

Written by Jeff Angus

Wednesday, 13 March 2013 17:48 - Last Updated Thursday, 14 March 2013 13:52 th round pick, the Devils landed what looks like a future top six too. For a 5 center. And you wonder about the other NHL teams looking for more scoring? A 5 round pick – I don't have the numbers handy, but I'd wager getting a player who suits up for even one game in the NHL is somewhere around 10-15% (at the best). Adam Henrique was dominant with two goals and a helper – his game is really rounding into form as he was clearly still dealing with lingering wrist issues after coming back from the injury. In case you were waiting for the Canadiens to crash back to earth, don't get your hopes up. Montreal is the real deal – great goaltending, balanced offense, and a solid mix of skill and physicality on the back end. Oh, and they have arguably the best goalie in the game manning the net.

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PK Subban played 30 minutes and had two points, and he is starting to emerge as one of the top defensemen in the league – how quickly his contract dispute gets forgotten. Good on Montreal for keeping him – he is a game-changing defenseman in so many ways.

<u>Lars Eller</u> added a goal as well as a team-leading seven shots on goal. He adds an important element up the middle for Montreal – size and grit.

<u>Patrick Wiercioch</u> is a player I'd be looking to target in all keeper leagues – tons of skill, plays with poise, doesn't make rookie mistakes. For a 6-4 defenseman he moves really well. Tons of offensive upside.

Silfverberg and Zibanejad were both very good last night as well – two terrific young talents who don't look overmatched in the NHL.

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Written by Jeff Angus Wednesday, 13 March 2013 17:48 - Last Updated Thursday, 14 March 2013 13:52 Jordan Schroeder had two points last night in his first game back in the AHL. He played well in Vancouver but hit a bit of a rookie wall. He'll be back. The Canucks will be calling up Steve Pinizzotto soon. He makes for a solid depth option for hits and PIM - he has had a very successful AHL career as a grinder/agitator. And he can throw 'em, too: {youtube}dz8mCcRpsol{/youtube} A good read on the ailing Vancouver power play – time to change things up, according to Thomas Drance. The issue at hand appears to be a combination of luck and the club's offensive zone execution, which hasn't been that good. The team's systems are fine to my eyes and are especially potent

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in transition, even against really good penalty-killing teams like the Kings, Blue Jackets and Sharks. It looks to me like far from being "figured out" by the rest of the league, the Canucks are still able to toy with the opposition when entering the zone, use the drop-pass as an effective decoy, and generate scoring opportunities using a variety of different looks on the rush.

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Here are 10 overage OHL free agents to keep an eye on after the season wraps up.

# **Ryan O'Connor - Barrie Colts**

At the beginning of the year, O'Connor was my pick for overage player of the year, and he's certainly staking a claim to that. He currently leads all OHL defenseman in scoring (including goal scoring with 14) with 42 points. He also captains one of the East's best teams and provides a terrific effort at both ends of the ice. In particular, his defensive play has grown a lot during his time in the league. He's not the biggest (5'10), but he's gotten stronger to the point where he can do some pushing around. He has also learned how to anticipate in the defensive end and has become a quality one on one defender off the rush.

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Obviously, it'll be his booming shot and ability to move the puck that will get him a look at the next level though. It's not too often that NHL teams take a look at undersized defenseman, but I think O'Connor is worth the gamble.

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Free Jake Gardiner? Really, Mr. Agent?

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A look at the best "power forwards" in hockey of look in their definitions of a power forward.

