

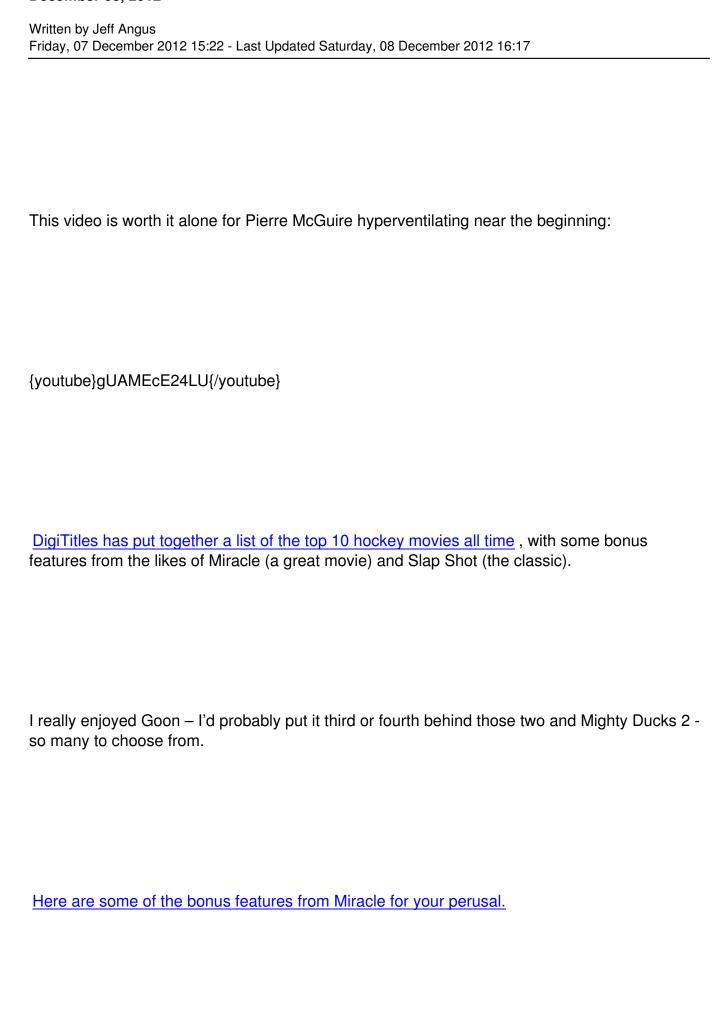
Written by Jeff Angus Friday, 07 December 2012 15:22 - Last Updated Saturday, 08 December 2012 16:17

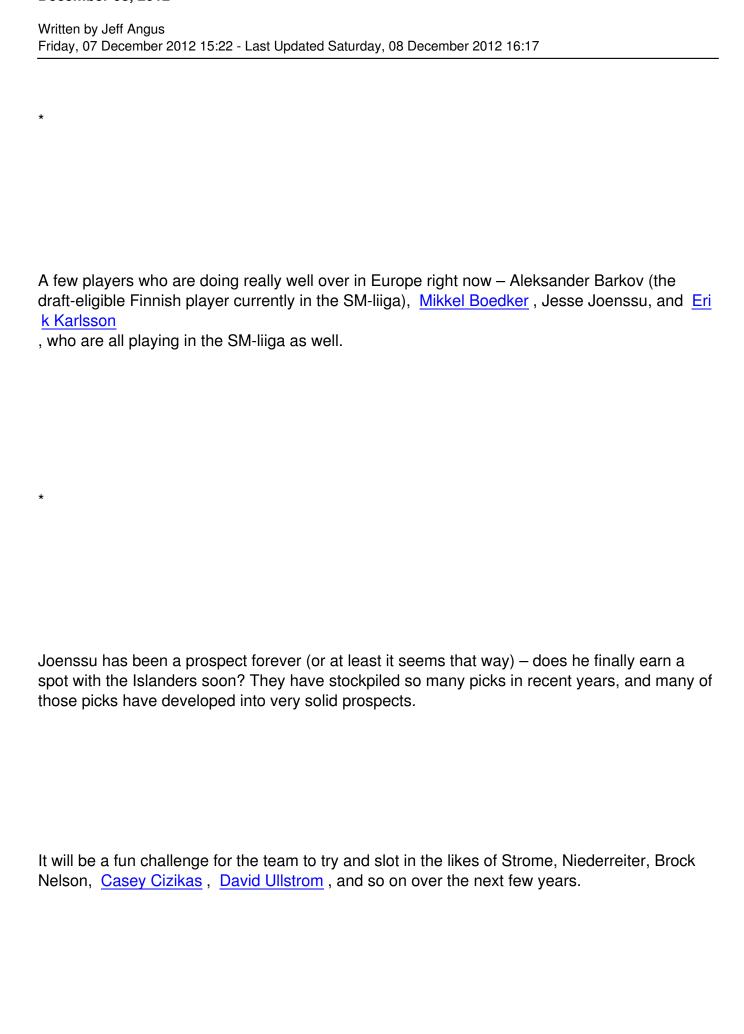
With all of the crazy KHL drama behind him, even at age 37, Nabokov should be considered one of the top goalies in the NHL. He plays with a narrow butterfly, has some stand-up elements in his style, and can log big minutes with heavy shot totals. Last season was a big adjustment, but when healthy, he was solid on most nights. In 42 games with the Islanders, he posted a .914 SV% and 2.55 GAA with two shutouts, proving he could still be counted on to win games and carry a team on his back. What makes Nabokov such a steady goalie is his economy of movement, but his overall tactical balance. He plays a refined version of the style taught by Vladislav Tretiak, combined with some more progressive elements taught by the great Warren Strelow. So he will square up to shooters with an upright stance, but when forced to rely on reflexes to scramble or make desperation saves, he has the agility and flexibility to do so.

