

April 02, 2012

Written by Jeff Angus

Sunday, 01 April 2012 22:29 - Last Updated Monday, 02 April 2012 13:19

Ilya Bryzgalov was named as the NHL's First Star for March - in 13 starts, he had a 1.43 GAA and a .947 save percentage.

Nick Grossman is out for a week or two (of course he is, he is a Flyers defenseman after all). Sounds like he will be good to go for game one of round one, though.

Happy Birthday to Darryl "the Dobber" Dobbs!

Angus here - subbing in for Dobber today.

From the Twitter of Jonathan Willis: *"With tonight's win, Dubnyk is now 0.500 on the season (20-18-2). Khabibulin is 15 games under 0.500 (12-20-7)."*

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[Tim Thomas](#) was sensational at MSG yesterday, stealing two points for the Bruins. Boston clinched second in the East.

[Tomas Fleischmann](#) is on pace to play every game this season, and he's going to break the 60 point mark, as well. Pretty solid season, and Florida's gamble is paying off (to date, at least).

The Oilers put rookie [Teemu Hartikainen](#) on the top line with Nugent-Hopkins and Eberle, and they were rewarded. The Finn had two goals (both in the first period).

[Ryan Getzlaf](#) led the Ducks with six shots on goal. None of them, however, ended up in the net.

Getzlaf has ONE goal since the All-Star Break. 32 games. Beyond awful. Imagine the backlash he would be getting if he played in a bigger market.

Last night could have been [Devin Setoguchi](#)'s best game as a member of the Wild – tons of

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scoring chances, and he showed a chippy edge as well. He finished the game with three points and four shots on goal.

[Nick Leddy](#) – assist machine. He has 37 on the season now – 15th among all NHL defensemen.

So that Radulov sure is struggling to adjust to the NHL.... Some were worried he would try to be too fancy or his game wouldn't translate – talent knows no languages or ice surface sizes. The guy can flat out play hockey at an elite level.

I'd be very afraid if I were Wings goalie Jimmy Howard – Radulov looks poised for a big first round (assuming Detroit and Nashville meet up... Chicago could find its way into the picture too).

Top WHL scorers through round one of the playoffs:

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[Ty Rattie](#) and Sven Bartschi have combined for 12 goals and 24 points in four games. Rattie had 10 games in that span.

[Emerson Etem](#) had seven goals and five helpers in a four game sweep. He's going to be in the NHL next year.

[Brendan Gallagher](#) has five goals and 10 points through the five games of the series (also has 14 PIM). He'll also be in the NHL next year – it will be interesting to see how the Habs fit him in. Such a smart player.

Game six between the two teams was last night, but it wasn't over at the time I wrote these ramblings. I'll update the results later on today.

Dorsett's 12 goals and 218 PIM is one of the better under-the-radar fantasy seasons I have come across. For a pure PIM player (Dorsett's fantasy hockey role, at least), 12 goals of production is quite impressive.

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[Henrik Sedin](#) has been really good lately – much stronger with the puck and more decisive offensively. 12 assists in the last 10 games – he won't even hit 15 goals, but he is a lock to win the assist crown again.

Sedin has had at least 55 assists in each of his past seven seasons.

Weber and Suter – on pace for a combined 27 goals and 99 points.

Shattenkirk and Pietrangelo – on pace for a combined 21 goals and 96 points.

I'd expect Yandle and Ekman-Larsson to be battle Pietrangelo and Shattenkirk as the highest scoring defensive duo next season.

For all of the flack he gets (including from me), [Patrick Marleau](#) is fourth in the entire NHL in goals over the last three seasons (109).

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Over the last three seasons, [Henrik Sedin](#) has 44 more assists than any other NHL player. Pretty impressive.

Burrows, Sedin, and Sedin are 1-2-3 in combined plus-minus for forwards over the past three years, too. Plus-83, 82, and 80, respectively. Shows the even strength dominance that the trio has had over that time.

[Alex Semin](#) is in fourth at plus-65, just to show that plus-minus is far from the end-all, be-all measure of defensive acumen (with the right context it is useful, though).

Parise and Ovechkin are the only players in the league to record at least one shot on goal in every single game this season.

An interesting stat – [Patrik Elias](#) is third in the league in terms of percentage of games with at least a point (over 70). Malkin and Stamkos, unsurprisingly, are one and two.

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Interesting idea – why doesn't the NHL award the draft lottery's highest odds to the 17th best team (the team closest to making the playoffs without getting in), and the second best odds to the 18th best team... and so on. Reward teams for trying to win and trying to get in the playoffs.

May open a can of worms for some other issues, but I can't see a team in playoff contention purposely losing games, even for a crack at a really good prospect.

A professional sports organization openly accepting losing and tanking is an embarrassment to the sport. Pittsburgh sucked for a few years, but they righted the ship with smart veteran signings and a stable base for the young talent to grow – same thing in Chicago.

So.... Flyers vs. Penguins, anyone?

I only caught the tail end of the third period, but I saw about three games worth of rough stuff and action.

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Highlights of the game include Giroux and Crosby going head-to-head (Giroux is like a slightly worse Crosby at everything, and I mean that as a compliment), and [Scott Hartnell](#) impersonating a fan who was impersonating Hulk Hogan.

Giroux's line: one goal, two assists, 20 minutes of ice time, and 14-for-28 at the faceoff circle.

Crosby's line: two assists, seven shots on goal, 22 minutes of ice time, and 15-for-30 at the faceoff circle.

Another late season game full of PIM – how many of you had your playoff week decided by the game yesterday?

Voracek has quietly had a very strong season for the Flyers – he had three points and four shots in only 14 minutes of ice time yesterday. He's going to be a mainstay in the top six next season, and could be the top line winger with Giroux and Hartnell (assuming Jagr doesn't return – I haven't heard much either way on the issue).

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Couturier's understated rookie season continues – it is incredible that a playoff calibre team is leaning heavily on a teenager as their main match up forward. He had a helper in 18 minutes last night, the bulk of it spend checking Malkin.

[Kyle Turris](#) had quite the afternoon for the Sens, who clinched a playoff spot. Two goals, two assists, and eight shots on goal.

Spezza missed the game due to family reasons – [Jesse Winchester](#) took the bulk of his ice time and faceoff situations (and he went 10-for-14 on the draw).

[Daniel Alfredsson](#) also missed the game with the flu.

With a strong finish to the season, [Mark Streit](#) could hit 50 points. He hasn't been his usually dominant self this season, his production is still quite good. I think he's in for a big 2012-13 season, especially with the talent he has to play with up front...

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... Assuming the Isles actually become a good team at some point.

Such a sweet goal from Radulov...

{youtube}BeakgLacUUU{/youtube}