

Written by Jeff Angus Friday, 08 February 2013 18:07 - Last Updated Saturday, 09 February 2013 17:29
Lots of injury news today – Kris Letang won't play tonight for the Penguins, but it sounds like Brad Marchand is ready to return for the Bruins. That crash into the end boards could have been a lot worse (and it looked a lot worse at the time).
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Here is my weekly Friday Five post for the PlayNow Sports Blog – Nugent-Hopkins, the flying Ducks, and more.
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Are the New York Islanders even trying to win?

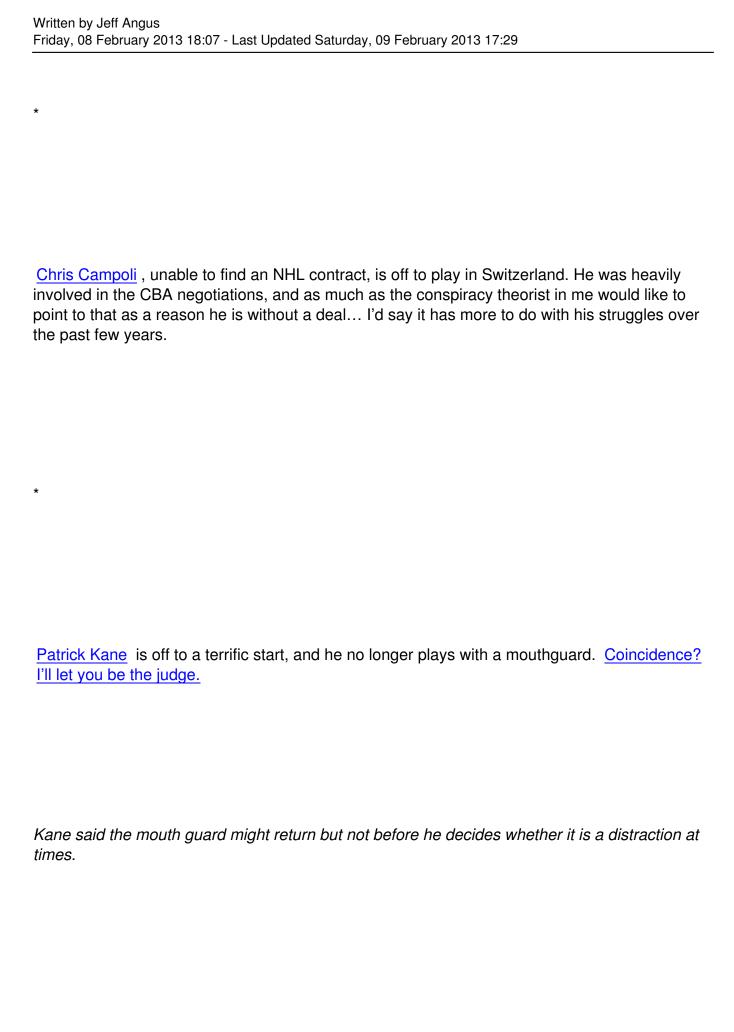
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The pattern obviously sucks for Islanders fans, who have to sit there and wait until the team moves out of the county before it will be competitive. You have the feeling that with a few more dollars, this could be a team that wins now, but the Islanders still have a round of selling off before ownership will decide whether or not they want to give the all-clear for the team to buy up a few good players, leverage their young talent for established NHLers, and even try make it back to the playoffs. The way teams like the Islanders, or the Miami Marlins in baseball, are run, sometimes going into seasons with no clear desire to compete makes you wish that a system of promotion and relegation wasn't foreign in North American sports. The team would at least have to pretend to care at that point.

