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Carey Price is out tonight with the flu (seems to be going around right now). Peter Budaj will get the start for the Habs.

*

Tyler Seguin's struggles continue - he is playing a soft, perimeter game right now. Perhaps he got used to the playing style in Switzerland? Either way, his early season lack of production is both surprising (considering how dominant he was in Europe during the lockout) and disappointing.

*

Dallas prospect Reilly Smith scored his first career NHL goal last night against Cory Schneider.

Schneider wasn't great - he let in a few softies. I'd expect Roberto Luongo to get the start next game.

Henrik Sedin had two helpers and passed Markus Naslund for the all time lead in team scoring.

Surrey, BC native Brenden Dillon scored the game winner in front of a ton of family and friends. The rookie defenseman has been a revelation for the Stars this season, and he is becomming a solid fantasy contributor (hits, PIM, too).

The big news - Kari Lehtonen left with a groin injury. Richard Bachman was OK in relief - I'd imagine Nihlstorp will get most of the starts if Lehtonen is out for any length of time.

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St. Louis received a number of really good performances last night.

Alex Steen had three points, David Perron scored twice, and Jaden Schwartz (one of my favourite young players in the league) had a goal and a helper.

TJ Oshie also had two helpers.

Jake Allen had a fantastic game for the Blues - he made 30 saves, including an absolutely ridiculous stick save which will be linked below.

Joey MacDonald came in to the game after Leland Irving allowed two goals on four shots.

*

75% of the time, Antti Niemi plays like a top 10 goalie. The other 25% of the time though… yikes. He did make 33 saves last night, but he looked shaky at times against his former club.

Ray Emery was rock solid for Chicago - he got the start as Crawford is out with an upper body injury.

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Another start and another win for Viktor Fasth. Quite the beginning to his NHL career - better late than never for the 30-year-old. I wonder what Jonas Hiller (and his owners) are thinking right now?

*

I am not always the biggest fan of Fleury, but he was great against Winnipeg last night. Best game I have seen from him in a while.

The game itself was pretty boring - Pavelec was spitting out rebounds all game long, but the team did a great job of containing the high-octane Pittsburgh offence.

So much for easing back in - Zach Bogosian played 25 minutes and looked great for Winnipeg. I forgot what a powerful skater he is - he had some fantastic end-to-end rushes. Still not really sure what kind of offence he possesses.

*

David "Wayne Gretzky" Clarkson had another goal last night - his last season and a half has been really, really impressive.

Kovalchuk added three helpers, and Elias also had three points. I don't think Elias gets enough credit for how well he has played in the past few years. He has played a lot of really good hockey for a long time.

*

Another great performance from Patrice Bergeron - no points, but he led the Bruins with five shots on goal, and he won 15 of 20 face-offs.

Dougie Hamilton score this first of many NHL goals, and he also added a helper. He continues to look really good on the Boston back end.

Tyler Myers had two points but played only 18 minutes. However, it was a step in the right direction after an awful start to the season (including a healthy scratch).

Drew Stafford (buy low candidate) scored his first of the season and had five shots on goal. I'm not a huge Stafford fan, but he's a good top six forward and his production will increase.

Christian Ehrhoff had a good game too - 27 minutes of ice time, plus-3, and two points.

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The Red Wings and Jimmy Howard have started official contract discussions.

*The last time goaltender Jimmy Howard was involved in a contract negotiation with the Detroit Red Wings, he admittedly was distracted to the point where it affected his performance.*

*That was two years ago. It won't happen again, Howard vowed.*

*“It was a learning experience last time," Howard said. “It was the first time I've ever been through something like that, and it took a toll on me.*

*

Are the Penguins interested in Pierre-Marc Bouchard and/or Devin Setoguchi ? They have a ton of cap space and would love to add another top six forward.

*Penguins GM Ray Shero was there while his team got ready for their game in Winnipeg on Friday. Why? The Star Tribune’s Michael Russo suggested that Pittsburgh might be interested in Devin Setoguchi and/or Pierre-Marc Bouchard .*

*Wild GM Chuck Fletcher and coach Mike Yeo both worked for the Penguins before coming to Minnesota and Pittsburgh is believed to be in the market for a top-six forward. Additionally, Setoguchi and Bouchard have both struggled this season, so maybe Minnesota would be willing to part with one of them in an effort to shake things up.*

*

Jake Allen's ridiculous save:

{youtube}s1yTWFUPbCM{/youtube}

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A look at how the New Jersey Devils are deploying their players thus far in 2013.

*If you didn't already know, Ilya Kovalchuk is a workhorse. Kovalchuk averages almost six minutes of power play time per game. This is two minutes more than any other skater for the Devils. Kovalchuk is often double shifted on the power play due to his blistering one timer. Part of the reason for the Devil's strong power play recently is the minutes Kovalchuk is playing. Since Kovalchuk is often used as one of the defensemen on the power play, there is only one other defenseman who is even remotely near Kovalchuk's minutes and that is Marek Zidlicky .*

*He is on the ice for just over three and a half minutes per game. As for forwards that see a lot of ice time during the power play, there are three that receive quite a bit of time: David Clarkson , Patrik Elias , and Travis Zajac . These three forwards average about 3.5 minutes of power play time. The Devils are running their most productive forwards on the power play. I personally like seeing these players on the ice for the power play. They're all composed players who function well on the power play.*

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I am starting to compile my annual top 10 keeper lists for each position – first up, the left wingers.

Here are my lists from the past three years:

- **2012 List**
- **2011 List**
- **2010 List**

How would you rank the top 10 LW?

How I go for positions – I use Yahoo as a guide, but I try to pick players that actually “play” the position they have eligibility for. Why? In the long run, they will tend to lose eligibility for positions they don’t play (not always, but often – better safe than sorry). LW is very thin right now, and Alex Ovechkin has been leading the way for the past three years. Will be retain his spot at the top, or will a new number one emerge?

*

Fitting - a nice pass from Henrik to set the all time Canucks scoring record:

{youtube}djoufm_u2u8{/youtube}