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Hmm. More bad injury news for the Pens. The team will be without Jordan Staal for 4-6 weeks. MCL-related. No surgery. James Neal will miss "weeks" after sustaining a broken foot blocking a shot last night. On the bright side, at least there are timelines for these injuries. Both Sidney Crosby and Kris Letang are still out indefinitely with their concussions.

Evgeni Malkin is being covered in bubblewrap as we speak.

Caps' media indicates no new updates yet on Nicklas Backstrom or Mike Green.

His career peripherals against them aren't great, but it looks like Ty Conklin will face the Hawks

this afternoon. FYI if you're in need of another start to round out the week. Looks like Steve Mason for the Jackets against the Ducks too, in case you enjoy fantasy roller coaster rides.

Jarome Iginla finally potted his 500th career goal and he wasn't far away from having a three or four-goal game against the Wild. Best smile in hockey. Lance Bouma also got his first NHL goal and the Flames celebrated Olli Jokinen's 1000th game in front of the home crowd, although this one was actually his 1003rd.

Mike Green left tonight's game with an apparent injury again. No joke. He was hit behind the net in the second period. He cannot catch a good break. Alex Semin was back in the lineup and he added more pointage for his owners. He's been solid lately after enduring a miserable season otherwise. Semin was rocked by Brad Winchester with what looked like a good hit. Winchester was given a charging penalty, but not before Alex Ovechkin went after him.

Nicklas Backstrom, despite practicing several times and feeling good since the Rene Bourque elbow, did not play against the San Jose Sharks. The Caps are opting to be safe with their star centre (they stressed he did not have any setback) and that’s always the right route. He’s so durable too. This was only his sixth missed start in his career.

Nice note on HNIC in that although Brian Elliott picked up the shutout this evening, Ken Hitchcock will give Jaroslav Halak the start against the Habs in the next game on Tuesday. Classy and the right move.

Shane Doan collected his first career hat trick and the third marker came at the last possible second of the game. Could not happen to a nicer guy. His past few weeks have not been too hot for poolies, but maybe this will kick something off for him. He skated with Daymond Langkow and Mikkel Boedker again here.

Oliver Ekman-Larsson has eight points in 12 GP and he continues to receive a lot of power play minutes with the first unit.

Frans Nielsen has seven points in his past eight contests. He's with Brian Rolston and the unstoppable P.A. Parenteau.

Ryan Ellis wasn't able to capitalize points-wise when Shea Weber was on the shelf, but the young rearguard collected both his first NHL goal and assist tonight in Nashville's 5-2 win over Carolina. He has a solid 4-13-17 in 26 AHL GP, but his upside for keeper owners down the line is truly drool-worthy. His skill-set is ridiculous.

Jamie McBain, from that same game, is up to 11 points in his past 16 and Jay Harrison's two-goal performance gives him four points in his past four games. They each saw the most PP time on D for the Canes tonight.

Alex Pietrangelo has three straight two-pointers after adding a pair of assists tonight, so that's the way to begin 2012. He's on PP1. T.J. Oshie also had two helpers and has 12 points over his past 15 outings. He was with Patrik Berglund and Matt D'Agostini.

Another shortie for Adam Henrique, who has three this season. He just belongs with Ilya Kovalchuk and Zach Parise for the time being. He's earned it.

Erik Cole scored again tonight and that makes 10 goals over his past 16 starts with 10-6-16 in that span. Throw in some PIM, hits and SOG and he's been a solid addition for any roster. He opened on a line with David Desharnais and Max Pacioretty. Brian Gionta was back tonight too and he was on a line with Michael Cammalleri and Tomas Plekanec.

Another couple of points each for Phil Kessel and Joffrey Lupul as the Leafs hung on for a wild ride with the Wings. Toronto blew a 3-0 lead, but still came out with a 4-3 win. Jonas Gustavsson looked really good when I was tuned in.

Bryan Little was back for the Jets this evening and he was back on the line that's been money in the bank for the Jets for awhile now with Evander Kane and Blake Wheeler. Kane and Wheeler had seven shots each and they're all just playing with so much confidence.

It's also worth noting from that one that Tyler Myers has been back two games now and he's seen the most PP time on D with no Christian Ehrhoff in the lineup. With no Derek Roy, the Sabres did get Ville Leino back and had him with Brad Boyes and Drew Stafford. Jochen Hecht was between Thomas Vanek and Jason Pominville, as we've seen from time to time.

Another low-scoring game for the Kings and Jonathan Quick. Even with the loss, his owners are laughing every night with great peripherals. Three goals against in his past five starts with two shutouts in that stretch.

Dustin Penner did not play this afternoon because of a sore back. He apparently couldn't even walk this morning. Kyle Clifford began the game in his spot on the second line with Jarret Stoll and Justin Williams.

