

Written by Chris Nichols Friday, 18 January 2013 22:52 - Last Updated Saturday, 19 January 2013 15:05

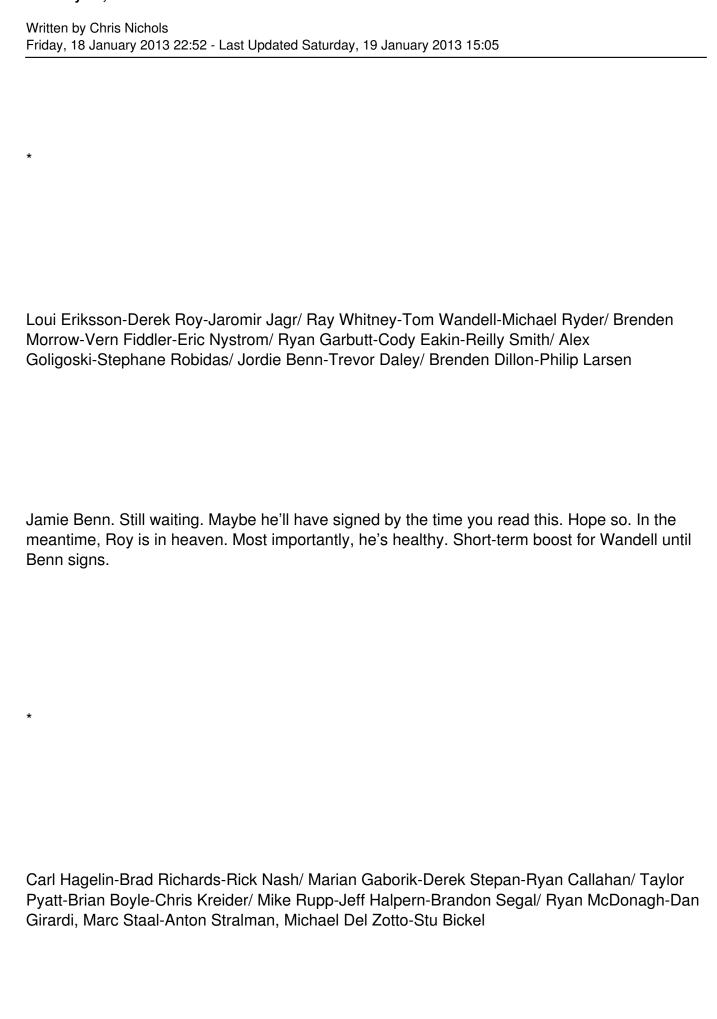
Murphy, who was sent back down to the OHL.

Boychuk has 16-16-32 in 37 GP w/ Charlotte and this is a pretty golden chance. Kirk Muller talked about liking the "young energy" Boychuk and Dalpe (13-15-28 in 38 AHL GP) are bringing and this short-campaign situation is tailor-made for young guys who are all already in mid-season form. It's just up to them to seize on the chance.

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Marcus Johansson - Nicklas Backstrom - Alex Ovechkin/ Wojtek Wolski - Mike Ribeiro - Troy Brouwer/ Jason Chimera - Jay Beagle - Joel Ward/ Matt Hendricks - Mathieu Perreault - Eric Fehr, Joey Crabb/ Karl Alzner - John Carlson/ Roman Hamrlik - Mike Green/ John Erskine - Jeff Schultz/ Jack Hillen - Tom Poti

The Ovechkin-on-RW experiment continues to unfold, but regardless of where he is on the ice he'll be lethal while being fed by Backstrom. Adam Oates' know-how should complement each quite well. The speedy Johansson quietly collected 46 points as a sophomore last year, which was a nice bump from his 27 as a rookie. He has seen plenty of time with that duo already and his style meshes well. How long will the oft-inconsistent Wolski last in a prime L2 spot alongside Ribeiro? Good to see Fehr back and hopefully he'll push himself higher and higher in the lineup.



