Lockout Update Day 94: there is still a lockout. So close, yet so far.

*

Still plugging away. I don't know what I'll do if the season is cancelled - DobberHockey will still be around and the daily ramblings will live on. But if a tree falls in the forest, will anybody hear?

*

Kristian Huselius has signed to play in the Swedish Elite League. So he's there for the year, rain or shine, NHL or no NHL. He waited a long time for something to give, so you can't really blame him.

*

Shawn Matthias suffered a head injury and may return to North America for an evaluation. It's looking like a concussion, in other words.

*

Bobby Butler woke up and smelled the coffee. He has 12 points in his last eight games, including a five-point effort. This was after he started out with five points in 11 games. Queue back up his dark horse status, he's found his way. The AHL also handed him the player of the week honors.

*

Marian Hossa is now cleared to play. Cleared to play hockey. Play hockey where? Well, that remains to be seen. But if the Blackhawks played a game tonight, he'd be there.

*

My article over at The Hockey News yesterday was on Cam Atkinson , Tyler Johnson , Jonathan Audy-Marchessault and
Cory Conacher
. Check it out
here
- there's a reason I like those fellas…

*

Ottawa prospect Stefan Noesen has been ruled ineligible for the WJC this year by the IIHF because of his 10-game suspension. He would have made Team USA. See Noesen's fantasy profile here , as well as a clip of the hit that got him suspended.

*

I think the NHL and the NHLPA will settle on numbers pretty much in between, for each and every bone of contention (i.e. the four points of contention I listed yesterday). The problem is, if one side goes to the other to offer that, then it will be seen as a weakness. A weakness that the other side would pounce on, thus nudging something that was neatly down the middle to a place that is skewed in their favor. Either that, or it is perceived, by both sides, to be that way. Just my opinion, but I think it's a game of chicken now.

The NHLPA disclaimer vote ends on Friday. The union would then disband. Last year, 12 days after the NBPA disbanded, they came to an agreement. Using that timeline, and factoring in an added day for Christmas, our hope is pinned on a deal January 3.

*

How does seeing this video make you feel? The facial expressions, the smugness…:

{youtube}eYQ1pEHWKU0{/youtube}

*

Top 10 KHL goals of the week (video is a week old):

{youtube}am_B1VpeZck{/youtube}