Mark Letestu is out with a broken hand. Columbus lines are often all over the place, but Letestu being out hopefully will give Derick Brassard more chances inside the top six. He had an assist on the only goal and was with R.J. Umberger and Antoine Vermette today, while the Vinny

Prospal – Jeff Carter – Rick Nash line was reunited. Ryan Johansen, who had been seeing quite a bit of top six time but was recently moved down in the line-up, was again in the bottom six to start today. Wait five minutes and Scott Arniel will change something again though.

Mike Ribeiro was apparently hurt at one point in his game, but came back and scored a couple of goals. Jamie Benn (nine points in four games) and Loui Eriksson (eight points in four games) are all about the multi-pointers these days and Trevor Daley now has 11 points in his past 14 games from the back end.

Jordan Eberle injured his knee after getting tangled up with Jamie Benn. Eberle did not return. Whew. At least it wasn't someone who was producing for the team or anything. He and RNH have been virtually invisible for my Oil this season. Taylor Hall has scored in four straight and five of six.

Danny Briere delivered a hat trick and has six goals in the three career games in which he has a fight. He took on Kyle Turris. Ilya Bryzgalov stopped 35 of 37 shots, so he'll look to build on that afternoon. Brayden Schenn has points in all three January outings and he's skating with JVR and Wayne Simmonds.

Milan Michalek recorded his first goal since coming back into the line-up. He had played five games without getting one past a netminder.

So the hockey day kicked off with a nasty Stanley Cup Finals rematch between the defending champion Boston Bruins at home to the Vancouver Canucks. Both teams wanted this one badly, although it changes nothing in terms of who's wearing last year's Cup ring. Every mental edge the Canucks can add to their arsenal can't hurt though.

With it having been an early game, you've likely seen all the highlights and don't need a big recap here. But there were two things aside from the brawling and fantasy results I wanted to touch on.

As much as I respect the competitiveness, I do not understand how Nathan Horton and players in similar situations can be so careless with their health as to fight when they've already suffered a concussion. If they're cleared to play they're cleared to play. I get that. I'm not a doctor. I'm also not suggesting he shy away from the physical game itself, but fighting in that situation is just – IMO – such a reckless and unnecessary thing for a player to do. Maybe that's another debate for another day when it can be gone into with more depth, but on the surface players in Horton's situation fighting just seems so ridiculous to me.

I've never weighed in on the "what to do with Cory Schneider" debate here at DH, so a quick two cents with him drawing the start and getting the win today in this huge game. The way Vancouver's roster is structured, with the depth in place and with the Canucks having a legitimate window in the next few years to continue being Cup contenders... I would keep Schneider here for the rest of this season, barring some huge injury elsewhere which might

necessitate a deal . The stability the team has with Roberto Luongo and Schneider in net is tremendous, just like the Bruins enjoy with Tim Thomas and Tuukka Rask. Those comparisons have certainly been made often enough.

Right now, IMO, Schneider helps the team's chances of winning a Cup more than bringing in an alternate piece up front or on D would. If the Canucks win this spring, maybe you deal him then. He'll be an RFA July 1. If the Canucks don't win this spring, I'd seriously consider keeping him for at least one more season for the same reason I would this year – he improves the Cup chances.

And from Schneider's perspective, although he certainly wants a shot at being a starter and also earning No. 1 money – don't you think he also realizes that a player should capitalize on a good chance to win a Cup when they have it? He's so young. He has plenty of years ahead of him and he'll be a star in this league. Players want to get dealt to Cup contenders when they're in their mid-30s because they've gone their whole careers without getting a chance to sip from Lord Stanley's mug. Schneider, if he wants it, has a chance to go for the brass ring multiple times early on in his NHL life. Who knows where he might end up if he's traded? Not to mention the fact that Vancouver – from the perspective of the team in front of him and the city for living – is a pretty sweet place to be for a goalie or any player.

Three quick notes to wrap up...

Should you be so inclined, you can follow me on Twitter . It's the quickest way to link to my blogs and I'm a safe "mobile notifications on" guy. Minimal inane babble.

Every night during the regular season, you can stay connected with a live NHL recap which includes fresh line combos, power play times and player notes from every team, every night. It's not perfect, but read it nightly and you'll have your finger on the pulse of fantasy hockey player trends. Check it out with your favourite features here at DH and you'll be laying waste to your poolie competition.

Have a brief fantasy hockey question? Every other Sunday you can send in something short for the Q&A and this is one of those weeks. Nichols@dobberhockey.com One Q per person, please. Your best shot is to send the email in before 12pm eastern or so on a Sunday on which the Q&A falls.

How much info do I need? Helpful notes include H2H vs. roto, keeper (how many per team and how many teams?) vs. single season, scoring categories, pertinent roster info and anything else truly relevant. Fantasy philosophy questions are more than welcome too.