

April 09, 2012

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 08 April 2012 22:40 - Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2012 14:07

If you are looking at my picks in the Draft List, then re-download this list as of 10:30am ET. I made a small mistake by not filling in Pittsburgh in the Final. This has been fixed and my picks/list is ready to go.

You can pick up my SEVENTH annual Interactive [Playoff Draft List](#) . I stuck the video clip of how this works at the bottom of the ramblings here – I've since updated the playoff tree and injury information. Everything is up to date. Also, don't forget to join the FREE annual playoff pool. [Click here](#) , pick your

players – 'submit'. Done. Win a custom jersey from

[Cool Hockey](#)

or a framed and signed Alex Burrows picture from The

[Fan Zoo](#)

Need some more playoff help? Here is my column today for [Puck Daddy on the Western Conference](#) . Here is my column

for the Hockey News from Thursday on

[sleepers in the West](#)

and then today's piece

[on the East](#)

April 09, 2012

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 08 April 2012 22:40 - Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2012 14:07

Now that the postseason is here, we can all quickly grab all the reliable injury information that we could possibly want, as teams trip over themselves to get that to us. Either that, or a player who was perfectly healthy – seemingly – on Saturday could be out for the playoffs with a concussion. Or perhaps he'll miss a game with what was either a stubbed toe or a broken arm...

In the playoff draft, I would not be taking [Daniel Sedin](#) or [Jonathan Toews](#) in any of the first three rounds. Just not worth such a precious pick. So if Sedin were to ever get to me in any pool in the fourth or fifth round, I would look at that as a huge win.

An update on James van Riemsdyk – he is [out for 2-3 more weeks](#) .

A couple of NHL debuts from Saturday – Jeremy Welsh was signed by the Hurricanes and thrown right into the lineup. Welsh plays a bit of a power game, was undrafted, and he had 81 points in his last 80 games for Union College (last two seasons). He was pointless with four PIM in his debut, but saw time with Skinner and Ruutu (not a bad start and hints at where they see his role). Meanwhile, [Scott Glennie](#) got into his first NHL game for the Stars. But he's some years away from becoming a regular. He was pointless in that cup of coffee.

Another debut – Riley Sheahan, Detroit's budding power forward. He saw just six minutes, yet managed to get four minutes in penalties. Very impressed that he took three shots on goal during that limited ice time. Look for him ...in 2015.

April 09, 2012

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 08 April 2012 22:40 - Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2012 14:07

With [Nicklas Grossman](#) n re-signing with the Flyers, [Ilya Bryzgalov](#) 's numbers for next season just became so much better.

[Jaroslav Halak](#) is coming off a win, while [Brian Elliott](#) is 0-1-1 in his last two (after three consecutive shutouts, I should add). Halak should get the starting job and the Blues will ride him until he has a bad game. And if he puts in several great games in a row, they'll ride him through the postseason. Just my guess. The two just won the William Jennings Trophy.

Generally speaking, I always bet on the bigger contract and/or better pedigree, when determining who gets more opportunities. That's precisely why [Martin Brodeur](#) will be the starter for the Devils, even though

[Johan Hedberg](#)

is, nowadays, the better goaltender.

And I don't care if Brodeur has won his last five games, or had an improved second half. He played in a protected system that saw the team allow 22 or few shots in nine of his last 24 games.

April 09, 2012

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 08 April 2012 22:40 - Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2012 14:07

I won! A hundred dollar bet on Bodog.ca before the season, picking [Evgeni Malkin](#) to win the Art Ross at 30-1 odds lands me a cool \$3000. Never really placed such a wager before, but those odds were ridiculous and I knew that I would win as long as Malkin played at least 75 games, and Crosby played fewer than 70. He did, he did and I did.

And [Steven Stamkos](#) fans and owners (often one and the same), the fact that he keeps building on his numbers year after year – up over the 60-goal mark now – is extremely promising. It's reminding me of the Brett Hull vs. Wayne Gretzky debate. If he gets to 70 goals, can he win the Art Ross next year? If Crosby or Malkin are healthy, the answer is still no.

Red Wings [injury updates](#) – [Darren Helm](#) is expected back for Game 2, Dan Cleary is expected back "soon". But [Todd Bertuzzi](#) may be struggling with his [groin injury](#), which may keep [Gustav Nyquist](#) in the lineup.

[Akim Aliu](#), whose stock has fallen tremendously over the years, could not have made a better impression. After being unable to hold down an AHL job and spending quite a bit of time in the ECHL, the Flames gave him a look. He had an assist in his first game, two goals in his second game. Three points in two games, while he has just 14 in 40 AHL games (six in 10 ECHL games). I don't know what to make of this. I obviously don't trust it, but sometimes players do better in the NHL than they do at other levels. [Andrew Shaw](#) is one example of this. Alex Burrows is another.

Things that won't shock me:

- [Mike Smith](#) shuts the door on the Blackhawks and finished them quickly.

- Pittsburgh knocks out Philly in four games.

- Letang gets hurt and Philly knocks out Pittsburgh in six.

- Florida goes to the second round

- The Kings go up 2-1 (games) against the Canucks before Corey Schneider gets a start, saves day.

How did you do this year? I won one of my three keepers. This is on the heels of two consecutive seasons in which I didn't win in any of the three keepers. Feels good to get back on top. And Mike Smith gets a big thank you for that one. Kovalchuk, Benn and Giroux also get my thanks, and a deep, strong defense corps also helped. The other pool I did well in was a basic points only pool done over at The Hockey News. I finished second to Jason Kay, despite having both Malkin and Giroux. My downfall there included Lecavalier, Plekanec and Heatley. In the DobberHockey Experts League, roto-style, I lost two points and Tim Lucarelli gained two points - knocking me down to fourth. Ryan Ma won that one, but it was down to the final week and Peter Hadley - our reader who worked his way up from the Entry League - gave him a good run.

April 09, 2012

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 08 April 2012 22:40 - Last Updated Monday, 09 April 2012 14:07

In my other two keepers, I'm rebuilding in one - around Malkin, Neal and RNH. Lots of great youngsters on the way up, including Granlund and Strome. I probably need one more year in that one, but could be surprised. And in the other keeper, because Crosby was out all year I just tried to build a strong playoff team. I got into the playoffs and I think I have a Top 3 favorite playoff squad at this point.

How the Interactive [Playoff Draft List](#) works, and what it has to offer...

{youtube}fjOeMnEAmHw{/youtube}