Highly-sought college defenceman Justin Schultz has reportedly filed the necessary paperwork to leave school, which opens the door for Anaheim's 30-day window to deal exclusively with him on an NHL contract. Schultz can, and why wouldn't he, wait until July 1 to explore all UFA options throw his way.

Count me as an Oilers fan throwing our collective hats into the ring hoping to land him as we build toward respectability and then eventually greatness again. Aside from that though, as a hockey fan I'm truly intrigued by each and every player's thought process – regardless of age – in terms of what goes into their decision to sign with a certain team.

Money (so many haters out there, but why not earn what you can while you can?) vs. term of deal (not everyone wants a long-term deal, depending at which stage of your career you find yourself) vs. opportunity (everyone wants to play as big a role as is realistically possible) vs. comfort level (family considerations, etc.) vs. winning (at the heart, it's why most everyone laces up the skates each year) vs. factors about which we may never learn. How much do they let their agent get in their ear? How much can what a team rep - be it a coach, GM or player - have on swaying a potential signee's decision?

That sort of process is fascinating to watch unfold.

If there is one subject in fantasy which is beaten to death – but rightly so – it's the old "buy low, sell high" axiom. The key point of getting players at a discounted price comes into play particularly well in keeper leagues, where opportunities routinely present themselves to acquire struggling stars.

Drew Doughty's early-season struggles have been well-documented, but he's now thrilled to be the player everyone thought he could become. And, after going from 59 points in '09-10 to 40 and then labouring toward his eventual total of 36 this season, Doughty's value was quietly screaming, "get me now while you can!" to prospective bargain-hunting poolies. The points drop-off, the contract situation and the ensuing slow start created the perfect storm when colliding with the addition of hard-nosed Darryl Sutter, which was exactly the kick in the ass Doughty (and the Kings, for that matter) needed. The rest, as we watch it unfold in these playoffs, is quickly becoming history.

Tomas Vokoun's agent, Allan Wash, tweeted this morning that, "Tomas Vokoun has decided not to accept an offer from a KHL team at the present time. He is solely focused on playing in the NHL next year."

It had to have been a frustrating year for the goalie, between the injuries and what happened to the Caps. Once he lands via free agency we can speculate his worth again, but he should at

least be a good mid-range guy wherever he lands with upside for more in at least a one-year scenario. I certainly hope the Caps this time will stick with what they should have done last summer... and actually give both Braden Holtby and Michal Neuvirth the keys. I remember tweeting UFA signings and being somewhat stunned the Caps went after Vokoun at the time. Aside from the fact that the youngsters were actually showing their potential, team management had been so vociferously defensive in their belief in them prior to signing Vokoun to that bargain contract when the opportunity presented itself.

(I took a sec to scroll back in the Twitter timeline. From July 2: "Truly surprised: Caps take Tomas Vokoun (1 X $1.5M). Neuvirth & Holtby were more than enough, IMO. Price was worth vet insurance, I guess."

Those damn Canadian poachers! Glendale City Council Member Joyce Clark is sick of the relocation turmoil involving the Phoenix Coyotes. While she does explain her thoughts in more detail , she still tweeted: “I will be so pleased when Coyotes issue is settled. Then all of these Canadian poachers can move on to another team and another city.”

This is in Phoenix. The Phoenix Coyotes, which originated from... hang on, it will come to me.

Hello, Merriam-Webster? Might we suggest a new entry for "ironic"?

Alexander Radulov had knee surgery today. It was a minor injury that nagged at him all season and caused him to turn down an invite to the Worlds after the Preds were bounced from the playoffs. If he winds up back in Nashville next season, chances are pretty good that he'll be a steal at the draft in many leagues in the fall. Anytime you have a player with a low GP total the year before (generally because of a major injury, not a late-season airdrop from Russia), it'll drastically increase the odds of your fantasy service leaving him really low in the preset rankings. We'll see what happens over the summer in general for the Preds, but Radulov, IMO, can at least make a run at something near the point-per-game plateau over a full season. Curfew mess aside, the guy has developed exponentially since he was last in the NHL.