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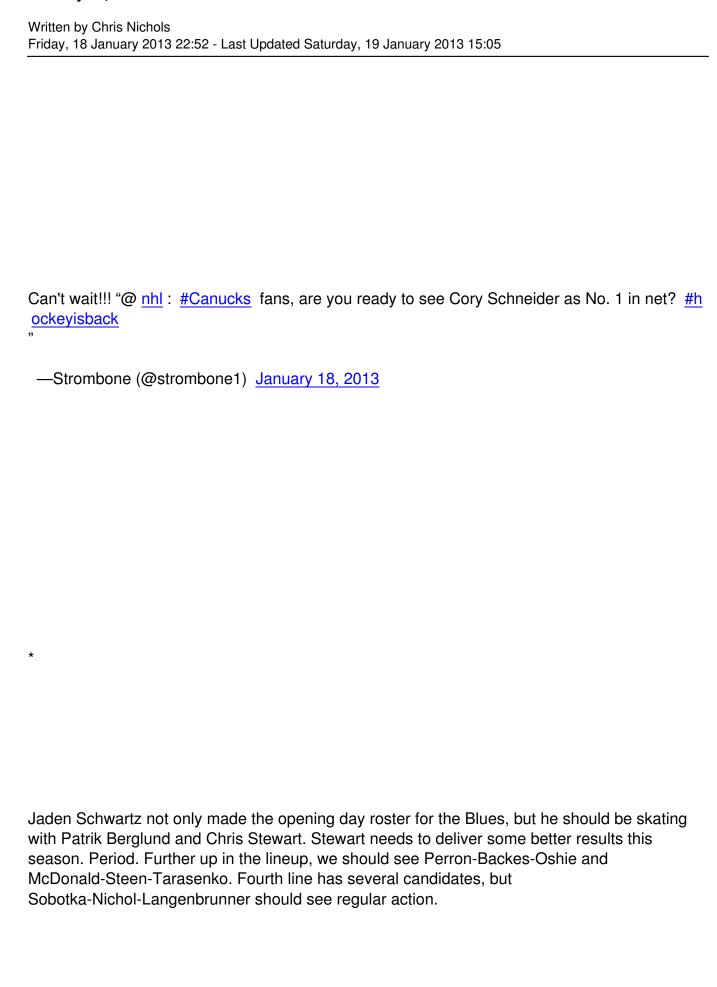
Aaron Asham will miss the first game thanks to his suspension from last year's playoffs. We'll certainly see the Gaborik-Richards-Nash super line as needed, but this is a really well-balanced top nine right now. Although it's not tremendous for his fantasy value off the bat, I do like Kreider with Boyle because Boyle will create room out there and be another great role model for the youngster in terms of work ethic. It's huge for this team to have a healthy Staal right from the start.

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Marleau-Thornton-Pavelski/ Clowe-Couture-Havlat/ Galiardi-Handzus-Wingels/ Sheppard,McLaren-Desjardins-Burish/ Vlasic-Stuart/ Irwin-Boyle/ Murray-Braun

Same top-six we're used to seeing with the Sharks. Look for bigger things from the second line in particular this season. Brent Burns is basically in the day-to-day area now, but still has no real timeline. He is expected to begin skating again soon though.

