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Written by Jeff Angus

Thursday, 05 July 2012 16:24 - Last Updated Friday, 06 July 2012 10:02

Some new contracts signed:

[David Perron](#) has been extended for four years by the Blues – cap hit of \$3.8 million. Great to see him back and in top form after missing almost an entire season due to a concussion.

The Oilers locked up goalie [Devan Dubnyk](#) to a two-year deal worth \$3.5 million per. May seem like a lot but Dubnyk has pretty good numbers (all things considered) and is a goalie to watch. It will be interesting to see how he handles 55-60 games this year. I think he's ready for it. The two year term won't hurt the Oilers at all, either. Dubnyk isn't at the Rask/Schneider level, but he is a solid goalie.

I wrote a piece on [Shea Weber](#) yesterday – where things are at now, and what David Poile's options are. [Give it a read.](#)

“Speculating on a potential return for Weber is a fool's errand at the moment, as no one outside of Weber, his family, and his agents knows where he wants to play. However, if and when that

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news is made public, the Predators would be best served in maximizing the value of their asset. They justified keeping Suter during his last season because they had a great shot to make a Cup run. However, losing another franchise defenseman for nothing would cripple the organization. They need to let the Suter news sink in, talk to Weber, and figure out where he wants to play. If it isn't in Nashville, it may be time to move on from their Captain."

The Hurricanes are reportedly no longer interested in trading for [Rick Nash](#) after Scott Howson kept asking for [Jeff Skinner](#)

in return. I don't think Howson gets this whole negotiating thing. Sure you start high, but you are supposed to meet somewhere in the middle.

I understand he has a lot of pressure to maximize the return on his club's only star player, but teams are going to become frustrated if Howson keeps asking for unrealistic returns.

A few minor signings yesterday:

[Ruslan Fedotenko](#) and [Bruno Gervais](#) signed with the Flyers. Fedotenko will slide in on line three or four in a depth role, while Gervais will do the same on the back end.

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Calgary signed center [Mikael Backlund](#) to a one-year deal worth just over \$700,000.

Backlund performed pretty well last year considering his always-changing linemates and lack of a clearly defined role.

Backlund will have a [top six spot to lose right now with the Flames.](#)

"Mikael needs to work on his consistency and his focus in order to break through in a top six role and start to define his role on our team," Jay Feaster said in a statement."

The Caps re-signed [Mathieu Perreault](#) to a two-year deal worth just over \$1 million per season. Perreault is a full-time NHL player after bouncing back and forth. He plays with a lot of intensity and has good offensive skills, but is [likely destined for more of a depth role at the NHL level.](#)

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“Even if I'm top nine forwards it's no problem because the Caps when they've been playing well in the last few years they've always had three sets of lines,” Perreault said. “Even if I'm on the third or even the fourth line, it wouldn't really matter. All I want is to get ice time and get a chance to play a little bit more. That's it.”

All organizations have them – players who contribute more than just goals and assists. [Sami Salo](#)

was one of those players for the Canucks.

[I counted down his top 10 moments yesterday](#)

(yes, a lot of slap shots made the list).

“He battled through incredible adversity, never complained or created any problems, and delivered at a high level both defensively and offensively. He provided some memorable moments, but it is the night-in and night-out consistency, and on-ice intelligence that the Canucks are going to miss the most.”

Michael Arace pleads with Columbus to not ship [Rick Nash](#) to Detroit. [Can you blame him?](#)

“The Detroit Red Wings are in the [Rick Nash](#) derby. Please, not Detroit. Not there.

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Have mercy for long-suffering Blue Jackets fans. If the captain wants out, ship him. This has dragged on long enough. It is torturous. It makes the franchise look like something even worse than a last-place team. Please, though, do not cave in to Detroit.”

Scott Howson is taking so long with this because he knows he needs to maximize the return on the only star player his organization has ever seen. Nash, at one time, was the Columbus Blue Jackets.

“There is only one scenario whereby Nash-to-Detroit would be acceptable, and that is if the Wings give up GM Ken Holland, coach Mike Babcock and a goaltender (preferably, Jimmy Howard). Absent such a weighty return, the Jackets are no closer to beating the Wings for another generation. Is that not the point, to beat them?”

Howson, after five months of wrangling, has to be haggard, harried and maybe even desperate. We all want this ordeal to end. But it would go beyond farce if Nash is traded to the Wings for a parcel of prospects and picks. It would tear at the very core of a franchise that has little left at which to tear.”

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With all of that being said, what would be a fair package from the interested teams? Here are a few of my thoughts:

San Jose:

[Joe Pavelski](#) , [Douglas Murray](#) , prospect [Alex Stalock](#) and a 1st round pick

Detroit:

[Valtteri Filppula](#) and [Brendan Smith](#)

New York:

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Chris Kreider, [Tim Erixon](#) , and a 1st round pick

Again, these are just ideas. I don't think the Rangers want to move Kreider. I'm not sure the first package would get it done. Whenever a team trades a star player for a package, it is hard to recoup full value (this relates to my quality over quantity rule for trading in fantasy hockey).