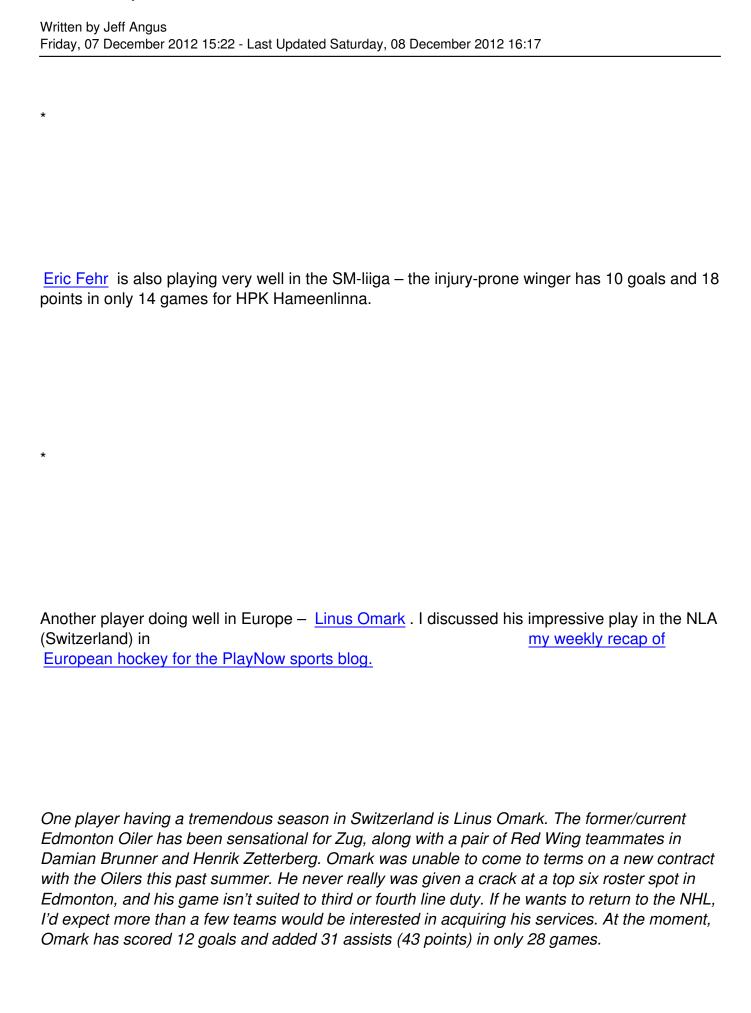
# **Dustin Tokarski**:

