The DobberBaseball Fantasy Guide is out one week from today. You can pre-order it here , and pick up the Fantasy Baseball
Prospects Report
as part of a cheap Keeper League package.

*

Don't forget to put in your team for Tuesday's one-day fantasy challenge - free to enter, prizes are a share of $300. Details here .

*

Vancouver GM Mike Gillis was at the Washington game yesterday and I remember speculating on a deal when I saw that. My mind immediately racing. With Eddie Lack hurt, a goalie would have to go the other way. I would assume that it would be Michal Neuvirth, yet it was Brayden Holtby who was between the pipes yesterday. Besides the goalie, the Canucks would want a young roster forward. My guess would be Marcus Johansson or Mathieu Perreault. And can they peel a prospect off the Caps as well? Is the real target Filip Forsberg? There is motivation to bring in more Swedish players, considering Vancouver's two best. But Johansson, Neuvirth and Forsberg for Luongo is way, way too much. So is it a matter of Vancouver throwing something else in? Something to think about.

*

An interesting take on Craig Smith 's troubles from a couple of his friends, Joe Pavelski and Adam Burish
here
. They raved about his workout regimen during the lockout and his hardworking attitude. They also note that he left Finland because it wasn't hard enough for him. With that attitude, there's hope yet.

With Patric Hornqvist (another two or three weeks) and Martin Erat (day to day, foot) out, Smith saw over 13 minutes of action Saturday and was eager to show that he deserved the ice time. He had five shots on goal and scored the shootout winner.

*

Andrej Sekera suffered a bone bruise and was unable to play Sunday. TJ Brennan drew back in and played nearly 16 minutes. Alexander Sulzer scored his second goal in three games and could be a dark horse to go on a hot streak if the Sabres have to rely on him more.

*

Bobby Butler got his long-awaited (by me) season debut Sunday. But he played the big seven minutes, and it was with Krys Barch and Jacob Josefson . He saw about two shifts with Ilya Kovalchuk , and got a brief sniff on the power play. Hold off until you see more ice time.

*

Max Pacioretty returned to action eight days after his appendectomy. That's two days sooner than when Jamie Benn missed time last year. The 3-4 week prognosis that you hear about these things going forward will clearly be wrong. Just file that away. " Super Human "? Ha.

His return couldn't have timed itself better because David Desharnais got the monkey off his back Saturday. He tends to get his points in clusters so look for big things this week.

*

With Wisniewski, Aucoin and Nikitin all out, David Savard saw over 16 minutes Saturday. This is his chance to make a splash. Ditto for John Moore, who saw 18:35 of ice and picked up an assist, plus he had a couple of shots on goal. One of these two could have a good week, which would dictate how many more opportunities they get going forward.

Poor Wisniewski. Can't catch a break with his new team. Two seasons in a row where he misses significant time in the first half.

Nikitin has been placed on IR retroactive to January 29. He's expected to miss the next two games or so.

*

Disappointed in the new Hockey Night in Canada "Hotstove". Since CBC launched this second intermission show, it has been about insiders discussing rumors. Now it's just a bunch of guys talking hockey. Elliotte Friedman is the only true inside. And while the rest of the panel knows hockey, they don't have anything to say during that timeslot that I want to hear. It makes it easier to flip to other games on Saturdays.

*

Here are the line combos from the latest games . You can always access these for free via the link along the top…that says…"line combos". (clever)

*

Apparently, the San Jose line of James Sheppard , Logan Couture and Ryane Clowe was their best line last game, according to
Fear the Fin
.

*

I got a phone call yesterday asking if I can play wing for the Flyers.

Yeah, with the concussion to Wayne Simmonds , the pickings are getting slim. A trade or a waiver acquisition has to be in the works. Does the aforementioned Butler need to clear waivers to go back down? Not sure how the new CBA works when it comes to that, but it's an interesting fit.

*

I thought that the line of Alex Ovechkin , Mike Ribeiro and Wojtek Wolski showed great chemistry Sunday and I'd like to see them stick together for a couple more games to see if it gets Ovechkin going. If so, then Wolski can be picked up again in most leagues.

*

Jaroslav Halak has been placed on IR with a groin injury. So you can ride Brian Elliott 's no-doubt nice numbers for the foreseeable future.

*

Carolina has sent down Zac Dalpe .

*

Peter Mueller has scored in four consecutive games. He was playing with rookie Drew Shore Sunday and the two looked great together. Shore hasn't seen too much ice time, but he has 14 shots in his last four games - so the points will come. Especially if he can stay on this line (and of course on the roster).

*

Derek Roy was back in full practice for the Stars and should be in the lineup for next game. This should help Brenden Morrow , who moved into the top six with the injury to Whitney.

*

With Eric Belanger on IR, the Oilers have called Magnus Paajarvi back up. Not that he has fantasy value anymore. And I don't see fantasy value in the long term, either. He looks like a solid third-line checker. Not what we saw in him during his draft year, but still a likely NHLer.

*

Other recalls - Charlie Coyle (Wild), Tomas Tatar (Red Wings), David Rundblad (Coyotes), Jake Allen
(Blues), Stephane Da Costa (Senators). I'm interested in seeing how all five do, but not interested in scooping them off the wire at this time. I'd be fastest on the trigger with Da Costa and Rundblad though, if I see something early.

With Coyle recalled and Matt Cullen healthy, Michael Russo speculates that one of Devin Setoguchi
or Mikael Granlund will be scratched for Monday's contest.

*

My THN article today, usually up around 1pm, takes a look at the top scorers in the NHL and how many of them played during the lockout. I'll try to keep linking them here and on Twitter, but since I'm off Thursdays those articles may not get linked unless Angus does it. My schedule for other sites are as follows:

The Hockey News - column every Monday and Thursday, mailbag every second Wednesday.

Yahoo! Puck Daddy - column every Thursday

*

Also next week I will be on vacation, losing money in Las Vegas. Jeff Angus has command of the ship.

*

Look at this weird goal off the glass:

{youtube}PrtBM0QQOXw{/youtube}