last 14 games, Dmitry Orlov has nine points and is plus-8. John Carlson has three points and is minus-3. I'd still rather own Carlson long term, but Orlov is really making waves.

Keith Aucoin, a career AHLer who posts big points at that level, picked up three at the NHL level for the Caps last night. In fact, he has seven points in his last eight games. As long as Dale Hunter keeps throwing him out there, he may be a nice little stop-gap solution for you.

Adam Henrique has just five points in 11 games, keeping the Calder race a close one. It's a long shot, but there is a chance that no rookie reaches 50 points. He sits at 46 with 12 games left.

Is Carl Hagelin in the Calder conversation yet?

At the end of 2011, Jaromir Jagr had 31 points in 33 games. Since then, groin issues have held him to 15 in 27. If you're the Flyers, do you re-sign him for a similar contract?

So Marty Turco gets his first start in over a year, gets blown out of the water, then Tim Thomas comes in and he gets blown out of the water… so Turco comes back in. The Bruins only gave up 17 shots, yet six of them went in. Why do I get the feeling that this postseason will be Tuukka Rask's coming of age?

Another "hunch" that I have – Dustin Tokarski pulls a James Reimer and makes the Lightning win a lot of hockey games down the stretch. This leads TB to make a tough summer decision – and go with him for next year. Or will Steve Yzerman see the mistake that Brian Burke made in a similar spot in 2011?

The last time Steven Stamkos went three games without a goal was on December 10. How

amazing is that?

Vinny Lecavalier is targeting next week for a return from injury (fractured right hand).

The Lightning have signed prospect Vladislav Namestnikov to an ELC. He is ranked 72 on my Fantasy Prospects List, but won't be with TB next season I'm sure. Lots of upside, but there will be a wait of a couple of years.

Simon Gagne is still not practicing with the team, and doesn't know when he will start. He is skating post-practice for now.

Jaden Schwartz did not dress for the Blues last night.

And of course, I'll have to comment on my buddy Sean Avery. He threw his skates in the river and says he's "retired" from hockey. Good for him to recognize that a) he's not wanted by most teams and b) he is already living the good life, so no need to go through all the crap of changing

to please others. His best season for fantasy hockey:

2006-07 84-18-30-48, plus-1, 174 PIM, 249 SOG

Avery was a rare player who was one of the best at annoying the other team, while at the same time producing about two points for every three games he played. Had he never been hurt (he was a Band-Aid Boy), he would have had three or four seasons of 50 points or more. But he crossed the line a few times, often stupidly, and wore out his welcome. I'll tell you this much – if the Rangers could win games last year or the year before without him, then he would have been waived/demoted/retired two years ago. You could tell that John Tortorella was trying to do that, but the team seemed to win more games with him then without him. This year, however, was a different story. They did just fine without him so it took Torts all of three seconds to push Sean out the door.

All in all, Avery was a character. If I watch someone who makes me laugh – either at him or with him – then he's okay in my books. Like here, where I laughed my ass off watching this:

{youtube}Ec_2oKWe2Gw{/youtube}

Clowe vs. Desbiens:

{youtube}yfzAwPyhPDc{/youtube}

Weird goal, this:

{youtube}ghSjwzGStKM{/youtube}