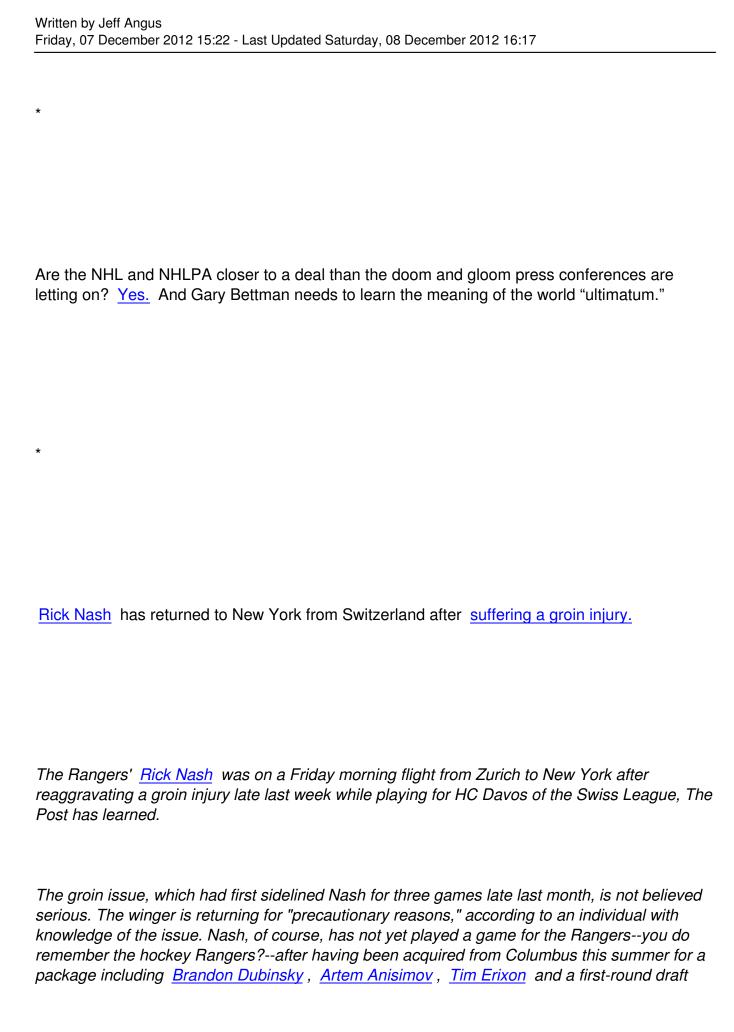
A proven winner wherever he goes, Tokarski has the mental makeup of a future NHL starter. From his time spent in the WHL to his experience in the World Juniors to his solid AHL career, he simply finds a way to win games. But technically speaking, a few areas of his game have scouts concerned about his long-term value. One of those areas is his low game. He's often caught dropping down early and he's not that big to begin with. He loves to utilize the butterfly slide and the back-side recovery, especially when the puck is behind the net. This could be a major issue when he tries to establish himself as a full-time backup because NHL shooters will pick up on that tendency very quickly. Regardless of this issue, Tokarski is still a great No.3 goalie for the organization. He certainly benefits from a team that has dominated the AHL over the past 10 months, and he seems to shine on the big stage and in the playoffs.

