

April 01, 2012

Written by Chris Nichols

Saturday, 31 March 2012 22:59 - Last Updated Sunday, 01 April 2012 19:38

Ok. Forgot about the fact that Claude Giroux added another three points to his incredible campaign. Or that Evgeni Makin collected points 103 and 104. Or that Wayne Simmonds scored without using his face today, giving him five goals in his four-game goal streak. Or that Pascal Dupuis extended his unreal point streak to 14 contests. Or that Brayden Schenn has been taken off Sidney Crosby's Christmas card list. Or that the Real Deal has 80 points and needs to score once in the next week to hit the 40-goal plateau. Or that there were 56 PIM handed out with just over a minute left to play.

No. Today's highlight was Scott Hartnell's Hulk Hogan impression. Scroll down to the bottom of this Ramblings to see. Made. My. Day.

I so hope these two teams indeed match up in the first round of the playoffs.

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Wide-ranging and insightful interview with Cory Schneider on After Hours. Worth a watch.

Antti Niemi picked up his sixth shutout of the season in a 3-0 win over the Stars and how about his guy's career so far? Seven shutouts in his first full season with the Hawks, six last year when he moved to the Sharks and now a chance for more before this year is done. 19 goose eggs in 162 regular season starts.

Andrew Ebbett came back from his collarbone injury and played for the first time since early January, tipping in the OT GWG against the Flames. He has played in 15 games this season, has five goals and two of those are winners. Max Lapierre has four points in two games after scoring again here.

Back-to-back shutouts for Mike Smith and career points 1000 and 1001 for Ray Whitney in Phoenix's 4-0 whitewashing of the Ducks. Smith had to stop 44 attempts tonight and 38 in the last game.

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Chicago did its best to blow a 4-0 lead, but the Preds surrendered one goal too many in that 5-4 loss. Aside from the usual suspects, Andrew Shaw is up to 10 points in eight outings and linemate Dave Bolland has points in six of eight. Viktor Stalberg also has nine points in 10 affairs. The Hawks clinched a playoff berth in that one and the best news came in the form of Jonathan Toews being cleared for contact.

Alexander Radulov had one of Nashville's goals, giving him six points in six starts. Andrei Kostitsyn, playing opposite Radulov alongside David Legwand, quietly has points in four of five.

Wild beat the Kings in a shootout 4-3, which featured the third call of March for Jonathan Bernier. Niklas Backstrom has wins in both of his starts since returning to action.

Allen York has won three straight tilts for the Jackets and he has stopped 93 of 98 shots in the process. R.J. Umberger notched a pair of goals and has 8-2-10 in his past six outings. He's been skating with Derick Brassard and Cam Atkinson.

Alex Steen earned a helper and has points in three of four since returning to active duty. He began with David Backes and T.J. Oshie and given that low overall GP total, Steen might make for a nice sleeper in your playoff pool. The team also got Andy McDonald back and he has 20 points in his only 22 starts of the campaign.

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Sebastien Caron made his first start with the Lightning and he picked up his first win since '06-7 in the process as Tampa Bay beat the Jets in overtime, thanks to Steven Stamkos' 56th goal. That was also his fifth winner in OT this year, which apparently sets a new NHL record. He has 11 GWG in '11-12 overall. Ryan Malone scored twice and his first one was a beauty. One of those must-see highlights. Victor Hedman has continued to sneak in some quality PP time and has five points in five games as well.

No playoffs for the Jets.

Devils spanked the Canes 5-0. Nothing too out of the ordinary there for poolies. 119 career shutouts for Martin Brodeur, including three this year. Devils are into the playoffs.

No points for Nicklas Backstrom in his long-awaited return to the line-up and I honestly didn't see a lot of that game given the gong show slate unfurled this evening, but by all accounts he looked fine. He played 19:38 and won 67% of his faceoffs, while beginning the game alongside Alex Ovechkin and Marcus Johansson. Michal Neuvirth turned away 39 of 41 too, which is something the Caps badly need these days.

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Costly loss for the Sabres in the standings, coming up short against the Leafs. The bright side for poolies was yet another contribution from the line of Marcus Foligno, Tyler Ennis and Drew Stafford.

Ben Scrivens started and saw his first NHL action since November.

Wayne Simmonds used his face to score a goal and Claude Giroux skated backward on his shootout attempt, but the Flyers fell to the Sens. Jason Spezza and Erik Karlsson got more points. Blah, blah, blah. Daniel Alfredsson had racked up eight points in three affairs.

On the Philly side of things, don't forget what a playoff beast Danny Briere is if you think the Flyers will make any noise in the post-season this year. He had another two helpers today, giving him nine points in four games to close out March.

Boston beat the Isles 6-3 to open the day. Tyler Seguin and Brad Marchand each delivered three-pointers for their owners, while Milan Lucic, Zdeno Chara, Patrice Bergeron and David Krejci each had two.

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Kyle Okposo's goal streak hit five games and Frans Nielsen has 10 points in his past seven tries.

This was my every-other-week bonus article for DH. This time the subject was [Fantasy Autopsy: Lessons Learned](#).

Should you be so inclined, [follow me on Twitter](#) for NHL and fantasy info as a safe mobile notifications options with minimal self-involved dreck in 140-character spurts.

For a more complete recap of Saturday's action, visit the [Live NHL Recap](#) over at Sportsnet.ca.

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