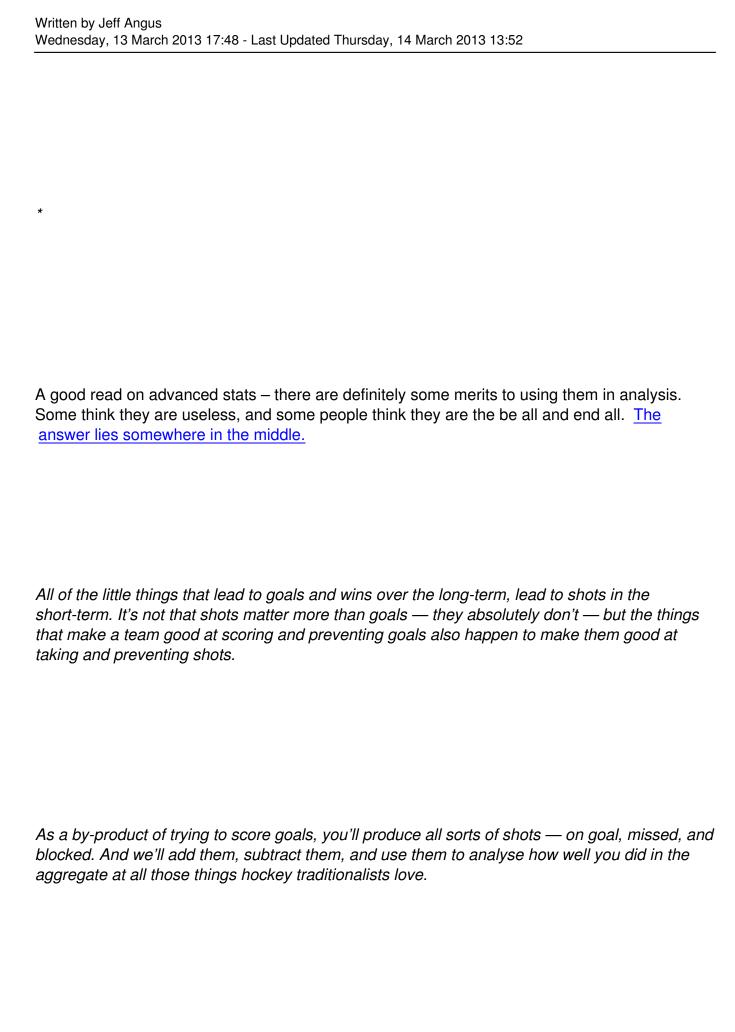
# <u>David Clarkson</u>, New Jersey

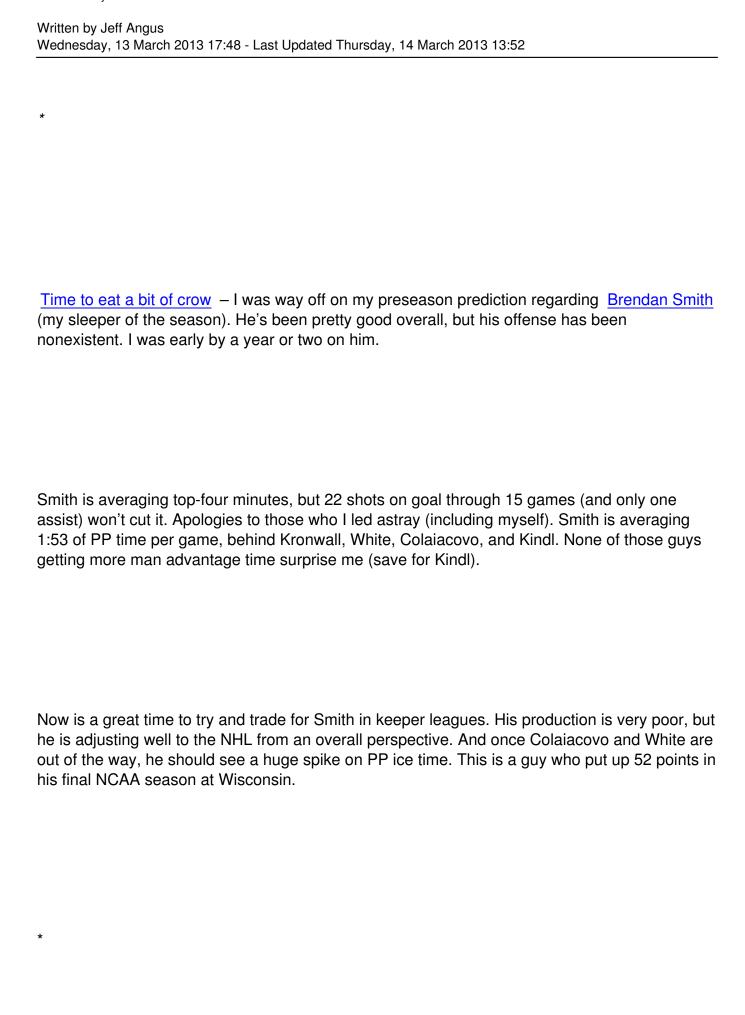
Long seen primarily as a grinder, the undrafted Clarkson forced the NHL to take notice with a 30-goal, 138-penalty minute campaign in 2011-12. He has now hit double digits in goals in five consecutive seasons, and has always been a reasonable shooter in terms of volume despite limited minutes early in his career. One of the toughest physical players on this list in terms of hitting and fighting, Clarkson is also enjoying a very strong possession season after years of middling play in that category, with the Devils leading their opposition by 22 shot attempts per hour in 5-on-5 play with him on the ice, and barely breaking even with him off it.

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A big reason for the lack of production from Grabovski and Kulemin – their role with the team this season. The duo have been the shutdown line for Toronto, freeing up scoring chances for the Kadri and Bozak lines.

If Carlyle wants Grabovski and Kulemin to start scoring more, then he needs to put them in a position to score more. Because right now, even with their exceeding huge defensive burden, they're driving play and scoring at the same even strength pace as their counterparts on the top line whose point totals are inflated by massive amounts of powerplay time.





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