[Sticking with the Red Wings](#) – Ken Holland, after missing out on [Ryan Suter](#) , would “rather go with the kids.”

“Our focus going back to last year was to be positioned for this summer. Unfortunately, we weren't able to add a high-profile player or two. But I think we have a lot of good pieces in place, and we have some players ready to take bigger roles. We'll explore the marketplace. We'll explore trading. We'll move on.”

Players ready to take bigger roles... [Brendan Smith](#) and Gustav Nyqvist, for sure. Who else? I hope he doesn't mean [Jonathan Ericsson](#) , for the sake of Wings fans. Ericsson the good is a very solid two-way defenseman who can play 20 minutes, but Ericsson the bad is a defensive liability prone to turnovers and poorly timed rushes up the ice. Still has yet to figure the consistency thing out.

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Do the Wings turn their attention to [Shea Weber](#) ?

I don't see Weber re-signing with the Predators. He wants to win. Losing Suter is a huge loss. Weber is reportedly still bitter about the arbitration process that he underwent last summer. The Predators could throw the kitchen sink at him, but something tells me he wants to move on.

And if he does, the Predators can't afford to lose a top defenseman for nothing, again ([Dan Hamhuis](#) and Suter). Weber could fetch a royalty in return, but it may come down to him forcing his way to a team he wants to go to, like [Jordan Staal](#) in Pittsburgh. Weber with a contract extension signed is worth immensely more than impending-UFA Weber.

Trade targets like [Jay Bouwmeester](#) and [Paul Martin](#) make sense, although the Penguins are likely keeping Martin now. [Keith Ballard](#) is another name it keep in mind – he is a good defenseman who hasn't fit in at all with the Canucks. He was a #2 in Florida when the Canucks acquired him, but he has struggled to hold down a role. Even as someone who watche 75+ Canuck games, it is a tough one to figure out. He skates well, reads the play well, and plays with a lot of snarl for a little guy.

On the Forecheck takes a look at replacing Suter in Nashville . [A really good read here.](#)

“On Opening Night 2011, the Predators' bottom pairing was [Teemu Laakso](#) and [Jack Hillen](#) , who contributed nothing on special teams (or at even strength, really). This change in roster dynamic necessitated that

[Ryan Suter](#)

and

[Shea Weber](#)

play on the top power play and penalty kill units.

This season, however, the Predators will, by all indications, feature [Ryan Ellis](#) and [Hal Gill](#) as their third pairing. Ellis and Gill, besides being a hilarious sight gag due to their height discrepancy, are two of best specialists for their respective special teams duties. With his much superior shot, Ellis is already probably a better PP defenseman than

[Ryan Suter](#)

. And Gill, while no #20, is a very good fit for the Preds' passive PK system that relies mostly on shot-blocking and forward clears.”

[Raw Charge takes a look](#) at the [Matt Carle](#) signing in Tampa Bay.

"While it's obvious Carle will be in a top-4 rotation with the likes of [Eric Brewer](#) , [Victor Hedman](#) and newly signed defenseman [Sami Salo](#) , it remains to be seen how exactly the Lightning defense will be made up this year. The Bolts had gone out of their way to acquire defenseman [Brian Lee](#) and [Keith Aulie](#) at the 2012 NHL trade deadline, but now it would look like one of the two may be bound for Syracuse to begin the 2012-13 season.

At the same time, Tampa Bay has just added a defenseman that was +4, +30, and +19 in the past three seasons (respectively) with the Flyers. And seeing he will be all of 28 when the NHL season starts (if it starts on time.... No pressure, Gary Bettman and Donald Fehr), the long-term investment is a sound one. Especially in light of the types of contracts being signed by free agents so far in the 2012 off-season."

Carle will fit in nicely there. Was he overpaid? Yes, most UFA contracts are above value. An open bidding process is meant to drive demand up. And when supply (puck moving defensemen) is limited, it is only a natural occurrence for prices to rise. However, the Lightning are a much better team today than they were yesterday.

What do the Leafs do with [Cody Franson](#) ? He did OK there last year in a very sheltered

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bottom pairing role, but he apparently doesn't want to re-sign if it means he will be a frequent healthy scratch again. Do the Leafs move him and try to get some value back?

[In Lou We Trust says goodbye](#) to [Zach Parise](#) . I own a Parise Devils jersey (one of a few jerseys that remain in my collection), and he has been my favorite player in the league for the past four or five years.

"So for now, we say goodbye to [Zach Parise](#) . Feel what you want; react as you are. Parise made the choice he felt was best for him and I know it hurts. Do know that feeling will pass. As great as he was, Parise is not and never will be bigger than the New Jersey Devils. Still, at some point, please thank him for the time, the plays, and the goals you've scored in New Jersey. We shall see him again on November 11, 2012 at the Rock - as the opposition."

This guy won't replace Lidstrom or fill in for Suter, but he's ready to play in the NHL:

{youtube}uESM2ua1X7w{/youtube}

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Boom goes the dynamite:

{youtube}JZMY4gyXAhU{/youtube}