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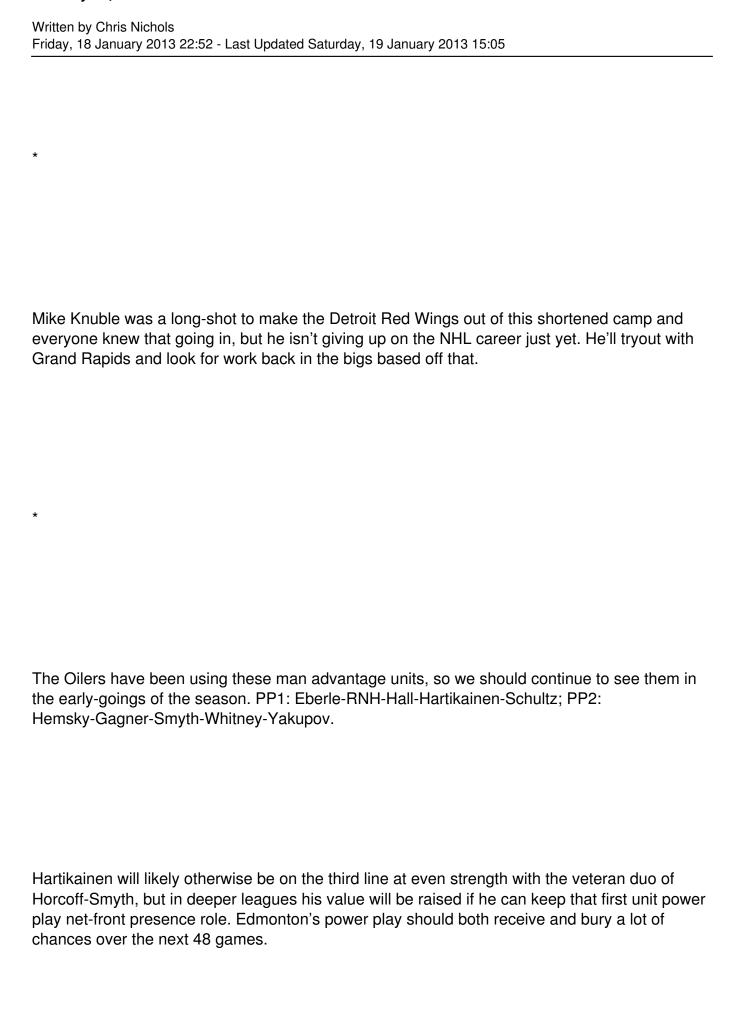
This team has a lot going for it, all throughout the lineup. Incredible coaching. They may not end up with what we'd consider high-end fantasy options in terms of guys racking up a lot of points, but this is a team built to win a lot of games. Watch out.

