

July 09, 2012

Written by Dobber

Sunday, 08 July 2012 22:12 - Last Updated Monday, 09 July 2012 16:49

Angus here - wrote an extensive analysis of Alexander Semin's tenure with the Capitals. Lots of interesting stuff was dug up - [check it out here](#).

When the Leafs grabbed van Riemsdyk I thought – “Hey, I wonder if he’ll get a look at center?” And then I figured that sure, it would be silly to not at least try him there. After all, he was a center in college and it’s not like that was twenty years ago. But I never heard anything about it in Leafland. So I was glad to see the [TSN article](#) reporting that it is exactly what the Leafs will do. And if his faceoff win percentage is anything above 46%, then they should keep him there. Faceoffs you can work on.

The Leafs would have JVR, Grabovski, Bozak, Steckel, McClement, Connolly and Lombardi. I think you buy Connolly out, move Lombardi and Bozak to the wing.

Connolly was a good, low-risk signing that failed miserably. That’s why he was signed for low risk – because you knew he was a risk. There was upside and there was downside. The wool was over nobody’s eyes here. The Leafs didn’t get the point-per-game player that he could have been, were it not for injury after injury. They did not get the talented 60-game player who could post second-line numbers either, which is what we saw his last couple of years in Buffalo. No, he stunk. They got the ‘downside’. But he was signed for two years – his buyout would cost \$2 million this year and \$1.3 million next year. I say do it and move on.

[Zach Parise](#) and [Ryan Suter](#) have top-heavy deals. We all rightfully assume that the players get the big contracts they want and the team gets around the salary cap a little. Suter's final two years are for \$1 million each. He'll be 38 and 39. Did he destroy the end of his career? Consider this – look at what [Daniel Alfredsson](#) is doing. He signed a similar front-loaded deal that sees him getting paid \$1 million next season. So now he's thinking about retiring. Would he think about retiring if his deal wasn't front-loaded and he made \$5.5 million next season? Of course not. But for a million bucks, to a guy who has trouble shutting his walk-in closet door because it's stuffed to the ceiling with neatly-stacked \$100 bills?

Now imagine [Ryan Suter](#), who at 38 could very well still be putting up 45 points and plus-25 numbers. Factor in inflation and the salary-cap rise. In 2023, the market for him could be \$12 million per year. But he still has two years left. At \$1 million each. So does he retire when he's still a productive player? And with technology and breakthroughs in training techniques, etc – players playing when they're 40 could be pretty common. It's not something that Suter and Parise thought about, but who could blame them – I'd still be jumping off the diving board into a swimming pool filled with bills.

Listen - I know they got their money now. So did Alfredsson early in his contract. But if the average salary more than doubles what it is today 12 years from now - Suter could be worth \$12 million per year. Those last three years he's set to make \$4 million. Forget all the "front pay" that he received. That's already in the bank. When he's 37, under this scenario, all he'll see is that equivalent players are making \$30 to \$40 million over those three years while he makes \$4 million. Long-term, front-loaded contracts hurt players too. They just won't know it until it happens.

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In the meantime, I can see Alfredsson negotiating an over-priced one-year extension. He knows he's worth \$5 million on a one-year deal, so why should he play for \$1 million? So instead, perhaps he gets extended for \$6.5 million ... with the understanding that \$2.5 million of that is backpay for 2012-13. Even though he already got paid for 2012-13 as part of the front-load. Selective memory, right?

If the Panthers get [Roberto Luongo](#) , he'll be in the exact same situation in 2014-15. Fans and media will be pressuring the team to get rid of him in favor of his young upstart backup. Why would he want to go through that again?

[Gary Roberts](#) . A legend for fitness. Surely anyone who trains in his fitness camp must have had a strong year. I assumed this very thing, and went to do an analysis of it for my [Fantasy Guide](#) . You tell me. Here are the results from last year's camp:

Strong years: [Tyler Seguin](#) , [David Clarkson](#) , [Brendan Smith](#) , Nail Yakupov (but he got hurt), Alex Galchenyuk (but he got hurt),
[Steven Stamkos](#)

,
[James Neal](#)

,
[Steve Downie](#)

,
[Cody Hodgson](#)

, Spencer Abbott,
[Peter Holland](#)

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Weak years: [Mike Cammalleri](#) , [Andrew Cogliano](#) , [Matt Stajan](#) , Nik Antropov, [Jay Harrison](#) ,
[Wojtek Wolski](#)
, Mike Neal,
[Matt Beleskey](#)

So-so years: PK Subban, [Paul Bissonnette](#) , [Raffi Torres](#) , [Ryan Ellis](#) , [Daniel Winnik](#) , [Jeff Skinner](#)
,
[Stephen Weiss](#)
,
[Chris Tanev](#)
,
[John Mitchell](#)

I was nice putting Galchenyuk in the “strong years” section, but what choice did I have given his draft spot – he missed most of the season. Not saying it’s the fault of this camp at all. I’m just pointing out the fact. Needless to say, I dropped the article.

It’s looking more and more like KHL for [Alex Semin](#) . Just my opinion, but I’m getting the feeling that there is a gap of \$2- to \$3 million between what an NHL team is offering (per season) and what a KHL team is offering. I don’t know which team, I’m just generalizing based on the chatter out there. He’d have to *really* want to play

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in the NHL badly to stay. And does Semin
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want to do anything?

Here's some [camp observations](#) for the Dallas Stars. Of note, a quote on [Scott Glennie](#) : *nothing but good things were said about*

[Scott Glennie](#)

. I talked to several people with the Stars organization who all said he's come a long way since last summer, both physically and mentally, and it's clear the Stars are going to be ready to give him a shot at the NHL -- possibly as soon as training camp.

An [update](#) on [Brett MacLean](#) , who is recovering well.

[Alexander Semin](#) highlights:

{youtube}Vvq2bHVRaB8{/youtube}

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