I published a profile today on Vancouver Giants forward Cain Franson . Cain is the younger brother of Cody and an undrafted prospect with NHL upside.

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For those fo you looking to get a hockey fix, I am watching an SEL game right now - the stream is great quality and viewable here
. The teams playing are AIK and Frolunda. Canuck 2011 1st round pick Nicklas Jensen is on AIK.

*

I interviewed Flyers strength & conditioning coach Jim McCrossin earlier this week. That piece was published over at Broad Street Hockey.

In your time with the Flyers, who have been some of the fittest players you have worked with?

McCrossin: "Rod Brindamour, Mark Recchi , and Braydon Coburn . There have been many."

*

The DobberHockey Experts league drafts next Wednesday evening. We have dropped PIM in favor of hits for this year, and that changes the draft rakings considerably. I was in the middle of the pack or near the bottom for much of last season (I'll lay the blame on Cam "Red Light" Ward).

*

John Tavares is the latest star to sign with a Swiss club, joining teammate Mark Streit with SC Bern. You can view the other signings with our handy Lockout Tracker.

*

Two players who I think will really benefit from the lockout – Jacob Josefson and Mattias Tedenby . Neither player has had much of an impact at the NHL level early on into their careers, but both are very skilled.

Josefson needs to stay healthy. He'll get a chance to play a top nine spot with Henrique and Zajac in front of him (depends where the Devils slot in winger/center Patrik Elias , too).

Tedenby just needs more confidence. He has the speed and skill to beat NHL defenders one-on-one, but he needs to play less of a perimeter game and get to the traffic areas to find loose pucks and create offense. I think he, in particular, is a very good buy low option for deep keeper leagues.

*

Corey Pronman ranks the top 10 prospects for the LA Kings.

The top prospect:

Tyler Toffoli , Right Wing

The Good: Toffoli had another giant season, missing his second straight OHL scoring title by two points. He's a very skilled player and an elite finisher. Toffoli has very good hockey sense, as he's always around the play finding ways to create chances, and he has quite impressive vision. He also has pretty good puck skills. Toffoli's shot is tremendous, which has helped him post over 50 goals in the OHL over the past two seasons. He also has a good work ethic and plays a bit of an edgy style.

*

Some NHLers in Quebec played in a game organized by Max Talbot and Bruno Gervais on Thursday evening. The players included
Patrice Bergeron
, Alex Burrows (no biting, I hope),
Corey Crawford
,
Jason Pominville
, and more.
The game was $20 to go see and sold out at a small arena in Quebec.

Not sure if there were any interesting fantasy lines to come out of the game.

*

Awesome news for Montreal fans – Josh Gorges is taking Brendan Gallagher under his wing during the lockout. I am a huge Gallagher fan (saw a lot of him in the WHL) and Gorges is a great role model for any young hockey player.

"He reminds me a lot of Brian Gionta ," Gorges said. "He's not afraid to get into the dirty areas around the net where you hack and whack. He came really close to making this team last year, and I thought if I could help him a bit. I know that when I was 19 at the San Jose camp, Scott Hannan took me under his wing and helped me out. I'm trying to do the same thing for Brendan."

*

Wade Redden isn't allowed to play in the AHL during the lockout, even though he spent last season there. In fact, he hasn't played in the NHL in almost three years.

*

A good read on Lightning prospect and Syracuse Crunch forward Cory Conacher .

"Big players always have to play themselves off teams. Small players always have to play

themselves on teams," Cooper said. " Cory Conacher is a fighter. He's a survivor. As a coach, he's one of the guys you want on your team instead of playing against you."

*

The NHL and NHLPA met yesterday and are meeting all weekend. Canwe get little good news, fellas?

*

Brett MacLean's life was saved by CPR and an AED machine. We were trained on these at my old place of work – and a girl I know used one to save someone a few months ago, too. Pretty amazing piece of equipment.

Since then, Brett's recovery has been remarkable. Though playing professional hockey again is unlikely, doctors assured him he can be active again, which means he can resume jogging, swimming, cycling and playing tennis. CPR/AED training is also high on his "to-do" list.

*

AHL camps kicked off yesterday. I'll be watching some AHL action this year, and will write on it a lot in my ramblings.

*

Here is a preview of the Rochester (Buffalo affiliate) defense. Brayden McNabb should lead the back end:

McNabb should get top minutes in Rochester this year and be given every opportunity to not only play in every situation, but to continue his fast-track development. This season could very well be his final one in the minors, especially if he shows the same results that were on display last season in his handful of NHL games.

*

A solid piece on some Coyotes prospects – not just Gormley, but a few players who are flying well under the radar. Including a potential multi-category stud:

Darian Dziurzynski *~ Before being traded to the Wheat Kings last season, Darian was out of the gate hot, scoring three goals in four for the Blades. In total last season, Darian scored 30 goals and had 16 assists. He had 106 penalty minutes last season and probably earned some that didn't get called. Considering he was a 5th round pick, Darian's upside is significant and Portland is gonna have some size.*

*

Sami Vatanen is one of the best young defensemen in hockey. More on him from Anaheim Calling.

"Is he a work-in-progress, future trade-bait, or a keeper? The 2009 Fantasy Prospects Report from dobberhockey.com wasn't on the Vatanen bandwagon that formed after the 2009 U-18 WJC, but still ranked him as a solid second round pick in the '09 NHL Entry Draft, and he's only improved since. So, Murray seems to have gotten good value with a fourth round pick. I'd like to see how his defensive game comes along with some time in Norfolk, adjusting to the physicality of the North American game and the smaller ice surface, so I'll say work-in-progress."

I was very comfortable including Vatanen in my top 10 defensive keeper prospects list earlier this year, too.

*

There may not be a player who stands to benefit more from the lockout than Isles prospect Ryan Strome. He returns to the OHL to dominate for one more year – Strome looked really good last season (at times), but he still needs to get that extra step for his game to translate over to the pro ranks.

If the NHL lockout keeps him in juniors all year long -- not a certainty, according to one post-lockout scenario -- then he'll have to make the most of it even if that level is probably a little beneath him by now. The hope is at this time next year he won't need a pit stop in AHL Bridgeport on his way to the NHL.

*

Malkin makes a slick pass to Kulemin for the goal:

{youtube}YlFUlTudbP0{/youtube}

*

An interesting read from Grantland on fantasy football changing the perception people have towards Chris Johnson. This column is very applicable to fantasy hockey (and all fantasy sports). The numbers skew our real-life judgment at times.