Some late afternoon news:

The Ducks have extended Cam Fowler for five more seasons.

Nail Yakupov will indeed play in the KHL.

Jordan Eberle, Justin Schultz, Ryan Nugent-Hopkins, and Jeff Skinner highlight many of the players sent down to the AHL today. Going to be some great hockey there this season.

Slava Voynov was also sent down to the AHL. He may choose to play in Russia, though.

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My piece for the Canucks Army today - the top moment from 2011-12 for Vancouver. Cody Hodgson's goal against Boston on January 7th was the top moment last season. Why? Read on to find out.

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Tyler Ennis signed a two-year 'bridge deal' with Buffalo today. The cap hit is below $3 million per. This is Buffalo saying to Ennis: prove your worth, and you will get a big money contract in two years. There aren't as many deals like this anymore as there used to be (the purpose of the second contract used to 'bridge' a player's rookie salary and a big pay day).

Ennis is the top C in Buffalo - I think he approaches 65 points (or a similar pace) this season.

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The Bruins continue to sneak in some last minute contract extensions. Milan Lucic has been signed for three more years at a cap hit of $6 million. This contract kicks in to start the 2013-14 season.

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Andrei Kostitsyn has signed to play in the KHL this season. I was surprised he wasn't able to secure an NHL contract – for all of his faults he's a pretty solid second line winger. Perhaps the term and or dollar figure he was seeking wasn't something that interested the GMs of the NHL?

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The Alex Burrows extension is a great one for both sides. The Canucks lock up a top line winger for a very reasonable cap hit of $4.5 million, and Burrows finally gets the pay day that he has long been owed.

Pretty amazing that he can receive a raise of $2.5 million per season and still have a great value contract.

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The Kari Lehtonen deal is a monster one for Dallas. Obviously he came back this summer in great shape and ready to take the next step – health was the only thing holding him back from elite status in the past.

Whenever I have a mixed opinion on a goaltending situation, I call on Batman (well, the Batman of goaltending scouts, at least – Mr. Justin Goldman). Here are his thoughts from Twitter yesterday:

“Someone obviously came to Dallas in the best shape of his life. Kari's transformation in just two years has been really remarkable...

It is a credit to his off-ice commitment, and the excellent support from Stars goalie coach Mike Valley. both guys work very hard every day.

Kari has already been working with Valley the past few weeks, so they obviously saw he improved things. No rush w/ Campbell is a good thing."

Jack's a 1st-rounder, but that doesn't mean he's on a direct path to NHL. Couple yrs in AHL, couple yrs behind Kari. Nothing wrong w/ that."

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More on the Lehtonen signing from Defending Big D's Brandon Worley:

"The quick eye test tells us that Kari can reasonably be put in the same group with the recent mega goalie deals. His save percentage fits in at about average for that group of eleven goalies over the past four years. The midpoint of those contracts is, as I mentioned above, about five years and 32 million dollars or the Ryan Miller contract. Kari also has similar counting stats to Miller over the past four years so it wouldn't be much of a shock if his representatives used Miller's contract as a negotiating point."

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Evgeni Kuznetsov now has three goals in three games to start off his KHL season.

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A lot of teams assigned some good players to the AHL yesterday. I am definitely going to be picking up the AHL package to watch the games online – it will be some great hockey while the NHL owners and players sort their various "issues' out in the coming days/weeks/months/years/decades.

Here is who the Blue Jackets assigned, including Cam Atkinson .

The Canucks sent down a ton of players, including Zack Kassian and Chris Tanev . I'm interested to see if Kassian and
Jordan Schroeder
end up on the same line (perhaps with veteran Darren Hayder as the third member).

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A solid read on Mike Green from CSN Washington.

"It's been eight months since Green underwent surgery to repair a sports hernia that limited him to just 32 games and a career-low three goals and seven points last season. But if you ask him, Green is feeling as good as he has felt in his seven-year career with the Capitals.

“Even better,” Green said. “I think I needed some time to recover from the surgery. The rehab helped, but I didn’t have enough time between the surgery and playing to really rehab it fully.”

I have started to rely more on advanced stats and numbers in my fantasy hockey evaluations, but I still go with my hunches a lot of the time. And I have a very strong one telling me to do everything I can to draft or trade for Mike Green during this lockout. I hope you all are able to do the same (unless you own him and we are in the same league, in which case you should completely disregard what you just read).

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