Some news trickling in:

Jordan Eberle and the Oilers have agreed to a six-year extension worth $6 million per.

The Jets learned today that defenseman Zach Bogosian will be out for up to six months after undergoing wrist surgery. Huge opportunity now present for Paul Postma.

I will have more on this news in tomorrow's ramblings.

Eddie Lack checks in at #2 on our prospect countdown over at Canucks Army.

I had Lack as the top prospect personally, but we took a consensus for this list.

Buy the Fantasy Guide here .

Dobber's Puck Daddy piece on Wingers , from yesterday...

Linus Omark is heading to Switzerland … for now.

"The deal with Zug is for one-year after which, according to Martin Lundén, the Oilers will still retain Omark's NHL rights. It seems then that Omark is still intent on making it to the NHL, as he has always said, and that he is hoping that he can stay healthy and generate some interest from another NHL club next summer. I am still very much a believer in Omark and I think there would have been value in the Oilers re-signing him this summer but the team seems to value grit, sand paper, jam, or whatever you want to call it, over actual hockey skills when it comes to the bottom of their roster."

I'm an Omark fan, but he isn't going to break out in Edmonton. There simply isn't a role for him on the team, as Eberle already sees the sheltered offensive minutes on the right side. Can't afford to have two right wingers playing the same role.

Jesse Blacker checks in at #9 on Pension Plan Puppet's countdown of the top Leafs young guns.

" Jesse Blacker is, by most accounts, an extremely talented hockey player. Excellent skater, good puck skills, physical presence. He only got into 58 games with the Marlies this year due to a few niggling injuries, but still managed the third most points from the blueline. The Leafs moved him to the left side this year (he's naturally a RD) and really worked on his defensive game. He's been around for a few years now it seems, but it's easy to forget that Blacker is a year younger than Jake Gardiner . It wouldn't shock me if he challenges for a roster spot in camp if/when that begins."

I have been really impressed when I have ever seen Blacker play, as well.

Some CBA-related dates to keep in mind as September 15th approaches.

Paul Postma is a great sleeper pick for this season. He has been extremely productive as a defenseman at the WHL and AHL levels, and he is now signed to a one-way deal with a really good chance to earn a regular spot in Winnipeg.

"He's gotten bigger and stronger each and every year that he's been in the organization and we expect that trend to continue," said Chevy. "Paul had a very good pre-season last year and was very close to being a part of the Jets' opening night roster but the opportunity to go and hone the game on both sides of it under Keith McCambridge and Mark Morrison in St. John's has helped him tremendously."

I profiled Brendan Gaunce over at the Canucks Army. The two-way pivot has earned comparisons to Ryan O'Reilly and Keith Primeau, and we ranked him as the fourth best Canucks prospect.

"There's no question Brendan is first and foremost a two-way presence. He's actually been criticized in the past for caring too much about his own end (if that's possible) when he should be thinking about putting one by the opposing goalie. But, at the core, statistics don't lie. Brendan averaged a point per game on a lower tier squad last year whose main problem was scoring goals. His offensive upside is underestimated, in my opinion. He can distribute the puck better than most in the CHL."

Cam Charron takes a look at the five best and five worst contracts on the Canucks.

"Fifth best: David Booth , Year 4 of a 6-year, $25M deal

The amount of grief in this market over the play of David Booth is amusing, as Booth is a hockey player who is good at offence, good at defence, and cost controlled for three more seasons. I would hope that he plays more than 62 games next season, but his seasons have been cut short by illegal hits from
Mike Richards
and now
Kevin Porter
.

Booth won't produce like a first-line player, but why should he? He is being paid like a second-line player, and he produces a little bit better than the average second line player. Booth is indicative of a management team that likes to have several above average players on the lineup rather than attempt to dominate with superstars, and Booth may be that guy for a little bit longer."

My latest for Defending Big D breaks down the Dallas forwards from a fantasy hockey situation. The stud(s), a sleeper, a rookie to watch (you may not have heard of him before), and a player to avoid. Read it here.

