Lockout Update: Day 30 - There is still a lockout.

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Fantasy Guide - Fully updated as of October 10, including the Draft List - KHL injury notes, a full blow-by-blow analysis and breakdown (from my perspective) of the Expert's League draft, a *bonus* article going over the rosters of each team and picking out possible retirement candidates in the event that the lockout wipes out the season.

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I wanted to touch upon last week's news that Pierre Lebrun reported , in which Sergei Gonchar noted that it was very much possible that some Russians may stay in the KHL. I hadn't thought of this, but he's right - Donald Fehr could see about getting a clause in the new CBA allowing players who do not like the new CBA to sign in another league despite having a contract in the NHL. Hell, it may even help out teams who need to get under the new salary cap without rolling back salaries. The odds of this are pretty slim, but they do exist. Enough to make me think twice about any
Ilya Kovalchuk
or
Pavel Datsyuk
offers that come my way.

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I had my third and final draft on the weekend (final, until a new season is announced, then I'll have two more). It was a very different dynamic this year, because last year we contracted by one team. We saw the impact of that a year later, as players were being dropped in our three-round draft who were often as good as many players on my list. Hunches were being played. It was very interesting. The hunch I played was with my final pick. I drafted Eric Tangradi

and dropped
Peter Mueller
. Mueller is more valuable than Tangradi by a wide margin, but Tangradi gives me five players (out of 20) who are on the Penguins. Since the pool counts the postseason, I thought I'd give it a shot. I don't expect much from him, but if the season is 50 games long I'd love to see him stick for the entire 50. If he can do that, then he's worth owning for 2013-14. Meanwhile, I had been trying to trade Mueller all season and nobody was biting. Not even for the lowest draft pick. So his trade value was nil. It was an expendable pick, an expendable player, and I can quickly fix the move in the midpoint of the season via the supplemental draft.

Other players dropped included John Carlson (this league is points-only, positions do not matter), Troy Brouwer , Ville Leino and Brian Gionta
. Carlson, Brouwer and oddly enough Mueller were re-drafted.

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It's funny how vast the difference of opinions are, and the many different personalities that make up a fantasy league. I had an animated discussion with a guy on Saturday who refused to drop Andrew Brunette
and
Tim Connolly
- when he could draft
Michael Del Zotto
(for example),
Mike Fisher
and/or PK Subban. Again - positions don't matter in this points-only pool, but still - you have to believe that MDZ, MF and PKS will each get more points than Connolly and Brunette combined. In fact, I'm so certain that Brunette will retire, that I bet him that
James Reimer
would have more points this year than he will. That's goals and assists, but if they tie at zero I win. He wouldn't take the bet, and he still didn't drop him. So weird - guys were dropping some interesting names to pick up players who weren't much better - yet he wouldn't drop Brunette to pick up a player who was clearly better.

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The Hockey Writers state that it's time for a new league to rival the NHL. You get this every lockout though (look at me, I'm writing about lockouts as a regular part of the NHL now). A new WHA was tried in 2004 but never got off the ground. However, if the lockout enters a second season, the KHL becomes a player. ESPN expands coverage, highlights become more prevalent on Sportsnet and TSN, and the KHL starts kicking tires about North American teams. That's right, a new Conference.

I don't think it gets there. I'm still saying the puck drops in late November. But if I'm wrong and a season goes by the wayside, and 2013-14 gets cancelled games…then the KHL would absolutely be open to a new Conference. They would at least look into it. However, the NHL eventually faced down the WHA after a few years, they'll do the same to the KHL. But if things get to the point I note above, then the league will lose a bit of money to the competition for several years before eventually crushing them.

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The beatwriters for the Blue Jackets are simulating the Blue Jackets games, and the lineup they put together for opening night was as follows:

F1: R.J. Umberger – Derick Brassard – Cam Atkinson

F2: Brandon Dubinsky – Artem Anisimov – Derek Dorsett

F3: Vinny Prospal – Mark Letestu – Nick Foligno

F4: Derek MacKenzie – Ryan Johansen – Jared Boll

Extra: Colton Gillies .

D1: Jack Johnson – James Wisniewski

D2: Fedor Tyutin – Nikita Nikitin

D3: John Moore – Adrian Aucoin

Extra: Ryan Murray.

So they have no David Savard , and if Murray is an extra then he'd probably go back to junior.

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Prospects ramblings from Dillon over at DobberProspects . You should check the site out frequently - over the past few days, new profiles (or updates on older profiles) have gone up for Devin Shore, Ben Scrivens , Niklas Svedberg, Jesse Joensuu , Teuvo Teravainen and more.

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And if you want fantasy hockey talk, seriously - the Sunday ramblings are a must read. Ridiculous amount of information written by Chris Nichols yesterday. Check it out here .

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Florida prospect Nick Bjugstad had a goal and an assist in the season opener for the Gophers on the weekend. He's on the Panthers in 2013-14, and he could be the most coveted (drafted) fantasy prospect not in the NHL by the spring - sought after the way Mikael Granlund was sought after by midseason. Bjugstad scored the game winner in Game 2 of the weekend set.

Russo also gives us the line combos for the Houston Aeros - also known as the second most exciting team to watch in the AHL:

Coyle – Granlund – Zucker

Foucault – Phillips – Fontaine

Bulmer – Larsson - Palmieri

Broda – Rau – McMillan

Brodin - Scandella

Kampfer - Connelly

Bagnall - Cuma

Hackett started in net

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Semyon Varlamov is kicking KHL ass so far. His record is a modest 2-1-1, but he has allowed just nine goals on 128 shots.

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Watch this absolute beauty goal by Brayden Schenn , after a beauty pass by Sean Couturier . You have go to
this link
to watch, sorry.

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Jeremy Morin scored twice for Rockford, but Zack Kassian was the big force in that one, leading the Wolves to a 5-3 win.

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Cody Eakin had two goals , was plus-2 and was star of the game for Texas, Sunday.

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Wow, Matt Duchene with the spinorama pass to Fabian Brunnstrom , (FF to one minute in);

{youtube}v8azmy-7PNw{/youtube}