

July 28, 2012

Written by Jeff Angus

Friday, 27 July 2012 20:34 - Last Updated Saturday, 28 July 2012 11:23

Help us pick a new DobberHockey banner – [information on voting can be found here.](#)

My fantasy hockey mailbag is open all weekend – [ask your questions here.](#)

I'll have some of my answers up throughout the day.

Calgary has signed [Leland Irving](#) to a one-year, two-way deal. He'll battle [Henrik Karlsson](#) to be the backup behind [Miikka Kiprusoff](#).

[Rick Nash](#) spoke to John Tortorella after the trade. Nash on their conversation:

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"He seemed really intense."

I look forward to many years of Crosby and Giroux going head to head. Both are skilled, gritty (code word for dirty), and leave it all on the line on the ice.

Giroux shared some thoughts on Crosby [in this interview](#):

"Those are from (Sidney) Crosby," he says half smiling, but with some tension in his voice. "Every time we'd line up against each other for a face-off during our (2012 playoff) series, instead of going for the puck when it was dropped, he'd hack me across the wrists. I ended up playing the series against (New) Jersey with one of them fractured and had to go for surgery on both of them after we were out of the playoffs."

The Rangers locked up [Anton Stralman](#) for two years. A reasonable cap hit, too. Stralman will get \$1.7 million in each year of his contract. He was once hyped as a top offensive prospect, but he hasn't delivered.

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However, he has developed into a pretty steady NHL defenseman, and he really stepped up his play in the postseason for the Rangers. He had 18 points in 53 regular season games (not horrific production considering the role he played), and in 20 playoff games he scored three goals.

[Where does Semin fit on the Carolina roster?](#)

Coach Muller:

"It's great to have a right-handed goal-scorer like Semin to balance out our lines. Who plays with who, this guy with that guy, can be sorted out in preseason. For us, having Semin adds another dimension to our lineup, with a right-handed shooter we know can produce. Whether he plays with the Staal brothers or splits time with them, we've got an elite player to play with them."

GM Rutherford:

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"That was the start of us really doing our homework leading up to this signing. Several people in our front office tried to reach out to as many people who have crossed paths with Alex in his career -- former players, former coaches, former scouts. You get different reviews from different people, but certainly the positives much outweighed the people who had a negative experience with him."

Ellen Etchingham is a talented writer. She works with Justin Bourne over at the Score's Backhand Shelf. [Read her latest piece on Semin:](#)

"And this is the problem: we don't treat style as a simple aesthetic preference that colors our enjoyment of certain skills over others. We often treat it as something that makes certain skills more legitimate than others. We allow our aesthetic judgments to override our assessment of skill, to the point where we can become entirely blind to actual performance."

I had people telling me that the problem with Semin is that he 'couldn't hack it, physically and mentally, in the NHL'. This is a man who has played 469 career games and scored 408 points- if that's not hacking it in the NHL, nothing is."

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Chicago Wolves owner Don Levin told the Seattle Times that the market for hockey in Seattle is tremendous, and he would be willing to invest \$100 million. I hear [Shea Weber](#) may be looking for some way to invest his \$100 million, too.

[Some thoughts](#) on what Anisimov and Dubinsky bring to Columbus:

"Dubinsky can be a grinding, possession-based, 50-point player. He's good in the corners, does what it takes to win and plays the hustle card every chance he can. You can never question that kid's work ethic. Anisimov is more of a wild card. He has the tools to be fantastic offensively, but he hasn't been able to implement them in the NHL as of yet. Still, there's no reason to assume he can be a 50-point player himself. What Ansimov really brings to the table is his defense. He's a brilliant defensive forward, and can create offense with his defense."

A wide-ranging look at the current status of the Capitals from one of my favorite blogs – [On Frozen Blog](#).

"So new coach Adam Oates will favor a more offensive style of play, relative to his predecessor. But even if you play pond hockey you have to have more than two-thirds of a first line in your top 6. The offseason is not yet over, but this morning the Capitals are missing merely a no. 1 right wing and a no. 2 left wing. Other than that, the top 6 is set. Maybe. No one this summer, other than George McPhee, was much lining up to pick Wolski's stick out of the pond puck pile

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as sides were being selected. Ditto that for [Joey Crabb](#) . And [Jack Hillen](#) ."

[Tobias Enstrom](#) re-signed with the Jets for five more years. His cap hit is \$5.75 million. A very fair price for a solid top pairing defenseman and one of the most important members of the Winnipeg roster.

Enstrom's production dipped last year after consecutive 50-point campaigns. He did miss 20 games, too. I'd expect him to get back to the 50-point mark if there is a full season in 2012-13.

According to [Aaron Ward](#) , the Red Wings are out of the [Shane Doan](#) sweepstakes.

I like Doan a lot but I'd be scared off of anything longer than two or three years. He is old and hasn't exactly been productive in recent postseasons. He's a great leader and incredibly durable (which at some point may lead to injuries, although Doan is also a fitness fanatic). The dollar amount of his new deal isn't as important as the term. I'd much rather give him \$6-7 million for two years than \$5 million for four.

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The Stars are high on prospect Matej Stransky. [Here is some more information on him:](#)

“Of all the players in our organization, he probably took the biggest strides in improvement this year,” said Les Jackson, Dallas Stars Director of Player Personnel. “He really is an impressive player.”

He’s a big man and an elusive, slippery forward,” said Jackson. “He has great puck skills and a nose for the net.”

There is one attribute that stands out.

“His puck possession,” said Holland. “In my opinion, he might have been the best puck possession guy below the dots in the Western Hockey League. He’s a big guy who sees his options so quickly and is tough to defend for defensemen because his body position and his puck protection is probably second to none out there.”

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Dan O'Toole and Jay Onrait make for fantastic TV. I loved this bit from last month (credit to Puck Daddy for posting it):

{youtube}kzhDjOuu1W0{/youtube}