"Don't Overrate

Michael Ryder – It is rare for a player to have a career season at the age of 31, but that is what happened with Ryder last season in Dallas. His 35 goals and 62 points were both career highs, as was his 16.6 shooting percentage (his career mark is 12.6 percent). Expect him to return closer to that number next season. Shooting percentage is a great indicator of a player due for a breakout or regression, but it isn't always an indicator.

Ryder has some competition on the right side now with Jagr, but after that the depth chart is still pretty thin. He will be in tough to score 35 goals again, but you probably knew that already."

My annual H2H keeper dispersal draft is being done via email this year, as we are all over the globe. This was the draft that we held live in Las Vegas last year. So far, my picks have been as follows:

David Booth (round one), Jonas Gustavsson (round two), Matt Donovan (round five), and Matt Martin
(round six). That was the "pro" draft, where any player selected has to have at least one game of NHL experience.

We are now into the "farm" draft, where player just have to have their rights owned by an NHL club. I took Nick Bjugstad fourth overall, after Yakupov, Galchenyuk, and Grigorenko. In round two, I opted for Dallas 1st round pick Radek Faksa. Faksa may not have the high end upside of other prospects who were available (I was considering a certain Russian on Tampa Bay), but he is a safe bet to be a very solid two-way forward at the NHL level… soon.

Speaking of Donovan… here is a solid interview conducted with Islanders Point Blank. (link fixed)

"What do you think your best on-ice attribute is that can help you grab of those spots?

I think definitely vision on the ice and my offensive skills. I've always been an offensive defenseman so I think getting points and playing on the power play are some of my biggest attributes. Definitely trying to get better and better at playing more defensive and playing better

defensively. I think I'm taking the right steps in that direction of getting better in those areas, but I definitely think that my offensive ability and vision on the ice are my best attributes."

Shutdown line gives us the #2 player under the age of 25 in Carolina: Jeff Skinner .

"The most important thing to remember about Skinner's sophomore season is that whenever he was on the ice, scoring chances were going in Carolina's favor. Almost every Carolina player saw their scoring chance percentage at even strength increase whenever they got to play on a line with him, which speaks highly of his ability to carry a line. One of the main reasons why Skinner is able to drive possession at a high rate is because he shoots the puck more often than almost anyone else on the team."

I'd expect a strong bounce back season from Skinner, for a variety of reasons. The one above, better linemate quality, an improved team overall, and another summer of working with Gary Roberts
(Skinner is up to 205 pounds from 190 last year).

Dominik Hasek has been announced as one of the additions to the NHL Legends roster for NHL 13, which is out in a few weeks.

Shane Doan still has yet to make a decision, but there are a few teams still in the running.

The Canucks may have the inside track for location reasons – Doan is a family man, and his wife hails from the province of BC, where Doan played his junior hockey. I believe New York and Pittsburgh are also in the mix. Not sure how much patience Doan can have with the Phoenix situation….

This season will be an important one for Matt Beleskey , who is in danger of getting passed over on the depth chart by a few other young Duck forwards.
Here is a profile of Beleskey for the Ducks official site.

"Beleskey has one year remaining on his current contract, and has the ability to play on either wing. He has proven he can bounce around different forward lines during his tenure with the Ducks, including some action at times with Corey Perry and Ryan Getzlaf . His versatility translates into many different options once training camp rolls around."

What should the expectations for Mikhail Grigorenko be this season? Read this.

"Comparatively speaking, every NHL team to hoist Lord Stanley's cup since the lockout has done so with a stud pivot that was drafted and developed in-house. Eric Staal (CAR), Ryan Getzlaf (ANA), Pavel Datsyuk (DET), Sidney Crosby (PIT), Evgeni Malkin (PIT), Jonathan Toews (CHI), David Krejci (BOS), and Anze Kopitar (LAK) have all led the organizations that drafted them to a championship. Second and third line centers are available via trades, but true star power down the middle ala the 8 players listed above is near impossible to procure through a trade. "

PK Subban discusses his offseason, among other things:

{youtube}6iydvjO4Gyg{/youtube}