

Written by Dobber

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In fantasy hockey, a player being moved to a new NHL team is often good news for the fantasy owner. A fresh start or a likely shot as a star's linemate – or both – is just what the doctor ordered for a slumping player. In the Western Conference, as of Saturday, eight points separated fourth and fifth...yet only nine points separated fifth and 15th. Since it's tough to nail down which teams will be buyers and which teams will be sellers in the West, we'll take a look at the Eastern Conference first.

## Change of Scenery □ Trade Deadline Pt. 1 of 2

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Here are the most interesting players in the East who could be moved March 4, and what to expect from them if they are...

**Nik Antropov, Toronto** – He has never played more than 72 games in a season, but is on pace for 82. His production is on pace for 62, but as a second-line player on any good team he could produce 70. A lot of teams could use second line depth, such as Florida, who have recent trade ties with the Leafs, and Vancouver and Anaheim, who have ties to Brian Burke. Odds of being dealt: 95%.

**Jay Bouwmeester, Florida** – Possibly the best player available at the deadline, JBo is currently a member of a playoff team. Will Florida deal him? If not, they risk losing him for nothing. The price will be high – a team in the playoffs will not be eager to sell. A new team is a definite plus for his production – his best years are still ahead of him. Odds of being dealt: 60%.

**Bill Guerin, NY Islanders** – He has slowed down to a 50-point player, but teams will be interested in his experience and they would want his scoring touch for their third line. On a new team, his production would slip a little. Odds of being dealt: 70%.

**Tomas Kaberle, Toronto** – He could go to any one of 10 teams on his list that he apparently submitted to GM Brian Burke. However, Burke thinks that he won't move him, but that could just be posturing. His 44 points are far below where he would be on another team. Odds of being dealt: 45%.

**Alexei Kovalev, Montreal** – The Habs may have had enough of his moodiness, but after his warm reception and excellent production Saturday, things could change. Either that or he just drove his price up. Kovalev could go up or down, depending on which team he ends up on. He normally doesn't perform well in the spotlight, but as a secondary character on a strong cast he is a point per game, easily. Odds of being dealt: 45%

**Vincent Lecavalier, Tampa Bay** – I don't think he'll move and the rumors have died off, but I would be remiss not to mention one of the best players in the game. If Lecavalier goes, it will probably be to Montreal. It doesn't matter where, really – he'll put up the numbers anywhere. Odds of being dealt: 10%

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**Kari Lehtonen, Atlanta** – TSN is reporting interest from the Flyers. Lehtonen is a talented goalie who will put up great numbers with a good team in front of him. However, a change of scenery won't help his fragility any – unless he goes to a high altitude state like Colorado where the air density could help him heal quicker. Okay, that was a joke – I have no idea if that is true so MD's please don't send me emails! The point is, his numbers will improve, but his games played will not. Odds of being dealt: 25%.

**Michal Nylander, Washington** – He makes \$5.5 million next season and \$3 million the season after. That makes his cap hit just over \$2 million per year over the next four years if a team bought him out this summer. With that in mind, a team could take a chance on him and know that if they had to resort to a buyout the cost would not be too terrible. However, the Caps would have to bring in salary in return. Dustin Byfuglien from the Blackhawks (\$3 million per year) would fit that bill. Odds of being dealt: 35%.

**Martin St. Louis, Tampa Bay** – It may make more sense for the Penguins to carry the \$5.25 cap hit of a star winger like St. Louis as opposed to the \$4 million cap hit of Ryan Whitney. It also would make sense the Lightning to free up that \$1.25 in salary and add a top rearguard. Obviously, St. Louis going to the Penguins would be gold for his owners. On any other team, it would probably help as well. Odds of being dealt: 50%.

**James van Riemsdyk, Philadelphia** – One of the best prospects outside of the NHL is available because the Flyers have a great team locked up for the long term and Claude Giroux and Andreas Nodl ready to get top six ice time on 20 other NHL teams. TSN thinks the Flyers could use JVR to get Lehtonen. He will be a star no matter what team he plays for, but for a weak time like Atlanta he could give you the numbers much sooner. Odds of being dealt: 20%.

**Antoine Vermette, Ottawa** – The Sens would have loved to dish Vermette to another team two months ago, but he was slumping so badly that no team wanted to give up anything for him. Now that he has 21 points in his last 28 games he will garner interest once again. However, the team's acquisition of Mike Comrie and Chris Campoli indicates that they are not lying down just yet. But they probably will by March 4. Odds of being dealt: 35%.

**Ryan Whitney, Pittsburgh** – The Pens love what they have seen from Kris Letang and Alex Goligoski. Sergei Gonchar has another year on his contract. They need cap room due to the signings of Sidney Crosby, Evgeni Malkin, Jordan Staal and Marc-Andre Fleury. Whitney is the most expendable and he could bring in a top winger in return. He is a potential 75-point player in Pittsburgh, but a potential 60-point player on another team. Odds of being dealt: 40%.

*DobberHockey.com will have the [fantasy impact of every trade within minutes of it being announced on March 4](#) . It is a "must stop" for all fantasy owners who have their own trade deadlines to worry about.*