Mikael Granlund is my top fantasy forward prospect to own - the rest will be unveiled Thursday.

In completely related news, Charlie Coyle has four points through two periods on Saturday night. He had six points on Friday. 10 points in five periods - not too shabby.

Drew Doughty - was is your take? He is on pace for less than 40 points. He had 40 points last season. Was his 59-point season two years ago a sign of things to come, or was it an outlier for a skilled but inconsistent defenseman?

Luongo vs. Varlamov tonight in Colorado.

Made a bunch of wallpapers for DobberHockey last year - here is one of my favorites - Henrik Lundqvist
. Hope you enjoy.

Big news out of Washington - **Nick Backstrom has been cleared for contact.**

Ray Whitney has been "hands down" the Coyotes MVP this year. I wouldn't disagree. Amazing what he has done at his age.

*"But this particular season, where he has taken the Phoenix offense on his back, become the Coyotes' top shootout specialist and piled up numbers on a team with the League's worst power play, has earned Whitney the undying respect of all around him.*

*"He's a star every game out there, and it's not a fluke," Maloney said. "Game in and game out, in a playoff atmosphere and against the best defenders in the League … he's producing and he looks great doing it. He's literally driving our offense forward."*

Minnesota defenseman Jared Spurgeon is out indefinitely with a concussion.

Isles prospect Corey Trivino, who was kicked off of Boston University's roster earlier this season for off-ice reasons, has had some of the charges against him dropped.

Trivino has had some other off-ice issues, which you can read about here. The reason I bring his name up is the fact that he is a pretty good prospect. Will be interesting to see if he can put this incident behind him or not.

Jason Garrison scored his 16th goal of the season last night, a single-season record for Panther defensemen. He's going to get an awfully nice payday this summer.

Wolski only played 12 minutes – the fourth lowest total among all Florida forwards.

RJ Umberger scored three goals for the Jackets last night, and Steve Mason had a strong game against the Hurricanes (39 saves on 40 shots). Carolina is essentially out of the Eastern Conference playoff race.

Umberger has been awful this season (he now sits at 14 goals), but he has been a solid depth fantasy option in the past.

David Savard had an assist and two shots on goal in 20 minutes of ice time for the Jackets. He played with Johnson. I've got Savard on the farm in my keeper league – even with the Johnson trade, I like his fantasy upside. Smart player who sees the ice really well.

Penalty minutes galore in the Ottawa/Montreal game last night.

Chris Neil (33), Konopka (19), Cowen (12), Foligno (12) and Smith (10) all had double digit totals for the Sens.

Subban had 10, Eller had 12, and Bourque had 10 for the Habs.

Subban also added two helpers.

Erik Cole scored a natural hat trick within the first six minutes of the first period. Suffice to say not the best return for Craig Anderson from his finger injury (he did return later on in the game though, as he needs to shake off the rust and the team recognized that).

Price was great – 37 saves on 38 shots. When he is on his game, not many other goalies make it look as easy as he does.

Montreal's top line center had two assists. No, not Plekanec, but David Desharnais.

A quiet 30 goal season for Jason Spezza. Not quiet in terms of him not playing well, but his stellar season has gone largely unnoticed (outside of Ottawa, at least).

Some of the top "combo forwards" this season (these numbers are all projections for the rest of the season):

- Hartnell – 71 points and 144 PIM

- Perry – 62 points and 116 PIM

- Lucic – 61 points and 147 PIM

- Clarkson – 46 points and 150 PIM

- Zack Smith – 27 points and 107 PIM (not updated to include his totals from last night)… and lastly:

- Dorsett – 20 points and 220 PIM. Great value as a goon who can chip in a bit to not be a total fantasy liability. Dorsett is a good hockey player, I remember watching him a lot in the WHL. Good offensive player, but he won't play that role in the NHL. Still doesn't mean he can't put up some points when called upon, though.

Shattenkirk and Pietrangelo are on pace for a combined 92 points. Do you think they can hit 100? This was one of my fearless forecasts to begin the season (the duo combines for 100 points) – so far, so good (well, at least pretty good).

