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Tim Thomas has been traded to the New York Islanders for a conditional second round draft pick. I'm going to hold off on a full analysis until we have a better idea of how this situation is going to play out.

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Dobber's Thursday Puck Daddy post is up - as always, an entertaining and informative read.

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Mikael Granlund is a scratch for the Wild tonight, and Charlie Coyle will skate on the right side with Parise/Koivu on the top line. Dany Heatley has moved down to the second line with Cullen and Bouchard.

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I have started to do some writing for the Canucks official website. In my piece yesterday, I take a look at Jordan Schroeder and his long road to the NHL. Schroeder has a homecoming of sorts tonight as the Canucks visit his hometown/state Minnesota Wild.

Through seven games in 2013, Schroeder is averaging a very respectable 14:47 of ice time per game. He has been seeing regular powerplay minutes on the second unit, and for good reason. He is arguably the best pure playmaker on the team after Daniel and Henrik (in fact, those cross-ice saucer passes he has been sending Raymond's way are very Henrik-like).

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And my latest for the PlayNow Sports Blog – a look at five NHL players who are underperforming in 2013. One of them, Dallas defenseman Alex Goligoski, was a surprise healthy scratch last night (well maybe not such a surprise given he is underperforming…).

Goligoski is a mobile and offensively-gifted defenseman, and he is able to create scoring chances for both himself and his teammates. However, he is off to a slow start in 2013, and he needs to be a productive defenseman on a consistent basis if he wants to bring value to Dallas. Goligoski has no goals and three assists in 10 games, and his defensive play has left much to be desired. He has been outplayed significantly in the defensive zone by most of Dallas's other regulars on the back end.

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All aboard the Viktor Fasth bandwagon! The latest goaltending sensation has stolen the starting job in Anaheim (or at least he is on the way to doing so) - he blanked the undermanned Avalanche last night and continues his dominant play for Anaheim.

I didn't watch the game but found it interesting that Ryan Getzlaf played less than Saku Koivu.

Colorado has yet to get a goal from a defenseman this season. Yikes. Erik Johnson is looking like the Benjamin Button of defensemen - seems to get worse each year after his monster sophomore season back in St. Louis.

Earlier in the day yesterday the Ducks acquired depth defenseman Ben Lovejoy from the Penguins for a draft pick. The Penguins moved him to free up a roster spot for Zach Boychuk (with Matt Niskanen returning from the IR the Pens were right against the roster limit).

*

PK Subban scored the lone Montreal goal last night. He now has more goals than Phil Kessel, too.

I am only kidding with my dig at Kessel - he's been generating a ton offensively, just incredibly snake-bitten so far in 2013.

From Dobber's twitter:

Dobber *@DobberHockey*

PK Subban - a point in each of the 3 games he's played. Raphael Diaz - 0 points in those 3 games (prior to that he had points in 5 of 6)

Tyler Seguin had a good game for the B's - two points in 18 minutes of ice time. After dominating Switzerland during the lockout, his slow start has been a real surprise.

Andrei Markov continues to remain healthy. 25 minutes played last night. With Subban back, the Habs have a lot of balance on their back end (Markov, Subban, and Josh Gorges have been spread across three pairings).

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Bob Hartley has been impressed with Jiri Hudler 's play so far.

"He's a gamer. He always wants to compete. With the puck, he's so creative. His passing, his vision around the net, he's very gifted. Has that quick release that can surprise many goalies. At the same time, I think he was raised in a great organization and you can tell his on-ice habits are very good and I think that's going to be a great example for our young players."

*

Speaking of Calgary, Miikka Kiprusoff 's injury could be a blessing in disguise for this team. They need to blow it up, and GM Jay Feaster appears to be unwilling to go that route. However, an injury to Kipper would surely sink Calgary to the NHL's basement (depending on the length of time Kiprusoff misses). I never advocate tanking intentionally, but Calgary needs to break the cycle of consistent mediocrity.

The Flames inked AHL goaltender Danny Taylor to a one-year, two-way contract. He has been very good this season with Abbotsford. No word on who will start (Leland Irving probably has the inside track for now).

*

In case you missed it, here is Elliotte Friedman's weekly 30 thoughts piece.

Centers are going to be a very hot commodity this summer.

There are seven prospective free-agent centres, including Weiss, who could, in theory, centre a No. 1 line next season:

Ryan Getzlaf , 28, Anaheim, $5.325M cap hit

Valtteri Filppula , 29, Detroit, $3M cap hit

Weiss, 30, Florida, $3.1M cap hit

Derek Roy , 30, Dallas, $4M cap hit

Mike Ribeiro , 33, Washington, $5M cap hit

Patrik Elias , 37, New Jersey, $6M cap hit

*

How high would you go for Getzlaf? How about any of the others on that list? I could see Weiss, Roy, and Elias all sticking around with their respective clubs, but not sure about the rest. Filppula could probably command upwards of $5 million on the open market.

*

I quite enjoyed this – PJ Stock (who I actually enjoy for the most part as a commentator on CBC) gets called out for his completely unwarranted blasting of PK Subban.

Ottawa prospect Mark Stone has a lot of upside both offensively and for other fantasy hockey categories. Get to know him a little better with this player profile.

On his play this season in the AHL:

"Stone's season started off with him mostly showing off his passes. He hung around on the perimeter a little too often, but had been adjusting and transitioning as the year went on. I would say it's both part of his transition and probably some stress that Richardson and the organization are putting on improving his defensive game. His two-way ability and his foot speed remain the things the team wants him to improve on most- we know he can score."