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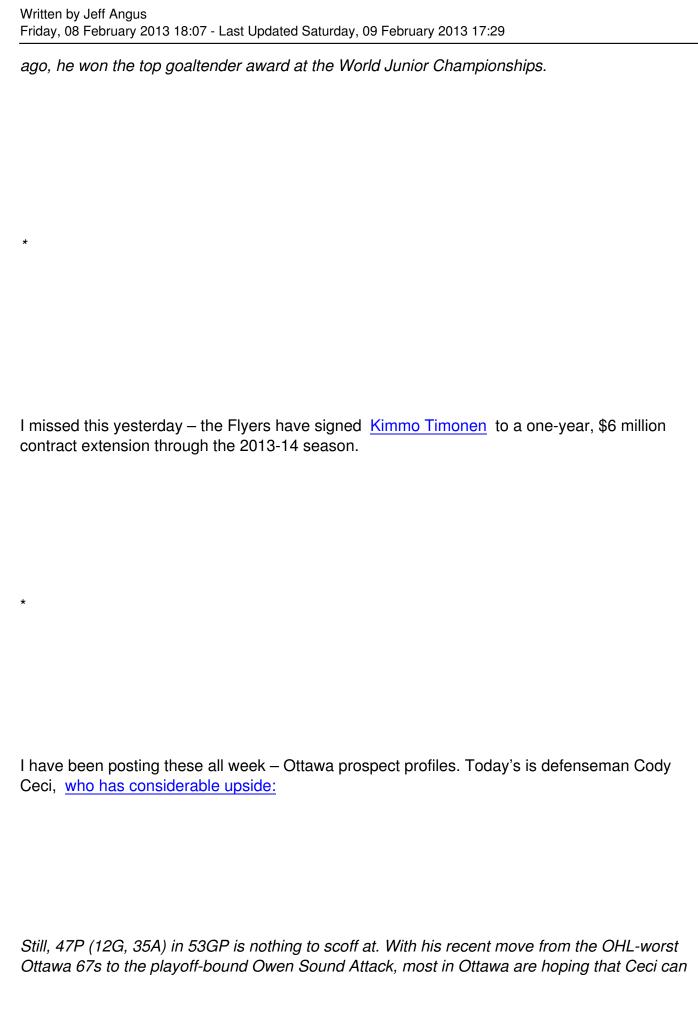
It isn't all doom and gloom in Washington – 2012 1<sup>st</sup> round pick Filip Forsberg is <u>tearing up</u> Sweden.

In the nine games since he returned from the World Junior Championship, Forsberg has four goals and eleven points. He also has 30 points in 31 games, which ranks him as one of the best in the league in points per game. Forsberg, one of the youngest players in the league, would also be among the league leaders in points if he hadn't missed time due to injury and captaining Sweden's WJC team.



Written by Jeff Angus Friday, 08 February 2013 18:07 - Last Updated Saturday, 09 February 2013 17:29 "That's something I've thought about," Kane said. "When it's in my mouth, is all I'm worried about is chewing it instead of worried about the game? It's kind of all in your mind. For the time being we'll keep it out. It could come back." More on Peter Mrazek's impressive NHL debut on Thursday night: Mrazek has won all his debuts this season, from the ECHL to the AHL to the AHL All-Star game to the NHL. He got his shot Thursday because the Wings wanted to give Jimmy Howard a mental break after he'd started each of the first nine games and played all but one period. Howard would have preferred to play, he said, but "it's good to just hit the re-focus button."

At the same time, it was an opportunity for Mrazek to show he can deliver in the big league after a strong showing in the minors. Mrazek was 16-7-1 with a 2.26 goals-against average and .916 save percentage in 25 games with the Griffins. He played in the Jan. 28 AHL All-Star game, and was last week's player of the week after stopping 53 of 54 shots over two games. Two years



{youtube}4dr92dSPDbk{/youtube}

Written by Jeff Angus Friday, 08 February 2013 18:07 - Last Updated Saturday, 09 February 2013 17:29 get back to playing meaningful hockey again. The fact that he's a leader on the Owen Sound blue line--he's by far the most potent offensive defenceman there--means he'll get a lot of responsibility and plenty of opportunities. Since Ottawa's got guite a few young defenders really pushing for NHL time (Patrick Wiercioch and Mark Borowiecki chief among them), Ceci may end up spending yet another year in major junior next season. (Editor's note: Due to his late birthday, Ceci is AHL-eligible for next season, so it seems likely the Sens would put him there. H/t to Monteith16 for the note.) If he does, the Sens will expect him to dominate, hopefully in the OHL and in the World Junior Championships. It might not be the ideal situation for him, but Ceci's going to have to make the best of it. A pair of first career NHL goals:

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