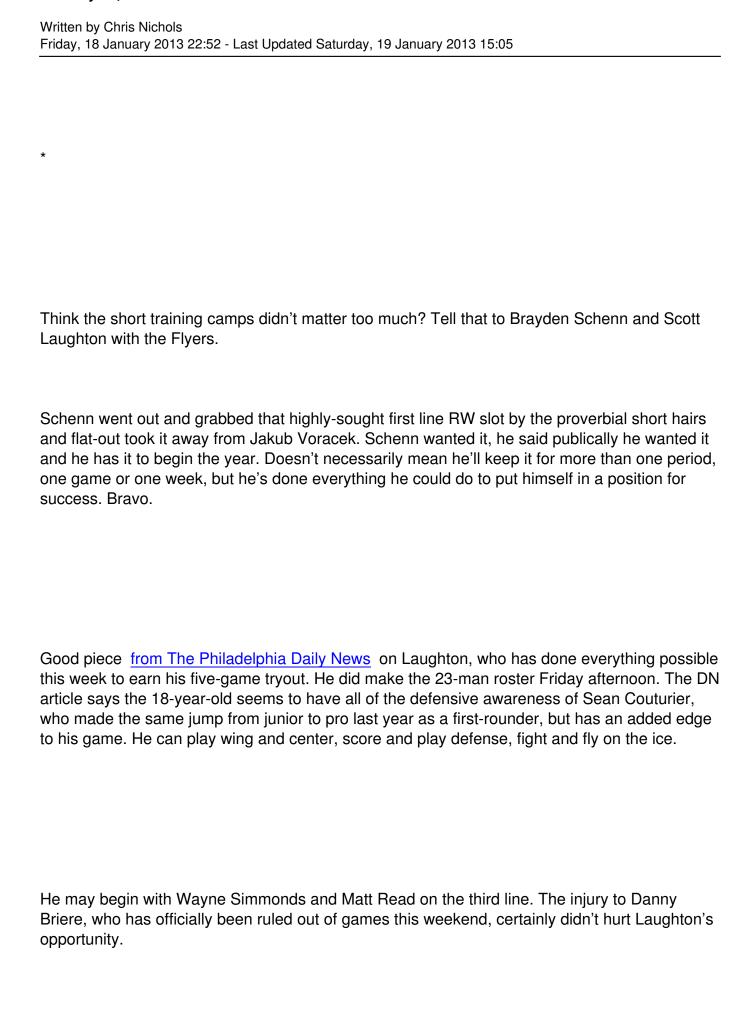
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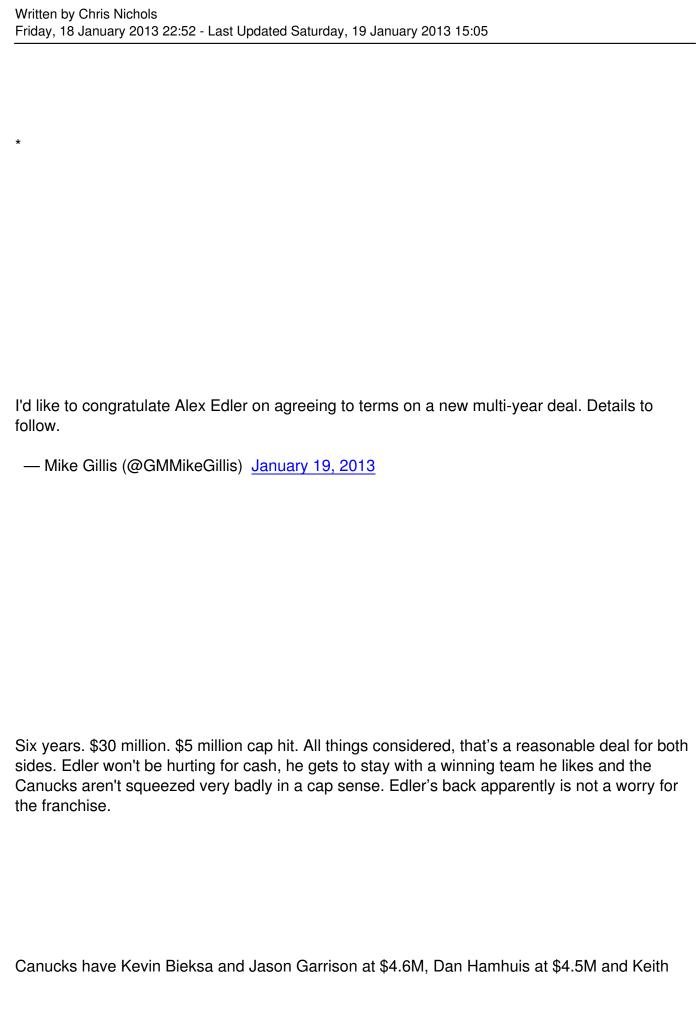
Wade Redden signed on with the St. Louis Blues. He deserves another NHL chance after the past few years of hell (well-paid hell, to be sure, but hell for a hockey player nonetheless) and while he won't be a recommended fantasy pick-up at this point, doesn't mean we can't root for the guy to do well. Like I tweeted when news of the signing first broke, it's a good situation for potential success (as a defenceman in general) for him with Ken Hitchcock's team structure.

