Buy the Dobber Draft app for Android - HERE .

Buy the Dobber Draft app for iPhone - HERE .

*

The only fantasy guide (to my knowledge at this moment) that you can get that is updated for the 48-game season with analysis of how the players did in the other leagues, injuries, etc. Both the Fantasy Guide and Draft List are updated, buy them here .

*

Brian Burke has been fired. Dave Nonis is Toronto's new GM. I'll try to keep my personal opinion aside. I already took my rant too far on Twitter and Facebook. I don't want to get started here. I'll say it is a mistake. I'll say that Burke needed this season and half of next at minimum to turn such a horrible team around. But ideally he needed seven years. Here is why I like Brian Burke - this is an article I wrote last year. And I'll leave it at that.

I suspect that Burke was told to cave into Mike Gillis' demands for Luongo. I suspect that Burke said 'no'. I suspect that Rogers/Bell (MLSE) told him he had to. And I suspect that he rightfully said 'no' again. So they fired him. We'll know if I'm right if the Leafs pay out the ass for Luongo within a week.

*

Jeff Angus is really making the rounds. Here is his interview with JetsNation .

*

A couple of morning notes - Ilya Kovalchuk is confirmed to play in the KHL All-Star game on Sunday. His thinking is that the NHL still, technically, doesn't have a CBA so what he is doing is legal. The CBA won't be ratified until the weekend. The KHL feels that NHL players left them too quickly and should have waited until the CBA is official. We won't truly know about Kovalchuk until the weekend.

Sergei Kostitsyn is heading back to Nashville now. Like I said below, we need to track these things now...

Bob McKenzie says that what will likely happen regarding the junior-eligible "10-game rule" for burning a year of his entry-level contract is that it will become a "six-game rule" this season. Interesting...

*

Phoenix goaltender Mark Visentin was the AHL player of the week. We won't see him this year unless there is an injury, but it's another great sign for the future. With the right development he could be a starter in three years. But if Mike Smith signs long term, then forget it.

*

Great quotes compiled by Russian beat writer Slava Malamud . From the KHL president Alexander Medvedev:

"New CBA may be basis for terminating existing contracts, some players will stay. NHL's

opinion of itself is so high... OK, let them get drunk on their greatness. We'll see how many Euros look our way. Our league will act according to our own and international rules. If players decide to stay, we will help them… There is no reason to fear (IIHF's sanctions against players who decide to stay)"

Wow. I'll even add a 'zers' - Wowzers.

And Bill Daly's response, courtesy of Tom Gulitti?

"We have no response. We will see what happens."

The repercussions of this are massive. Medvedev's statement, even if he was drunk, is a declaration of war on the NHL. And if he's going to declare war, there is no better time to do it than after the NHL shoots themselves in the foot for the second time in eight years.

So Lubomir Visnovsky and Ilya Kovalchuk will have the backing of the KHL in their decision to stay (Kovalchuk didn't make that decision, but to me it's clear that he wants to). By the time a battle like this gets resolved, even though the NHL will win - it may not be over until April. Which means, drafting Kovalchuk is a big bust for this year. Thank goodness you have a Fantasy Guide that will walk you through this and keep you posted daily, right?

Now we need to watch carefully of news of NHLers flying home! We can't just assume they're on their way back.

Don't worry about Alex Ovechkin - he's already back.

*

I've been thinking about Justin Schultz and where he'll be at this year. And even though I'm as guilty as anyone, I believe all prognosticators are taking the chickenshit path. This is not uncommon. We all do it. I try not to do it as much as others, but with Schultz I did. You see, either Schultz makes it and thrives, or he doesn't. he's not going to have a middling year. Not after what we watched him do in the AHL. He will either struggle to adapt, and thus fail to reach 15 points. Or he will thrive, and top 30-plus. I don't think he'll get in that 15-30 window. And yet in the Fantasy Guide I have him for 26 points. I'm waffling, but for a reason. Many people really count on those projections. So if say he gets 31 points, they'll draft him at the point in the draft where 31-point players get picked. So I dial it back a little, and they pick him closer to where they should.

*

I updated the Fantasy Guide late late last night. Do I need to tell you when I update? Because I'm doing an update every day. I guess it can't hurt to remind. This update includes re-doing the Calder Trophy race chart, and the predicted final NHL standings. I also adjusted for the Jonathan Quick news, and I tweaked Tuukka Rask's projection because I felt it was too aggressive.

*

There is speculation that, due to Cristopher Nilstorp's strong play, that he would be the Dallas backup and Richard Bachman would be sent down. But that's not the case . However, the Stars seem hell-bent on Nilstorp winning the job in camp. He has been fabulous in the AHL. But to me, Bachman was fabulous in the NHL last year. This situation will be interesting to watch.

*

The Flyers may not have Scott Laughton or Nick Cousins to camp. It's not in stone yet, but it doesn't look that way. Makes sense to me. Neither is NHL ready and besides - I don't have them making the team in the Fantasy Guide

.

*

Besides Alexei Kovalev being invited to Florida's training camp, the Panthers have also invited Marek Svatos. Then, they went and invited Andrei Kostitsyn? I thought his KHL contract was binding…then again, I guess that's out the window.

I love their strategy here. They want a second-line winger and they're looking for bargains. Word out of Florida is that Shawn Matthias, Sean Bergenheim and Marcel Goc are all injured. Nothing beyond that is known at this time.

But if I'm one of the three players invited - I'm declining. I'd want to go where the list of invites competing with me is smaller. Svatos has virtually no chance here.

*

Old news, but the Sabres confirmed that Mikhail Grigorenko will be coming to camp.

*

Oh no, blood clot strikes again - Roman Cervenka is out indefinitely with a blood clot. He will be in training camp and take a physical and receive treatment. But tough news.

*

Gone, but not forgotten - actually, yeah, I forgot about him - Tom Poti has rehabbed for two years and is now pain-free. He plans to take part in Washington's training camp, which could wind up hurting Dmitri Orlov 's ice time (when Orlov wanders back from the injury ward).

*

Matt Dumba will be in camp for the Wild. Per Russo . I don't think he makes the squad.

*

Daniel Briere 's hand isn't healing properly and he will see a hand specialist. The start of the season is in jeopardy.

*

KHL players of the week:

– Best goaltender was Sergei Bobrovsky (SKA), two shutouts in two games

– Best defenseman was Dmitry Kalinin (SKA), who picked up 2 points (1+1) in two outings and earned a +2

– Best attacker was Evgeny Malkin (Metallurg Magnitogorsk), whose haul from two games was six points (4+2) and a +4

*

Washington's Nicklas Backstrom suffered a neck injury December 26 and is still not ready for action. I had no idea this was even a problem! Like I said, the injury news will come pouring out, and some of it will shock us.

*

Jeff Angus talked to On the Forecheck about Fantasy Hockey. Happy to have Dirk Hoag, a noted fantasy enthusiast, consider my stuff here as essential for draft preparation.

*

Let's do one more KHL update package:

{youtube}72jaEyAc2bw{/youtube}