*

Mike Ribeiro has been Washington's best player this season, and it hasn't even been close.

A review of the Capitals loss to Toronto:

Great movement on the power play again (seriously, whodathunkit??) in the third period gave the Caps their second goal of the night - and raised the hopes of every Caps fan hoping for a late-game rally, admit it. Solid effort by Alex Ovechkin to carry the puck into the zone and zip it to Troy Brouwer , equally solid effort by Brouwer to get it on the tape of Mike Ribeiro . And because Ribeiro continues to be the best player on the team, he fired a laser of a shot past Scrivens to cut the lead to one.

*

Sticking with Washington – according to winger Eric Fehr , the Capitals are an "old team." I agree with him in a way – this isn't the team full of youthful exuberance from a few years ago. They look weathered and tired, and the core seems to be getting stale.

"We are an old team," Fehr said. "If you look around, we don't have a lot of rookies on our team. I don't even know if we have a rookie on our team this year…I guess Kundy [Tomas Kundratek] right now, but that's about it, so for the most part we've got guys that have been in the league for a number of years, and I guess the way this league's getting younger and younger, that would make us an old team."

This has not been a graceful aging. Being an old team isn't inherent to being either bad or good. But for the Capitals, it's particularly poignant, because they're far from where a team that's grown old together should be.

*

Rick Nash isn't producing at the level he had hoped for to begin this season. Never one to mince his words, John Tortorella takes a shot at a few of his players (and Nash likely among them):

"I tell you what … we have some guys who are really playing hard and we have some guys that look scared and tentative," Rangers coach John Tortorella said. "There's no sense in running through it with you guys [in the media]. The power play has been a struggle, and it hurt us again. I liked a lot of things about our 5-on-5 play, but [Tuesday] was all about special teams."

It will be interesting to see how Nash responds to the criticism – you knew it was coming at some point this season.

*

I give referees the benefit of the doubt on missing headshots from time to time as hockey is a really fast game and things aren't always as they appear in real time… but this is just a horrendous call. Even in real time it is clear as day that there was no direct contact with the head:

{youtube}CHgT_ccSTA4{/youtube}

*

What has Barry Trotz learned about his team this year?

“When our backs are against the wall, we’ll dig in,” Trotz said. “We’ll bend a lot. Maybe not necessarily break all the time, and we hang around. We defend OK. That’s something we’ve struggled with early in years almost every year, is defensive play.”

Added Trotz, “Our defensive play has been much better. It has been our puck management that has gotten us in more trouble than anything.”

*

I think as poolies we have learned that Shea Weber misses playing with Ryan Suter . Zero points in nine games this season for him.

*

Stop me if you have heard this before – is Columbus ruining the development of another high draft pick from the WHL? Ryan Johansen was sent down to the AHL yesterday – he isn't producing a ton this season early on, but he has been pretty good in other areas, and is playing over 15 minutes a night. What are the Blue Jackets doing with him? Let's hope he doesn't end up getting Brule'd.

*

So Marc Crawford… is Alex Semin still a "complete loser" in your eyes?

In a recent article posted by the Sporting News, the club's general manager, Jim Rutherford had

nothing but good to say about the Russian sniper. And why should he complain? Semin leads all forwards with ice time and is near the top of the team's stat chart regarding shots on goal, assists, and plus/minus.

"Sasha" has one goal and five assists so far but has hit the post on several shots, leaving one to think that with a slight change of luck, the goals will soon come. He has also made several brilliant passes that have just missed, as the recipient was not ready or expecting them.

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If you have some time to spare, this is a really interesting read on the Pittsburgh Penguins and their dwindling reliance on European players.

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Not fantasy hockey related, but I love what the Canadian NHL clubs are doing to raise awareness about mental health . Good on them.

*

Perhaps the most visual proof of Alex Ovechkin 's decline as an offensive force:

Season

TOI

G

A

Pts

Shots

Sh%

TOI/G

TOI/Shot

2012-13

149:14

0

1

1

18

0.00%

-

8:17

2011-12

1193:36

19

15

34

206

9.22%

62:49

5:48

2010-11

1230:48

17

30

47

230

7.39%

72:24

5:21

2009-10

1125:08

32

33

65

246

13.01%

35:10

4:34

2008-09

1222:16

27

23

50

305

8.85%

45:16

4:00

2007-08

1302:36

34

27

61

285

11.93%

38:19

4:34

*

The Devils have made a very shrewd acquisition, picking up skilled center Andrei Loktionov from the LA Kings. Loktionov has top six talent and upside, but he was never going to get the opportunity to show it with the Kings. He joins former OHL teammate Adam Henrique with the Devils.

A solid sleeper pick in keeper leagues, expect Loktionov to get a chance to prove himself shortly. From In Lou We Trust:

I get the sense that while he's been a productive forward in the AHL, the jury's still out about whether he can be a regular NHL player. Since he's already 22, I don't think he's going to develop that much more as a player but he's not done improving just yet. It may soon be "put up or shut up" time for him. The fact that Los Angeles was willing to give him up for just a fifth round pick suggests to me that they didn't think much of his future. They definitely gave him chances in his 59 games played.

On the other hand, HailRover's reaction at Jewels from the Crown has a different perspective. The Kings are well set at center in the future, he was pushed out of the lineup when they got Jeff Carter (Aside: thanks Columbus), and Loktionov became unnecessary to their plans (and kept him off the Cup, that's cold, L.A.). He could benefit from the change in scenery; going to an organization that really could use some young forwards in the system.

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