

**May 5, 2012**

Written by Ryan Ma

Saturday, 05 May 2012 22:36 - Last Updated Sunday, 06 May 2012 19:42

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Big win for the Caps as they even the series 2-2.

How much does Braden Holtby remind you of Cam Ward? Both Saskatchewan boys, both developed in the WHL, both spent a couple of development seasons in the AHL and now both making/made their mark with great rookie playoff performances.

At the start of the playoffs the Vegas odds for Holtby winning the Conn Smythe were 100 to 1. I bet they're much lower now.

Last week I brought up the playoff record of teams scoring first, the Caps are 6-1 during this post-season when scoring first.

When was the last time that the "big three" of Alex Ovechkin, Nicklas Backstrom and Mike Green all scored in the same game? Oct 30, 2010, this was 533 days ago. Surprisingly, when that happens they're 13-0. Wow!

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Green is headed towards RFA status in the off-season, what do you think will happen? Does he get offer sheeted? Will the Caps match if he does? Do they even need him? Discuss.

I've brought up this scenario before, could the Oilers offer sheet him? And would they even want to? There's been talk about the Oilers going with Ryan Murray with the top pick at the Entry Draft. The problem with that is by the time he properly develops, the Taylor Hall's, Jordan Eberle's, Ryan Nugent-Hopkin's will all be heading towards RFA or UFA status and possibly won't be with the Oilers. So why not go with Nail Yakupov with the top pick, send an offer sheet of \$6.25 mil per season to Green's agent (compo of a first, second and third pick in next year's draft) and you've got a team ready to compete next campaign. Makes sense to me.

Semin's also headed towards UFA status this summer, does he walk? How would the Caps look if they lost both Green and Semin?

According to [Fire & Ice](#) , the Flyers will tweak their line up for today's game against the Devils.

JVR – Giroux – Simmonds

Hartnell – Briere – Voracek

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Read – Schenn – Jagr

Rinaldo – Talbot – Wellwood

With Sean Couturier scheduled to miss the contest with a left leg injury.

Found this interesting [read](#) the other day.

“Before the lockout, a 10% increase in spending was worth about 5.8 team points (roughly three wins) over a season. Since the lockout, that number has ballooned to 9.2 points.”

The post-lockout era of the NHL is more about the “efficient” use of cap space as opposed to spending to the cap maximum, but you would have to think that as the salary cap balloons up to the levels where the “lower” cap space teams can’t afford to spend and compete, what’s going to result from that? I’ve got one word, lockout!

There hasn’t been a lot of talk about the whole Alex Radulov and Andrei Kostitsyn vs. the Preds debacle. I say good on the Preds for drawing a line and sticking to it. There are too many

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scenarios in professional sports where we're seeing "special status" given to athletes. I understand that a professional organization is to "win" games, but at the end of the day creating and sustaining a team culture is vitally important for the longevity of a franchise. The question is out of the 30 NHL teams out there, how many of them have the balls to do what the Preds did and how many of them would have caved? Would the Preds have stuck to their guns if it was game seven of the Stanley Cup final?

The duo has a "[high probability](#)" of returning back into the line up for Monday night's game five tilt.

According to [Orange and Black](#), the reason why the Devils are leading the series, cycling and puck retrieval. I would chalk it down to limiting opposition shots and getting timely saves from a veteran goalie. Also Travis Zajac's 58.9 faceoff winning percentage doesn't hurt either.

[Olli Jokinen](#) had abdominal surgery which will sideline him for three to four weeks. He's scheduled to become a UFA on July 1<sup>st</sup>, and there might be a few teams willing to knock on the door. His 61 points this campaign was ranked 19<sup>th</sup>

amongst all centermen, while his 223 SOG were also in the top-50 in the league. There are plenty of teams that could use someone of his skill set (Leafs).

Marian Hossa still not "[feeling himself](#)", which is a worrying sign for poolies heading into next

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season. One-year pools, I probably wouldn't want to touch him next campaign.

20 over-time games already this post-season, too much of a good thing according to [Defending Big D](#) ?

With Martin Biron headed towards UFA status in the summer, keep an eye on Cam Talbot, who's absolutely tearing up the AHL playoffs with the Connecticut Whale. He's 4-1 with a remarkable 1.69 GAA and a dazzling .956 SP.

Josh Yohe, the Pens beat writer, [speculates](#) that there is a "strong" chance that the Pens move Staal to the Canes this Summer.

Angus speculated that Brandon Sutter would make sense, since they both play a similar type of game and I whole-heartedly agree with him. The question is what else needs to be tacked on? Perhaps Zac Dalpe or Drayson Bowman plus one of Bobby Sanguinetti, Jamie McBain or Justin Faulk, while the Pens add in Tom Kuhnackl or Beau Bennett? Seems to make sense to me.

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Another Jumbotron going [into another NHL arena](#) , this time costing \$5 mil. If I were the NHLPA, I'd use this to my advantage. Instead of owners "crying" about the lack of ticket revenue and soaring operating costs and how teams are losing money hand over fist, I'd throw this back at them and say quit whining when you can afford to spend \$5 mil on a new HD screen, you can afford more than a 50/50 revenue share.

First wake up call for Team Canada at the WC as they fell to the US 5-4 which dropped them to 1-0-1. It was the first time since 2001 that the Americans have defeated Canada in the WC tournament.

Max Pacioretty [leading the tournament](#) with four points in two contests.

Make sure you head over to [Dobber Prospects](#) and give that a good gander. Brendan Ross and Rich Dillon are two of the most knowledgeable people in terms of hockey prospects.

Should you be so inclined, follow me on [Twitter](#) if you think that my article/tweets are useful.

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Ovechkin hit, suspendable?