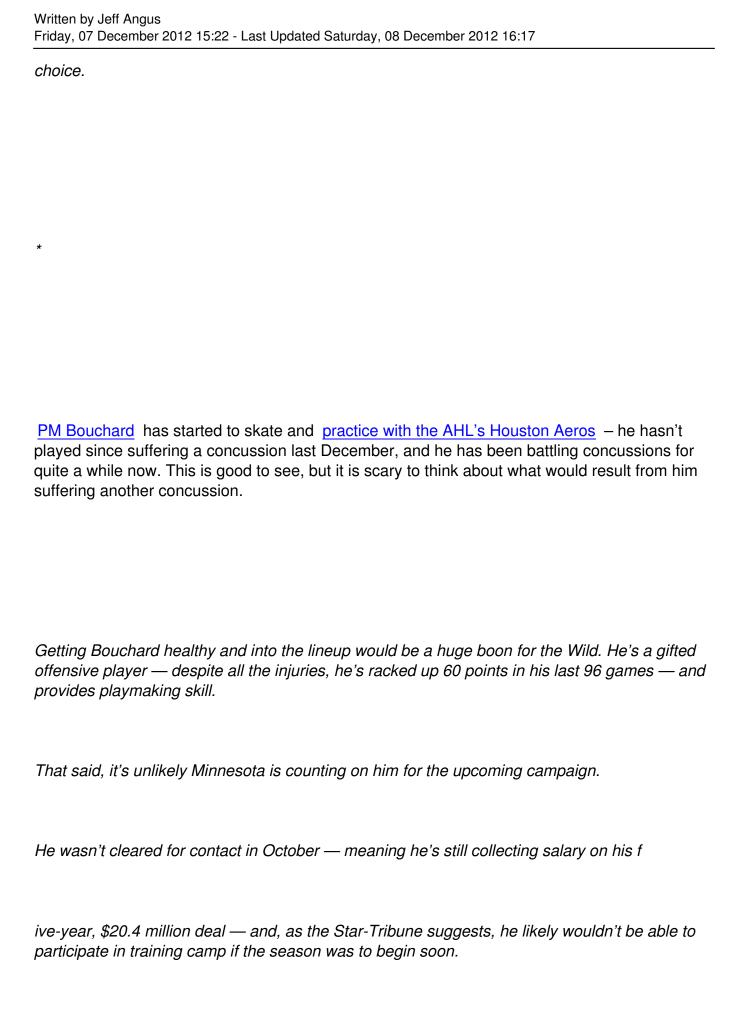
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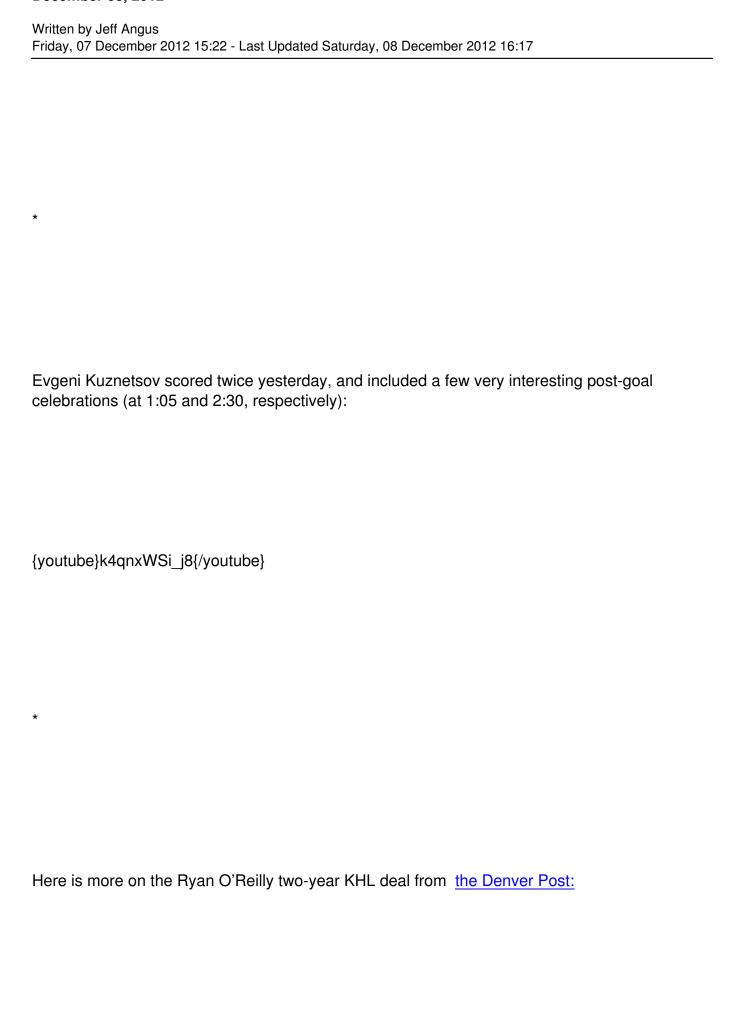












**December 08, 2012** Written by Jeff Angus Friday, 07 December 2012 15:22 - Last Updated Saturday, 08 December 2012 16:17 "No good reason not to," Guy told me. "It's a very good deal for Ryan. He has an opt-out clause and if the lockout continues or we can't reach an agreement (with the Avalanche) he can play with his brother." O'Reilly remains the only player of the Avs not signed to a contract for 2012-13, when/if that season begins. My feeling is O'Reilly would finally get his deal done with the Avs when/if the lockout ends, but there is no question that it was a surprise that wasn't signed entering in the cutoff date to get players signed before the Sept. 15 lockout. This simply gives O'Reilly a bit of leverage – he isn't going to stick around in Russia for two years if the lockout ends.

Here are my 10 fitness tips for December - packed a lot into here - Rory MacDonald, a star MMA fighter, has benefitted from training with a certain NHL player. I also touch on the importance of sleep, some common injury fixes, and more.

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Sleep promotes muscle recovery. Sleep is a critical time for cell regeneration and repair in the body. During non-REM stages of sleep, cell division and regeneration actually becomes more active than during waking hours. Insufficient sleep, on the other hand, hinders muscle recovery.

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The wife of Brandon Reid (former NHL player, now in the DEL playing in Hamburg) tweeted me this picture—it is a pre (or post) game dance/celebration of some sport... Jamie Benn and Reid are in there somewhere.

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