

**July 31, 2012**

Written by Jeff Angus

Monday, 30 July 2012 21:27 - Last Updated Tuesday, 31 July 2012 15:41

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Dobber has set a target for 3pm ET tomorrow for the release of the guide. We will of course be updating it quite frequently throughout the rest of the summer as trades and signings continue to trickle in.

My piece for Defending Big D - [taking a look at the top six forwards for the Dallas Stars](#). I use advanced stats as well as other forms of analysis to give my thoughts on potential line combinations.

I have started following the Phoenix Coyotes situation quite closely. If you want some further reading material on it, check out [Five for Howling](#) , the SBNation Coyotes blog. A lot of political power plays going on (unfortunately not as exciting as hockey power plays...).

As expected, Daniel Alfredsson is returning for another year in Ottawa. He will likely play on line two with Turris and either Silfverberg, Zibanejad, or Latendresse, leaving Spezza and Michalek to play together on the top line.

Cristobal Huet would make a solid backup in the NHL next year. What teams need a back up right now? I imagine the Canucks will be in the mix once Luongo is moved. Lack may be ready but the club won't want to force him into NHL action.

The Fantasy Guide continues to near completion...

Mike Colligan takes a lengthy look at the success of the Phoenix Coyotes in recent years for the Overtime site that I write for. [You can read his piece here](#) .

It will be interesting to see what the Coyotes do up front if Doan leaves. Ray Whitney has

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already moved on. David Moss was a solid signing and he could fill in on the second line, although he is probably better suited for third line minutes.

Mikkel Boedker is going to see an increase in responsibilities. He will likely form two-thirds of the top line with Antoine Vermette and either Steve Sullivan or Doan (if he returns).

Vermette is another guy who should have a career year – Hanzal is strong defensively, and Vermette is the only real offensive center on the roster right now. Gordon will also play a lot of defensive minutes.

I think Phoenix's best course of action would be to move Yandle for a forward. Ekman-Larsson has emerged as a top defenseman, and the depth behind him is solid. There are several young defensemen very close to NHL action as well – the most notable being former World Junior standout Brandon Gormley.

Apparently the Red Wings are interested in Bouwmeester, as are a few other teams. With the rising salary cap, Bouwmeester's contract isn't as bad as it once was. He is a defensive defenseman and shouldn't be expected to contribute a lot offensively (unless he is put in an offensive role), but he can log heavy minutes and play against top opposing forwards.

Calgary 2012 1<sup>st</sup> round pick Mark Jankowski will play for Providence College this fall. Jankowski was originally going to play a year in the USHL before going to college, but he has changed his mind.

[Cam Charron](#) asks – is Shane Doan worth \$7 million?

*“There’s nothing wrong with Doan, and there’s nothing wrong with making him the final piece to your team. I think a few teams, Vancouver, Pittsburgh, possibly Detroit, can make the space available to sign a winger who is nothing if not reliable and workmanlike.”*

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*Still, there's reasons for those teams to give Doan the term he is demanding. Few players over 30 make crazy money, or are signed to these deals when they're 30, bypassing the player's prime years. Jarome Iginla was 32 when he signed a 5-year deal, taking him through his 36-year old season next year. Brian Campbell's contract ends at 37, signed when he was 29, but defencemen tend to peak later."*

[Copper & Blue takes a look](#) at Anton Lander.

*"Despite all his struggles at 5 on 5, he had a simply fantastic season killing penalties. He played a touch under 2 minutes per game 4 vs 5 and was behind Petrell, Smyth and Horcoff in terms of shot prevention on the PK. These are not easy minutes and Lander was able to contribute to a decent PK group. His biggest problem at the NHL level has been his inability to keep the puck out of his own end, but that's not just his fault. His most common teammates were Lennart Petrell, Ben Eager and Darcy Hordichuk. Not necessarily putting him in a position to succeed. Not only that, but by the time the Oilers smartened up and sent him to the AHL, the Barons were in the midst of some strong play, making it hard for him to get into the top 6. This doesn't excuse his play, he's got to be better, but it does give a bit of perspective."*

It will be interesting to see how Lander is utilized. Right now, the Oilers have a lot of top six talent, and a likely veteran checking line with Horcoff, Smyth, and Jones. Lander could play 4<sup>th</sup> line minutes with some special teams responsibilities mixed in.

Blueshirt Banter takes a look at a [potential Nash-Richards duo in](#) the Big Apple.

*"I'm not overly worried about this. Richards should work very well with Nash on his wing. I think the biggest issues Richards had with Marian Gaborik early on was that Gaborik is a sniper who relies on his speed, Nash is a guy who gets into position and then takes his shots. That's the type of player who should mesh well with Richards. As for Nash and Carter not working out, I think Carter not wanting to be in Columbus at all didn't help matters."*

Will the Stars re-sign Jamie Benn before the new CBA is ratified? [Defending Big D takes a look](#) :

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*“So what is Jamie Benn actually worth? It's tough to put a quantifiable number on what Benn provides for the Stars aside from pure statistics alone. Benn has 160 points in 222 NHL games and is coming off his best season yet, where he proved he's much more than just a flashy goal-scorer, taking on a major defensive role the second half of the season in order to help free up the Ribeiro line. He performed that role exceptionally well and it could be argued that Benn was the best even-strength forward in the NHL last season.”*

*It stands to reason that the best contract for both sides would be in the neighborhood of a five-year, \$28.5 million contract -- depending on just how much the CBA changes. A great value for a player like Benn, while also providing a significant pay raise for a former 5th-round pick who made the unexpected jump from the WHL to NHL superstardom in just a few short years.”*

It appears that Nick Bjugstad is [the sticking point in Vancouver/Florida trade negotiations](#) for Roberto Luongo.

*“It was reported by the Fourth Period earlier this summer that the Canucks were "demanding" Bjugstad's inclusion in any Luongo package, so Allen's report isn't exactly "new" information. If his information is accurate, however, what it does suggest is that the Canucks are standing firm with their asking price and Panthers continue to bristle. The report is interesting, but it does nothing to alter the current holding pattern between the two teams.”*

I enjoy reading Kevin Allen's work for USA Today. Allen shares his thoughts on [10 burning issues right now in his most recent column](#).

*“The 2013 free agent class might feel pressure to sign now: Nobody knows what the new collective bargaining agreement will look like. Will there be restrictions on contract lengths? Will there be a new way to calculate a salary cap hit? There could be changes that prevent athletes from landing the kind of deal that Shea Weber and Sidney Crosby received this summer. If you are Anaheim's Corey Perry, you have to think about this.”*

*“Feels like Toronto will make another move: GM Brian Burke is always aggressive, and the James van Riemsdyk deal might not be enough. It seems like Burke could end up with another goalie or more size and grit.”*

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Dustin Brown makes the most of [his time with the Cup.](#)

*“Brown and his family brought the Cup to the gravestone of Christopher Bordoni, his wife Nicole’s cousin, a Marine who died in January as a result of injuries suffered in Afghanistan. Bordoni was serving his second tour of duty when he was critically wounded during a suicide attack. He was scheduled to return home in February.”*