John Tortorella says Henrik Lundqvist will play his best game Friday night, with his team's season on the line. Same thoughts from the coach on his former Tampa Bay Lightning star: "I know his makeup...Brad Richards will find his way." A three-pointer from Ryan Callahan would really help my playoff pool's cause. Just sayin'.

Favourite quote of the day for me was from Tom Renney on Ryan Nugent-Hopkins: "Getting Nuge was important. It's like playing Scrabble with no vowels. Nuge is a vowel and the guys on the outside will really benefit from Nuge."

One more quick Hockey Hearsay-related note from Thursday. There was a follow-up story to Mikael Granlund being signed and how this potentially marks a new era for the Wild with all the new, young talent coming in... including Charlie Coyle. The article notes how Coyle has been a

prolific scorer in the Quebec League this year, and his stock has skyrocketed while Granlund's has fallen.

ESPN.com special contributor Grant Sonier had the most salient point on the subject though: "They're different types of players, and if you put Mikael Granlund on the Saint John Sea Dogs, he would absolutely dominate. Like, it wouldn't even be funny. You can't elevate one guy based on his performance in junior and downgrade the other kid who's playing in the [Finnish] Elite League." #truth

Regardless, Granlund and Coyle are two reasons to be pretty excited for the Wild.

Coyotes GM Don Maloney said re-signing Shane Doan is the team's top priority this summer. The 35-year-old winger, who will celebrate his next birthday October 10 (Early next season, right? No lockout. Think positively.), had a decent 5-4-9 in the 'Yotes 16 playoff games... including that timely two-goal effort to avoid being swept. Those nine points tied him with Keith Yandle for second on the team, one back of Antoine Vermette. There's really no reason Doan owners can't zone in on the 45 to 50-point mark again next season, with anything beyond that considered gravy. He'll continue to draw most of his fantasy power from the peripheral categories like shots (12 straight years of 200 or more), hits and penalty minutes. Other potential UFAs for the team include Ray Whitney, Daymond Langkow, Taylor Pyatt and Michal Rozsival.

There'll be a story on the subject in Friday's Post-Dispatch, but Blues beat writer Jeremy Rutherford tweeted today that President John Davidson has a window in his contract regarding an ownership change. He could, if he wanted, seek a job elsewhere. His preference is to stay there, but he understands ownership could have different ideas. FWIW, getting rid of JD would be a bad move. Smart hockey man. He was, hands down, my favourite colour guy in hockey before he moved into management.

The Michigan House has voted to let fans buy alcohol at next year's Winter Classic at Michigan Stadium, which means it'll now go to the State Senate. It's all just part of the formal process. The NHL's approval of this venue for hosting the Detroit Red Wings and Toronto Maple Leafs game was conditional on being able to sell booze.

Alexandre Giroux signed a two-year deal to play in the KHL for Dynamo Riga. He piled up points in the AHL, but not so much in limited NHL action . He was originally a seventh round pick of the Sens back in 1999. All the more power to him. He should fare relatively well there.

There was a piece late Wednesday night how the Tampa Bay Lightning and Swiss star Damien Brunner are said to be interested in joining forces. The TB Times had a few words from GM Steve Yzerman on the subject Thursday evening. "He's an exciting player. He can skate. He's really skilled. I'd like to sign him." The Penguins may also be in the running. Potential sleeper for next year in deeper leagues, although we'd still generally likely be talking early season FA addition at most in a heavy number of cases.

Fire & Ice has a note on how NBC has blocked any further viewing parties at Prudential Center or MSG. The Devils had one for Game Two and the Rangers matched that effort for Game Four. Both sites showed the NBC Sports Network telecast of the game. The network's response, through the NHL, was: "Viewing parties can have an adverse effect on viewership and, hence, on our obligations to our advertisers, sponsors and affiliates."

Really? Is this what it has come to? Let's make sure every sports bar has games blocked too. And that we can't use PVRs/ DVRs, cuz we might miss an ad. And that when a few buddies come over to our house to watch the game that we all promise to be really quiet in commercial breaks... and that said buddies will also leave their TVs on at home on the game, just to make sure every possible ratings point is being squeezed out. Will that suffice?

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Weekday Hockey Hearsay blogs on Sportsnet.ca, 12 months a year.