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My Saturday post - what is Jordan Schroeder's offensive upside?

Will Schroeder be a 60+ point player at the NHL level? Probably not. His production at lower levels doesn't indicate that kind of upside. But it doesn't rule it out, either. Schroeder has always been a player who excels with more talented linemates (to be fair, this could be said about any athlete in any sport).

To expand on that further – Schroeder has terrific vision and plays a smart game positionally, and those attributes are best utilized when he is put with talented wingers. For example, he and Mason Raymond have been great together this year, and Raymond is another really smart hockey player (and he looks significantly stronger on his skates this year than last too).

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I thought Columbus put up a great fight against Chicago last night, although the Hawks still found a way to get it done in OT. Chicago is so lethal at four-on-four with how they activate their defense.

Ryan Johansen scored his first goal of the season, and it was a beauty. He also added four shots on net and played 18 minutes.

Artem Anisimov had a goal and was really involved all night long - when he is skating and moving his feet he is really tough to handle. I really like the mix of players Columbus is gathering.

Steve Mason let in four on 35 - some great saves, and a few goals he would probably like back.

Stalberg had two points and six shots on goal - he's having a great season for Chicago, and has a lot of value in most roto leagues (of the deeper variety).

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Taylor Hall left the Oilers game with a minor lower body injury - don't expect him to miss any games.

Jaden Schwartz found the score sheet for the Blues - one of my favorite prospects in hockey. He is being brought along slowly by the Blues in his rookie season. He also had six shots on net, all while playing less than 14 minutes.

Ryan Whitney scored his first goal of the season for the Oil. He's been a healthy scratch as of late.

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Only 28 minutes of ice time for Ryan Suter last night. Does this guy have his own oxygen machine yet?

Another balanced effort for the Ducks - they are getting great performances from forwards like Bonino, Beleskey, and Palmieri.

Teemu also scored a vintage goal - what a beauty.

{youtube}pjEmDFrrP9Y{/youtube}

Minnesota rookie Darcy Kuemper got the start in goal - I thought he played pretty good in the loss.

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Here is an extensive breakdown of the failures of the Calgary Flames as a franchise. Warning – if you are a Calgary fan, maybe skip this one.

The problem with making lateral moves as a team fighting for the playoffs every year, is that you continue to struggle in the fight for the playoffs every year. Calgary has been stuck in this middle area for a long time because of the lateral trade moves. Calgary needs to break this trend and start to liquidate their assets as stated above. The Flames need to try and get as many quality prospects or draft picks with Iginla and Kiprusoff. Unfortunately for the Flames they are in a spot where even if they did commit to a total rebuild, they do not have enough attractable assets to trade for high end picks or prospects.

In conclusion…

Ultimately the modern day Calgary Flames can be described by a combination of bad contract value/cap hits, lateral trade moves, bad drafting, and an unwillingness to do a full rebuild. It has left Calgary fans with a product that is the definition of mediocre. There is no worse place to be in a salary cap league. Until changes are made in how the Flames operate, I see no end in sight to the Flames underwhelming results. Calgary is a great hockey town with knowledgeable and passionate fans. They shouldn't have to sit idle while its business as usual

from upper management.

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I have slogged the Oilers (a lot) for their ineptitude, but at least they have had a plan and have stuck to it (tanking). The Flames seem stuck in this middle zone, between playoffs and losing, and it won't help them at all when Iginla and Kiprusoff eventually move on.

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It is great to see a tragedy has such a positive outcome:

{youtube}K74HPdrr5H0{/youtube}

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Mike Green is out with a groin injury and won't play today for the Caps as they take on the Jets in Winnipeg.

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Can Brendan Gallagher become Montreal's Brad Marchand? That is meant to be a good thing, of course.

But Marchand has been very successful playing his style. Being a small agitator in a league filled with massive bodies isn't an easy thing to do. And yet, Marchand is one of the Boston Bruins' most valuable forwards.

Respect is key in professional sports, and Gallagher seems to understand where to draw the line. For an inexperienced pro, that's essential. One could make an argument Marchand hasn't found that line yet, but there's no denying that his approach is effective.

Gallagher is a long way away from becoming an NHL mainstay, but there's a reason a concussion didn't cause him to lose his spot on the Canadiens' roster as a rookie.

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Justin Bourne takes a look at the defenseman slide in his latest Systems Analyst post.

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How good is Alex Galchenyuk? Very good, in case you were wondering.

The above link compares his rookie season to Tyler Seguin's.

From looking at the data we have available, it seems like in spite of knee surgery costing nearly an entire year of his development, Galchenyuk is ahead of Seguin's development curve. Does this mean that Galchenyuk is going to explode into a 30 goal and 60+ point player next season? It's tough to say, because players don't all progress at the same rate, but it certainly looks like it's possible.

The results that Galchenyuk has shown so far as a rookie vindicate those who advocated he play this year in the NHL. The fact is that he has already had his adjustment period and managed it smoothly, which could provide the jump off point for a monster sophomore campaign.

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Dallas prospect Devin Shore is having a very solid season at Maine.

Devin Shore has flown somewhat under the radar since getting drafted by the Dallas Stars. This isn't a huge surprise given the amount of talent the Stars have injected into their farm system in the last couple of years and the fact that he's taking the road less traveled in playing U.S College hockey rather than Juniors.

That being said, Shore shows all the signs of being a talented prospect with some high end potential. He'll continue to get big minutes and improve for the next few years at the University of Maine but the way things are going for him and the way that he's working indicate that he'll have a legitimate shot at NHL playing time sooner than may be expected.

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