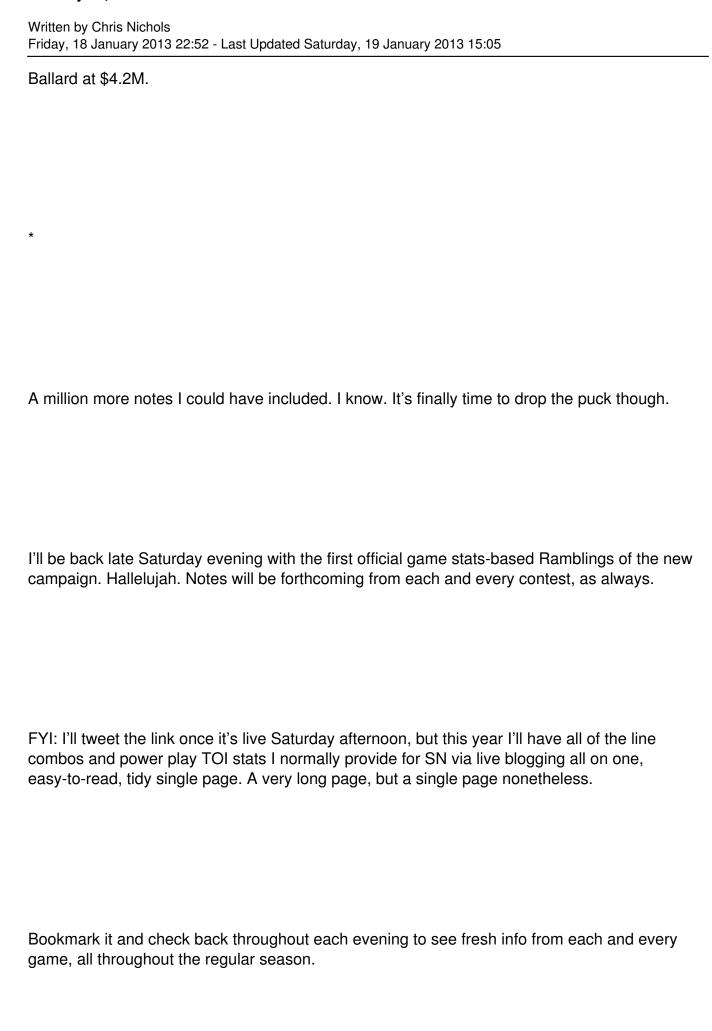
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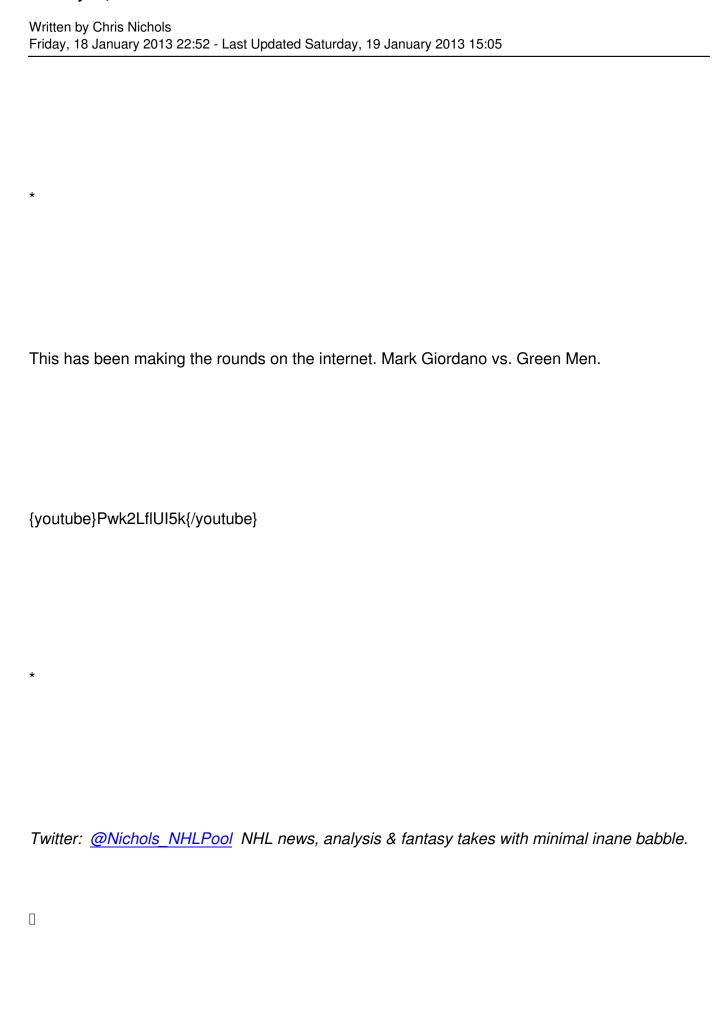
The Panthers officially inked both Alex Kovalev and Dmitry Kulikov. Kovalev will be on the right side of the Huberdeau-Mueller line, which has some real potential. Can't wait to see a healthy Mueller and to have Huberdeau in the NHL. Kris Versteeg, incidentally, might miss the first game. He's otherwise slated to resume his role on the first line with Fleischmann-Weiss.











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