Another season, and another chance for Jay Bouwmeester to absolutely wilt in pressure games. Mike Peca called him out a few years ago on TSN as being one of the easiest defensemen he had ever played against – the criticism was biting, but on point. Bouwmeester has a ton of natural abilities, but not much else.

The best quote on him I got from another hockey site – Bouwmeester is paid like a franchise defenseman (Chara), but really, he is a solid #2/3 minute eater (Seidenberg).

The Capitals lost to Winnipeg after taking a 3-0 lead. Not really sure why Dale Hunter continues to match lines so strictly – Ovechkin played less than Jay Beagle and Matt Hendricks last night

Ovechkin, by the way, scored twice. It was his third multi-goal game in the last six contests.

John Carlson has really been struggling lately, but a lot of it has to do with a broken defensive system in Washington. He is seeing tough minutes because he is better defensively than the likes of Green, Orlov, Wideman, and so on (lack of production), and he is putting up a lot of minuses lately because the Caps simply don't defend well. I'm not exonerating him, but he's not as bad as the recent stats are indicating.

Dmitri Orlov was a healthy scratch, as was the recently called up Cody Eakin (Semin ended up being healthy enough to play).

Fantasy playoffs are underway (I missed making mine by a few points) – have any big nights hurt or helped your chances at a title this year?

Spencer Machacek scored his first career goal, and now has points in three straight games for the Jets. He was a very solid member of the Vancouver Giants for his career – doesn't do anything at an elite level, but a solid two-way winger.

Buffalo is rolling at the right time, and they can thank their new top line of Ennis between Foligno and Stafford. The trio has been on fire ever since being put together a few weeks ago –

Ennis is excelling at center.

He's a similar player to Patrick Kane, who is also doing well out of position at center. Small, quick, and they both see the ice really well.

Buffalo's trio combined for eight points last night.

Mats Zuccarello left the game with a broken wrist. Fedotenko will likely draw back in for him.

Joey Crabb had an assist in almost 22 minutes of ice time – the Leafs are thin up front right now with all of the injuries, and guys like Crabb are going to benefit.

Kadri scored a goal in his first game since getting called up. He skated with Grabovski and Ryan Hamilton, who was also called up.

Jacob Josefsen scored his first goal of the season last night for the Devils. He's had a tough time battling various injuries. Worth stashing on the roster if you have your eyes set on the future.

The Norfolk Admirals have won an AHL record 19 straight games now. They are the farm team for Tampa Bay, and have been led by the undrafted Cory Conacher (second in AHL scoring), and late round defenseman Mark Barberio (number 10 on my top keeper league prospect defensemen list).

QMJHL playoffs - Charlie Coyle had a decent game for Saint John – six points, including three of the goal variety.

Huberdeau had three points, and Tomas Jurco had four points. Defenseman Nate Beaulieu had three points. The Sea Dogs put up 13 goals against Cape Breton.

The first round of the CHL playoffs are usually hard to get a read on, as there are many talent discrepancies between top teams (like Saint John, and Niagara in the OHL).

The Jackets have nothing to play for right now, and they seem loose and relaxed. Mark Letestu is benefitting from more ice time with all of the centers Columbus traded away.

Brassard had three helpers – one on each Umberger goal.

Jack Johnson had two points.

Five games for Keith – a lot more ice time coming for Oduya and Leddy.

Sedin is going to be out for a few weeks – even if he feels good, the team isn't going to rush him back. They are locked in to second in the West barring something crazy happening.

The immediate benefactor has been Mason Raymond, who has played his two best games of the season in the past two. Kassian will see a lot more ice time, too. It will be interesting to see how Vancouver puts their top power play unit together, now.

How will the Red Wings fare when Lidstrom eventually hangs them up? Rhys Richards offers his take .

*"Detroit's future without Lidstrom is more than a little unnerving, but those future Detroit teams will have an entire preseason and season to adapt to that loss. Lidstrom's offensive contributions will likely have to come from two or three defenseman and cannot be replicated on the defensive end, but that can be expected since defensemen of Lidstrom's caliber are so rare."*

Absolutely filthy shootout move from Kadri:

{youtube}T-mRfrvf5Dk{/youtube}